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Nation Celebrates 72nd Independence Day

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech signals on future priorities if elected again



Independence Day 2018: PM Modi announced mega schemes

NEW DELHI (TIP): In his last Independence Day address before the next General Elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced, August 15, not just the launch date for the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Abhiyan health insurance scheme, but also that women officers in short service commissions in uniformed services will be eligible for permanent commission similar to male counterparts.

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The Colossus of Indian Politics bids good bye

Former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee dies at 93

NEW DELHI (TIP): Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee passed away at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), August 16 evening at 5.05 bringing to an end a glorious political innings. The 12-time Parliamentarian was 93.

Vajpayee, a bachelor, is survived by his adopted daughter Namita Kaul Bhattacharya. AIIMS announced the demise of the BJP veteran saying, "It is with profound grief that we inform about the sad demise of former PM of India Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee at 5.05 pm on August 16."

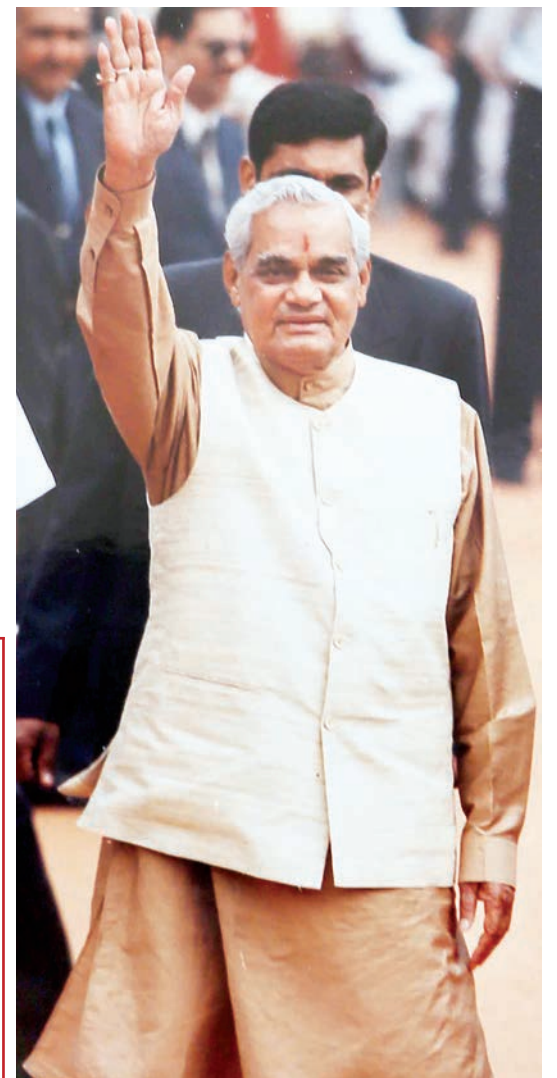
Vajpayee was admitted to AIIMS on June 11 and was stable in the last nine weeks under the care of a team of AIIMS doctors.

"Unfortunately, his condition deteriorated over the last 36 hours and he was put on life support systems. Despite the best of efforts, we have lost him today. We join the nation in deeply mourning this great loss," the bulletin issued by Dr Aarti Vij, chairperson, media and protocol division, AIIMS said.

In his condolence message, President Ram Nath Kovind stated, "His leadership, foresight, maturity and eloquence put him in a league of his own. Atalji, the Gentle Giant, will be missed by one and all." "It was Atalji's exemplary leadership that set the foundations for prosperous and inclusive India in the 21st century," Modi said.

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Read Tribute on Page 4 & 5



A file photograph of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1924-2018)

Photo / Jay Mandal-on assignment



Congresswoman Grace Meng Praises India as a Great Democracy

Consulate General of India celebrates India's 72nd Independence Day

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): India's 72nd Independence Day was celebrated by a very large gathering at the Indian Consulate in New York on August 15. Congresswoman Grace Meng was the chief guest. Also present were Assemblyman David Weprin, New Jersey Senator Vin Gopal, Bollywood actor Anupam Kher, and a couple of other politicians and officials, besides a large number of Indian Americans. Consul General Sandeep Chakravorty hoisted the Indian National Flag to the singing of the Indian national Anthem.

contd on Page 22

Consul General Sandeep Chakravorty unfurled the national flag at the Consulate General of India in New York, August 15. Time for National Anthem. Seen, from left to right: Traana Chakravorty, Congresswoman Grace Meng, Consul General Sandeep Chakravorty, Bollywood actor Anupam Kher, among others.

Photo / Jay Mandal-on assignment

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Gurvinder S. Sahni
Attorney At Law

GURVINDER S. SAHNI

ATTORNEY AT LAW

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ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (1924-2018)

India loses elder statesman, pragmatist, orator who went beyond BJP's nationalist agenda

Statesman and pragmatist, orator and poet, a man of peace and conviction. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was a towering nationalist who softened the often sharp edge of his party's politics with sophisticated inclusiveness, earning him the sobriquet "ajaat shatru" or the man with no enemies.

The first prime minister from a non-Congress party to complete a full term in office, Vajpayee began shakily-his first stint as prime minister in 1996 lasted only 13 days when his unlikely coalition government failed to get support from other parties. The BJP-led coalition government came back to power in 1998, and this time Vajpayee stayed in office for 13 months before losing a no-confidence motion by one vote.

The National Democratic Alliance returned to power in October 1999 with Vajpayee as prime minister once again. This time he lasted the entire term, capping a glorious career that saw him go from student activist to journalist, Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh pracharak, Member of Parliament, foreign minister, opposition leader and finally a much-loved leader of the nation.

Like many of his generation, Vajpayee - who died today at age 93 - came into politics as an 18-year old during the Independence movement in 1942 when the Quit India movement was going on.

A lifelong bachelor, Vajpayee was first elected to Lok Sabha in 1957 from Balrampur in Uttar Pradesh in India's second general elections. His maiden speech in Parliament so impressed his peers and colleagues that the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru introduced Vajpayee to a visiting foreign dignitary thus: "This young man one day will become the country's prime minister." He remained a member of Parliament for 47 years-elected 10 times to the Lok Sabha and twice to Rajya Sabha.

Vajpayee's signature in politics was achieving pragmatic consensus, and in this process he earned the respect of his party, allies and opponents. Abroad, he projected a harmonious image of India and connected it to the world through his foreign policy outreach.

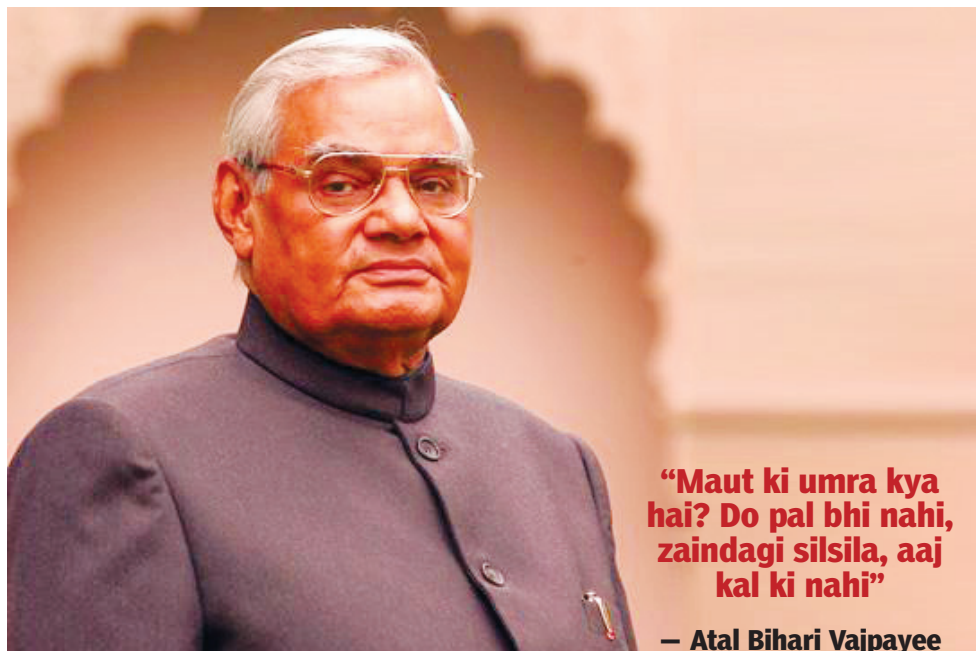
Fluent in English, his oratory was at its best in Hindi. With his well-timed wit, and carefully-chosen words delivered with trademark long pauses, Vajpayee immediately connected with all those who came in contact with him-the common man, politicians, bureaucrats, students and world leaders.

As foreign minister under the Janata Party government headed by Morarji Desai in 1977, Vajpayee was the first leader to deliver a speech to the United Nations General Assembly in Hindi.

He was awarded India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna, in March 2015.

While his six years in office were defined by several crises - including the hijacking of an Indian Airlines jetliner to Kandahar, Afghanistan, in 1999, an attack on the Parliament building in 2001, communal riots in Gujarat in 2002 - he also left a mark with peace initiatives and infrastructural projects. Chief among them is the Golden Quadrilateral Highway network, connecting India's four major metropolises with 5,846 kilometers of roads.

During his second term as prime minister, Vajpayee ordered nuclear tests in May 1998 in a strategic masterstroke to blunt Pakistan's nuclear ambitions while at the same time announcing a moratorium on future testing.



"Maut ki umra kya hai? Do pal bhi nahi, zaindagi silsila, aaj kal ki nahi"

— Atal Bihari Vajpayee



Vajpayee addresses a rally organised by non-Congress parties in New Delhi on September 1, 1988.



He followed this up with peace overtures to Pakistan, riding on the first direct bus from India to Pakistan in February 1999.

Undeterred by party hawks, Vajpayee arrived in Lahore on the bus, accompanied among others by legendary actor Dev Anand. Vajpayee met with then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in what was hailed as the dawn of a new era in India-Pakistan relations.

However, then army chief Gen. Pervez Musharraf did not turn up to greet him at the Wagah border. It soon became clear why.

Only months later, in June 1999, Pakistan began hostilities in Kargil that took the two

countries to the brink of a full-scale war. Vajpayee felt betrayed and never hid his bitterness whenever Kargil was mentioned. He tried again to build peace with Pakistan-which people close to him say was the mission of his life-by holding a historic summit in Agra with Musharraf in 2001, who by then had become the president. But the summit too failed spectacularly.

Another historic event that he expressed anguish about was the post-Godhra communal riots in Gujarat in 2002 when Prime minister Narendra Modi was the chief minister.

Contd on page 5

End of an era: Modi

India grieves the demise of our beloved Atal Ji. His passing away marks the end of an era. He lived for the nation and served it assiduously for decades. My thoughts are with his family, BJP Karyakartas and millions of admirers in this hour of sadness. Om Shanti. — PM Narendra Modi

Lost my closest friend: Advani

I am at a loss of words to express my deep grief and sadness today as we all mourn the passing away of one of India's tallest statesmen, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. To me, Atalji was more than a senior colleague- in fact he was my closest friend for over 65 years.

— Senior BJP leader LK Advani

India lost a great son: Rahul

Today India lost a great son. Former PM, Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, was loved and respected by millions. My condolences to his family & all his admirers. We will miss him. — Rahul Gandhi, Congress president

Gentle giant, says Kovind

Extremely sad to hear of the passing of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, our former Prime Minister and a true Indian statesman. His leadership, foresight, maturity and eloquence put him in a league of his own. Atalji, the Gentle Giant, will be missed by one and all.

— President Ram Nath Kovind

He had no enemies: PC

Vajpayee ji was a man of great wisdom, tolerance and compassion. He led his party to its first victory in national elections and established the credentials of the BJP to run the central government.

— Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram

The tallest leader: Naidu

I visited him this morning but didn't imagine that the end will come so soon. He is, undoubtedly, one of the tallest leaders in post-independence India.

— Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu

'Nursed BJP into a banyan tree'

Atalji emerged as a popular national leader who believed that power is a means of service and led a spotless political life without compromising on national interest. And that's why the people across political and social boundaries showered him with love and respect. — BJP chief Amit Shah

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (1924-2018)

The life and times of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, former prime minister and admired leader

Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the first non-Congress prime minister to complete a full term in office, died in Delhi on Thursday after a prolonged illness, doctors said. He was 93.

Here is a brief time of his lifeline and career:

1924: Atal Bihari Vajpayee is born in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior

1942: Arrested and held for 24 days. He later wrote in a piece titled 'The Sangh is my Soul': "I participated in the Quit India movement in 1942 and was jailed..."

1951: After working as a journalist, he joins the newly formed Bharatiya Jan Sangh

1957: Elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time

1962: Becomes a member of the Rajya Sabha

1975: Jailed during the Emergency

1977-79: Serves as the external affairs minister in the Janata Party government

1980: Cuts ties with the Janata Party and helps found the Bharatiya Janata Party. He is chosen as the president of the party

1992: Awarded the Padma Vibhushan for contribution in the field of public affairs

1996: Becomes the Prime Minister but is forced to resign in 13 days after the BJP unsuccessfully attempts to stitch together an alliance with regional parties. On May 28, he – in what has become a landmark speech – resigned on the floor of the House before a trust vote



In April 18, 2005, file photo, Pervez Musharraf (L) shakes hands with Atal Behari Vajpayee (R), after their meeting in New Delhi.

1998: Sworn in as PM after the BJP emerges as the single largest party and forms the National Democratic Alliance government

1998: Under Vajpayee's leadership, India conducts five nuclear tests on May 11 and 13 at the Pokhran range in Rajasthan. Seventeen days later, Pakistan conducts its own nuclear tests

1999: The government lasts a little over a year. Vajpayee resigns in April after his party loses the vote of confidence

1999: Becomes the PM for a third time in October after the NDA emerges as the largest political alliance

2000: Signs a statement on 'US-India Relations: A Vision for the 21st Century' along with Bill Clinton during the US

President's visit to India in March. The statement talks of a "pledge to reduce impediments to bilateral trade and investment, and to expand commerce between the two nations"

2000: In September, after an invitation to address a joint session of the US Congress, he speaks at a joint session. Vajpayee says his visit to Washington has "consolidated relations between the world's two largest democracies and marked a new era in bilateral and global affairs"

2004: In May, he resigns as the PM following the NDA's defeat in the Lok Sabha elections

2005: Retires from active politics

2009: Has a stroke that impairs his speech



Vajpayee with US President George W. Bush.



Vajpayee with then Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif in Lahore in 1999.

2015: Conferred the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian award. In a departure from protocol, President Pranab Mukherjee drives to Vajpayee's residence and presents the

award to the ailing leader. Prime Minister Narendra Modi says: "There are crores of workers around the country who draw inspiration from Atalji"

India loses elder statesman, pragmatist, orator

Contd from page 4

Unwilling to hide his feelings over the riots, Prime Minister Vajpayee said the government must follow "raj dharma". In his autobiography, former President Pranab Mukherjee wrote that the Gujarat riots were "possibly the biggest blot" on Vajpayee's government that could have cost the Bharatiya Janata Party the 2004 Lok Sabha elections.

After the NDA was routed in the elections, Vajpayee announced his retirement from politics in 2005 and slipped into relative political oblivion. He was rarely seen in public after suffering a stroke in 2009, and subsequently developed dementia. However, his influence loomed large over the party, which often quoted him and his policies.

In his Independence Day speech yesterday, Modi said he wants to resolve the Kashmir issue through Vajpayee's doctrine of "Insaniyat, Kashmiriyat, Jamhooriyat", which seeks to preserve the composite Kashmiri culture while ensuring democracy in a humane manner.

When he assumed office for the second time in 1999 as the head of a more stable coalition, Vajpayee had to abandon some of the cornerstones of BJP's policies to get the backing of more secular groups. This included the BJP's demands for scrapping the special status for Jammu and Kashmir, building a Hindu temple on the site of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya and abolishing the separate civil code for Muslims.

The demolition of Babri Masjid by kar sewaks in December 1992, when he was the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, was an acid test for Vajpayee's secular agenda and his stand within the party. Vajpayee's trusted lieutenant L K Advani and most



US President Bill Clinton shakes hand with Vajpayee at the White House in September 2000.

BJP politicians supported the demolition but Vajpayee condemned the attack unequivocally.

At times he tried to appeal to Muslims and other minority groups, and was seen as a reassuring figure for India's mainly

secular establishment.

His personal integrity was never seriously questioned but arms bribery scandals exposed corruption in his government and at times cast doubts on his judgment.

A romantic at heart, Vajpayee wrote poetry in his spare time, and was a connoisseur of good food.

Vajpayee was born on December 25, 1924 in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh to a schoolteacher, Krishna Bihari Vajpayee, and Krishna Devi. Today, his birthday is celebrated as Good Governance Day'.

After schooling, he graduated from Victoria College in Gwalior, now known as Laxmi Bai College. He did his M.A. in political science from DAV College in Kanpur. Following a brief flirtation with communism, he became a full-time worker of RSS in 1947.

Vajpayee subsequently entered journalism and was editor of Rashtradharma, a Hindi monthly, the Panchjanya Hindi weekly and the dailies, Swadesh and Veer Arjun.

He became a close follower of Syama Prasad Mookerjee, the founder of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the precursor to Jana Sangh and later the BJP. Under Mookerjee's tutelage, Vajpayee's right-wing philosophy shaped.

Vajpayee accompanied Mookerjee to Kashmir in early 1950s during the BJS leader's fast-unto-death to protest the identity card requirement for Indian citizens visiting the state. It was Vajpayee's first insight into the Kashmir problem, which decades later he addressed in 2003 with the "Insaniyat, Kashmiriyat, Jamhooriyat" doctrine.

Vajpayee is survived by his adopted daughter, Namita Kaul Bhattacharya.

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Message

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On the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day on 15 August 2018, I send my greetings to the readers of The Indian Panorama.

India is a young nation, with a proud history and an advanced civilization that goes back several thousand years. The Cambridge historian Angus Maddison found that in the early 18th century, India accounted for 27% of the world economy. However, at the end of 190 years of colonial domination by England, our economy and our people were ravaged by poverty and deprivation. When we won our hard-fought Independence, India's share had dropped to 3% of the world economy.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, India has begun to craft the contours of a 'New India', which we will achieve by 2022 – the year we celebrate 75 years of our independence. This 'New India' seeks to build a nation that draws inspiration from our robust Constitution, from the Directive Principles that oblige us to protect our people, to provide them with opportunities, and to ensure that there is justice and peace in the land. In addition, it is premised upon the belief that the role of the state is to effectively and efficiently deliver essential goods and services to its citizens, especially to those at the bottom of the pyramid.

A home, toilet, electricity, a gas connection, are just some of the necessities that eluded millions of Indians for decades, are now reaching millions by the day. The ethos of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' addresses requirement of all Indians, predicated development on social justice, taking inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of "From Sarvodaya to Antyodaya". This lexicon now finds pride of place in the internationally agreed 2030 Development Agenda, which incorporates the Sustainable Development Goals, by way of titles such as "To the Farthest First" and "Leaving No One Behind".

New Delhi
14 August 2018

(Hardeep S Puri)

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MESSAGE

I extend my warm greetings to all fellow Indians and members of the Indian American community on the occasion of the Independence Day of India. I am happy to know that *The Indian Panorama* is bringing out a special issue to mark the occasion.

2. After 70 years of Independence, India has much to be proud of. Our thriving pluralistic democracy, our fast growing economy and our achievements in the field of science, technology, sports and the performing arts have made a global impact. India is well-positioned to face the challenges of the decades ahead and to fulfill the tremendous human potential of its people.

3. India's relationship with United States is substantive and wide-ranging and is set to grow further both in strategic and economic spheres. The contribution of the Indian-American community to this relationship has been critical. My congratulations to *The Indian Panorama* for its relentless work in promoting friendship and understanding between India and the US.

[Navtej Sarna]

Congressman Tom Suozzi



*Wishes you a very happy
72nd Independence Day!*



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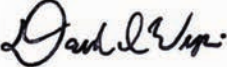
It is a great pleasure to join you as The Indian Panorama celebrates 72 years of Indian Independence. As the Assemblyman who represents one of the largest South Asian populations in New York, I am honored to be a part of this special publication to commemorate the 72nd anniversary of India's Independence.

Since its inception in 2006, The Indian Panorama has been instrumental in displaying the positive impact and rich heritage of the Indian-American community. In addition, under the direction of Chief Editor Indrajit S Saluja and the support of his talented team, The Indian Panorama has provided an indispensable voice for the Indian-American community.

The publication's fine work in showcasing the positive impact of the Indian community in New York, as well as its efforts to promote and uphold the interests of the global South Asian diaspora is worthy of our highest recognition and gratitude; and The Indian Panorama's dedication to better serve our city and our great state by providing quality journalism deserves our highest appreciation.

Once again, I am honored to join The Indian Panorama to commemorate the 72nd anniversary of India's Independence; and send my best wishes and congratulations to each of you as we celebrate 72 years of Indian Independence. Jai Hind!

Sincerely,



David I. Weprin
Member of Assembly

DIW/ss



**Ashwini Kumar Tewari
Country Head, SBI US Operations
State Bank of India,
460 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022**



Ashwini Kumar Tewari

MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

My greetings to you on the 72nd Indian Independence Day. Each of you in USA has origins, links, remains in touch and has roots in India, which is a free country today. However, this was not the case always. Like the United States, India has to fight long and hard to overthrow the foreign rule from India for 200 years. Today is the occasion to remember all the freedom fighters who contributed to this. Moreover, today is also the occasion to remember that it is incumbent on all of us to make sure all Indians get true freedom - freedom from the drudgery of poverty, ill health, social backwardness, persecution etc. Everyone should get equal opportunities. As ambassadors of India and having done well those of us here, have a higher responsibility to contribute to the success of India. Jai Hind.

Ashwini Kumar Tewari

**Padma Shri Dattatreyudu Nori,
M.D., M.B., B.S.
New York**



MESSAGE

Happy Independence Day 2018!

For all Indians around the globe, Independence Day is a day to remember the people who fought the Britishers and gave up their lives to free the country from a foreign ruler. Let's salute the martyrs for the sacrifices they made and thank them for giving us our today.

India's freedom struggle was a hard-fought one and Independence Day is the day to pledge and to protect the unity and integrity of our country. Be the cause of that unity, fight against forces trying to divide us. With freedom in mind, faith in words, pride in our souls let us salute our flag on this important day and feel pride of being the part of such a glorious nation.

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I am honored to write this message to Indian Panorama on the occasion of 72nd Independence Day of India. Throughout its vast history, India has never invaded another nation, has never experienced a civil war and nor experienced a military coup.

When I think of India, I think of my birthplace and of the birthplace of so many medical developments. I think of a country that once flourished and now emerging as a modern nation, a country whose ancient civilizations were amazingly sophisticated.... A country from which other ancient civilizations borrowed ideas... and above all, a country that offered me a stellar medical education almost for free.

To quote Dr. Arnold Toynbee "It is already becoming clear that a chapter which had a western beginning will have to have an Indian ending if it is not to end in the self-destruction of the human race....At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian way- Emperor Ashoka's and Mahatma Gandhi's principle of non-violence and Sri Ramakrishna's testimony to harmony of religions."

Sincerely,



V.K. Raju, MD, FRCS, FACS

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Syed Akbaruddin



Message

संयुक्त राष्ट्र स्थित भारत का स्थायी प्रतिनिधि
न्यूयॉर्क
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK

I am happy to know that *The Indian Panorama* is publishing a special edition on the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day.

The celebration of our Independence Day is an occasion for remembering the sacrifices and contributions of the freedom fighters and founding fathers of our nation and renewing our commitments to the core values of our Constitution. It is also an occasion to reflect upon our collective journey so far and rededicate ourselves to working towards a better future for all Indians.

India's deepening engagement with the United Nations is based on its steadfast commitment to multilateralism and dialogue as the key for achieving common goals of peace, security and development. In this regard, India is also increasingly assuming a leadership role at the UN.

India has set up the India-UN Development Partnership Fund to help the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). India is also promoting clean and sustainable energy through its global initiative in the form of the International Solar Alliance (ISA). India is partnering with the United Nations to utilize solar energy at the UN Headquarters. With a view to enhance the outreach of the United Nations, at the initiative of India, the UN has started new public communication services in Hindi.

I compliment Chief Editor Prof. Indrajit Saluja and his team for their continuous effort in promoting friendship and understanding between India and the USA. I extend greetings to the readers of *The Indian Panorama* on the occasion of India's Independence Day.

(Signature)
(Syed Akbaruddin)
August 14, 2018

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CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA
NEW YORK



August 13, 2018

MESSAGE

On this occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day, I extend my greetings to all readers of *Indian Panorama* which is publishing a Special Issue to mark the 72nd Independence Day of India. Since 2006, having its base in New York, the *Indian Panorama* is serving NRI's & Indian Americans with a variety of news, information and entertainment and no wonder it has become a popular read in many homes.

Independence Day is a celebration of India, its History, Culture, Nature, Cuisine, Art, Wildlife, Music, Dance, Spirituality, Mountains, Rivers and Valleys. It reminds us to value our hard-fought freedom; remember our martyrs and freedom fighters and makes us value the purposefulness of unity. India is a greatly diverse country, which has its own intrinsic value but when we unite it unleashes our power on the world stage. It is also an occasion to remember the strides that we have made and the challenges that still beckon us.

I extend my heartiest greetings to *Indian Panorama* which has created a special bond between the Indian Diaspora through the newspaper and wish all success for the future.

(Signature)
संदीप चक्रवर्ती
Sandeep Chakravorty

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Asoke Kumar Mukerji
Writer and former diplomat



Asoke Kumar Mukerji

Greetings on the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day

I would like to extend my warmest greetings to the esteemed readers of *The Indian Panorama* on the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day.

The journey that India began as an independent country on 15 August 1947 is marked by many momentous milestones. Our population has grown from 330 million to over 1.3 billion citizens today. India is on the verge of becoming the fifth largest economy in the world, after the United States, China, Japan and Germany. With our growth, our aspirations have grown, and India's voice on the world stage reflects this today.

This is a good occasion to look at India's role in international relations. The world we live in is becoming increasingly impacted by growing turbulence. This is an opportunity for India to make a positive contribution in confronting the challenges, based on the values rooted in her civilizational heritage.

Let us rededicate ourselves to working together to achieve this, so that we can make the world a better place for ourselves and for succeeding generations.

Asoke Kumar Mukerji

Prabhu Dayal
Former Diplomat and author



Prabhu Dayal

Message

I am very happy to learn *The Indian Panorama* is bringing out a special issue to mark the 72nd Independence Day of India.

Independence Day is celebrated with great enthusiasm by Indians all over the world, including here in USA. I have been privileged to be part of these celebrations for many years.

The Indian community here has excelled in all areas, thus earning the respect of other sections of American society. At the same time, it has served as a bridge of friendship between India and USA. Indo-US relations have grown by leaps and bounds, and the Indian community living in America has played a pivotal role in this process.

On the joyous occasion of Independence Day, I extend my greetings and felicitations to all Indians while exhorting them to continue to strive towards excellence.

Jai Hind.

Prabhu Dayal

Ajay K. Lodha, MD
7 Oak Ridge Lane,
Roslyn NY ,11576
Past-President, AAPI

MESSAGE



Ajay K. Lodha

I would like to wish everyone a Happy India Day August 15th. Independence Day is both an occasion to celebrate and to remember those who fought for us. In the spirit of our national flag, Orange, White and Green, let's stand together for unity, prosperity and peace. In the 71 years since India achieved independence, India has excelled and become a global leader. It is with great pride that we rejoice in the spirit of an independent India blessed to have the freedom to soar in the unbound sky. The Indian diaspora has come to the US and been very successful and build a great community. I also want to thank my adopted country as it has provided me with an opportunity to grow and develop so I am able to give in return to our community.

Ajay K. Lodha, MD

Sunil Mehra, MD, FCCP, FACP
Past President, AAQIQLI and IALI
Vice President, National AIA

MESSAGE



Dr. Sunil Mehra

Hi,

I wish all the readers of this esteemed newspaper and our community in New York, a very Happy and Proud Independence Day of India.

We have come a long way since 1947. Let us stay united and bring a noble name to our great country.

We have to work together as Indians and not by regions or religions.

My best wishes to all Indian community and our friends from different cultures and countries on the glorious occasion of the 72nd Independence Day of India.

Jai Hind

Happy Birthday India!

How does one measure success or failure of a nation which was born out of carnage and chaos? It's ironic how the oldest civilization in the world was 'born' 72 years ago, today. When India stepped into democracy on the principle of universal adult franchise after August 15, 1947, there were many who had predicted gloom and doom for the country. One of the fears was that India would 'collapse into regional components'. None of those fears and predictions have come true. This does mean India's rise is a success story.

Deepening of democracy, success of parliamentary form of government, rule of law and people's faith in democratic process and institutions are the biggest achievements of independent India. Every change in government has been only through the ballot box. Even some so called, modern democracies in the Western world cannot lay claim to this achievement.

Called the country of illiterates that would be ruled by semi-illiterate parliamentarians, India's literacy rate at the time of independence was a mere 18%. Today, it is almost 75%. India's economy, long known as the elephant that walks at the 'Hindu rate of growth' of 3.5%, is now the 6th largest in the world, growing at an astounding 7%. The 'Elephant has started to run' said the recent IMF report.

Along with the above statistics there are glowing examples of failure, women's safety being one of the most prominent. It is sad to know that we as a nation can't make our women feel respected and secure in the premises of our own home. Economic benefits haven't reached to all the sections of our society. If India has to continue its progress, it has to uplift the life of every individual from every corner of the fragmented society of ours.

A nation, so socially fragile, so economically average, so culturally diverse, so politically split, has survived in peace. The marvel persists. The wonder is not that there are so many problems in India, but that it exists as a country, as a society, as a political system, as a true democratic nation!!

Here at FIA, we believe in the same mantra of finding success in our diversity and uniqueness. The mission of the FIA is to foster and promote cultural and social interactions among the members and our community. FIA concerns itself with the social welfare of the American Indians and supports them by organizing community events like Women empowerment summit, Visa camps, college fair, celebrating cultural shows and celebrating India's largest Independence Day parade, outside India, in New York.

Here's to another great year! Happy Birthday, India! Jai Hind!

Srujal Parikh, President

Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) NY-NJ-CT



FIA Curtain Raiser Ceremony 2018



FIA Gurjat Day Celebration



Women Empowerment Programmer



Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Celebration



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Pravasi Bhartiya Divas



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INDIA INDEPENDENCE DAY

India celebrates Independence Day on August 15 each year. India became an independent nation on August 15, 1947, so a gazetted holiday is held annually to remember this date.

What Do People Do?

Independence Day is a day when people in India pay homage to their leaders and those who fought for India's freedom in the past. The period leading up to Independence Day is a time when major government buildings are illuminated with strings of lights and the tricolor flutters from homes and other buildings. Broadcast, print and online media may have special contests, programs, and articles to promote the day. Movies about India's freedom fighters are also shown on television.

The president delivers the "Address to the Nation" on the eve of Independence Day. India's prime minister unfurls India's flag and holds a speech at the Red Fort in Old Dehli. Flag hoisting ceremonies and cultural programs are held in the state capitals and often involve many schools and organizations.

Many people spend the day with family members or close friends. They may eat a picnic in a park or private garden, go to a film or eat lunch or dinner at home or in a restaurant. Other people go kite flying or sing or listen to patriotic songs.

Public Life

Independence Day is a gazetted holiday in India on August 15 each year. National, state and local government offices, post offices and banks are closed on this day. Stores and other businesses and organizations may be closed or have reduced opening hours.

Public transport is usually unaffected as many locals travel for celebrations but there may be heavy traffic and increased security in areas where there are celebrations. Independence Day flag raising ceremonies may cause some disruption to traffic, particularly in Dehli and capital cities in India's states.

Background

The struggle for India's Independence began in 1857 with the Sepoy Mutiny in Meerut. Later, in the 20th century, the Indian National Congress and other political organizations, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, launched a countrywide independence movement. Colonial powers were transferred to India on August 15, 1947.

The Constituent Assembly, to who power was to be transferred, met to celebrate India's independence at 11pm on August 14, 1947. India gained its liberty and became a free country at



midnight between August 14 and August 15, 1947. It was then that the free India's first prime minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave his famous "Tryst with Destiny" speech. People across India are reminded of the meaning of this event - that it marked the start of a new era of deliverance from the British colonialism that took place in India for more than 200 years.

Symbols

The sport of kite flying symbolizes Independence Day. The skies are dotted with countless kites flown from rooftops and fields to symbolize India's free spirit of India. Kites of various styles, sizes and shades, including the tricolor are

available in the marketplaces. The Red Fort in Dehli is also an important Independence Day symbol in India as it is where Indian Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru unveiled India's flag on August 15, 1947.

India's national flag is a horizontal tricolor of deep saffron (kesaria) at the top, white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. The ratio of the flag's width to its length is two to three. A navy-blue wheel in the center of the white band represents the chakra. Its design is that of the wheel which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Ashoka. Its diameter approximates to the white band's width and it has 24 spokes.

We celebrate the bravery of our fathers and their gift of freedom. Long may our flag wave. Happy 72nd Independence Day.

Independence is among the most valuable gifts one can benefit from. This day God granted this gift to our freedom fighters.

Freedom is one of the most expensive commodities. No amount of money will be enough to buy freedom.

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action-Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake."
— Rabindranath Tagore in his poem *Where The Mind Is Without Fear*

Long years ago, we made a tryst with destiny and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge... At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. — Jawaharlal Nehru on August 14, 1947



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INDIA'S MARCH TO PROGRESS

“Independence means voluntary restraints and discipline, voluntary acceptance of the rule of law.” As India celebrates its momentous 72 Independence Day, the above words of Mahatma Gandhiji, the Father of the Nation, echoes in most minds.

Seven decades down the line, from once being a humble nation, today India stands tall and high with scores of achievements to its credit. This is a time to reflect upon ourselves if we, as Indians have succeeded in grasping the real meaning of independence in letter and spirit. Have we been able to live upto the expectations which our valiant leaders had in their minds while fighting for the freedom of the nation? Questions prop us as India is all geared up for its most cherished day.

India has beyond doubt taken giant strides and has progressed by leaps and bounds in spheres diverse. From being a nation that literally struggled to cope with its huge populace, soaring demands, abject poverty, hunger and innumerable social problems, today India has emerged as an economic power and a global leader. Today the whole world looks at India, astonished by the astounding progress it could achieve.

The strength of India lies in its unity and diversity, in its vibrancy, its cultural splendour and its vast human resources. Today the nation's tricolour is soaring high, thanks to its unprecedented progress which has been made possible by its men and women of great calibre and strength, who have proved their mettle in various spheres, bringing laurels both at the national and international levels. Today India has got the talent, the real talent that can bring positive changes in the world.

Freedom or Independence is the breath of life and also that of a nation. For a vibrant nation like India, freedom is a challenge while also being a reason to celebrate. The multi-cultural ethnicity of India, its rapid strides in science and technology, the vast progress in Space Science and Information Technology fields and the giant leaps in education have proved the stepping stones of success of the nation.

The Mahatma who laid down the path of peace and non-violence, Sardar Vallabha Bhai Patel, the steel man of India, Bal Gangadhar Tilak who gave a clarion call that 'Freedom is my Birthright, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the revolutionary leader, Bhagath Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad and many more like them were true patriots whose supreme sacrifice saw the birth of an independent India on August 15, 1947 thus freeing the nation from the shackles of colonial rulers. The formidable challenge posed by the British rulers was faced effectively by a great generation of supreme heroes who continue to be the inspiration of millions of Indians.

India has stood the test of times. Every challenge that the nation faced has made it more stronger. It is a nation that has taken an unbeaten path, a path that will take it to greater heights no matter the



turbulent times, the stress, the tension and unwelcome developments that have brought sufferings. The strength of this nation is so supreme that none can shake its secular fabric and the inherent virtues of patience, peace and tolerance which the nation nurtures and which form its rock solid foundation. India's diversity is nourished with tolerance and patience. It is Peace, Co-operation and Friendship that bonds people.

It was the self-respect, pride and the self-esteem of the nation that gave India its much needed freedom and it were these which the Constitution of the nation is striving to protect and help it in the march towards a great future.

"Today India does not need rebels or revolutionaries, but a vast majority of people who can grasp the truth or the facts," said a veteran thinker. A quick glance at the developments in the nation in the recent past makes this remark very meaningful.

With its abundant natural resources, plethora of talents and multitudes of magnanimous efforts, India has been able to achieve big. Today the nation rededicates and pledges itself to work for the betterment and progress, thanks to those visionaries whose extraordinary accomplishments helped India attain freedom with unparalleled fortitude and unique means. The nation's freedom fighters charted the roadmap of Independent India by sacrificing their todays for a better tomorrow for the citizens of the nation.

The nation's ability to forge a strong national identity despite being a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-religious entity is yet another distinct hallmark. India's democracy is vibrant mainly owing to the plurality of the nation and this diversity can be nourished only when there is patience and tolerance.

No doubt vested interests will try to have their way and disrupt harmony and erode secularism, but it is patience and tolerance that eventually pays. Here the ideals of the Mahatma, of peace, harmony, non-violence, truth, human dignity and compassion comes to the picture.

That India has adopted inclusive growth in every sphere and every developmental initiative has been the hallmark of this nation which always prides in its diversity that has stunned the whole world.

India can be termed to have attained real independence when no one sleeps on a hungry stomach, when every child

gets good education and every individual gets housing, healthcare and basic needs.

When citizens joins hands with the government in these tasks instead of leaving it to the government alone, India can achieve progress much beyond the expected level. At every level, right from villages to metropolitan cities, people must come together and form groups to work for the disadvantaged sections of the society. It is only then that one can witness development in the true sense. Each and every effort, big or small can make a real difference.

Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, the former President of India, in one of his Independence Day speeches had said so – "We are a large country blessed with natural resources and a highly motivated younger generation. We have to prioritise our thoughts on national development and make all other issues as "non-issues". This will ensure focus and thrust for the development process. And it will prevent dissipation of energy and resources on non-productive issues."

The late President's words are thought provoking and very much relevant in the recent times when non-issues are turning out to be major issues in the nation.

India takes pride in its democracy no matter the pressures and challenges that it faces. Here everyone's opinion counts and everyone has to respect each other's opinions and try to understand the view point of others.

The Mahatma had once said "Evolution of democracy is not possible if we are not prepared to hear the other side. We shut the doors of reason when we refuse to listen."

The combined hard work of Indians as well as the successive governments that ruled this largest democracy in the world, has helped India stand where it is today. If India is a force to reckon with, if India is a leader among the emerging economies and if the super powers of the world consider India a great partner of growth, it is all the net result of the unprecedented progress that the nation has registered since independence. Today, India has truly made its mark on the world stage and every Indian is proud of the nation's achievement. Independence Day is a time to introspect ourselves, our contributions to the nation as well as how far we have succeeded in protecting our hard earned freedom in the truest sense.

The Mahatma who laid down the path of peace and non-violence, Sardar Patel, the steel man of India, Bal Gangadhar Tilak who gave a clarion call that 'Freedom is my Birthright, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad and many more were true patriots whose supreme sacrifice saw the birth of an Independent India on August 15, 1947.

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India takes pride in its democracy no matter the pressures and challenges that it faces. Here everyone's opinion counts and everyone has to respect each other's opinions and try to understand the view point of others.



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INDIA'S JOURNEY: 1947 TO 2018



"I wish for the friendship between India and Israel to always grow and influence the lives of all citizens in both countries,"
Maya Kados,
Israeli Diplomat
Charge d'Affairs at
Israeli Embassy in
India, tweeted.

The Embassy
posted a video on
the social media
platform wishing
Indians around the
world a very
happy
Independence day.

Twice invaded by foreigners, ripped off its wealthy glory, facing the agony of partition, punctured by numerous anti-national elements, yet standing strong in the face of all & that's India for the world.

What we started with?

A country that today comes across as a strong powerful, developing nation has achieved and lost so many things in its journey; India has come a long way since its Independence on August 15, 1947.

Notions about India

No matter how, intolerant people think my country is, or how patient it is in the times of real aggressive calling, I still admire for the strength that it displays into harboring the needs of its countrymen.

India's growth

There still might be a lot of scope for infrastructure, better education and economic policies, foreign and defense strategies, even thought-process of certain section of society, but you cannot ignore the developments that led us to make a mark in numerous areas at global level.

Food Grain production

Right after independence, India majorly imported food grains and depended upon international food aid up to mid-1960s. Today India has self sufficiency in food production and exports various food grains. We are largest producers of fresh fruits, milk, pulses and oil seeds, sunflower seeds and second largest

producers of wheat, rice, sugarcane, potato, tea, cotton etc., in the world.

Eradication of epidemics

We have successfully eradicated various epidemics and Polio from our nation. Life expectancy grew up to be 68.89 years, which was only 32 years at the time of independence. This is one of the major achievement taking into account that we comprise 17% of world population.

Indian Armed Forces

India is one of four largest military powers in the world today, and has got one of most sophisticated missile programs in the world.

First voting

We are the only nation in the world which gave every adult the right to vote from its first day. In the US, the world's second largest democracy this right was given more than 150 years after their independence.

Union of princely states

Just after re-birth, we executed the world's largest merger and acquisition activity, when 560 small princely states joined (merged) into the Union of India; neither any blood drop was spilled nor was any bullet fired.

Diverse languages

We have the most number of languages spoken in any one nation; 29 languages are spoken in India, by more than one million people each. Canada almost broke up into two in 1960's because of tension between English and French.

Unity and Integrity

Despite such a vast diversity we are a single nation and this feeling of unity is increasing with each passing day.

Space and defense program

Despite having almost nil self-reliance on defense technology and space technology, today we are one of the most advance nations in this field. Indians have been able to develop one of the most envious space programs in the world started in the year 1969 after their independence. To this day, we launched various space programs including Lunar and Mars mission, and on way to commercially launch satellites of developed nations at very low cost, all thanks to Indian Space Research Organization.

Technical Education & Digital India

Since independence India has been developing its technical education sector steadfastly. This resulted into our green revolution, resulting in increase of our food grain production more than four times, our independent space programs, eradication of epidemics and our envious IT sector.

Religious tolerance

Despite having such diversity in terms of religions and cultures, and many elements working round the clock to create disturbance among them, our nation remains by far the largest one to have people living peacefully with each other, something worth appreciating.

(Content Input: Quora)

Happy
Independence Day
to all our Indian
friends and PM
@narendramodi.
Strong Indo -
Maldives relations
necessary to
preserve
democratic values
and Indian Ocean
stability in an era
of increasing land
grab and debt
traps, which
undermine states'
economic and
national security.

— President of
Maldives Mohamed
Nasheed wished the
citizens of India and
PM Modi a happy
Independence Day.

The Prime Minister of Portugal António Costa also wrote on Portugal-India relations in a well-known Portuguese news publication. His father was from Goa, making him a person of Indian origin. The article was acknowledged by the Prime Minister in a tweet.

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1947-2018: EVENTS THAT SHAPED OUR POLICY

India celebrated its 72nd Independence Day on August 15, 2018. India gained independence from the British Raj on August 15, 1947, making it an important day in the history. India is truly a secular and diverse country with different religions, languages, caste, and creed living in a harmony. We all have read our freedom fighters' struggle and sacrifice for freedom. But that are several interesting events in independent India that have helped to shape our Indian policy. As we celebrate 72nd Independence Day, let us take a flashback over the many events that shaped our policy, after Independence.

1947: India gains its liberty and became a free country at midnight between August 14 and 15.

1948: Nathuram Godse, a right-wing advocate of Hindu nationalism, assassinates Mahatma Gandhi in New Delhi on January 30.

1949: The Indian Constituent Assembly adopts Article 370 of the Constitution. Article 370 of the Indian constitution is an article that gives autonomous status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

1950: The Constitution was adopted by the Indian Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949, and came into effect on 26 January 1950 with a democratic government system, completing the country's transition towards becoming an independent republic. The last Governor-General of India Chakravarti Rajagopalachari reads out a proclamation announcing the birth of the Republic of India.

1951: The first Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru presented the First Five-Year Plan to the Parliament of India. The plan mainly focused on the development of the primary sector.

1952: India holds its first general elections. The polling was held between October 25, 1951, and March 27, 1952.

1956: The second five-year plan presented to the Parliament of India that focused on rapid industrialisation. Babasaheb Ambedkar passed away in December after months of illness.

1957: Jammu and Kashmir approve its own constitution. Second general elections are held in India.

1959: The 14th Dalai Lama flees to India. His shelter is seen as a trigger for the 1962 war with China.

1960: Following violent protests, the Bombay state is split into Maharashtra and Gujarat.

1962: The Sino-Indian War, also known as the Sino-Indian Border Conflict, occurred between China and India. A disputed Himalayan border was the main pretext for war, but other issues played a role. In the war, India lost a border war with China. The Indian army lost over 1300 army men and injured 1,047. The state of Nagaland is formed.

1964: Nehru passes away on May 27, the cause of death is believed to be a heart attack. After Nehru's death, Gulzarilal Nanda is sworn in as acting Prime Minister.

1965: The Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 was a culmination of skirmishes that took place between April 1965 and September 1965 between Pakistan and India. Both the countries suffered heavy casualties.



1966: The state of Punjab is divided into three other states – Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Punjab.

Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistani President Ayub Khan meet in Taskent along with the Soviet Union Prime Minister Kosygin, and signs 'Taskent Agreement'. On the same night, Lal Bahadur Shastri dies in sleep, of cardiac arrest.

Following the death of Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, Gulzarilal Nanda once again becomes the acting Prime Minister.

1969: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is founded.

1971: India fights the third war with Pakistan. East Pakistan is divided from Pakistan, Bangladesh is born as an independent nation.

1972: The state of Meghalaya is formed, under the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.

The Simla Agreement is signed between India and Pakistan on July 2 in Simla, Himachal Pradesh.

1974: India conducts nuclear tests at Pokhran.

1975: The Congress government imposes 'Emergency'.

1977: Emergency ends. The first non-Congress government elected at the Centre.

1979: Mother Teresa is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

1980: The BJP is formed after internal differences in the Janata Party result in the collapse of the Janata government in 1979.

Sanjay Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's son, dies in a plane accident.

1983: Kapil Dev led Indian cricket team wins the World Cup.

1984: Operation Blue Star is launched to drive out Sikh extremist religious leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and his followers from the Golden Temple, Amritsar.

In the same year, the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is assassinated by her two bodyguards. Following

Indira's death, her son, Rajiv takes over. On December 2 and 3, the Bhopal disaster, also referred as the Bhopal gas tragedy took place at the Union Carbide India Limited pesticide plant in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The government of Madhya Pradesh confirmed a total of 3,787 deaths related to the incident.

1985: On June 23, Air India Flight 182 was destroyed with a bomb, killing 268 Canadian citizens, 27 British citizens, and 24 Indian citizens. Canadian law enforcement determined that the main suspects in the bombing were members of the Sikh militant group Babbar Khalsa. The attack was said to be a retaliation against India for Operation Blue Star.

1987: The state of Goa is formed.

1988: Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visits China to meet Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. Gandhi becomes the first Prime Minister in 34 years to do so. Both the leaders agree to ensure peace in the border areas.

1989: Outbreak of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir.

1990: Cauvery tribunal is formed to resolve the water dispute between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

1991: Rajiv Gandhi is assassinated during the election campaign by a suicide bomber sympathetic to Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers in Southern India.

1992: The Babri Masjid in demolished. The mosque is believed to be built on a piece on the birthplace of Lord Rama – Ram Janmabhoomi, sparking nationwide communal riots.

1993: Series of bomb blasts disturbs the city of Mumbai, killing over 250 people and injuring 700.

1994: Beauty queens Sushmita Sen and Aishwarya Rai wins the Miss Universe and Miss World titles respectively.

1999: Indian Airlines flight IC-814 hijacked by Harqat-ul-Ansar. After seven days of negotiations with the Indian government, the hostages are released in exchange of militants Maulana Masood Azhar, Syed Umar Sheikh and

Mushtaq Latram Jerger.

The Kargil War, also known as Kargil conflict, took place between May and July in the Kargil district of Kashmir and other areas along the Line of Control (LoC).

2000: The states of Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand are formed.

2001: Five terrorists of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) attacked the Parliament of India on December 13. The attacks took a toll of 14 lives – 6 Delhi Police personnel, 2 Parliament Security Service personnel, 1 gardener, and 5 terrorists.

2002: Communal violence breaks out in Gujarat. A coach of Sabarmati Express is set on fire at Godhra railway station.

2005: Right to Information Act implemented.

2008: 10 members of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) carry a series of coordinated bomb attacks and shooting at prime locations including Taj Hotel, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) and Leopold Café.

2011: After 28 years, The Indian Cricket team wins the World Cup.

2013: On June 16, Uttarakhand witnessed devastating floods and landslides killing over 6,000 people and leaving thousands homeless.

2014: Ending the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty, Narendra Modi becomes the 15th prime minister.

India's 29th state Telangana is formed.

2015: US President Barack Obama has attended India's Republic Day parade in Delhi, becoming the first US head of state to do so.

The Aam Aadmi Party headed by Arvind Kejriwal wins a stunning victory in Delhi state election.

India and Bangladesh sign a historic territory swap deal allowing residents to choose where to live.

2016: The Modi-led government announced demonetisation of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes.

2017: The Goods and Services Tax (GST) introduced on July 1.

India creates history by launching 104 satellites by ISRO's vehicle the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).

Indian Women's Cricket Team enters World Cup finals. Even though India lost to England at the Lord's stadium, the team and the match changed the face of women's sports in India.

Men's Hockey team wins 2017 Asia Cup. Manushi Chhillar becomes Miss World. The Supreme Court bans the practice of Triple Talaq.

2018: India national under-19 cricket team wins Under-19 Cricket World Cup held in New Zealand beating Australia in the final.

The Bharatiya Janata Party-led government faces the no-confidence motion brought against it by the Congress-led Opposition. After a 12-hour marathon debate, the BJP defeats the motion.

The year so far has proved worst as minors being the victim of sexual assaults. The Kathau rape victim was an 8-year-old, while the Surat victim just 11, the list goes on and on.

GOVT OF INDIA'S INITIATIVES

MAKE IN INDIA

Make in India is a major new national programme of the Government of India designed to facilitate investment, foster innovation, enhance skill development, protect intellectual property and build best in class manufacturing infrastructure in the country. The primary objective of this initiative is to attract investments from across the globe and strengthen India's manufacturing sector. It is being led by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. The Make in India programme is very important for the economic growth of India as it aims at utilising the existing Indian talent base, creating additional employment opportunities and empowering secondary and tertiary sector. The programme also aims at improving India's rank on the Ease of Doing Business index by eliminating the unnecessary laws and regulations, making bureaucratic processes easier, making the government more transparent, responsive and accountable.

"I want to tell the people of the whole world: Come, make in India. Come and manufacture in India. Go and sell in any country of the world, but manufacture here. We have skill, talent, discipline and the desire to do something. We want to give the world an opportunity that come make in India," Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi said while introducing the programme in his maiden Independence Day speech from the ramparts of the Red Fort on August 15, 2014. The initiative was formally introduced on September 25, 2014 by Mr Modi at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, in the presence of business giants from India.

The focus of Make in India programme is on 25 sectors. These include: automobiles, aviation, chemicals, IT & BPM, pharmaceuticals, construction, defence manufacturing, electrical machinery, food processing, textiles and garments, ports, leather, media and entertainment, wellness, mining, tourism and hospitality, railways, automobile components, renewable energy, biotechnology, space, thermal power, roads and highways and electronics systems.

SKILL INDIA

Skill India is a campaign launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 15 July 2015 which aim to train over 40 crore people in India in different skills by 2022. It includes various initiatives of the government like "National Skill Development Mission", "National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, 2015", "Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)" and the "Skill Loan scheme".

India is one of the youngest nations in the world. Over 62 percent of its population is aged between 15 and 59 years. Over 54 percent of the country's total populace is below 25 years. It is estimated that average age of India's population by 2020 will range between one and 29 years. In comparison, the average age of population of US will be 40 years, Europe at 46 years and Japan, 47 years.

In the coming two decades, labor force of industrialized nations is forecast to decline by four percent. In sharp contrast, India will witness a boom of some 32 percent during this time span.



STARTUP
INDIA
STAND UP INDIA

Skill India aims at tapping this vast potential of indigenous manpower. For over seven decades since India's independence, no such initiatives were taken to tap the potential of the country's workforce.

DIGITAL INDIA

Digital India is a campaign launched by the Government of India to ensure the government services are made available to citizens electronically by improved online infrastructure and by increasing Internet connectivity or by making the country digitally empowered in the field of technology.

The initiative includes plans to connect rural areas with high-speed internet networks. Digital India consists of three core components, (a) development of secure and stable digital infrastructure, (b) delivering government services digitally, and (c) universal digital literacy. Launched on 1 July 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it is both enabler and beneficiary of other key Government of India schemes, such as BharatNet, Make in India, Startup India and Standup India, Industrial corridors, Bharatmala, Sagarmala, Dedicated Freight Corridors and UDAN-RCS.

STARTUP INDIA

Startup India is an initiative of the Government of India.

The campaign was first announced by Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi during his 15 August 2015 address from the Red Fort, in New Delhi.[1] The action plan of this initiative, is based on the following three pillars:

- Simplification and Handholding.
- Funding Support and Incentives.
- Industry-Academia Partnership and Incubation.

An additional area of focused relating to this initiative, is to discard restrictive States Government policies within this domain, such as License Raj, Land Permissions, Foreign Investment Proposals, and Environmental Clearances. It was organized by The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP). A startup defined as an entity that is headquartered in India, which was opened less than seven years ago, and has an annual turnover less than Rs 25 crore (US\$3.6 million).[3] Under this initiative, the government has already launched the I-MADE program, to help Indian entrepreneurs build 1 million mobile app start-ups, and the MUDRA Banks scheme (Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana), an initiative which aims to provide micro-finance, low-interest rate loans to entrepreneurs from low socioeconomic backgrounds.[4] Initial capital of ₹200 billion (US\$2.9 billion) has been allocated for this scheme.

KNOW INDIA PROGRAMME

Know India Programme abbreviated as KIP is a government initiative by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India for the Indian diaspora (excluding NRIs) between the age group of 18 to 30 years. It was launched on January 8, 2014, on the occasion of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in New Delhi.

The purpose of the Know India Programme is to help Persons of Indian Origin youths familiarize with their roots and contemporary India and provide them an exposure to the country of their origin. From 2016, six KIPs a year are being organised.



GUEST COMMENT

A universally loved politician: Vajpayee set templates that surprised

The man was a marvel. There have been few politicians like Atal Bihari Vajpayee who so effortlessly stepped across the Lakshman rekha of party propriety and ideology and yet garnered all-round respectability. Right from his debut in the Lok Sabha, there were murmurs by his constipated colleagues about his waywardness and 'un-swayamsevak-like' behavior. The minders kept their counsel because of the rarity in their ranks of a silver-tongued communicator like Vajpayee. Compared with other anti-Congress young Turks of the time, Vajpayee was entirely home-schooled in politics. Yet, the man gave the impression of being more forgiving, open-hearted and oriented towards politics of consensus than those schooled in tenets of western liberalism.

His speech in Parliament that was noticed by Nehru marked him out as a politician to watch out for. And Vajpayee paid the price when it rolled out one of its big guns to humble him in the 1962 elections. Vajpayee was to brush off this dust of defeat several times in his career even as he silkily positioned himself for the top job in the party, leaving it to LK Advani to wield the axe on their one-time mentor Balraj Madhok to land control of the party. The Emergency tested his resolve and staying power as did a barren stretch after Indira Gandhi's assassination. Vajpayee braved them both.

Vajpayee's hour arrived in 1998. And till ill-health laid him low, he occupied the political center-stage with hardly a single blemish of graft, nepotism or rank opportunism blighting his 50 years of public service. As PM, he endured the usual tumultuousness of helming a country, besides countering challenges to his authority with customary élan and panache. His experience enabled him to control the narrative - be it the nuclear tests, the Kargil conflict or the 2002 Gujarat riots. His inclusion in the pantheon of greats was guaranteed when he was felled by a paralytic attack in 2009. The only regret would be that Vajpayee entered South Block 10 years late when his health was already on the decline.

(Tribune, India)



By Tabish Khair

Naipaul knew that our house is not perfect and that it is ludicrously incomplete, but he preferred living ironically in it to pulling it down. Who, honestly speaking, can claim that he was entirely wrong? Who, in any case, with a roof over his head?

The joke, considered by some to be factual, runs like this. An Englishman, an admirer of the descriptive writing of the blind Ved Mehta, goes to a literary party in London in the 1980s because he has heard that Mehta would be there. The Englishman suspects that any writer who is so good at description cannot be truly blind. On arriving, he asks the hostess if Mr. Mehta is in the room. She says, yes, I think he is sitting on a sofa at the back of the hall. The Englishman navigates his way through the crowd and reaches the back. He spots an Asian sitting alone on a sofa. Sneaking up, the Englishman waves his hands in front of the Asian's face. No response. The Englishman pulls faces. No response. Just then the hostess passes by, so the Englishman turns to her and whispers, "You know, Mr. Mehta there is really blind". "But that is not Mr. Mehta," she replies. "That is V.S. Naipaul."

Like all good jokes, there are elements of truth in this one. V.S. Naipaul, or Sir Vidia as he was called after receiving his knighthood, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, was a man who did his own stuff, and seemed to be blind to those who pulled faces at him. This was misleading: he could see them and was often highly conscious of what they were doing. But he would not condescend to respond to them, except indirectly in his writing. This was an indication of his greatness as a writer.

Naipaul's hurt

Born on a small Caribbean island to a family of Indian origin, Naipaul made himself a major writer with a rare single-mindedness of purpose. He also brought this concentration, this ability to observe without seeming to be moved, to the best of his works. Of course, this ability was misleading. "Mad Ireland hurt you into poetry," W.H. Auden wrote of W.B. Yeats. The madness of the world was also essential to Naipaul's oeuvre. But while Yeats, the poet influenced by a Romantic sensibility, wore his hurt on his literary sleeve, Naipaul kept it deeply hidden. That is why Yeats's hurt translates into beautiful, lyrical poetry with little humor in it, and Naipaul's hurt translates into humorous, ironic or satirical fiction at its best.

Despite the fact that Western critics focus inordinately on it, it is not Naipaul's travel writing that makes him one of the greatest writers of the 20th century, it is his fiction. His travel writing comes across as hasty at times. I suspect the reason so many Western journalists do not see this is that, at a far higher level of

AS I SEE IT

THE HOUSE THAT NAIPAUL BUILT

It is not his travel writing that makes him one of the greatest writers of the 20th century, it is his fiction



Nobel Prize-Winning author VS Naipaul (Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul) died at 85 on August 11.

accomplishment, Naipaul's travel books move through the non-West with something of the burden of received opinions and impatience that Western journalists often display in their incursions.

But even here, there is a difference. Naipaul's highly accomplished non-fiction was flawed not as much by what he saw critically and impatiently in other cultures, for these insights were often acute despite being politically unsavory, but what he chose not to see in them - and in himself. This had to do with his hurt; his, at times, desperate trajectory from the margins to the center, and its consequences.

The hurt that Naipaul does not easily show - or shows only as criticism, humor, satire - is revealed in the nature of the two of his greatest books, which are among the greatest 'novels' of the 20th century: A House for Mr Biswas (1961) and The Enigma of Arrival (1987). In very different ways, both occupy that particularly fruitful space between fiction and memoir: A House for Mr Biswas, with a story inspired by Naipaul's father's warped intellectual struggles in a discouraging postcolonial environment, is one of those rare recent novels in which the protagonist is basically conservative and yet gains the reader's sympathy. The Enigma of Arrival is the story of the writer V.S. Naipaul, told by the writer V.S. Naipaul: a memoir dressed up as a novel, or a novel dressed up as a memoir; depending on how you choose to look at it. Selecting deceptively from actual autobiographical facts, this 'novel' (which is what Naipaul chose to call it) is correctly read by critics as examining the ambiguities of leaving or arriving 'home'.

But what also needs to be recalled is that the place where Naipaul arrives, or fails to arrive, in this novel is next to Stonehenge, the very heart of England, so to say. This trajectory remains central to any understanding of Naipaul as a person and a writer. It relates to the hurt I have mentioned, which is primarily that of a great artist seeking to escape - and all artists seek this, consciously or not - the whirlwind of time. This might also mean

escaping the lesser storms of ugliness, pettiness, disorder. For writers who feel, as the younger Naipaul obviously did, caught on the margins of history, to be 'post' not just the colonial but also at times the sensible, this hurt assumes compulsive force. It is an index of Naipaul's artistic greatness that he shaped it into highly honed creativity and did not allow it to seep, as it often does in postcolonial circles, into insistence, rhetoric, bitterness and resentment.

Contested politics

Naipaul's politics, especially but not only in his non-fiction, has been often indigestible to many, including, at times, me. This does not detract from his stature as a writer, especially a writer of fiction. But it cannot be ignored. In Naipaul's defense, one has to add that he often seemed to operate with a basic assumption that was anathema to the Left but that is largely justified. The Left (much more so in the past) operates on the assumption that if only the poor and the deprived could assume power, we would overcome the problem of power being abused. In all his writing, indirectly but clearly, Naipaul scoffs at this idea. For him, the fact that you are poor is no guarantee that you will be just if you assume power; the fact that you were deprived does not mean that, given a chance, you won't deprive others.

Hence, while acutely aware of the abuse of power within any conservative status quo, finally Naipaul prefers a coherent status quo to radical or revolutionary change. This explains his sympathy for extant English and (to a certain extent) Brahminical-centric tendencies over radical religious, social and political ideologies. Perhaps like Mr Biswas in his long-sought and finally half-achieved house, Naipaul knew that our house is not perfect and that it is ludicrously incomplete, but he preferred living ironically in it to pulling it down. Who, honestly speaking, can claim that he was entirely wrong? Who, in any case, with a roof over his head?

(The author is a novelist and academic who works in Denmark)

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The Indian Panorama
P.O. Box No. 190067, South Richmond Hill, NY 11419,
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WHOSE INDEPENDENCE IS IT ANYWAY?



By George Abraham

As the Diaspora is celebrating 72nd Independence Day of India, one of the questions that arises in minds across the globe is whose independence and freedom is actually being celebrated on August 15, 2018. Obviously, it is not the freedom of Akbar Khan, who was lynched by a mob in Rajasthan on suspicion of cattle smuggling, or Gauri Lankesh, a journalist who was shot by a Hindutva fanatic who brazenly stated that "she was anti-Hindu and had to be killed", or Rohit Vemula, a Dalit Scholar who was driven to commit suicide because of the entrenched anti-Dalit mindsets and practices still prevalent across the nation.

In the case of Akbar Khan, instead of immediately rushing him to the hospital, the police appeared to have given priority in arranging the transportation of the cattle to a cow shelter and thereby denying him timely medical care that could have saved his life. It only appears to have given fodder to those who believe that it is safer to be a cow in India than a human being. What happened to their right to life and liberty? Why has the state once again failed to protect their rights as equal citizens? Who empowered these marauding thugs to conduct street-level justice to promote a sectarian ideology? What is happening to the soul of Indian democracy?

After four years of BJP rule, lynching has become the national pastime, mobocracy rules the day. The latest attack in Rajasthan came days after India's Supreme Court requested the government to enact new legislation to end an increase in mob violence and lynching that have reportedly killed more than dozen people accused of cattle theft or eating beef.

"The basis for democracy is Liberty," said Aristotle. However, today, the Institutions that were built to safeguard that principle are under duress. India is one of the most diverse nations in the world. The country has its population 80% Hindu, 14 % Muslim, Sikhs, and Christians about 2 % each. It has Castes and sub-castes, many languages and dialects and varying customs and traditions including different dress codes and dietary habits. That is the crossroad where India is today with Narendra Modi in power disregarding the aspirations of the minorities and diminishing the power structures that provided political and social equilibrium in the last seven decades or more.

Despite these variances, India has not only survived but prospered as a nation under a Nehruvian vision and the constitutional umbrella engineered by the great B.R. Ambedkar. Together, they have built Institutions that guaranteed life and property of every Citizen regardless of their background or circumstances, providing an opportunity to climb up the ladder of success and economic prosperity. Thanks to the economic liberalization policies initiated by Rajiv Gandhi and Manmohan Singh, former Prime Ministers, India has surpassed France as the sixth largest economy in the world. What we should have witnessed is a continuum of those policies and practices resulting in more openness and tolerance, and yet the opposite seems to have taken place.

In this week, we may witness widespread celebrations of India's independence that will be held in many cities across the country. However, one may hear very little in regard to whether the hard-fought freedom by the founding fathers of modern India is in danger of being extinguished!

The Cultural and Religious organizations that provide forums for these events appear not to be concerned about the ever-diminishing freedom of India's citizens or weakening of its institutions. They rather keep repeating the same narrative of India's history and heritage and remind everyone on a regular basis of our noble ancestry. Compounding that, many of these same leaders may not only fail to mention the opportunities and privileges they were accorded here in their adopted land but often make even derisive comments about the 'decadent culture' of the west as if we were forced to migrate to this part of the world.

In these days, Embassies and Consulates of India have been utilized as propaganda machinery for the ruling party in India. In the name of promoting soft power, they have been forced to underwrite programs with intrinsic religious themes or one that would fit their nationalist agenda. Even English is often being banished at official functions to the dismay of the attendee population that always include non-Hindi speaking people or the people who are born and brought up in this country.

Indians have done well with the open electoral process in the US having elected four of their own to the House of

The ultimate goal of the agenda is to transform the pluralistic and democratic India to a Hindu nation where the majority religion will have the pre-eminence and minorities are relegated to subservient role probably being denied equal protection or opportunities, that too, to a substantial segment of the population.



Representatives and another one to the Senate. Although most of them ascribe to policies considered far left of the center and often very strident on issues dealing with Civil Rights, Social Policies or Immigration, they rarely criticize the Government of India for any similar wrongdoingssuch as violations of human rights or religious freedom andseem reluctant even to raise these issues when meeting with the Prime Minister or other officials.

Many of the Desi civil rights organizations in this country that would make loud protests, justifiably so, at the slightest discrimination or physical attack on an Indian, remain largely silent to any level of atrocities committed on vulnerable groups in India. Some of them act as if they are mouthpieces of the BJP regime often defending actions that would violate the basic values and principles of the democracy where we all live. As a minority, we demand equal opportunities and protection from the U.S. government, however, most, remain reluctant to hold Modi regime accountable to the same standard! It is quite a paradox!

Many liberal critics of the Modi regime sincerely believe that his administration is run by a political dogma inspired by the RSS ideology. That ideology is based on a common thread promoted by the Sangh Parivar organizations and is called the 'Hindu Nationalist agenda of BJP'. The ultimate goal of the agenda is to transform the pluralistic and democratic India to a Hindu nation where the majority religion will have the pre-eminence and minorities are relegated to subservient role probably being denied equal protection or opportunities, that too, to a substantial segment of the population.

The constitution's framers created a democratic system wherein the legislature would make laws, the executive would implement laws and be accountable to parliament, and an independent judiciary would interpret the laws. They also put in a system of checks and balances among these three organs of the state. However, over the years, these three organs of the state have pushed the boundaries of their relationship with one another. NDA has the majority in the Lok Sabha where they pass ordinary bills and then pass it on to Rajya Sabha as Money bills to circumvent their numerical impairment in that body. They also have shown utter disregard to deliberate on essential bills bypassing various parliamentary committees.

Agencies such as India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Enforcement Directorate of the Finance Ministry, the Tax authorities and even local police forces are often accused of doing Government's bidding. The opposition has charged that their leaders have often been targeted for harassment which they consider as a political vendetta for expressing their opinions critical of the government.

India has witnessed an extraordinary news conference by four members of the Collegiums revealing the skew in the allocation of work and lack of transparency by Dipak Misra, the Chief Justice of India. According to Justice Chelameswar, recently retired, "we tried to persuade the CJI to take steps but failed. Unless the Institution of Supreme Court is preserved, democracy won't survive in the country". There is indeed a cloud still casting a pall over the recent verdicts on Loya and Mecca Masjid cases.

Since the Narendra Modi government came to power, access to information through the Right to Information (RTI) Act has diminished greatly, according to the annual report of the Central Information Commission (CIC) for 2014-15. "Every Indian deserves to know the truth, and the BJP wants to hide

the truth. The BJP believes the truth must be hidden from the people and they must not question people in power. The changes proposed to the RTI will make it a useless Act," Rahul Gandhi said recently on the Twitter.

Shiv Sena, a member of the NDA coalition has recently dubbed the election commission as a 'Tawaif' (Mistress) of a political party. Coming from an ally, it only amplifies the long-held suspicion by many that the election commission has become a tool increasingly in the hands of the BJP government. "People are losing faith in the voting system," Shiv Sena spokesperson Sanjay Raut told ANI.

Freedom of Conscience is fundamental to all other freedoms. It is innate and God-given. It is guaranteed under the Indian Constitution. However, it is open season on those who freely exercise it. Professor M.M Kalburgi and Govind Pansare were active in combating the organized mysticism and cultures of gullibility widespread at the "popular" level. Their professed independence and determined efforts to alert the common man from the hideous agenda of the so-called religious godmen cost them their lives.

Media is dubbed as the fourth estate and has a vital role to play in a vibrant democracy. However, they are increasingly fearful for their existence if they do not toe the line of the Government. Many of these media outlets are bought out by the crony capitalists and have become the cheerleaders of the BJP agenda.

Academia has become another favorite target of the Modi Government. BJP and its ilk have always hated Institutions like JNU where the free flow of ideas flourished, and lively debates on the pros and cons of contemporary issues were the order of the day. Today, the students and faculty in these revered institutions are intimidated, harassed and called anti-national for failing to toe Hindutva agenda line and are even charged with sedition. Modi Government has been openly hostile to civil society groups. It repeatedly denounces human rights and environmental activism as "anti-national" - a phrase that carries connotations of treason.

Religious freedom in India continued on a downward trend in 2017, said the United States Commission on International religious freedom's annual report released recently. It said that although government statistics have indicated that communal violence has decreased over the past two years, during the year, Hindu-nationalists groups sought to "saffronize" India through violence, intimidation, and harassment against non-Hindus and Hindu Dalits" although Indian Constitution guarantees freedom of religion through article 25 and 26. Since the ascendance of Modi as the Prime Minister, tensions between Muslims and Hindus have increased in many parts of the country. Modi's rise has further pushed Muslims towards marginalization.

Christians who constitute around 2% of the population are also under severe stress with many of their places of worship under attack, increased re-conversion efforts by Hindu fundamentalist organizations, removal of Christmas Day and Easter Day from the National Calendar and by the cancellation of FCRA of thousands of Christian charities effectively putting them out of business, the Saffron brigade appears to be questioning the very India ness of every Christian in India.

"Democracy is under threat in India with "artists, writers and rationalists" being attacked in some form or the other, says acclaimed actress and filmmaker Nandita Das who feels conservatives and right-wing groups are increasingly becoming country's moral police citing the effort to block the release of the movie 'Padmavati'.

Since the ascension of BJP to power, there is one in a series of incidents that has revealed the mindset of a party, on the one hand, urging Dalits to unite under the flag of Hindutva but on the other, setting up a delimiter to what extent they can be included; first, the ban on the Ambedkar-Periyar Study circle of IIT Madras, then the burning alive of Dalit children in Haryana and finally General VK Singh allegedly referring to them as animals.

The Bharatiya Janata Party's victory in the Lok Sabha elections of 2014 has ushered in an unprecedented attack on India's democracy and injected new elements of intolerance and authoritarianism into the lives of people living in the country. Martin Luther King Jr. once said: 'Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter'. The question is: will the Diaspora continue its long-held silence!

(The author is a former Chief Technology Officer at the United Nations and Vice-Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, USA)

Ambassador Asoke Mukerji awarded honorary Doctor of Civil Laws degree

NEW DELHI /LONDON/ NEW YORK (TIP): The University of East Anglia in the UK conferred on Ambassador Asoke Mukerji (he was Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations a few years ago) an honorary Doctor of Civil Laws degree for his contribution to diplomacy, more than two years after his retirement from the Foreign Service.

The last time they had given an honorary DCL to another Indian was in 2012 to Dr M.S. Swaminathan (the "father of India's Green Revolution") for his contributions to science. Since it was established 55 years ago, the University has moved into the top 200 universities of the world, and the top 15 of the UK. It has produced two Nobel Laureates from its alumni - the 2017 Nobel Laureate in Literature Sir Kazuo Ishiguro and the 2001 Nobel Laureate in Medicine Sir Paul Nurse.

In his Acceptance Speech on this occasion, addressing the students graduating on the same day, Ambassador Mukerji offered them the vision of Rabindranath Tagore from more than a century ago to confront the turbulence currently being witnessed in international affairs. This poem is from Tagore's Gitanjali, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913:

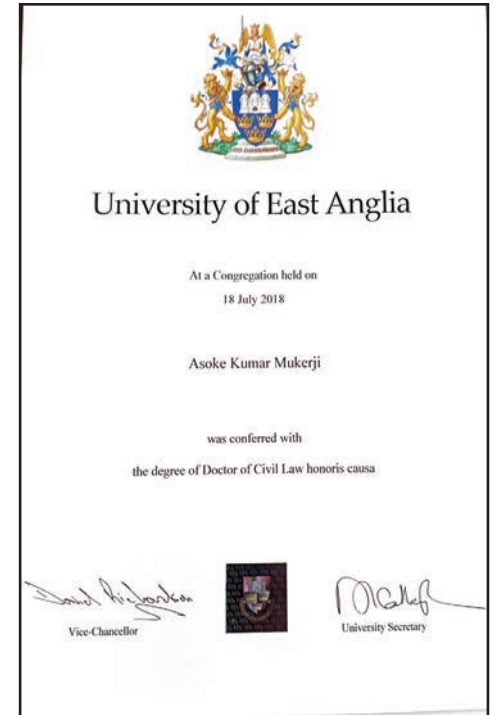
*"Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,
where knowledge is free.*



Ambassador Asoke Mukerji (seated second from left)

*Where the world has not been broken up into
fragments by narrow domestic walls.
Where words come out from the depth of
truth,
where tireless striving stretches its arms*

*toward perfection.
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost
its way
into the dreary desert sand of dead habit.
Where the mind is led forward by thee*



Citation

*into ever widening thought and action.
Into that heaven of freedom, my father;
let my country awake!"*

Congresswoman Grace Meng Praises India as a Great Democracy

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Consul General read out Indian President's address to the nation and offered his congratulations to the gathering on the historic day. He spoke briefly about the achievements India has made in its 71-year journey as a democratic nation.

Congresswoman Grace Meng in her brief address, spoke of the greatness of India as a democratic nation and praised the contribution of the Indian American community in "so many ways".

Anupam Kher spoke feelingly about India, emphasizing the opportunities the country offers to all to grow. Speeches were followed by a cultural presentation, which included a Kathak presentation.



Consul General extends congratulations on India's 72nd Independence Day



Congresswoman Grace Meng praised India as a great democratic nation



A Kathak presentation

Photos / Jay Mandal-on assignment



Bollywood actor Anupam Kher described India as a country with opportunities



Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin unfurling the Indian National Flag

PERMANENT MISSION OF INDIA CELEBRATES INDEPENDENCE DAY

Ambassador Sysed Akbaruddin hoisted Indian National Flag

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, hoisted the Indian National Flag at the Permanent Mission of India here, August 15 to mark the 72nd Independence Day of India.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador congratulated the gathering on the historic occasion and said that India has been making its presence felt in the comity of nations. He spoke of India's all-round growth, and contribution to United Nations.



Children singing patriotic songs. Ambassador Akbaruddin is seen on extreme left.

Photos / Jay Mandal-on assignment

New York Plans to Cap Uber and Lyft

Taxi drivers welcome the measures,
while ride-hailing firms warn the cap will
lead to reduced service in City

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): New York moved to become the first city in the U.S. to cap ride-hailing services including Uber Technologies Inc. and Lyft Inc., freezing new vehicle licenses for one year while it studies the fallout from the booming industry.

The vote Wednesday, August 8 by the New York City Council could cripple the growth of Uber and Lyft in their biggest U.S. market as both companies are heading toward eventual initial public offerings. The Silicon Valley companies' businesses depend on recruiting as many drivers as they can to drive down fares and cut pickup times.

Council members approved a package of bills after months of campaigning from taxi drivers and others in favor of the legislation and a challenge by the ride-hailing companies urging customers to oppose the bills.

Mayor Bill de Blasio, who has championed the measures and unsuccessfully tried to rein in the services in 2015, said he would sign the legislation. "Our city is directly confronting a crisis that is driving working New Yorkers into poverty and our streets into gridlock," he said.

The ride-hailing firms warned that the cap, which the council approved in a 39-6 vote, would lead to reduced service in the outer boroughs and to higher fares at a time when the city's subway and bus systems are frequently delayed and overcrowded.

"The city's 12-month pause on new vehicle licenses will threaten one of the few reliable transportation options while doing nothing to fix the subways or ease congestion," a spokeswoman for Uber, Danielle Filson, said.

Ms. Filson added: "Uber will do whatever it takes to keep up with growing demand."

Joseph Okpaku, vice president of public policy for Lyft, said: "These sweeping cuts to transportation will bring New Yorkers back to an era of struggling to get a ride, particularly for communities of color and in the outer boroughs."

The vote marks the first big lobbying setback for Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi.

Since joining the company in September from Expedia Group Inc., Mr. Khosrowshahi has scored several wins, including a short reprieve in London after regulators there threatened to effectively shutter Uber. He also helped to soften legislation affecting ride-hail drivers in Brazil.

Uber's fate in New York carries added weight as the company eyes an IPO in the second half of next year. If other cities follow New York's example, it could cast doubt on Uber's ability to maintain its growth, as well as the effectiveness of its lobbying operation. The nine-year-old company, last valued by investors at about \$70 billion, recorded more than \$7 billion in revenue last year but lost \$4.5 billion.

Yes, a D.J. Can Make a Difference!

RICHMOND HILL, NY: Loud music and wild parties are probably what comes to mind when we hear the words disc jockey (DJ). SukhjinderSingh is not one to argue against that, having worked as the DJ in the successful Punjabi Mela concert in New York last May. But try asking South Richmond Hill residents and they will be quick to say that Sukhjinder is not your ordinary DJ. DJ Sukhjinder is more than loud music and wild parties. DJ Sukhjinder is also all heart.

Born in Bholath, a town in Kapurthala district in the state of Punjab, India, DJ Sukhjinder went to the U.S. in 2000 on his own search of the American dream - good job, nice house and car, family, and plenty of money. But the American dream did not come easy to the then 18-year old DJ Sukhjinder. "I did all kinds of jobs. I worked whatever job I could get - in restaurants, construction, you name it. I was earning only \$80 to \$90 a day. Taxi work was not available at that time."

For years, DJ Sukhjinder tirelessly worked multiple jobs, but without losing sight of his goal - having his own business. Then in 2012, DJ Sukhjinder opened his very own CD/DVD store in South Richmond Hill, NY. And his formula for success: Service. As inspired by his personal experience as an unhappy customer. "I needed a new SIM card for my phone. The guy at the store was charging me \$10 to swap SIM cards! When all he needed to do was to pick up the cellphone and change the SIM cards. From there I ventured into the cellphone business as well. And never did I take money for changing a SIM card!"

Since then, DJ Sukhjinder has dedicated himself to helping make things easier for the South Richmond Hill community. To this end, DJ Sukhjinder now offers DJ, photography, videography services and financial services in his CD/DVD store. DJ Sukhjinder processes international money transfers, domestic money orders, and bill payments. For all these, DJ Sukhjinder has partnered exclusively with RIA Money Transfer: "RIA is great! They have competitive fees, best rates, and extra mile service."

DJ Sukhjinder continues, "With RIA's money transfer service, I have yet to hear a customer complaining that money was not received. Instead, customers are happy that loved ones don't have to go out of their villages to get the money. To them RIA is reliable and convenient. And because customers are happy with RIA, I am happy with RIA."

Visit DJ Sukhjinder at his RIA location, 116-01 101st Ave, South Richmond Hill, NY. He is currently offering fee-free bill payments to all new and existing customers.



Entrepreneur, DJ Sukhjinder, makes a difference in South Richmond Hill

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo: US hopes to strengthen ties with Pakistan

WASHINGTON (TIP): The US hopes to further strengthen ties with Pakistan in the years ahead and work with its people and government to advance shared goals of security, stability and prosperity in South Asia, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo has said.

Wishing the people of Pakistan on the country's 72nd independence day Tuesday, Pompeo, in a statement, said for more than seven decades, the relationship between the US and Pakistan has "rested on the strong foundation of close ties between our two peoples".

"In the years ahead, we hope to further strengthen these bonds, as we continue to look for opportunities to work with the people and Government of Pakistan to advance our shared goals of security, stability, and prosperity in South Asia," he said in the statement.

Prime Minister-in-waiting Imran Khan last week said that Pakistan and the US should strengthen their relations based on trust, amidst tensions in bilateral ties over Islamabad's support for terror groups.

The relations between Pakistan and the United States nosedived this January after President Donald Trump accused Islamabad of giving nothing to Washington but "lies and deceit" and providing "safe haven" to terrorists.

The US Congress also passed a bill to slash Pakistan's defence aid to USD 150 million, significantly below the historic level of more than USD one billion per year.

The US Congress also passed a bill to slash Pakistan's defence aid to USD 150 million, significantly below the historic level of more than USD one billion per year. (PTI)

FBI fires Peter Strzok in wake of anti-Trump text messages

WASHINGTON (TIP): Peter Strzok, a longtime FBI agent who was removed from the Russia investigation over anti-Trump text messages, has been fired by the agency, his lawyer said Monday.

The FBI had been reviewing Strzok's employment after the politically charged text messages were discovered last year. President Donald Trump's allies have seized on the texts, saying they show the investigation into possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia is tainted by political bias.

Strzok was fired late Friday by FBI Deputy Director David Bowdich, said his lawyer, Aitan Goelman. He said the 21-year veteran of the FBI was removed because of political pressure and "to punish Special Agent Strzok for political speech protected by the First Amendment."

Goelman also said the FBI had overruled the agency's Office of Professional Responsibility, or OPR, which he said had determined that a 60-day suspension and demotion from supervisory duties was "the appropriate punishment."

In a statement, the FBI said Strzok was subject to the standard FBI review and disciplinary process and defended the decision to overrule the OPR. "The Deputy Director, as the senior career FBI official, has the delegated authority to review and modify any disciplinary findings and/or penalty as deemed necessary in the best interest of the FBI," the statement said. (AP)

Former CIA boss says he won't be scared into silence after Donald Trump slap

Brennan and the others have been critical of the president.

WASHINGTON (TIP): Former CIA Director John Brennan said on Thursday he would not be silenced by Donald Trump, a day after the U.S. president revoked the Obama-era official's security clearance and said the move was directly tied to the ongoing Russia investigation.

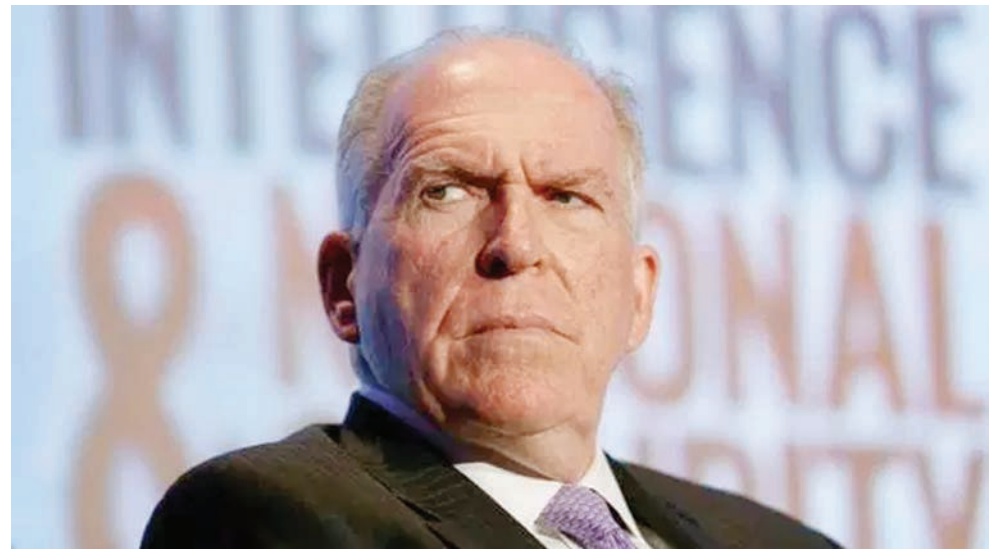
The Republican president said in a statement on Wednesday that he revoked Brennan's authorization for making what he called "unfounded and outrageous allegations" about his administration and was evaluating whether to strip clearances from other former top officials. Brennan and the others have been critical of the president.

Trump later told the Wall Street Journal his decision was connected to the ongoing federal probe into alleged Russian interference in the 2016 election and allegedly collusion by his presidential campaign. "I call it the rigged witch hunt, (it) is a sham," Trump said in an interview with the newspaper on Wednesday. "And these people led it."

"It's something that had to be done," Trump added. The president has denied any collusion. Russia has said it did not interfere, contrary to the U.S. intelligence community's findings. Brennan, who led the Central Intelligence Agency under Democratic President Barack Obama, on Thursday called Trump's denials "hogwash" and vowed not to be silenced.

"The only questions that remain are whether the collusion that took place constituted criminally liable conspiracy, whether obstruction of justice occurred to cover up any collusion or conspiracy, and how many members of 'Trump Incorporated' attempted to defraud the government by laundering and concealing the movement of money into their pockets," Brennan wrote in an op-ed published in the New York Times.

Former U.S. Director of National



Intelligence James Clapper, another critic whose clearance Trump said he might target, cautioned that Brennan was expressing "an informed opinion." It remained up to Special Counsel Robert Mueller, who is leading the probe, to make a final conclusion, Clapper said.

"There needs to be an official determination made about this, and that, I think, can only be done by the Mueller investigation," Clapper told CNN on Thursday. Mueller has indicted or secured guilty pleas from 32 people and three companies, including Russian intelligence officials and former Trump aides.

High-ranking government officials sometimes retain security clearances after leaving office to advise their successors as needed, and some private sector companies can also require them. Former FBI Director James Comey and former National Security Agency director Michael Hayden, among others, could also see their clearances

revoked. Bruce Ohr, a Justice Department official currently in the criminal division, was also on the White House list.

"I don't trust many of those people on that list," Trump told the Journal. "I think that they're very duplicitous. I think they're not good people." Brennan is not facing any formal charges of violating any regulations or laws. He has frequently criticized the president on television news shows and in blistering tweets that Trump on Wednesday called "wild outbursts."

Reactions from Republican lawmakers were mixed, with some critical of Trump while others blamed Brennan for acting inappropriately. Democratic lawmakers blasted the president's move as dangerous. U.S. Representative Joaquin Castro said Mueller should also investigate the issue now that Trump tied it to the Russia probe.

"It's an abuse of power because he's not doing it for a legitimate reason," Castro told CNN. (Reuters)

Senate study faults government care of migrant children

WASHINGTON (TIP): The government has made only incremental improvements to its troubled efforts to care for thousands of migrant children detained entering the US without their parents, perpetuating a problem the Trump administration has aggravated with its "zero tolerance" immigration crackdown, a bipartisan Senate report said Wednesday.

The 52-page study said no federal agency takes responsibility for making sure children aren't abused or used in human trafficking once the government places them with sponsors, who sometimes aren't their parents or close relatives. Immigration judges are ordering the deportation of growing proportions of these children partly because the government does little to ensure they get to court, and officials haven't provided sufficient mental health services for some of them, the report said.

"Major deficiencies persist that leave the children at significant risk for trafficking and abuse and undermine our immigration system," said the report by the Senate Homeland Security Committee's investigations subcommittee. It said a recent attempt at coordination between the departments of Health and Human Services and Homeland Security "does little to offer

hope that federal agencies are working to improve" children's safety, and it called the situation "untenable."

DHS, HHS and the Justice Department said in a joint statement that the report "misses an opportunity to address decades of congressional inaction" that has spurred the influx of unaccompanied children. They faulted the report for "erroneously" saying Trump had worsened the problem and accused lawmakers of ignoring problems like immigrants joining gangs and smuggling and trafficking by criminal organizations.

"We will not be able to fix these long-standing problems" unless Congress addresses those issues, they said.

The report comes as attention has focused on another set of migrant children: more than 2,000 who were separated from their parents as part of President Donald Trump's policy of aggressively prosecuting immigrants entering the country without authorization.

Though most of those children have been reunited with their parents or others, the costs involved "have stretched thin" HHS' "already limited resources," the report said. The authors wrote that when they asked that agency to detail its efforts to check on children placed with sponsors, "HHS told the subcommittee that it can either work to

reunite families or update data _ but not both."

More than 200,000 unaccompanied children have entered the US without legal status over the past six years, and most problems started under President Barack Obama, the report said.

"This is an incredibly difficult issue and it's not a partisan one," said Sen. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, the subcommittee chairman.

The panel's top Democrat, Delaware Sen. Tom Carper, took a more partisan tone, saying, "This administration continues to make an already challenging reality for migrant children even more difficult and more dangerous." When unaccompanied children are apprehended, Homeland Security must quickly transfer them to Health and Human Services, which then tries placing them with parents, relatives or others until a court hearing _ a wait that typically takes 480 days. If a sponsor can't be found, children are held in facilities often run by government contractors. Once they're with sponsors, HHS has trouble tracking them. In figures originally released in April, when officials tried calling 7,635 children late last year who'd been placed sponsors, they were uncertain where about 1 in 5 were. Twenty-eight others had run away. (AP)

US newsrooms to Trump: We're not enemies of the people

The Boston Globe invited newspapers across the country to stand up for the press with editorials today, and several began appearing online a day earlier.

NEW YORK (TIP): The nation's newsrooms are pushing back against President Donald Trump with a coordinated series of newspaper editorials condemning his attacks on "fake news" and suggestion that journalists are the enemy.

The Boston Globe invited newspapers across the country to stand up for the press with editorials today, and several began appearing online a day earlier.

Nearly 350 news organisations have pledged to participate, according to Marjorie Pritchard, op-ed editor at the Globe.

In St Louis, the Post-Dispatch called journalists "the truest of patriots." The Chicago Sun-Times said it believed most Americans know that Trump is talking nonsense.

The Fayetteville, NC Observer said it hoped Trump would stop, "but we're not holding our breath." "Rather, we hope all the president's supporters will recognize what he's doing — manipulating reality to get what he wants," the North Carolina newspaper said.

Some newspapers used history lessons to state their case. The Elizabethtown Advocate in Elizabethtown, Penn., for instance, compared free press in the United States to such rights promised but not delivered in the former Soviet Union. The New York Times added a pitch. "If you haven't already, please subscribe to your local papers," said the Times, whose opinion section also summarised other editorials across the country. "Praise them when you think they've done a good job and criticize them when you think they could do better. We're all in this together." That last sentiment made some journalists skittish.

The Wall Street Journal, which said it was not participating, noted in a column by James Freeman that the Globe's effort ran counter to



the independence that editorial boards claim to seek. Freeman wrote that Trump has the right to free speech as much as his media adversaries.

"While we agree that labelling journalists the 'enemy of the American people' and journalism 'fake news' is not only damaging to our industry but destructive to our democracy, a coordinated response from independent — dare we say 'mainstream' — news organisations feeds a narrative that we're somehow aligned against this Republican president," the Baltimore Sun wrote.

Still, the Sun supported the effort and also noted the deaths of five Capital Gazette staff members at the hands of a gunman in nearby Annapolis, Maryland.

The Radio Television Digital News Association, which represents more than 1,200 broadcasters and websites, is also asking its members to point out that journalists are

friends and neighbours doing important work holding government accountable.

"I want to make sure that it is positive," said Dan Shelley, the group's executive director. "We're shooting ourselves in the foot if we make this about attacking the president or attacking his supporters."

It remains unclear how much sway the effort will have. Newspaper editorial boards overwhelmingly opposed Trump's election in 2016.

Polls show Republicans have grown more negative toward the news media in recent years: Pew Research Center said 85 per cent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents said in June 2017 that the news media has a negative effect on the country, up from 68 per cent in 2010.

Still, newsrooms are trying to convince them otherwise. "We are not the enemy," declared the Mercury News in San Jose, California. (AP)

NASA administrator supports Trump 'space force' proposal

NEW ORLEANS (TIP): NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine expressed full support Monday for President Donald Trump's proposed military "Space Force" but added that it will have a role separate from NASA. Bridenstine said in New Orleans that NASA's responsibilities involve science, space exploration and technology development. As for defense and national security, he told reporters in New Orleans: "We want to be an agency that maintains its independence from those capabilities."

Bridenstine was touring the Michoud Assembly Center, where workers are putting together major parts of systems that are planned to return Americans to the moon and, eventually, take them to Mars. In a towering building, Boeing workers are building parts of the 322-foot (98-meter) rocket known as the Space Launch System. Lockheed Martin workers are building the spacecraft called Orion.

Bridenstine, a former Republican congressman, was nominated by Trump to head NASA last year and confirmed by the Senate in April. He touched on the work at Michoud and other NASA concerns while standing next to a massive liquid hydrogen tank — a test version of one that eventually will be part of the SLS rocket.

SPACE FORCE: Bridenstine was among the officials with Trump in June when he called for creation of a new military branch known as the Space Force. He said it's needed because the nation's space assets — including satellite technology and global positioning systems — are vital to numerous interests and industries, including communications, navigation, food and energy production, banking and climate.

"If we lose GPS, we lose banking in the United States of America. There's no milk in the grocery store in a matter of three days," he said. The space force plan requires congressional approval. Military leaders and experts have questioned the wisdom of launching an expensive, bureaucratic new service branch.

Bridenstine spoke enthusiastically about the much-delayed James Webb Space Telescope, what is now a nearly \$10 billion project. That next-generation technology is envisioned as the successor to the Hubble Space Telescope, despite an announcement in June — for the third time in less than a year — of a lengthy postponement.

Among the latest problems: In a vibration test of the telescope earlier this year in California by prime contractor Northrop Grumman, dozens of loose fasteners — some 70 pieces in all — came off. In another mishap, the wrong solvent was used to clean spacecraft propulsion valves, leading to a need for repair or replacement.

Webb, which officials now hope to launch in 2021, is meant to peer farther into space and deeper into time than ever before. It will operate from a point 1 million miles (1.6 million kilometers) from Earth.

Bridenstine gave a lengthy explanation of the infrared telescope's design and mission and added: "We are, in fact, going to see back to the very beginning of the universe, what we call cosmic dawn."

He stopped short of saying there would be financial penalties for Northrop Grumman to cover NASA's burgeoning costs on the project but said the contractor is being held accountable.

SLS AND ORION: Bridenstine praised workers at Michoud for their work on the Orion spacecraft and the SLS rocket that will launch it into space, saying their efforts are helping the U.S. get ahead and stay ahead of other nations in space. (AP)

Around 300 priests sexually abused over 1000 children since the 1940s, says US grand jury report

HARRISBURG (TIP): A priest raped a 7-year-old girl while he was visiting her in the hospital after she'd had her tonsils removed.

Another priest forced a 9-year-old boy into having oral sex, then rinsed out the boy's mouth with holy water. One boy was forced to say confession to the priest who sexually abused him.

Those children are among the victims of roughly 300 Roman Catholic priests in Pennsylvania who molested more than 1,000 children — and possibly many more — since the 1940s, according to a sweeping state grand jury report released Tuesday that accused senior church officials, including a man who is now the archbishop of Washington, D.C., of systematically covering up complaints.

The "real number" of abused children and abusive priests might be higher since some secret church records were lost and some victims never came forward, the grand jury said.

While the grand jury said dioceses have established internal processes and seem to refer complaints to law enforcement more promptly, it suggested that important changes are lacking.

"Despite some institutional reform, individual leaders of the church have largely escaped public accountability," the grand jury

wrote in the roughly 900-page report. "Priests were raping little boys and girls, and the men of God who were responsible for them not only did nothing; they hid it all."

Top church officials have mostly been protected and many, including some named in the report, have been promoted, the grand jury said, concluding that "it is too early to close the book on the Catholic Church sex scandal."

In nearly every case, prosecutors found that the statute of limitations has run out, meaning that criminal charges cannot be filed.

More than 100 of the priests are dead. Many others are retired or have been dismissed from the priesthood or put on leave. Authorities charged just two, including a priest who has since pleaded guilty. Attorney General Josh Shapiro said the investigation is ongoing.

The investigation of six of Pennsylvania's eight dioceses — Allentown, Erie, Greensburg, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh and Scranton — is the most extensive investigation of Catholic clergy abuse by any state, according to victim advocates. The dioceses represent about 1.7 million Catholics.

Until now, there have been just nine investigations by a prosecutor or grand jury

of a Catholic diocese or archdiocese in the United States, according to the Massachusetts-based research and advocacy organization, BishopAccountability.org.

The Philadelphia archdiocese and the Johnstown-Altoona diocese were not included in the investigation because they have been the subject of three previous scathing grand jury investigations.

The grand jury heard from dozens of witnesses and reviewed more than a half-million pages of internal diocesan documents, including reports by bishops to Vatican officials disclosing the details of abusive priests that they had not made public or reported to law enforcement.

The grand jury concluded that a succession of Catholic bishops and other diocesan leaders tried to shield the church from bad publicity and financial liability.

The report is still the subject of an ongoing legal battle, with redactions shielding the identities of some current and former clergy named in the report while the state Supreme Court weighs their arguments that its wrongful accusations against them violates their constitutional rights. It also is expected to spark another fight by victim advocates to win changes in state law that lawmakers have resisted. (AP)

Afghanistan: At least 48 killed, 67 injured in suicide blast in Kabul

KABUL (TIP): The death toll from a suicide blast at an educational centre in a mainly Shi'ite area of the Afghan capital on Wednesday reached 48, with another 67 wounded, the health ministry said. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the blast, which came after several weeks of relative calm in Kabul but previous attacks on Shi'ite targets in the area have been claimed by Islamic State.

The attack occurred as the government was facing heavy pressure over a Taliban attack on the central city of Ghazni that led to five days of intense fighting during which hundreds of civilians and members of the security forces were killed.

The attack on Ghazni, one of the biggest seen for years in Afghanistan, fuelled criticism that President Ashraf Ghani's Western-backed government was incapable of protecting the country.

With parliamentary elections due on Oct. 20, the government had been bracing for more attacks in Kabul and other cities, even while hopes of peace talks with the Taliban had been fuelled by a three day truce during the Eid al-Fitr holiday in June. (Reuters)

Sri Lanka's top cop asks tourist police to learn Hindi, Chinese

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka's Inspector General of Police Pujith Jayasundera has directed the country's tourist police personnel to learn international languages including Hindi, Chinese and French as the tourism sector is set to be the biggest forex earner for the island nation.

With 206,337 tourists visiting Sri Lanka during the first six months of 2018, India continues to be the leading contributor to the country's inbound tourism market.

At 136,294, the next highest number of arrivals were from China, the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) said. We have to understand the important role played by the tourism sector in the country's economy. In a few years, it is expected to become the largest foreign exchange earner for the country. Therefore, ensuring (the) safety of the foreigners visiting Sri Lanka will be a top priority for the Police force, Jayasundera said.

Officers of the Tourist Police Division should pay special attention to language training. In addition to English, they should also learn widely used international languages such as Chinese, Hindi, and French, he added.

The police chief further said 25 new Tourist Police stations would be established across the country to ensure the safety of tourists. (PTI)

Inside Bangladesh prime minister's war on drugs

Dhaka (TIP): Bangladesh police arrested Riazul Islam as he was walking home from his in-laws' house. At 3:15 a.m., he was shot dead in a sandy field beside a set of railroad tracks north of Dhaka. Police say he was killed in a gunfight with other drug dealers, and they recovered 20 kg of marijuana from the site. His parents say the officers extorted money from them and then killed him. "I knew my son was in police custody. All of a sudden my son was dead. I couldn't believe it. The police took the money and they still killed him," said his mother, Rina Begum. (Reuters)

Imran Khan Faces Key Vote to Win Pakistan's Prime Minister Post

Lawmakers in Pakistan's National Assembly to vote on August 17
Khan's PTI party has formed a coalition majority in parliament

LAHORE (TIP): Imran Khan faces a crucial vote on Friday to secure Pakistan's premiership after his Movement for Justice party pulled together a coalition majority since winning the most seats at last month's national elections.

Khan will likely win the prime ministerial post after his choice for the lower house's speaker was elected on Wednesday. However, the 65-year-old former cricket star may face a united opposition led by the previous incumbent Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Pakistan Peoples Party -- both of which now make up the second and third largest parties respectively and claimed rigging and military manipulation at the July 25 ballot. Khan pledged to investigate the charges and the army has consistently denied the allegations.

With Pakistan's finances rapidly deteriorating and as the U.S. continues to pressure the nuclear-armed nation over its alleged support for insurgent groups, Khan will be hoping for a smooth passage into office. It would be only the second successful, consecutive transfer of power between civilian governments in a country that has been ruled directly by the military for almost half its 71-year existence.

After galvanizing voters, particularly Pakistan's large young electorate, Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has made promises to both expand social spending, while attempting to fix the economy and rebuild the nation's depleted finances. Despite forming a majority with the support of independents and several smaller parties, Khan's ability to govern and push through reforms will continue to be tested.

'Horse-Trading'

"Even within the PTI-led government, extensive horse-trading is likely needed to get policies passed," Fitch Solutions said in a report last week. "We are skeptical regarding the new government's ability to fulfill its campaign promises given its weak margin of



victory and resource constraints."

Khan's party has already flagged that urgency is needed to deal with Pakistan's dwindling reserves, which have dropped at the fastest pace in Asia this year to \$10.4 billion. The nation's current-account deficit has widened by 42 percent to \$18 billion in the year through June.

Asad Umar, a senior PTI lawmaker and the incoming finance minister, said in an interview this month that Pakistan may need more than \$12 billion to plug the finance gap and a decision on where to source funds needs to be made by September at the latest.

Many investors, analysts and politicians expect most or part of that will come from an International Monetary Fund bailout. With Pakistan a key country along its Belt and Road trade route, China has also been providing the

South Asian nation with billions of dollars in stop-gap loans this year.

Those vast debts to Beijing have prompted worries from U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who said last month he would be watching to see if Khan's new government uses IMF funds to pay off the opaque Chinese loans. Umar said he would bring more transparency to the more than \$60 billion Belt and Road infrastructure projects in Pakistan.

During his victory speech on July 26, Khan called for closer ties with China and said he wanted a more "mutually beneficial" relationship with Washington. His comment comes after President Donald Trump cut Pakistan's military aid and a U.S. push saw the country added to a global anti-money laundering and terror financing agency in June. (PTI)

Malaysian court to rule on women accused of killing Kim Jong Nam

The two young Southeast Asian women are the only suspects in custody and face the death penalty if convicted.

MALAYSIA (TIP): Two Southeast Asian women on trial for the brazen assassination of the North Korean leader's half brother arrived at a Malaysian court Thursday to hear a judge's decision on whether to call them to enter their defense or acquit them of murder.

A defense phase of the trial could take several more months. If they are acquitted, they may not be freed right away as prosecutors could appeal as well as push forward with separate charges for overstaying their visas.

Indonesia's Siti Aisyah, 25, and Vietnam's Doan Thi Huong, 29, are accused of smearing VX nerve agent on Kim Jong Nam's face in an airport terminal in Kuala Lumpur on Feb. 13, 2017. The women have said they thought they were taking part in a prank for a hidden-camera show.

During the six-month trial, prosecutors have laid out a murder plot involving four suspected North Korean government agents who recruited and trained the two women and provided them with the VX used to kill Kim. All four fled the country the same morning Kim was killed.

The two young Southeast Asian women are the only suspects in custody and face the death penalty if convicted.

Airport security footage shown in court captured the moment of the attack and prosecutors said linked the women to the other suspects. Shortly after Kim arrived at the airport, Huong was seen approaching him, clasping her hands on his face from behind and then fleeing. Another blurred figure was also seen running away from Kim and a police investigator testified that it was

Aisyah. Kim died within two hours of the attack.

Lawyers for the two women have said their clients were pawns in a political assassination with clear links to the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. They say the prosecution failed to show the two women had any intention to kill -- key to establishing the women are guilty of murder.

The real culprits, the defense argues, are the four North Korean suspects. Kim, the eldest son in the family that has ruled North Korea since its founding, had been living abroad for years after falling out of favor. It is thought he could have been seen as a threat to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's rule.

Malaysian officials have never officially accused North Korea and have made it clear they don't want the trial politicized. (AP)

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KERALA FLOODS DEATH TOLL CROSSES 100



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (TIP): More than 40 people were swept away on August 16 by rising waters as the worst flood in Kerala in nearly a century, which has claimed more than 100 lives, threatened to sink neighbouring other southern Indian states, where dams neared maximum capacity and rivers in spate.

The airport in Kochi, the state's largest, was declared shut till August 26 and Southern Railway and Kochi Metro suspended their operations. More than 150,000 people jostled for space in relief camps as their houses collapsed under heavy rainfall or were cut off by surging waters that have damaged more than 10,000 kilometres of roads.

"Kochi Airport operations is temporarily suspended up to 2 pm on August 26 due to very high flood situation and key essential facilities like runway, taxiway and apron are under submerged condition," an airport statement said.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan warned of a grimmer situation as more rain has been forecast till Saturday. "The Centre has sanctioned more men and material," Vijayan said after a conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other central leaders.

Thursday saw 10 more helicopters joining the existing fleet in the massive rescue operation while 40 additional teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and a team of marine commandos also arrived. Thirty three of the state's 39 dams have opened their sluice gates to discharge water, adding to the surge in already overflowing rivers.

Pathanamthitta district in central Kerala continued to be the worst affected in the last 24 hours as thousands of people are trapped in their homes in the towns of Ranni, Aranmula and Kozhencherry.

"This sort of a situation has never been faced by the state. We are doing all that is humanly possible and rescue efforts are going on," Vijayan added.

Visuals showed hundreds of people perched on rooftops, as attempts to airlift some marooned families failed. The worst flood in the state since 1924 has wrecked havoc across the coastal state, with damages estimated to be more than Rs 8,000 crore.

Source: HT

Technology to send astronauts to space already developed: ISRO on Gaganyaan



NEW DELHI (TIP): Technologies that will help in sending an Indian astronaut to space — like human crew module and environment control and life support system — have already been developed, ISRO chairman K Sivan said on Thursday.

Prior to the actual launch by 2022, the Indian Space Research Organisation will have two unmanned missions and spacecraft will be fired using Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-III, Sivan said.

"We have already developed the technology like human crew module, environment control and life support system. Before undertaking the launch, we will have two unmanned missions. We will use GLSV Mark-III for this project," Sivan told PTI.

Source: PTI

Capable of holding LS polls, 4 state elections together in Dec: CEC

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Election Commission was capable of holding the Lok Sabha elections and polls to four state assemblies together in December if the parliamentary elections are advanced, Chief Election Commissioner O P Rawat said on August 15.

His comments came when asked whether the EC was ready if the LS elections are held in December along with Assembly polls in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram and Rajasthan.

"Why not. There would not be any problem," he told PTI.

There have been speculations in some circles that the Lok Sabha elections, scheduled for April-May 2019 may be advanced to November-December 2018 so that they can be held simultaneously with Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram and Rajasthan.

While the term of the Mizoram Assembly will end on December 15, the terms of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan assemblies would end on January 5, 2019, January 7 and January 20, 2019, respectively.

Asked whether the required electronic voting machines (EVMs) and paper trail machines would be ready if the LS polls are held in December along with those of four assemblies, the CEC said while all the required EVMs would be in place by September end, paper trail machines would come in November end.

The CEC explained that out of 17.5 lakh paper trail machines, 16 lakh would be in place before November.

The remaining 1.5 lakh paper trail or voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) machines would be delivered by the end of November.

"As you had sought to know, if LS elections are held in December, then the first level check (FLC) of the 1.5 lakh VVPATs (which EC would get in November end) would be difficult ... then some critical small gaps would be there,"



Chief Election Commissioner O P Rawat

he said. While the EC needs EVMs and VVPATs for 10 lakh polling stations for the LS polls, it needs the two devices for two lakh polling stations in four states where Assembly elections would be due in December-January.

"There would be a little constraint on the reserves. Instead of 135 per cent (reserves), will have to go for 130 per cent, if the situation arises," Rawat said about VVPATs.

Voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) or paper trail machine is a device which dispenses a slip with the symbol of the party for which a person has voted for. The slip appears on a small

window for seven seconds and then drops in a box. But the voter cannot take it home.

The VVPAT are used in all polling stations. But as of now, results of EVMs and VVPATs are matched in one polling station per constituency. There have been demands to increase the number of polling stations where EVM and VVPAT results are matched to dispel fears about electronic voting machines being 'hacked' to favour a particular political party.

Rawat said there have been delays in the delivery of paper trail machines as the Technical Experts Committee appointed by it analyses the technology stabilisation issues in the initial batches and incorporates essential design improvements.

"This ensures we don't face the problems later," he said.

While all required EVMs -- 13.95 lakh ballot units and 9.3 lakh control units -- will be delivered by September 30, 17.15 lakh VVPATs will also be delivered well before the end of November, he added.

Over 11 per cent of the 10,300 VVPAT machines across 10 states had developed faults and had to be replaced during the May 28 bypolls.

Source: PTI

Rahul Gandhi to visit Germany, London next week

NEW DELHI (TIP): Congress president Rahul Gandhi will be visiting Germany and London next week to meet businessmen, politicians, academics and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), it was announced on August 16.

"Because of the high demand from NRIs, and political, business, academia, intellectuals and media in EU and UK, President of the Indian National Congress Mr Rahul Gandhi will be visiting Germany on August 22 and 23 and London on August 24 and 25," US-based engineer and innovator, Sam Pitroda, said in a tweet.

"Rahul Gandhi will give a series of talks at large public events, meet political and business leaders and also interact with intellectuals, academics, students and media.

"Congress president Rahul Gandhi started similar tours about a year ago to



interact with global communities, NRIs and Indian Overseas Congress to understand, explore and promote India's interests and aspirations. He first visited the US, then Middle East, Singapore and Malaysia," he said.

Pitroda was advisor to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and before

him to Rajiv Gandhi for almost a decade in the 1980s. He was the founding chairman of India's Telecom Commission, now known as Department of Telecommunications.

He was the key figure in the establishment of Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) in 1984, founded to develop telecommunication technologies in the country.

"This tour of Rahul Gandhi to Germany and the UK comes at a time when events in Turkey and free fall of Lira are getting global attention on the type and style of leadership and its impact on social, political and economic fabric of a country," he said, adding that people abroad are interested in listening to Gandhi on the issue of economy, employment, demonetisation and security.

Source: IANS

Can't deny quota in promotions to creamy layer, govt tells top court

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Centre on Thursday told the Supreme Court that the creamy layer concept cannot be applied to deny benefits of quota in promotions to government employees of SC/ST community as the stigma of caste and backwardness is still attached to them.

Attorney General KK Venugopal told a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra that there is no judgment which says that affluent people of the SC/ST community can be denied quota benefits by applying creamy layer concept.

Venugopal was responding to a question whether the creamy layer concept can be applied to exclude persons who have come up to ensure that the backward among the SC/ST communities can reap the benefits of quota.

The top law officer said that even if some people of the community have come up, the stigma of caste and backwardness is still attached to them.

He also said that the question of excluding certain class of SC/ST has to be decided by the President and the Parliament and this exercise is not open to judiciary.

"They have to marry from their own caste. Even a well-off person of SC/ST



community cannot marry from a higher caste. The fact that some persons have become affluent does not take away the imprint of caste and backwardness."

The top law officer termed the discriminatory caste system as a misfortune of the country.

Advancing of arguments is still continuing.

The bench, also comprises justices Kurian Joseph, R F Nariman, Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Indu Malhotra.

Earlier on August 3, the top court had asked the Centre as to why states have not come forward with any quantifiable data to decide the inadequacy of representation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in government services even 12 years after its verdict on the 'creamy layer'.

The five-judge Constitution bench is

examining whether its 12-year-old verdict that had dealt with the issue of 'creamy layer' for reservations to SC and ST categories in government job promotions needs to be re-visited by a seven-judge bench.

The top court had on July 11 refused to pass any interim order against its 2006 verdict and said that a five-judge bench would first see whether it needs to be examined by a seven-judge bench or not.

The M Nagaraj verdict of 2006 had held that the 'creamy layer' concept cannot be applied to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for promotions in government jobs, like two earlier verdicts of 1992 Indra Sawhney and others versus Union of India (popularly called Mandal Commission verdict) and 2005 E V Chinniah versus State of Andhra Pradesh which had dealt with creamy layer in Other Backward Classes category.

It had reiterated that the ceiling-limit of 50 per cent, the concept of the creamy layer and the compelling reasons like backwardness, inadequacy of representation and overall administrative efficiency were all constitutional requirements, without which the structure of equality of opportunity in Article 16 would collapse.

Source: PTI

INDIA'S FIRST PENGUIN BORN IN MUMBAI ON I-DAY



MUMBAI (TIP): Nature lovers were thrilled as India's first Humboldt Penguin chick was hatched at Mumbai Zoo, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) announced on Aug 16.

"The Humboldt Penguin chick hatched at 8.02 p.m. on August 15. It appeared to be active and the mother Flipper was trying to feed it too," confirmed the Zoo Director in-charge Sanjay Tripathi.

After mating in captivity, the penguin pair "Mr Molt" and "Flipper", finally delivered an egg in July at the Veer Jijabai Bhonsale Udyan, or Mumbai Zoo.

While Molt is the youngest male, Flipper is the oldest female in the zoo's penguin colony that attracts a large number of excited visitors daily.

As an anxious team of zoo caretakers, vets and others kept vigil for nearly 40 days, the egg was finally hatched late on Wednesday and the small fluffy chick struggled out to freedom in the nest inside the special chilled enclosure where all the penguins have been kept.

The special enclosure is spread across 1,700 sqft where an average temperature of 16-18 degrees is maintained, the water quality is regularly tracked and the penguins feed on fish, including Indian Mackerels.

Eight Humboldt Penguins - later named as Dory, Donald, Daisy, Popeye, Olive, Bubble, Flipper and Molt - were imported here from a South Korea zoo on July 26, 2016.

However, one female, Dory could not survive and died on October 23 following a bacterial infection during the period of acclimatisation before they went on public display, and have been the top attraction of the Mumbai zoo.

SHAURYA CHAKRA FOR MAJOR ADITYA, AURANGZEB

NEW DELHI (TIP): Major Aditya Kumar who fired on a stone-throwing mob and rifleman Aurangzeb who was abducted and killed by terrorists, both in Jammu and Kashmir, were selected for the Shaurya Chakra on the eve of Independence Day. Sepoy Vrahma Pal Singh was selected for the Kirti Chakra posthumously for his act of bravery in a counter-insurgency operation.

In addition, all six women officers, who completed a global circumnavigation trip on sailing vessel INSV Tarini early this year, have been selected for Nao Sena medals (Gallantry).

The President has approved 131 gallantry awards to armed forces personnel and members of paramilitary forces, which include one Kirti Chakra, 20 Shaurya Chakras, 96 Sena Medals (Gallantry), 11 Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry) and three Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry).

Major Kumar from 10 Garhwal Rifles and his unit fired at the mob in Shopian on January 27 that left three people dead. Following this, the police registered a case against his unit under the Ranbir Penal Code. Later, his father, also an Army officer, filed a counter petition in the Supreme Court.

Abducted and killed

Rifleman Aurangzeb, a resident of Poonch, was abducted from the taxi he was travelling in near Kalampora village and his body was recovered later with multiple gunshot wounds. He was in 4 Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry and posted to 44 Rashtriya Rifles. He was part of the team that killed terrorist Sameer Tiger.

The six-member sailing team, during its eight-month voyage, covered 21,600 nautical miles, crossed the equator twice and visited five countries.

"The entire voyage was completed using sails, regularly negotiating 10-meter waves and over 100 kmph winds with the temperatures varying between 4 and 40 degree Celsius as the vessel traversed through different parts of the world," reads the citation of the team skipper Lt. Cdr. Joshi.

Source: The Hindu

'Understand India' programme to be launched in China To 'demistify' India

BEIJING (TIP): India plans to launch an 'Understanding India' programme in China to "demystify" the country and create a better understanding of it.

Despite being immediate neighbours, India and China lack people-to-people contact and cultural exchange.

Indian Council of Cultural Relations President Vinay Sahasrabudhe, who was in Beijing to attend the World Congress of Philosophy, said that by

watching Bollywood and reading websites one can know India only superficially. "India cannot be understood by simply reading books and visiting websites. India is an experience," Sahasrabudhe said.

"In most big countries like China, we are trying to have some kind of 'Understanding India' programme which will be a structural programme."

The Rajya Sabha lawmaker said that

India was a "riddle" to the people outside because of its diversity and coexistence of masses despite the economic disparity in the country.

"We would like to demystify the idea of India through this programme," Sahasrabudhe added.

He also said the Indian cultural centres across the world that don't have any name will be named after Indian monk Swami Vivekananda.

Amarinder seeks Facebook, Google support to fight Punjab's drug menace

CHANDIGARH (TIP): Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh has sought technical support from Facebook and Google to combat the drug menace prevalent among the youth of the state.

In his letters addressed to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Google's Sundar Pichai, Singh said the Internet is ripe with content about finding newer ways of drug addiction. He sought their help in limiting the spread of those materials.

"I will knock on every door and leave no stone unturned to ensure we eliminate drugs from Punjab. I wrote to @google CEO @sundarpichai and @facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg to extend and provide technology support in fighting this menace. We look forward to their help," Singh said in a tweet.

In his letter to Zuckerberg, he said, "We realize that technology now forms a



larger part of the youth's lives and they are deeply influenced by what they see, hear and consume."

"I firmly believe that platforms such as yours can play a big role in combating this menace. I am writing to you to seek your help and support in making Punjab drug-free through the use of the unique products and services you have built. I look forward to getting some ideas on

what you can do and how can we work together," he said.

To Pichai, Chief Minister Singh said, "I write to you at a critical juncture of my state's journey to combat the menace of drugs. I am seeking your partnership in developing technology based strategies to make Punjab drug-free in next five years."

"Technology forms the backbone of information and education today. Punjab's youth have easy access to platforms such as yours and I am seeking your assistance in helping us develop ways in which we can make Punjab drug-free. I look forward to hearing from you," he said.

Singh has also pointed out that Punjab government had formed a three-pronged strategy based on enforcement, de-addiction and prevention to combat drug menace.

Source: PTI

Indian-origin man held for selling cocaine & possessing stolen bikes in US



NEW YORK (TIP): An Indian-origin man in the US has been booked for unlawfully selling cocaine and possessing stolen bikes worth thousands of dollars, officials said.

Randall Singh, 32, of Long Island has been charged with criminal possession of a controlled substance and third-degree criminal possession of stolen property.

He allegedly sold bikes worth roughly USD 60,000 and 162 grams of cocaine. If convicted, he faces between eight and 20 years in prison.

Singh is presently awaiting arraignment in Queens Criminal Court on two complaints.

Queens District Attorney Richard Brown said that according to one of the complaints, between June 2017 and April 2018, Singh arranged meetings in Queens with a buyer to sell various stolen motorcycles as well as cocaine. However, it was unknown to him that the buyer was an undercover detective.

During these meetings, money was exchanged for drugs and stolen bikes.

Singh is alleged to have sold a variety of stolen motorcycles and none of the motorcycles were sold with an ignition key and in many instances the ignitions had been manipulated either with a screwdriver or rewired to enable the engines to start.

On one occasion, Singh had met with a buyer and exchanged a bag of cocaine for cash. Singh then again allegedly sold to the same buyer, a bag of cocaine for USD 4,000 as well as a stolen Honda motorcycle for USD 2700. "As a result of a long-term investigation... this individual is now out of business and facing lengthy term of incarceration for these alleged crimes. This case should serve as a warning to drug dealers and anyone else who barter in stolen goods that law enforcement is coming for you," Brown said.

Indians Abroad Celebrate Independence Day with traditional fervor

NEW YORK (TIP): Thousands of Indians across the world, August 15, proudly celebrated India's 72nd Independence Day with the tricolor fluttering high and the national anthem reverberating at Indian missions abroad. Indians in the US, China, Pakistan, Australia, Singapore and many other countries marked the day with hoisting of the national flag and singing of patriotic songs. Independence Day was celebrated with joy, fervor and special resonance at the High Commission of India in the Pakistani capital Islamabad. The occasion was marked by High Commissioner Ajay Biserial hoisting the national flag, singing of the National Anthem, a cultural program, and tea.

Read full story on
www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian American singer Subhi to perform at John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington Center on August 19

CHICAGO (TIP): Indian American singer and songwriter Subhi will perform at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC, on August 19.

The Chicago-based singer released her debut Hindi pop jazz album *Shaitaan Dil* last fall. The Millennium Stage performance is part of the musician's four-city Northeastern tour, which includes stops in Long Island, NY; New York City and Baltimore.

"I am thrilled to perform at Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage," said Subhi, whose full name is Subhi Khanna Rangnekar, but uses only the first name in her artistic life. "This will be my first performance there. I will be performing some of my original compositions from my debut album. I will also be doing a few classic Bollywood jazz covers."

Subhi's upcoming performances and venues

August 16, 2018
Mint Lounge, Long Island, NY

August 17, 2018
Rockwood Music Hall, Stage 2, New York City

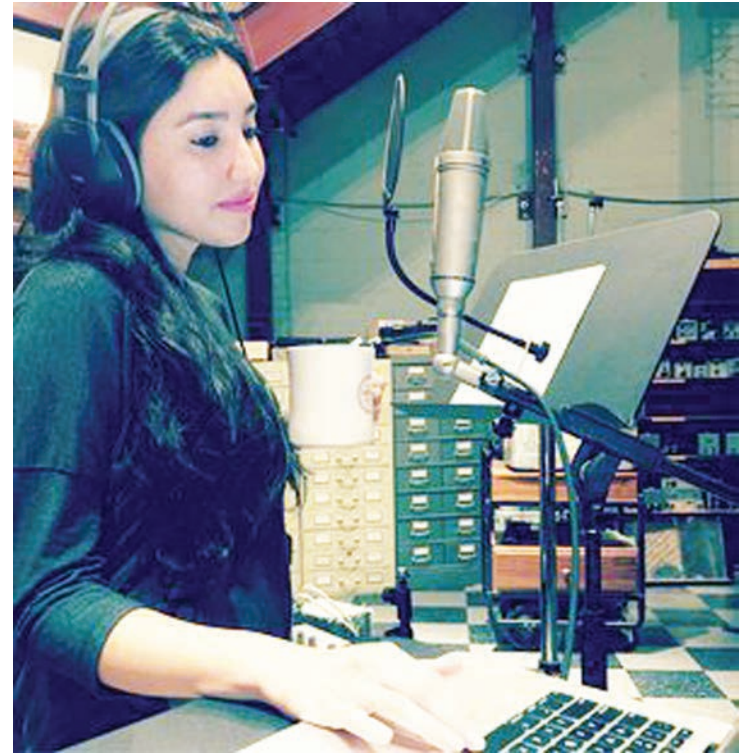
August 18, 2018
An Die Musik, Baltimore

August 19, 2018
Kennedy Center: Millennium Stage, Washington, DC

Subhi moved to New York from Delhi when she was 15. Her first musical venture was working as a music assistant to Indian American filmmaker Mira Nair, on *Monsoon Wedding: Musical*, a Broadway show.

After working as a songwriter, lyricist and vocalist for an independent feature film, in June 2013, she returned to India - this time to Mumbai - to compose music for the Bollywood film *Take it Easy*.

Subhi and the New York-based reggae singer StyleBhai also composed the promo song of the film *Kaun Kitne Paane Mein*, directed



Subhi to perform at JFK Center in Washington

by Nila Madhab Pandav, a national award-winning filmmaker.

Subhi has a master's degree in film and media studies from The New School in New York.

Indian-Origin British Billionaire Plans Clean Energy Project in Australia



CANBERRA (TIP): India-origin British billionaire has launched a \$1 billion, one-gigawatt renewable energy plan based in South Australia's mid-north that he says will lead the country's industry transition to more competitive power.

Sanjeev Gupta's energy company Simec Zen and its Cultana Solar Farm released the details on August 16. It said that "In the first of a number of projects slated for the upper Spencer Gulf region, will include a 120MW lithium-ion

battery bigger than the 100MW battery built by Elon Musk's Tesla in South Australia in 2017."

The project will produce 280 megawatts of power and feature 780,000 solar panels, generating enough electricity for 96,000 homes. The Cultana Solar Farm will begin construction in early 2019, employing 350 workers during construction, reports stated.

"Today's event is symbolic of our desire to develop and invest in new-generation energy assets that will bring down Australia's electricity prices to competitive levels again," Mr Gupta said on Wednesday, August 16.

"Solar will be the main base of our ambitions in Australia but we will have some wind and we have lots of storage solutions."

When completed, Mr Gupta's battery will surpass the battery built by Tesla as the largest in the world, reports said.

However, the Gupta Family Group (GFG) Alliance has no intention to stop there with plans for pumped hydro projects and expanded solar farms being developed for South Australia.

"All of these projects will not only improve reliability and greatly reduce the cost of electricity in our own operations, they will also provide competitive sources of power for other industrial and commercial users, while at the same time playing a key role in the market's transition towards renewables," he said.

"We have a strong conviction that traditional carbon-intensive generation sources do not have a long-term future as the predominant source of power in Australia and globally."

"We believe the world is undergoing a momentous transition to renewable power as the cost of renewables drops dramatically and quickly," he added.

Indian-Origin Restaurateur Racially Abused in Kentucky



Kentucky community supports Sikh diner owner after customer's racist comments

NEW YORK (TIP): An Indian-origin restaurateur in the US was racially targeted by a customer who referred to him and his family as "a tribe from India". He was further told that he "probably just funded Al-Qaeda" by eating at the hotel, a media report stated.

Taj Sardar, the owner of 'The Kings Diner' in Ashland, Kentucky, was targeted by racial posts by the man after eating at his restaurant.

The small eatery serves a combination of home cooking and Indian dishes.

Later, the man took a photo of the restaurant and wrote on Facebook to voice his displeasure with the food and also the people inside, media reported.

"I reluctantly entered to order meatloaf special and was greeted by a tribe from India. I'm ashamed that I probably just funded Al-Qaeda," the post on Facebook said.

"When I first read the thing on the Facebook, I was like, 'Oh my gosh, is this serious?'" Mr Sardar said.

"I was like hopefully his backers don't try to get together and push me out here, which I've been living here since 2010," he was quoted as saying by the report.

Since the racist post, the restaurant has been packed with community support doubling business ever since.

"I got to realize there are more positive people out there than the negative ones we just had experienced, and I'm really thankful to this community here," Mr Sardar said. Mr Sardar said he is thankful for the outpouring of love he has received.

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

The Man, the Vision, the Task-Elimination of Avoidable Blindness among Children



Dr. V.K. Raju, MD, FRCS, FACS
Founder and President, Eye Foundation of America
www.eyefoundationofamerica.org

While living in London, Dr. V.K. Raju traveled home to India on vacation, where a farmer asked him to examine his eyes. Dr. Raju complied, but without any instruments. In 1977, Dr. Raju returned to rural India with personnel and equipment and offered his first eye camp near his hometown; this was the inception of the Eye Foundation of America (EFA).

For the past 4 decades, Dr. Raju and the EFA have been actively and tirelessly on a crusade to eliminate avoidable blindness in areas plagued by poverty and poor access to medical care. Because Dr. Raju feels so incredibly thankful for his personal and professional gifts, he makes great effort to share those gifts with those in need of his services. He believes that medical professionals in the United States are afforded many material comforts, and as such, only voluntary service can alleviate the feeling of intellectual poverty. He gives freely of his own time, money, and medical expertise to help the less fortunate.

The EFA's mission is to eliminate avoidable blindness under the guiding principles of service, teaching, and research. This is accomplished through eye camps and brick-and-mortar hospitals in developing countries, training of medical personnel to serve the needy, and educating the population at large on preventative eye care and healthy lifestyle choices. Dr. Raju quotes his mentor in London as saying, "There are 3 solutions for any problem. The first is education, the second is education, and the third is education." With this education, patients are empowered to take charge of their lives and their own health and prevent further deleterious consequences of their poor lifestyle choices, while sharing this knowledge with their friends and families.

When education and preventative measures are insufficient, medical and surgical interventions are performed. With the aim of permanently providing world-class state-of-the-art services to populations with poor access to health care, the EFA helped to build 2 hospitals in rural India: the Sri Kiran Eye Institute and the Goutami Eye Institute. The Goutami Institute has a wing dedicated to exclusively to children, and the EFA has future plans to build a service and research eye hospital in India where no child will be denied treatment and children from around the world can come to receive services. Dr. Raju and the EFA are also committed to finding new cures for age-old eye disease in children.

With all of Dr. Raju's momentous

The execution of his vision, affordable and accessible healthcare, has provided innumerable individuals with the invaluable gift of sight. In children, this gift results in 75 years of a full and productive life. These children, who would be considered a burden to society, are then able to contribute and to their families and to society.

achievements, he has also ensured that his life's work and vision are self-sustaining. Dr. Raju has passed on his knowledge, plans, and vision to the future leaders of this movement: Dr. Leela Raju, Dr. Raju's daughter and fellow ophthalmologist, is the EFA's Secretary and Coordinator for Education and actively participates in its mission. "Our work is only just beginning," affirms Dr. Raju.

Dr. Raju was born in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India. He earned his medical degree from Andhra University and completed an ophthalmology residency and fellowship at the Royal Eye Group of Hospitals in London, England. He is board certified in ophthalmology and is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and the American College of Surgeons. He has resided in Morgantown, WV since 1976, where he is currently a Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology at West Virginia University (WVU), the Section Chief of the Ophthalmology Department at Monongalia General Hospital, runs a private practice at the Monongalia Eye Clinic, and is the Founder and Medical Director of the EFA, a registered non-profit organization.

Dr. Raju began the work of the EFA in 1977 by offering eye camps. The West Virginia Ophthalmology Foundation was subsequently created in 1982 and became the EFA in 1992. The realization of Dr. Raju's vision, the EFA, has a reach that currently extends to 30+ developing countries and the USA. The EFA has served approximately 2 million patients and performed 300,000+ vision-saving surgeries, with 25,000+ surgeries performed on children alone.

Awards/Recognition Received by Dr. Raju

State

Dr. Raju has received many honors and awards, including 26 distinguished awards and 17 gold medals. In Dr. Raju's adopted home state of West Virginia, he was awarded both the Lions Club International (Morgantown) Jarrett Award and the WVU International Service Award in 1995. Morgantown Rotary International presented Dr. Raju with an award for community service in 2000. He also received the Martin Luther King Jr. Achievement Award from WVU in 2008.

National

The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) has awarded Dr. Raju 4 times for his teaching and research contributions, including the Outstanding Humanitarian Award in 2002. Dr. Raju received this honor because of the more than \$1 million dollars of his own money that went into building hospitals in India, teaching, and providing services to needy patients. At the same meeting in which Dr. Raju was presented with this award, he also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from The Association of Asian Indians in Ophthalmology. That same

year, Dr. Raju received the Free to Achieve Award from the Maryland chapter of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) for his philanthropy. The AAPI also awarded Dr. Raju with their prestigious Distinguished Community Service Award in 2007 for his service, patient care, teaching, research, and professional and community involvement. In 2011, he received a Senior Achievement Award from the AAO. He has received awards from Lions International and Rotary International. For his humanitarian work, the American Medical Association Foundation acknowledged him with the prestigious Dr. Nathan Davis International Award for Excellence in Medicine in 2013. For the past 2 years, Dr. Raju has expanded his humanitarian efforts in African countries by joining the Carter Center's Ambassador Program. President Barack Obama presented Dr. Raju with the 2016 President's Lifetime Achievement Award. He was recently inducted

invited guest of honor at GITAM University and the All Indian Ophthalmology Society Meeting in 2012.

Since its inception, the EFA has facilitated 600+ physician exchanges and trained 200+ ophthalmologists, equipping these medical practitioners with the tools to join the global fight against blindness. The EFA not only trains medical practitioners to join the global fight against blindness through exchange programs, but also provides workshops and training opportunities for medical students and physicians. Dr. Raju's charisma and vision inspire the EFA's trainees return to their native countries to prevent and/or alleviate blindness in the field. For example, India and Ghana are actively engaged in avoidable blindness elimination projects with cooperation from their governments. In 2016 in India, 4,889 vision and 374 retinopathy of prematurity screenings were conducted; 779 eye glasses were distributed, and 162 pediatric surgeries were performed.

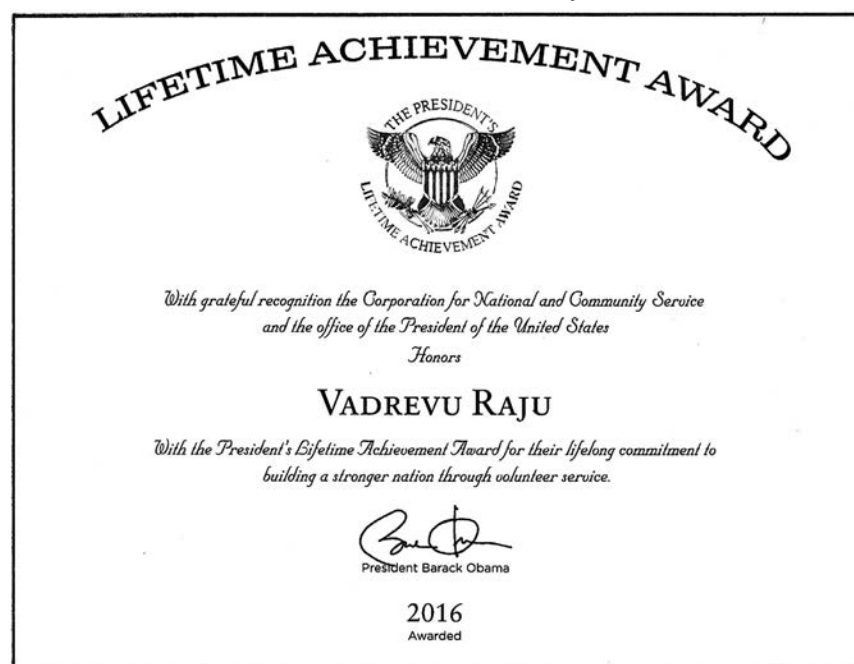
In Ghana in 2016, the Avoidable Blindness Elimination Project (abep@5) and the World Sight Day Kids Funfair screened 9,763 people, including 7,453 children, and detected ophthalmologic diseases in more than 1,000 individuals who consequently received treatment, which included 157 surgeries. More than 11,560 children received vision screenings in Ghana schools; eye glasses and follow-up care were provided when necessary.

Dr. Raju contributes to society in his home country of India and his adopted home state of WV. He believes in and practices

Ayurveda, an ancient Indian health care philosophy that emphasizes a holistic approach in which prevention is preferable to treatment. In some cases, blindness and visual impairment can be prevented in developing countries by simply providing a pair of corrective glasses costing less than \$10 or delivering vitamin A supplements for just a few cents per dose. The public is educated on eye care and injury prevention, and local teachers are taught how to screen for early eye problems in children. Patients, their families, and the greater community benefit from preventative medical care, free procedures, and access to education.

In WV, Dr. Raju accepts patients that do not have medical insurance and performs surgical procedures that are not covered. If a patient is unable to pay for the costly services rendered, he asks for a small donation to the EFA. Dr. Raju performs free procedures that amount to an estimated \$25,000-45,000 per year. This allows many of these patients to remain functional members of society.

The execution of his vision, affordable and accessible healthcare, has provided innumerable individuals with the invaluable gift of sight. In children, this gift results in 75 years of a full and productive life. These children, who would be considered a burden to society, are then able to contribute and to their families and to society.



into the University of Toledo Global Medical Missions Hall of Fame Class of 2017.

International

Dr. Raju's international awards date back to the 1970s, when he received 2 separate awards for service for the blind: Lions (India) and Jaycees (Vijayawada, India). He received several gold medals, including the AP (India) Gold Medal for Contributions to Advance Ophthalmology in 2001; the Dr. Hardia Gold Medal for Best Paper on Refractive Surgery for the All Indian Ophthalmology Society in 2002; Gold Medal from the President at the All Indian Ophthalmology Society Meeting in Cochin in 2012; the Rameshwar Sharma, MD Gold Medal Oration from the Indian Academy of Medical Sciences, Rajasthan Chapter, in 2012; the Gold Medal Oration at the Vijayawada Academy of Ophthalmology in 2014; and the Gold Medal Award from the International Academy for Advances in Ophthalmology, Bombay Ophthalmologists Association, in 2014. He received the Vaidya Ratna in 2002, as well as an achievement award from the House of Lords, London, and the Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Samman Award for Achievement in Medicine in 2014. He was also recognized as one of the Leading Physicians of the World by the International Association of Ophthalmologists in 2014. Dr. Raju was an



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Eye Foundation of America: Work Began 1977 (World without childhood blindness)

Combating avoidable blindness in India and the developing world: Efforts since 1977



Indian Express Press, 1977 Morgantown, WV and Vijayawada in India come together to prevent blindness



India Abroad, 1980 "Doctor on Vacation Serves the Poor"



Indian Express, 1981 "One Town; Two Town"



Indian Express, 1986 "Doctor's Gesture for Eye Hospital"



Dominion Post, 2000 "It is a great feeling Dr. Raju donates LASIK fee to Eye Foundation of America." -Dr. & Mrs. Alan Hess



Ophthalmology Times, 2002 "Exchange program opens eyes for a developing nation."



AAPI, 2003 "One Man's Crusade Against Blindness"



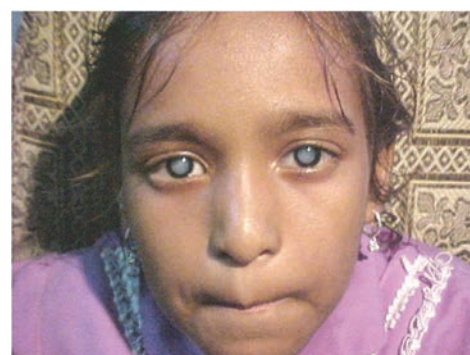
Hindu, 2007 "A Ray of Hope for Affected Children"



India Abroad, 2009 "Eye Foundation of America Vision of Hope"



India Abroad, 2011 "Exploring New Frontiers in Philanthropy"



India Abroad, 2013 "Support A Cause"



"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children"-Nelson Mandela



2013 VK Raju receives Dr. Nathan Davis International Excellence in Medicine Award; AMA Foundation



2013 Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Award at House of Lords



Eye Foundation of America
2016 Global Health Summit Journal Presented to PM Modi by AAPI

Italy bridge collapse: The financial facts behind the fury

A sell-off sent Italian bond yields rising sharply on Wednesday morning after Salvini used the bridge disaster to question EU limits on Italy's deficit.

MILAN (TIP): Italy's anti-establishment government, outraged at the deadly collapse of a 50-year-old bridge, has presented the disaster as a warning to Brussels to give it more leeway to upgrade the country's ageing infrastructure.

But the political anger generated by Tuesday's tragedy in Genoa, in which at least 39 people died, could instead end up piling even more financial pressure on the state – from nervous holders of its 2 trillion euros (\$2.3 trillion) in bonds.

Within hours of the viaduct giving way and sending vehicles plummeting, Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini said the EU must allow Rome to include in its next budget all the funds needed to ensure the country's infrastructure was safe.

That investment, to be calculated after an emergency audit of bridges and tunnels nationwide, comes on top of plans outlined by the government which took office in June to spend tens of billions of euros on tax cuts, easing pension rules and a basic income for the poor.

It also wants to avoid triggering a planned rise in value-added tax (VAT), agreed with Brussels by the previous government to meet budget goals.

For Italy's creditors, the fiscal gap is a growing worry.

A sell-off sent Italian bond yields rising sharply on Wednesday morning after Salvini used the bridge disaster to question EU limits on Italy's deficit. The bonds later rallied but their yields continue to offer a sizeable premium over safer German debt.

NOT ALWAYS A PRIORITY

Gustavo Piga, economics professor at Rome's Tor Vergata University, said regardless of EU rules, Rome had not always demonstrated that infrastructure was at top of its agenda. "Italy sorely needs higher and better public investments but they haven't been a priority for politicians in recent years," Piga said, noting that the previous administration had even appeared to divert some funds away from infrastructure after winning some budgetary leeway from Brussels for investments.

Total investment and maintenance spending on Italian transport infrastructure fell by 58 percent between 2008 and 2015, according to data by the Organisation for



Economic Cooperation and Development.

But more money could have been invested, according to an Italian central bank analysis last year. As overall public investment in Italy fell 35 percent in real terms between 2007 and 2015, Rome hiked spending on everyday things like public salaries and pensions by 7 percent.

The European Commission also sent reminder on Wednesday that it had for some time been encouraging the ruling coalition in Rome to prioritise infrastructure spending.

The Commission, the EU's executive, said it had approved in April an 8.5 billion euro investment plan for Italian motorways, including in the Genoa region, under EU state aid rules.

Italy is also set to receive around 2.5 billion euros in European funds between 2014 and 2020 to invest in network infrastructures, such as roads or rail, the Commission added.

Italy's economy minister, a former economics professor who appears more attuned to the moods of markets than some of his colleagues, also hinted on Wednesday that infrastructure might not fit neatly into the call for easier EU funding rules.

Giovanni Tria said in a statement that his priority would not be just on higher public investment, which was already factored into his upcoming budget; the government would also aim to "overcome shortfalls in the ability to spend and intervene".

A Treasury source said Tria was already discussing a big overall public investment plan with EU officials, worth a total of 150

billion euros over 10 years. Italy does not need to raise its deficit to boost infrastructure spending, the source added.

KEEPING IT PRIVATE?

The bridge disaster may also fail to further the government's cause in Brussels for other reasons: the viaduct revealed problems not long after it was completed in 1967 and it is maintained by a private toll operator, not the government.

Autostrade per l'Italia, part of the Milan-listed Atlantia group, said it complied with all its maintenance requirements and made regular safety checks on the bridge. It said it spent more than 1 billion euros a year over 2012-2017 to maintain and upgrade its road network spanning 3,000 km.

Autostrade has not disclosed its specific maintenance budget for the bridge, which was part of its concession on the A10 motorway linking the port city of Genoa with southern France. Antonio Brencich, an engineering professor at Genoa University, told state television the bridge had been shown to be defective just two decades after it was built — a comment supported by anecdotal evidence of those who lived below it.

"In the '80s pieces of cement came down and ruined parked cars, and there was a procedure — you filled out a form to claim compensation for the repairs," said Salvatore Lorefice, 58, a pensioner who worked at a warehouse directly under the bridge. (Reuters)

Zimbabwe court to hear election challenge on August 22

JOHANNESBURG (TIP): The Zimbabwean opposition's challenge against President Emmerson Mnangagwa's election victory will be heard in the constitutional court on August 22, the opposition leader's spokesman said on his Twitter account on Thursday.

Opposition leader Nelson Chamisa says the July 30 presidential vote, the first since the removal of Robert Mugabe last year, was rigged by a biased electoral commission. The electoral commission and Mnangagwa say there was no foul play.

The Constitutional Court can throw the case out, declare a new winner or order a fresh election.

The state-run Herald newspaper also confirmed that the case would be heard on Wednesday next week.

"Mr Chamisa has been directed to file his answering affidavit and heads of argument by 12 noon on Saturday while President Mnangagwa has been given up to 10am on Monday to file his," the newspaper reported.

The election had been expected to end Zimbabwe's pariah status and launch an economic recovery but post-election unrest has brought back uncomfortable reminders of its violent past. Mnangagwa has urged Zimbabwe to unite behind him but questions remain over the death of six people in an army crackdown on protests against the ruling party's victory. (AP)

China, US to hold lower-level trade talks in late August

BEIJING (TIP): China will hold a fresh round of trade talks with the United States in Washington later this month, Beijing said on Thursday, offering a glimmer of hope for progress in resolving a conflict that has set world financial markets on edge.

A Chinese delegation led by Vice Minister of Commerce Wang Shouwen will meet US representatives led by Under Secretary of Treasury for International Affairs David Malpass, the Ministry of Commerce said in a statement on its website.

While the engagement was seen by analysts and business officials as positive, they cautioned that the talks were unlikely to lead to a breakthrough given they are among lower-level officials and led on the US side by the Treasury Department, not the US Trade Representative (USTR). (Reuters)

Israel: No criminal action in deadly Gaza 2014 war incident

JERUSALEM (TIP): The Israeli military said on Wednesday its investigation into one of the bloodiest incidents of the 2014 war in the Gaza Strip found no criminal wrongdoing by Israeli forces and there were no grounds to prosecute any troops. The announcement drew condemnations from Palestinians and human rights advocates, who accused the military of a whitewash.

The investigation focused on an Aug. 1, 2014, battle in the southern Gaza town of Rafah that erupted after an Israeli military officer was feared abducted by Palestinian militants during a cease-fire. Over 110 Palestinians were killed in the daylong fighting, and Palestinian witnesses had complained of heavy and indiscriminate shelling by Israeli forces. (AP)

Budapest Airport terminal briefly shut due to hot isotope container

BUDAPEST (TIP): A terminal of Budapest Airport was briefly shut down late on Wednesday due to an overheated container carrying an isotope, a spokesman for the Hungarian Disaster Management Authority said. "Material damaging to health did not get into the environment," Marton Hajdu told Reuters, adding that Terminal 2B was shut down to facilitate a fast investigation. "Passengers are perfectly safe," he added.

The terminal was shut between 7.30 pm (1730 GMT) and about 10.30 pm and eight incoming and eight outgoing flights were affected, Budapest Airport spokesman Laszlo Kurucz told Reuters. Passengers and crew of the flight that carried the container and

Neither the airport nor the disaster control authority confirmed the flight affected was operated by Turkish Airlines.

passengers at the airport were not in danger, according to information from the Disaster Management Authority, Hajdu added. The officials did not name the flight or the isotope. The national news agency MTI said the material was iridium ordered by a Hungarian company from the Russian city of Dimitrovgrad, and the container arrived in Budapest on a flight which arrived in the evening from Istanbul. Gabor Kaszas, an official of the company, Izotop Intezet Kft, was

quoted by MTI as saying that a rise in temperature was normal when such materials are transported.

Izotop Intezet is a company focused on research, development and production of radioisotopes used in healthcare, research and industry. Officials of the company were not immediately available for comment. Neither the airport nor the disaster control authority confirmed the flight affected was operated by Turkish Airlines, Turkish Airlines officials were not immediately available for comment. Data on the airport's website showed that flight TK1037 from Istanbul landed in Budapest at 1907 CET, shortly before the terminal was closed. (Reuters)

FIGHTING IN FRONT OF YOUR KIDS AND WHY YOU NEED TO STOP

It's a parenting tip echoed from one generation to the next: "Don't fight in front of the kids." But many parenting experts believe it's not the actual fighting that upsets kids: it's the way in which parents argue. So how does inter-parental conflict affect children? Is it ever okay for parents to argue in front of the kids?

Warren Cann, CEO of Parenting Research Centre, says the impact of parental conflict on kids depends on the severity and frequency of the conflict, and the way it is resolved. "Severe parental conflict is very damaging to children," he says. "Ongoing, high level conflict can lead to emotional and behavioural disorders in children and there is evidence that the effects can be long-lasting."

The parents' relationship creates the emotional climate for a home, explains Cann. "If that climate is stressed and hostile, then it can affect a child's development." It doesn't have to be the loud fighting variety either, Cann points out. Even when there's no arguing, unspoken hostility can cause distress. "It can be those long periods of stony, frosty silence," he explains, adding that if these periods become extended it can have a serious impact.

A recent Cardiff University study claims that there's no need go out of earshot when having an argument with your partner. Rather, the psychologists at Cardiff University believe it's good for children to be exposed to constructive arguments as it sets a good example for the children.

Psychologist and Director of Parent Wellbeing, Jodie Benveniste, agrees that it isn't always a bad thing for children to be exposed to parental disagreements, particularly when they see their parents discussing issues respectfully. "There are ways to discuss



issues which strengthen relationships rather than pull them apart."

"Children can actually benefit from witnessing disagreements if parents listen to each other, and are willing to give and take," says Benveniste. "It shows kids how to negotiate and find solutions to problems."

In other words, it's fine - even healthy - for kids to witness your arguments. But there are caveats. "If you're shouting and name calling, that's not setting a good example at all". Parents need to be aware that their kids are watching, and feeling the emotion in the room, explains Benveniste.

It's not the occasional bickering that harms kids, says Cann. This is a normal part of life and children are robust enough to deal with it. "An environment of chronic friction and hostility is what harms kids the most."

Interestingly, the effects of parental conflict do not appear to be experienced equally by all children. New research by the Economic and Social Research

Council (ESRC) found that the impact of everyday parental conflict on children's behaviour is driven by how the children understand the problems in the relationship as well as the nature of the conflict itself. Children were more likely to experience behaviour, such as depression, if they blamed themselves for the conflict, or emotional problems if they felt threatened.

Factors such as temperament and age also make a difference. Younger kids will often think that they have done something wrong, explains Cann. Older children will worry that their parents are going to break up. "Some children are very sensitive to toxic elements in their environments; some are more robust and more resilient."

Some research suggests that gender plays a role in how kids respond to conflict. "Boys are more likely to act up or become more aggressive, whereas girls tend to internalise conflict more and become withdrawn," explains Cann.



A new study says that texting can say a lot about our relationship satisfaction and couples who are in sync with the texts they send each other are more satisfied

Texting and sexting play a huge role in your relationship, here's why

Texting, an act of writing and sending messages electronically, can both help and hinder our relationships. According to a research on texting and sexting presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, it was found that whether it is sexting or breaking up, texting can either bring us close or drive us apart.

Researchers surveyed 205 adults between the ages of 18 and 29 who were in romantic relationships. The questions focused on emotional security, texting habits and relationship satisfaction. Results showed that people who described their partner as having a similar texting style to themselves reported greater relationship satisfaction.

In other words, couples who were more in sync with the kind of texts they send to each other were more satisfied with their partner, regardless of whether the messages they sent were love notes or complaints about an issue in the relationship.

Leora Trub, who presented the findings, said, "How couples texted was more important to the satisfaction of the relationship than how frequently they texted."

A second study, also presented by Trub, found that texting can bring people closer to others or create distance, depending on the motivations underlying its use. She added, "We text to check in with our spouse during the work day and to stay connected with friends far away, but we also text to avoid dealing with relatives at the family party and to break up with someone."

The researchers also found that a greater percentage of people in same-sex relationships were frequent or hyper sexters. The full findings are present in American Psychological Association's 126th Annual Convention.

Source: ANI

FOOD CORNER

CAULIFLOWER AND COCONUT DHAL

This cauliflower and coconut dahl recipe is a fast and filling vegetarian dish that will leave meat lovers satisfied.

Ingredients

- 1 small cauliflower
- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 tsp sambal oelek or mashed red chilli
- 300g pack chilled dhal
- 2 tbsp coconut cream
- A handful of chopped fresh coriander leaves
- Serve with warm naan bread, if you like.

Method

- Discard the leaves and central core from cauliflower and break the rest into medium florets. Heat sunflower oil in a deep frying pan over a medium-high heat. Add the cauliflower and some seasoning and stir-fry for 3-4 minutes, until lightly browned in places.
- Add a splash of water, cover, turn the heat to low and cook gently for 6 minutes or until the cauliflower is just tender. Drain and set aside on a plate.
- Stir in sambal oelek or chilli from a jar to the pan, along



with the dhal, coconut cream and the cauliflower. Stir, bring to a simmer and cook for 5 minutes.

- Scatter with a handful of chopped fresh coriander leaves and serve with warm naan bread and extra sambal oelek, if you like.

ADDING CABBAGE, BROCCOLI TO YOUR DIET MAY HELP PREVENT COLON CANCER

Chemicals produced by vegetables such as kale, cabbage and broccoli could help to maintain a healthy gut and prevent colon cancer, a study has found. The research, published in the journal *Immunity*, shows that mice fed on a diet rich in indole-3-carbinol - which is produced when we digest vegetables from the Brassica genus - were protected from gut inflammation and colon cancer.

While the health benefits of vegetables are well-established, many of the mechanisms behind them remain unknown. This study offers the first concrete evidence of how I3C in the diet can prevent colon inflammation and cancer, by activating a protein called the aryl hydrocarbon receptor (AhR).

AhR acts as an environmental sensor, passing signals to immune cells and epithelial cells in the gut lining to protect us from inflammatory responses to the trillions of bacteria that live in the gut. "We studied genetically modified mice that cannot produce or activate AhR in their guts, and found that they readily developed gut inflammation which progressed to colon cancer," said Amina Metidji from the Francis Crick Institute.

"However, when we fed them a diet enriched with I3C, they did not develop inflammation or cancer. Interestingly, when mice whose cancer was already



developing were switched to the I3C-enriched diet, they ended up with significantly fewer tumours which were also more benign," said Metidji.

By studying both mice and mouse gut organoids - 'mini guts' made from stem cells - the researchers found that AhR is vital for repairing damaged epithelial cells. Without AhR, intestinal stem cells fail to differentiate into specialised epithelial cells that absorb nutrients or generate protective mucus. Instead, they divide uncontrollably which can ultimately lead to colon cancer.

"Seeing the profound effect of diet on

gut inflammation and colon cancer was very striking," said Gitta Stockinger, Group Leader at the Francis Crick Institute in the UK. "We often think of colon cancer as a disease promoted by a Western diet rich in fat and poor in vegetable content, and our results suggest a mechanism behind this observation," said Stockinger.

"Many vegetables produce chemicals that keep AhR stimulated in the gut. We found that AhR-promoting chemicals in the diet can correct defects caused by insufficient AhR stimulation," she said.

Source: PTI



CLINICAL TRIAL SHOWS MARIJUANA SAFE TO TREAT EPILEPSY IN CHILDREN

Consuming a marijuana-based drug may be safe in treating children with severe epilepsy, results of a clinical trial has showed.

Following treatment with cannabidiol -- a non-psychoactive compound found in marijuana -- about one in five children were described as much or very much improved from their baseline, while around half reported none, or a very slight improvement, Xinhua news agency reported.

While the trial was conducted on a small group of children with severe epilepsy, it showed that the drug had a manageable side effect profile, but only showed extensive symptom relief for a brief number of patients.

The trial "involved the sickest children with epilepsy -- children who are having seizures many times per day, who have been recently hospitalized for their epilepsy, and have failed on average about nine anti-epilepsy drugs before," said lead author John Lawson, paediatric neurologist at Sydney's Children's Hospital.

"The main aim of the study was about safety. We found that there were a few safety concerns but overall those safety issues were very manageable and the drug overall was very safe for the majority," he added.

The study was published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*.

Although legally cannabis must be prescribed by a doctor, recent reports of cannabis derivatives being successful in treating children with epilepsy have led to a number of parents of sick children sourcing their own medical marijuana.

While the study's authors said the results were significant, they stressed that the purpose of this study was about safety not efficacy.

The US Food and Drug Administration had recently approved Epidiolex (cannabidiol) [CBD] oral solution for the treatment of seizures associated with two rare and severe forms of epilepsy -- Lennox-Gastaut syndrome and Dravet syndrome -- in patients two years of age and older.

Source: IANS

Aspirin may help prevent HIV: Study

An affordable, globally available drug—low-dose aspirin—could help prevent HIV transmission, scientists say.

HIV infection rates remain unacceptably high, especially among young African women.

Researchers including those from University of Manitoba in Canada tested the effect of acetylsalicylic acid (ASA or aspirin) and other anti-inflammatory drugs on HIV target cells in a group of Kenyan women who were at low risk for HIV.

The pilot study, published in the *Journal of the International AIDS Society*, built on existing knowledge about the role of inflammation in HIV transmission.

Transmission of the virus requires a susceptible target cell in the human host. Activated immune cells are more susceptible to HIV infection than resting cells. It is known that inflammation brings activated HIV target cells to the female genital tract.

The researchers found that Aspirin was the most effective anti-inflammatory drug. It reduced the number of HIV target cells in the female genital tract by 35 per cent.

The reduced number of HIV target cells in the women who took aspirin approached the level found in Kenyan women at high risk of HIV contraction who have remained uninfected for many years.

"Further research is needed to



confirm our results with aspirin and test whether this level of target cell reduction will actually prevent HIV infections," said Keith R Fowke from University of Manitoba.

"If so, this could be a strategy for HIV prevention that is not only inexpensive, but easily accessed globally. People living in poverty are disproportionately at risk of acquiring HIV. We need prevention approaches that are affordable and immediately available," said Fowke.

The goal is to provide a new tool in the

HIV prevention arsenal that would be used together with other approaches to reduce HIV transmission in high-risk populations, Fowke said.

Study participants were given the same daily low dose of aspirin that is commonly used for long-term prevention of cardiovascular disease.

Participants said they liked that aspirin does not carry the stigma associated with other anti-HIV drugs, which could mean it is more likely to be used regularly.

Source: PTI

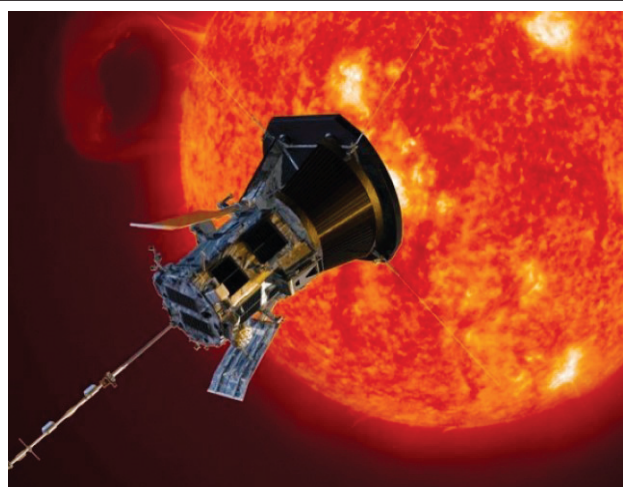
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DR. SATISH AND GITANJLI ANAND



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



NASA launches probe to go deep into Sun's scorching atmosphere

NASA launched a space probe early Sunday that will go closer to the Sun than any spacecraft before, the agency announced.

The craft will endure extreme heat while zooming through the solar corona to study the Sun's outer atmosphere that gives rise to the solar winds.

The Parker Solar Probe, a spacecraft the size of a small car, launched from Cape Canaveral in Florida about 3:30 a.m.

Sunday, on a seven-year mission. It is set to fly into the Sun's corona within 3.8 million miles (6.1 million km) of the solar surface, seven times closer than any other spacecraft.

The corona gives rise to the solar wind, a continuous flow of charged particles that permeates the solar system and can cause havoc with communications technology on Earth. NASA hopes the findings will enable scientists to forecast changes in Earth's space environment.

The project, with a \$1.5 billion price tag, is the first major mission under NASA's Living With a Star program.

The probe, named after American solar astrophysicist Eugene Newman Parker, will have to survive difficult heat and radiation conditions. It has been outfitted with a heat shield designed to keep its instruments at a tolerable 85 degrees Fahrenheit (29 degrees Celsius) even as the spacecraft faces temperatures reaching nearly 2,500 degrees Fahrenheit (1,370 degrees Celsius) at its closest pass.

Source: Reuters

Apple iOS 12's top feature, Group FaceTime for video calls, delayed

Apple has delayed its "Group FaceTime" feature that will allow up to 32 people to simultaneously participate in video calls on iOS devices.

According to a report in 9to5Mac on Monday, "Group FaceTime" has been removed from the initial release of iOS 12 and will ship in a future software update later this fall.

"Group FaceTime for iPhone, iPad, and Mac appears to be delayed and won't be ready in time for iOS 12 and macOS Mojave launch in September," the report added.

Apple announced "Group FaceTime" feature in June during the company's annual Worldwide Developers' Conference in the US.

"We're very excited about the new communications features we're bringing to iPhone and iPad with Memoji, a more personal form of Animoji, fun camera effects and Group FaceTime," Craig Federighi, Apple's Senior Vice President of Software Engineering, said during the event.

The feature was announced to take on similar services like Google Hangouts and the Microsoft-owned Skype.

iOS 12 is designed to make everyday tasks on iPhone and iPad faster and more responsive.

Source: IANS



GOOGLE TRACKS YOUR MOVEMENTS, EVEN WHEN YOU TELL IT NOT TO

Google wants to know where you go so badly that it records your movements even when you explicitly tell it not to.

An Associated Press investigation found that many Google services on Android devices and iPhones store your location data even if you've used privacy settings that say they will prevent it from doing so.

Computer-science researchers at Princeton confirmed these findings at the AP's request.

For the most part, Google is upfront about asking permission to use your location information. An app like Google Maps will remind you to allow access to location if you use it for navigating.

If you agree to let it record your location over time, Google Maps will display that history for you in a "timeline" that maps out your daily movements.

Storing your minute-by-minute travels carries privacy risks and has been used by police to determine the location of suspects—such as a warrant that police in Raleigh, North Carolina, served on Google last year to find devices near a murder scene. So the company will let you "pause" a setting called Location History.

Google says that will prevent the company from remembering where you've been. Google's support page on the subject states: "You can turn off Location History at any time. With Location History off, the places you go are no longer stored."

That isn't true. Even with Location History paused, some Google apps automatically store time-stamped location data without asking.

For example, Google stores a snapshot of where you are when you merely open its Maps app. Automatic daily weather updates on Android phones pinpoint roughly where you are.

And some searches that have nothing to do with location, like "chocolate chip cookies" or "kids science kits" pinpoint your precise latitude and longitude—accurate to the square foot—and save it to your Google account.



The privacy issue affects some two billion users of devices that run Google's Android operating software and hundreds of millions of worldwide iPhone users who rely on Google for maps or search.

Storing location data in violation of a user's preferences is wrong, said Jonathan Mayer, a Princeton computer scientist and former chief technologist for the Federal Communications Commission's enforcement bureau.

A researcher from Mayer's lab confirmed the AP's findings on multiple Android devices; the AP conducted its own tests on several iPhones that found the same behaviour.

"If you're going to allow users to turn off something called 'Location History' then all the places where you maintain location history should be turned off," Mayer said.

"That seems like a pretty straightforward position to have," Google says it is being perfectly clear.

"There are a number of different ways that Google may use location to improve people's experience, including: Location History, Web and App Activity, and through device-level Location Services," a Google spokesperson said in a statement to the AP.

"We provide clear descriptions of these tools, and robust controls so people can turn them on or off, and delete their histories at any time."

To stop Google from saving these location markers, the company says, users can turn off another setting, one that does not specifically reference

location information.

Called 'Web and App Activity' and enabled by default, that setting stores a variety of information from Google apps and websites to your Google account.

When paused, it will prevent activity on any device from being saved to your account. But leaving 'Web & App Activity' on and turning 'Location History' off only prevents Google from adding your movements to the "timeline", its visualisation of your daily travels. It does not stop Google's collection of other location markers.

You can delete these location markers by hand, but it's a painstaking process since you have to select them individually, unless you want to delete all of your stored activity.

You can see the stored location markers on a page in your Google account at myactivity.google.com, although they're typically scattered under several different headers, many of which are unrelated to location.

To demonstrate how powerful these other markers can be, the AP created a visual map of the movements of Princeton postdoctoral researcher Gunes Acar, who carried an Android phone with Location history off, and shared a record of his Google account.

The map includes Acar's train commute on two trips to New York and visits to The High Line park, Chelsea Market, Hell's Kitchen, Central Park and Harlem. To protect his privacy, the AP didn't plot the most telling and frequent marker—his home address.

Source: AP

YouTube dark mode for Android: How to turn it on

YouTube has begun rolling out dark theme for Android users. The dark theme essentially inverts the colour of the YouTube app UI, replacing the white background with black. The feature is already available for desktop users.

The dark theme essentially allows users to watch the videos on YouTube for a longer period of time without straining the eyes. The inverted theme has become quite popular on several applications such as Twitter. According to YouTube, the dark theme has been one of the most requested features for the mobile versions.

Note that the feature is being rolled out gradually. So if you haven't received the feature yet, you should in the coming days. Here's how to enable YouTube dark mode on your Android phone.

Step 1: Launch the YouTube application.

Step 2: Tap on your profile icon that appears on the right top corner

Step 3: Go to Settings > General



Step 4: Tap on the toggle for "Dark theme" to enable it

Step 5: Tap on the back button, the theme is automatically saved.

Rupee hits new all-time low of 70.32; Sensex, Nifty fall on weak macro cues

MUMBAI (TIP): The rupee on Thursday slumped 43 paise against the dollar to trade at a life-time low of 70.32 on strong demand for the US currency. At the Interbank Foreign Exchange, the local currency opened at a record low of 70.25 a dollar, down from its previous close of 69.89, and weakened further to trade at a fresh low of 70.32, down by 43 paise.

Forex dealers said besides strong demand for the American currency from importers, capital outflows mainly weighed on the domestic currency.

A sharp surge in trade deficit too impacted the rupee. Trade deficit soared to a near five-year high of USD 18 billion, data released by the commerce ministry on Tuesday showed. Furthermore, depreciation of the Turkish lira against the dollar after the US imposed tariffs on steel and aluminium imports also put pressure on the Indian rupee, they added.

The rupee had gained 4 paise, to close at 69.89 against the dollar in the previous session on Tuesday.

Forex market was shut on Wednesday on account of Independence Day. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) sold shares worth a net of Rs 378.84 crore on Tuesday, as per provisional data.

Sensex, Nifty fall on weak macro cues

The benchmark BSE Sensex fell over 207 points and the NSE Nifty slipped below the 11,400-mark in early trade on



Wednesday on selling in metal, realty and banking stocks amid weak macroeconomic cues and sustained foreign fund outflows. The 30-share index dropped 207.03 points, or 0.54 per cent, to 37,644.97. The gauge had gained 207.10 points in the previous session on Tuesday.

The NSE Nifty fell below the 11,400-mark, shedding 58.15 points, or 0.50 per cent, to 11,376.95. Market sentiment turned weak as investors turned cautious after the country's trade deficit soared to a near five-year high of USD 18 billion. The trade data was released by the commerce ministry on Tuesday after market hours.

The sharp surge in imports led to

worsening of trade deficit to USD 18.02 billion in the reporting month as against a deficit of USD 11.45 billion during July 2017.

Over 57 per cent increase in oil import bill (USD 12.35 billion) and 41 per cent jump in gold imports to USD 2.96 billion during July is believed to be main reason behind high trade deficit.

Brokers said apart from profit-booking in recent gainers by investors, a weak trend in Asian markets tracking losses on Wall Street amid fresh concern over Turkey's currency crisis and the rupee's fall to a new low of 70.32 against the dollar too dragged weighed on investor sentiment here.

Source: PTI

Samsung may suspend operations at China mobile phone plant: Report



Samsung Electronics Co Ltd is considering suspending operations at one of its mobile phone manufacturing plants in China due to slumping sales and rising labour costs, the Electronic Times reported.

Samsung might stop producing mobile phones this year at Tianjin Samsung Telecom Technology, located in the northern Chinese city of Tianjin, the South Korean newspaper said, describing the move under consideration as a potential withdrawal.

The world's biggest smartphone maker said on Monday that nothing had been decided on the fate of its Tianjin operation.

"The overall smartphone market is

having difficulties due to slowing growth. Samsung Electronics' Tianjin telecom enterprise aims to focus on activities that increase competitiveness and efficiency," it said in a statement to Reuters.

Just five years ago, Samsung had 20 percent of the Chinese market only to see that fall to less than 1 percent this year, outgunned by Huawei, Xiaomi and other Chinese brands, particularly on pricing.

The South Korean tech giant is also under pressure to jump-start faltering smartphone sales after posting its slowest quarterly profit growth in more than a year, as rivals nip at its heels with cheaper, feature-packed models.

Source: Reuters

Nadella nets \$35 million after selling one-third of his shares

WASHINGTON (TIP): Microsoft's Indian-origin CEO Satya Nadella has netted over \$35 million after selling almost one-third of his common shares in the software giant.

Nadella sold 328,000 shares in multiple trades at prices ranging from \$109.08 to \$109.68 as the stock trades near a record price.

The stock sale, disclosed in a regulatory filing yesterday, netted Nadella more than \$35 million.

Microsoft shares have soared 53% in the past year, closing the week at \$109. The record closing price was \$110.83 on July 25.

Nadella, 50, still own 778,596 shares of common stock. He is required to have 15 times his base salary in stock.

His annual base salary in 2017 was \$1.45 million, and his total compensation exceeded \$20 million. "The stock divestitures made today were for personal financial planning and diversification reasons," a Microsoft spokesperson told CNBC. "Satya is committed to the continued success of the company and his holdings significantly exceed the holding requirements set by the Microsoft board of directors," he said.

PNB FRAUD: GOVT DISMISSES EX-MANAGING DIRECTOR

NEW DELHI (TIP): The government dismissed Usha Ananathasubramanian, former MD and CEO of Punjab National Bank, and who was three months ago divested of her powers as MD and CEO of Allahabad Bank, following the country's biggest bank fraud allegedly carried out by Nirav Modi and associates at PNB.

She was named in the CBI chargesheet in connection with the Rs 14,000-crore fraud. She has been dismissed with immediate effect in the interest of Allahabad Bank, sources citing government notification said.

It was alleged that she failed to exercise proper control over the functioning of PNB while serving as MD of the bank. It enabled the fraud in the bank through misuse of SWIFT at PNB's Brady House branch.

Besides Anathasubramanian, the government has given sanction for prosecution against PNB executive director Sanjiv Sharan as part of the clean-up exercise in the system.

Ananathasubramanian had enjoyed leadership roles in PNB in two stints. She headed the bank between August 2015 and May 2017, before moving to Allahabad Bank. She was executive director at the bank from July 2011 to November 2013.

Source: PTI

eBay India shuts down; Flipkart to launch marketplace for refurbished goods



NEW DELHI (TIP): Flipkart is shutting down eBay India. Starting Tuesday, eBay India will stop taking new orders and is now directing users to Flipkart to buy and sell.

"eBay India will cease to exist. We will be launching a new value platform starting with refurbished goods very soon," said Flipkart in a statement.

Flipkart had acquired eBay's India unit last year as it raised \$1.4 billion from global technology majors such as Tencent and Microsoft. Along with selling its India arm, eBay had also invested \$500 million for an equity stake in the Indian e-commerce giant.

"eBay.in has stopped accepting new orders. You can still register an eBay account on www.eBay.in and continue to buy and sell on www.eBay.com or other eBay sites internationally. Please visit www.flipkart.com to buy and sell within India," says eBay on its website.

Users cannot use their eBay.in account to buy and sell products on Flipkart. Users have until August 30, 2018 to raise 'eBay Guarantee claims' for refunds.

"Your purchase history will remain available on My PaisaPay and My eBay until further notice. Your warranty will remain valid till its validity date. Please contact eBay.in customer support for any issues regarding your item," the website adds.

Source: HT

Netflix finance chief to step down

Netflix Inc Chief Financial Officer David Wells will step down after eight years in the role, the video streaming company said on Monday.

Wells will remain with Netflix until his successor is found, a search that will consider both internal and external candidates, Netflix said.

"Personally, I intend my next chapter to focus more on philanthropy and I like big challenges but I'm not sure yet what that looks like," Wells said.

Wells joined Netflix in 2004, two years after the company went public, and was responsible for content operations and strategic planning. He was made vice president of finance planning and analysis in 2008.

Netflix shares fell 1.8 percent to \$339.72 on Monday morning.

Source: Reuters



Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

**011-91-8141234275
www.bejandaruwalla.com**

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE AUGUST 20-26, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says making strong decisions, and making them fast, is not your key strength. In this period you continue to suffer from that malady and in the process lose out on important deals. There is a lot going on in the family, including, possibly, an inheritance tussle. If you have been having it easy all along, the time has come for you to pull up your socks. The focus of this period will be solely on family affairs. You need to shed your laid-back attitude, roll up your sleeves and get down to the hard job of making things happen.

Taurus:

You straighten out, look reality in the eye, and realize that there are no free meals in life. You get down to the hard slog. I must add here that influences of one period often coalesce into the other. Also, I am not God. I am your favorite astrologer by a distance, but do remember that these are generalizations as I do not have your personal horoscope. Also, astrology never compels. You can always use your free will to advantage.

Gemini:

You are filled with vigor and make miracles happen. Your health is good; at least you are feeling good, and this helps. There are ego drives and you are subject to misunderstandings and altercations but that is par for the course. Your love life gets a hike too. The married take bonding to new heights and singles play the field as though the world is coming to an end in a hurry. Elders may be a cause of worry and children bring joy.

Cancer:

There could be international travel, expensive purchases, a possible change of residence, an addition to the family, fun and festivities. You could also bring home an exotic pet. You may also enroll in a gym or take a membership in a spa or nature-cure center to knock off unwanted pounds and get back on track. There are several possibilities. Your plate overflows and it's not about curry. This is a propitious time and all that you embark on now leads to success. Ganesha is impressed.

Leo:

There is great intensity in your life. Everything is happening all at once and yet nothing decisive is happening. There could be also be illness in the family and an old skin infection may just erupt. You may be spending time with specialists. Get to the root before it ensnares you. Relationships could also get tricky and you may be hauled up for something you didn't do. There could be time spent with the law and some out of court settlements.

Virgo:

'The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love,' said William Wordsworth, the poet. If you are writing a book or are into art, music or any creative pursuit, you will be laughing all the way to the bank and also singing a fine tune. There are rewards and awards, applause and kudos. You also spend time with NGOs and helping with the less fortunate.

Libra:

There are stability, love and longing. You are in the coils of amour and it is more constricting than the strange hold of a boa constrictor. You are helpless and flapping around. Use your free to extricate yourself. Ask me. I have seen the expression of love and lust in all its shades in the eight-plus decades of my long and winding life. You are in an altruistic state and seek out idealistic romanticism. People take advantage of you. They walk all over you. Family and friends love this side of you.

Scorpio:

There is more stability and you go the whole hog. You sign new deals and read the fine print with some deliberation. You plan your moves carefully. You may go looking for a guru and someone from another culture and country will greatly influence you. It may be someone from the same sex and it could be platonic. But you will learn a lot and emerge a better person. Children bring joy. There could also be an addition to the family. Ganesha blesses you.

Sagittarius:

You are a bundle of contradictions. You want to do everything at once and yet don't know where to begin. You are all dressed up without knowing where to go. Your world is also playing with demons. This could be an unsettling period, but you manage to see light at the end of the tunnel before the period is over. You are frank, free and fearless. You take other people's breath away with your open-ended comments and remarks.

Capricorn:

There could be solo travel as you decide to explore new areas of life and geography. You are one who travels in groups, but you make an exception this time. There are fun times as you meet up with new people and open new vistas to your life. You may adopt a pet, spend time in museums and entertainment parks and generally chill. 'Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark,' said Rabindranath Tagore.

Aquarius:

You are back where you belong. There are energy, focus and creativity. There are group activities which you adore. There is also new love and you miss a heartbeat in fantasy land. 'Loving ourselves works miracles in our lives,' said Louise Hay. Loving someone else also strengthens and validates your life for yourself. Ganesha is happy that you are back on terra firma. Domestic life may showcase its thorns.

Pisces:

There are expenses of every kind. It is not that you are wasting money, but the compulsion to spend are acute and need-based. The family demands attention and galloping inflation isn't helping the cause. You also find it tough in this phase to make hard decisions and thus lose out where it matters. Avoid gambling and games of chance. Also, if you are signing important deals make sure that you watch the fine print with care and get legal advice.

NAG PANCHAMI

Nag Panchami is celebrated on the Shukla Paksha Panchami during Shravan month. The day falls on the fifth day of the moon's waning in the Lunar Hindu month of Shravan. The festival involves worshipping the serpent god to get rid of bad karma. People worship snake and offer milk on this day. It is believed that offering puja to snakes would reach to the serpent gods. Hence, snakes are worshipped as representatives of gods. People observe fast a day before Nag Panchami which is called as Nag Chaturthi or Nagul Chavithi. In India, Nag Panchami is celebrated in much fervour in Nagaraja Temple in Kerala, Hardevja Temple in Jaipur and Nagathamman Temple in Chennai. The state of Gujarat celebrates the festival 15 days after other states.

MYTHOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

There are several myths and stories surrounding the origin of the festival. According to one of the myth, the day is celebrated as the victory of Lord Krishna over the black serpent Kaliya, killed in the river Yamuna. It is also believed that Lord Brahma created Sheshnag, King of Snakes, on this day. The day is also referred as Garuda Panchami. Garuda is the carrier of Lord Vishnu and is also considered as the enemy of serpents.

AGRICULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Shravan i.e. monsoon is the best time for cultivation. As fields are the dwelling ground for snakes, Nag Panchami is celebrated to calm them, so that they don't bite them during cultivation. The day also helps to make the bond between human and nature strong. Farmers celebrate the day by not digging the fields and by worshiping snake idols made of mud.

From times immemorial, snakes have always enjoyed a prime place in Hindu religion, philosophy and iconography. Many Hindu gods are shown with serpents. Lord Vishnu sleeps on the king of snakes, Seshanag or Adishesha. Lord Shiva wears snakes as his ornaments. Many temples dedicated to Mother Parvati have snake hills inside. People worship serpents as the very form of Mother Durga. Even Ganesh and Subramanya are shown with snakes. Hindus have been worshipping snakes for a very long time in history.

LIVING IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

Amongst many Hindu rituals and festivals, one of the important one that falls on the fifth day of the waxing moon in the lunar month of Shravan is the festival of Nag Panchami. From time immemorial, man has always worked towards living in harmony with its environment. Giving importance to all the sentient beings has been the essence of the Sanatan Dharma. Snakes occupy a very significant space in Hindu Mythology as they are also considered to be the resident of Patal Loka or Nag Loka. The scriptures treat Snakes as a community; Mansa Devi the Snake Goddess is specially offered prayers on this day. Her temple is located on Bilwa Parvat on the Sivalik Hills, the southernmost Himalayan chain. It is said goddess Manasa Devi manifested from the mind of Lord Shiva. She is also said to be the sister of snake Vasuki. It is said as the ruler of the mind, Manasa devi fulfills the genuine desires of her devotees.

SEEKING PROTECTION FROM SNAKES

Nag means snakes and Panchami means the fifth day and therefore, on this day, Snakes who have a lot of holy importance are offered milk and rice and prayers are offered to give protection to the family and the clan in totality. Across India and Nepal, Nag Panchami is celebrated in a variety of ways. In some places snake worship is done on Chaturthi also called as Naga Chaturthi.

NAG PANCHAMI STORIES



There are a lot of myths and stories that go along with why this day is dedicated to snakes and why prayers are offered to them. According to mythology, a deadly snake Kalia had been poisoning the river Yamuna and it had become difficult for the residents of Braj to drink any water. Krishna, as a child Avatar of Lord Vishnu, one day on the pretext of a ball falling down in the river has a tussle with Kalia and eventually defeats him. Kalia takes away all the poison from the river and Krishna in return blesses him that on this day of Panchami whosoever will offer milk and prayers to the snakes, will get expiated of any hardships in times to come. Thus from then onwards the day was celebrated as Nagpanchami day.

SIGNIFICANCE OF MILK

Unfortunately, the brother dies due to a snake bite while in search of Ketaki. The sister then prays and performs fast and propitiates Nagaraja to take the poison away and the brother is brought back to life. The sister therefore, rubs the ointment on her brothers back to protect them from any hardships in times to come. The rubbing of the milk also signifies their umbilical connection and strengthens the love between a brother and sister. On this day in few areas,

whole process few drops did fell on the ground and were drunk by snakes. People pray to snakes so that they and their families are spared of their wrath and poisonous bites.

SNAKE ADORNING LORD SHIVA

A snake also adorns the neck of Lord Shiva and has a lot of spiritual significance too. The three coils around Shiva is also the indication of the past, present and the future. It also signifies that the Shakti / kundalini energy finally dances around Shiva, while Shiva the omnipresent is static. A five hooded Snake also surrounds the shivlingam again indicating the culmination and protection of the yin and yang energies; the materialistic and the spiritual combination.

NAGAS ARE DEMI GODS

Hindu scriptures talk about Nagas or a class of demi gods who are also semi-divine beings. They are the residents of the subterranean world, known as Patala. They are the guardians of the treasures hidden in the earth and have the ability to assume a human form at will. Though they are very compassionate by nature, they can cause destruction if they turn vengeful due to disrespect or mistreatment. Hindus believes the curses given by the aggressive snake deities can bring about death, illness, misfortune, absence of progeny and other difficulties in family life for which there are purifying and expiatory rites prescribed. Nag Panchami is one occasion when the Nagas are propitiated.

SLOKA DEDICATED TO GREAT SNAKES

A famous verse in Hinduism lists out the names of great snakes and gives the benefits of worshipping them. It says, Ananth, Vasuki, Adhi Sessa, Padmanabha, Kambala, Drutharashtra, Sankhapala, Thakshaka and Kaliya are the names of nine snakes who are so great. These names must be read in the morning time so that the individuals can win the blessings of these snakes and attain good luck and fortune.

KAL SARP DOSHA AND NAG PANCHAMI

Astrologically too, the horoscopes which are generally in the grasp of the Rahu and Ketu nodes commonly known as the Kal Sarp Dosha has a lot of importance on this day. The head of the snake is Rahu and its tail is Ketu and when the planets fall in between them they are considered to be in their grip. It is said offering a pair of snakes made in silver to the Shivlingam helps in expiating the effect of this dosha.

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

Hinduism & other religions are the two wings of the same bird called India



By Dave Makkar

I am a Hindu & living in America since 1996 and I always say I am proud to be an American first, then Hindu. When I look at the statistics I find 72% of Americans are proud to be American and in India only 18% are proud to be Indian. In America people understand, respect and honor that America quote unquote is a Christian nation, but at the same time it is a Muslim Nation, a Jewish nation, a Hindu nation, a Buddhist nation, a Sikh nation, a Mormon nation and a nation of non-believers also."

No one including the state or federal government has forced me or other Americans to be proud of being an American, then why after 70 years of Independence majority Indians are not nationalist and are not proud to be Indians? Why they are Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhist etc?

Unfortunately, India lacks an identity that supersedes caste, ethnicity, religion and region, which can unify all its citizens as equal members of a shared Nation with a shared destiny reached through common goals.

The multi-fractured nature of Indian society goes beyond the healthy human disagreement and debate inherent to a healthy democracy; instead prompting the question whether India's 1.33 billion citizens; Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain and Christian further sub-divided into more factions Punjabi, Gujratis, Maratha, Jat, Ahir, Shia, Suni, Tamil, Kannad, Bhapey, Lubaney, Digambari, Shevetambari - actually want to be "Indians".

Most pathetic are Hindu's with 72% of the population; they are Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi, Tamil, Kannad, Bihari, Maratha, Haryanvi, Himachali etc. Then they are Arya Samajis, Vaishnavas, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Dravidians, Jats, Ahirs, Yadavas, Khasi, Dhogra, Kurmi, Dalits etc. None of them want to stand on one platform or have one identity - "Hindu" -and prior to calling themselves Hindu, that they are Indians first. Dalit Hindus that are almost 20% of the total Indian population do not want to be associated with upper caste Hindus or Hinduism as defined by them because for centuries Dalits have been treated inhumanly by upper caste Hindus. Even a great majority of the upper caste Hindus are not with the Hindus that want to redefine Hinduism and its history.

If onecombined Muslim, Christian, Sikhs & Buddhist, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes together they are 25% of India's population. On the other hand, upper caste Hindus that believe in Hindutva invented by the likes of Savarkars and Golwalkars are less than 30%. Their numerous religious organizations like RSS, VHP, Hindu Mahasabha, Bajrang Dal, Ram Sena etc. and political wings mainly BJP & Shiv Sena- all believe that they can tolerate Sikhs, Buddhists & Jains because India is the birth place of these religions. But they are not willing to accept followers of, especially Islam and Christianity as Indians because these religions were born outside of India. How these misguided, less than 30% Hindus can dictate that India should be governed under their Hindutva when more than 70% Indians

"It is very unfortunate that misguided, dishonest, corrupt, semi or not educated at all Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs that do not understand Hinduism or Islam or Christianity or Sikhism or humanity at all have become top political & religious leaders and are pushing India towards a civil war in the name of religious supremacy.

"Indians can learn from America. It is an open and diverse society; all of its members are equal with the right to identify themselves with America's "Founding Fathers and Freedom Fight Heroes". An African-American Barack Obama, son of a Kenyan Muslim immigrant and native white American mother, can speak with pride of George Washington, the father of the nation and Hero of the American Revolution/ War of Independence against the British Rulers. Obama, a Democrat, also has the right to speak with pride about Republican Abraham Lincoln who enacted the Emancipation of Declaration ending Slavery which later paved the way for Equal Rights for Blacks in America.



and have not been punished even 16 years after the reprehensible crime.

Christians, the 2nd minority with 6% population are also divided in different sects and hardly feel that they are Indians first. The reason being the believers of Hindutva, not Hinduism, and their leaders keeps on reminding Christians that they don't belong here; they are foreigners.

The 3rd minority- Sikhs with 2% population are constantly reminded by Hindutvawadis that they can tolerate them because Hindus and Sikhs share some common ancestry, and for Sikhism

being born in India. Though caste system is forbidden in Sikh Holy Scripture "Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji", Sikhs are known as Sainis (Kshatriyas), Rajputs, Ramgarhiyas (artisans), Ahluwalias (formerly brewers), Kambojs (rural caste), Lubana (merchants), Kumhars and the 2 Dalit castes- Majhabis and Ravidasias. Of the nearly 27 million Sikhs worldwide, approximately 83 percent live in India. Majority of the Sikhs living outside India, and a substantial population living in India, do not consider themselves as Indians and want their own sovereign nation- Khalistan- to be carved out of India. The blame for this squarely lies with the preachers of Savarkar / Golwalkar Hindutva that instigated Sikh genocide in 1984 when Indian PM Indira Gandhi was shot dead by her Sikh bodyguards. Till today, 34 years after the people responsible for this genocide have not been punished and Sikhs are still waiting for justice.

It is very unfortunate that misguided, dishonest, corrupt, semi or not educated at all Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Sikhs that do not understand Hinduism or Islam or Christianity or Sikhism or humanity at all have become top political & religious leaders and are pushing India towards a civil war in the name of religious supremacy.

The current ruling party BJP, and the followers of Savarkar/Golwalkar should be aptly named "Bharat Jalao Party" (Burn India Party) for spreading misinformation, fabricating history, inciting hate for minorities including Dalit Hindus. The Hindutva they want to impose has nothing to do with Hindu religion. Its top leaders mostly uneducated are telling especially Hindu women what to wear, how many children to produce, they cannot marry a non-Hindu and a marriage for them is

a contract of slavery with husband controlling their life. For vote politics they are inciting violence in the name of Cow in majority of the states of India, killing people or instigating mob lynching of suspects of eating or carrying beef. In north eastern states & Goa they are assuring the residents cheap and steady supply of beef! They are also denying the fact that today India is the number one beef exporter in the world and 95% of the slaughter houses for export are owned by upper caste Hindus.

Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Sikh leadership representing the largest, second largest, third & 4th largest sections of the society; must understand that all the religions of India are the two wings of the same bird called "Indian Public". Why don't they stop killing this bird in the name of Ram or Allah or Christ or Waheguru whatever they believe in? Why they want to impose ill-defined radical Hinduism or Islam or Christianity or Sikhism on India when majority of the Indians do not want that? None of them has ever thought about integrating all individuals of different religions, regions and factions of Indian origin on one Indian platform as "Nationalist Indians"?

Indians can learn from America. It is an open and diverse society; all of its members are equal with the right to identify themselves with America's "Founding Fathers and Freedom Fight Heroes". An African-American Barack Obama, son of a Kenyan Muslim immigrant and native white American mother; can speak with pride of George Washington, the father of the nation and Hero of the American Revolution/ War of Independence against the British Rulers. Obama, a Democrat, also has the right to speak with pride about Republican Abraham Lincoln who enacted the Emancipation of Declaration ending Slavery which later paved the way for Equal Rights for Blacks in America. The people of America elected Obama as its first African-American President by ignoring the race factor. This is the definition of a Democratic nation; multi-cultural and multi-racial. Here a person joins it by acquiring citizenship by birth or naturalization and from that moment on is the heir to all its cultural and social history. May be, Indians can learn something from American experience.

Every Indian Leader Religious, Political and Business and the intelligentsia must unite to put an end to human sufferings of the millions of Indians rather than spreading hatred in the name of religion invented or misinterpreted by them. They must pay attention to the vast majority of Indians whose voice they are ignoring. They are the sane and rational Indians with their hopes for better future, looking for progress, prosperity along with peace and harmony among all citizens.

(Dave Makkar is a community activist and author, based in New Jersey. He can be reached at davemakkar@yahoo.com)

do not agree with them?

The largest minority "Muslims" with 18% of the population, are Shia, Sunni, Wahabi etc and none of them wants to stand on one platform or are Indians first. The worst is they believe in the interpretation of Islam as being done by Muslim feudal lords and dictators of Middle East & other Islamic countries. Then the Savarkar/Golwalkar type Hindus and their religious & political organizations have alienated them more by destroying a disputed Ram Janma Bhumi/Babri Masjid in 1992 and by killing Muslims in Gujarat under CM Modi in 2002. Now Modi is PM of India and has never shown any remorse for the organized killing of Muslims. The worst is those that did the organized killing were let go free or are on bail

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Reflections of Readers of The Indian Panorama on India's 72nd Independence Day

After 71 years of independence, India is a highly developed country with developing country problems



After 71 years of independence, India is a highly developed country with developing country problems - Dr. V.K. Raju

Barbara Wootten, one of the greatest champions of higher education for women died at the age of ninety-one. Her autobiography, entitled "In a World I never made" is a fascinating book. She observed "the laughable idealism of one generation evolves into the accepted common place of the next." She lived to see the truth of her dictum proved right time and again, particularly in the field of female education.

When Lee Kuan Yew was asked on the BBC as to what attributed the phenomenal success of Singapore, his answer was "education". Education has been (correctly) defined as the technique of transmitting civilization. It is unfortunate that the country with the oldest and greatest civilization should be lackadaisical about the technique of transmitting. Education has never been a high priority item in any Indian political party's manifesto though there were some changes in the recent years. But still there are enormous gaps between the promises and execution.

It is only through female education at all levels and the private initiative of well educated women, that India will be of our dreams and will ever be transformed into what our constitution intended it to be. The criminalization of politics and the deplorably low moral tone of our public life may be the direct consequences of the failure to impart value-based education. India ranks very high in innate intelligence, but low in wisdom. (what the ancient Rishis called "Buddhi"). Today India has islands of excellence in a sea of mediocrity or even worse.

May I end by saying that I am an eternal optimist, but when I learn that of the girls under five years: 48% are stunted, 19% are wasted, 70% are anemic (moderate progress was made during the last few years), how can they learn? This is totally unacceptable in a country that sent a mission to Mars in the first attempt. And any country that ignores almost half of its population will fail to reach its true place in the modern world

Finally, to quote Nani Palkhivala "To my Countrymen":

- who gave unto themselves the constitution but not the ability to keep it.
- who inherited resplendent heritage but not the wisdom to cherish it
- who suffer and endure in patience without the perception of their potential.

We need only one change: the MINDSET!

India has abundant natural resources and all the man-power she needs. Then what is the problem? Real problem? In India, power is in one group and knowledge is in another group.

*Dr. V.K. Raju, M.D., F.R.C.S, F.A.C.S.
Founder & President, Eye Foundation of America,
Morgantown, WV
vkrajumd@gmail.com*



A Mixed Bag for India in 72 Years

Anu Jain

India completes 72 years of independence on August 15, 2018. But when we look back on what we have achieved or lost in these years, it is difficult to point out a single achievement or failure. There are countless achievements in many different fields, whether it's science, technology, medicine, society, or culture, our country has witnessed a tremendous transformation and progress.

One of our biggest achievements is our progress in technology. Today economic growth in the last twenty-five years has made India a super power. Information Technology being at the heart of our education system has created large pool of global entrepreneurs. India will soon become a technological and economic powerhouse for the world with a billion people achieving an improved standard in day to day life.

But still in certain areas there is no change, for example; religious diversity has been a defining characteristic of India's population for centuries. Religion continues to play a central role in India in daily life through its temple ceremonies, festivals, pilgrimages, and family religious traditions among others. Religion is taken far more seriously in India than it often is in the West and by virtually the entire population across India.

Another popular link is the ideas of songs and dances in Indian movies, people enjoyed then also, and they are still enjoying. Mostly there are no movies without songs and dance

Our biggest failure is corruption because this is one thing, which has caused maximum damage to our country. We could have done much better if our political system had not been as corrupt as it is today. Another concern or failure is the growing gap between the rich and poor which has not been reduced.

If India has to progress, deliver inclusive growth and lift many more millions out of poverty, the government needs to prioritize on a comprehensive educational policy and healthcare system to fast track the country's growth. The nation suffers from inadequate infrastructure and deep skills deficit. Without jobs the demographic dividend of youthful population can turn into a massive social and economic problem. India doesn't need nationalistic rhetoric and mere promises of prosperity. It needs real and faster development and a society that's just, peaceful and equal, which the country's leaders had promised at the time of independence. Otherwise, despite the boom years, India will continue to remain a struggling country.

*Anu Jain
New York
Jainanu2005@gmail.com*



India's greatness lies in its respect for diversity - Zafar Iqbal, Ph. D

On this auspicious day of 15th August, when we are celebrating the independence of India from British occupiers, let us also remember the sacrifices of Azadi movement heroes. The Ghadar Movement was an important episode in India's freedom struggle. A group of a few dedicated people comprising of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and other communities started the Ghadar Party and launched the movement. Most of them were hanged publicly by the British government. The movement gained strength and thousands of freedom fighters were subjected to capital punishment for their participation in the movement. Let us also not forget the contributions of Mahatma Gandhi, Subash Chandra Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, Rajendra Prasad, and many others who piloted post-independence India to an established democracy. Let us vow to maintain the secular nature of the constitution where people of all faith, caste, and color have equal rights. India is the largest democracy in the world and we need to work hard to become a world-leading democracy. Let us hope appropriate steps are taken to maintaining an independent judiciary, participation of all communities in sharing the power, and freedom of the press with an expectation that they would fulfill their role of a watchdog. Jai Hind, Hindustan Zindabad.

Zafar Iqbal, Ph.D., Washington, DC, Raabta.india@gmail.com



India's Unity in Diversity - Gunjan Rastogi

I am extremely proud of collaboration among the community organizations and believe it is a testament to the national pride we all feel for India. It is only fitting that we all unite to celebrate our beloved country's 72nd Independence Day. We need to recognize esteemed Indians of four major religions (Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian) and other community leaders from other regions of India with the main goal of bringing the community together. As we all know, India is a beautiful mosaic of different regions which have different languages, dressing style, dance, music, regional festivals, customs and traditions, yet we all are united to celebrate our national holiday and show unity in diversity."

*Mrs. Gunjan Rastogi
President
India Association of Long Island, New York
Gunjan.p.rastogi@gmail.com*



India needs to unite to exploit its full potential - Ven Parameswaran

I am very proud of India for many reasons. India was the most civilized and affluent country in the world. Mohan Jo Daro civilization demonstrates this. India invented zero, fraction, decimal algebra and geometry including the theorem that was renamed as Pythagoras theorem by Greece. Kautilya's Arthashastra was the first book on Political Science. Aristotle and Machiavelli published their books based on Arthashastra. I am proud the largest capitalized corporations -- Microsoft and Google are headed by Indians. I am proud the Dean of Harvard Business School is an Indian. I am proud Ireland and Portugal are headed by Indians. I am also proud America elected two Indian American Governors. India needs to unite to exploit its full potential.

*Ven Parameswaran
Chairman, Asian American Republican Committee, Scarsdale, New York
Former President & CEO, First Asian Securities, New York
vpware@gmail.com*



Nothing stops India from becoming a golden sparrow again - Rajiv Khanna

India has made progress since independence. Yet its potential is largely unexploited. If only India moved from its 100th position on ease of doing business to the top 20, it would open floodgates of investment and prosperity. Nothing stops India to be the golden sparrow again, expect India itself. It is time to correct this grave injustice that the Indian bureaucracy inflicts on India!

Rajiv Khanna, New York, rkhanany@gmail.com



Stay vigilant and never take freedom for granted - **Priya Mukhi**

August 15th represents a plethora of positive and joyous feelings of pride for all Indians, as it represents the date that more than 200 years of British colonial rule came to an end. Since that day in 1947, Indians around the world gather each year to celebrate and honor the freedom fighters who dedicated their lives to the independence of this great, beautiful nation.

The Indian Independence Day is a meaningful event for everyone, an opportunity for people of all ages and from all different parts of India to unite and celebrate the diversity and strength of our nation. The holiday gives younger ones the chance to learn more about their culture and connect in various ways with the earlier generations. In my personal experience, I have learned how much my grandparents and their parents coped and survived living under the rule of a foreign power. I have come to appreciate even more the benefits of living in a free country. Everyone who has endured the hardships and seen or heard about the independence struggles has a story, and I encourage everyone to listen and pass these stories down. These memories of suffering and privation should not be forgotten, as history teaches us integral lessons, such as a nation must stay united to retain its strength, as divided we fall.

Independence Day is celebrated in various ways across the globe. In India, there are numerous flag hoisting and patriotic presentations throughout different states, and the main event takes place at the Red Fort in New Delhi where India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, unfurled the Indian flag to officially mark the nation's independence. Every year since then on Independence Day, the Prime Minister hoists the beautiful tricolor flag and presents a speech on the history and progress of the country. In other parts of the globe, parades, flag hoisting events, and kite flying festivals are held to celebrate the holiday.

On this festive occasion, the freedom fighters are also honored. Leaders such as Sarojini Naidu, Mahatma Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad, the Rani of Jhansi and many more are remembered and celebrated for their efforts to bring peace and sovereignty to India. Arya Samaj leaders such as Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Swami Shraddhanand, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Bhagat Singh also took part in the great struggle for India's freedom. In fact, Swami Dayanand wrote one of the most influential works of the movement, Satyarth Prakash.

In midst of celebration for this joyous holiday, it is important not to forget the significance and message of the freedom movement that took place over 71 years ago. We must look forward, stay vigilant, and never take freedom for granted. As Pandit Nehru said just before midnight on August 15th, 1947, "At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity." And surely, as freedom rung, and the nation progressed, India has become a power to be reckoned with on the world stage.

*Priya Mukhi
Youth Leader of Arya Samaj of Long Island, New York
aryasamajoflongisland@yahoo.com*



Time for India and Pakistan to move forward- **Tajuddin Ahmad**

Let forget all differences of the past and resolved all issues on table, as new elected government coming into effect led by former cricketer Imran Khan as new Prime Minister taking oath on August 18th, 2018 in the capital Islamabad. Both leaders Modi and Imran are known by both nations for years and it's time now to move forward and bring peace in the regions.



*Tajuddin Ahmad
tajahmad717@yahoo.com*



Let us work together for a progressive and clean India - **Indu Jaiswal**

On August 15 Indians will celebrate its 72 ND Independence Day. We remember and Salute the people who fought for the freedom of India. We feel the pride that we are from such a glorious Land. With Freedom in the mind, faith in the words, pride in our souls, let us all salute the Nation on Independence Day. May the nation's Tricolor always fly high and wishing our dreams of anew tomorrow, Progressive and Clean India come true for us. Happy Independence Day

*Naye Daur mein Likhenge Mil Kar Nai kahani, HUM HINDUSTANI HUM HINDUSTANI
JAI HIND and VANDE MATRAM*

*Indu Jaiswal RDN CDN
Chair Indian American Forum, New York
indu@jaiswal.net*



Remember those who sacrificed their lives for India's freedom - **Gobind Bathija**

On the 72nd celebration of India Independence Day, on behalf of our Asamai Hindu temple and myself, I want to extend my sincere best wishes to our community as well Mr. Indrajit Saluja and The Indian Panorama Newspaper. We must remember those who sacrificed their lives to obtain independence. May India always enjoy freedom and continue to flourish and prosper.

*Gobind Bathija
Founder, P. President, trustee and Board mem
Asamai Hindu Temple, Flushing and Hicksville, NY USA
Gobind.bathija@gmail.com*



Observance of 71st Anniversary of India's Independence

Ashook Ramsaran

The Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) and its global affiliates, on the occasion of the 71st anniversary of India's independence, extend warm and special congratulations to people of India and Indians living in other countries who take much pride in this annual celebration.

Indians sacrificed for many years with struggle and lives in attaining their hard-fought and wrenching freedom from Britain on 15th August 1947. They used various independence movements, in particular, nonviolent resistance led by Mahatma Gandhi, to become free and independent. The partition with Pakistan resulted in violent riots, mass casualties and dislocation of millions of people.

Despite many initial difficulties, India has made enormous strides and progress since independence from dependency to becoming a major entity in the global arena.

A nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people. Freedom is never dear at any price. It is the breath of life - Mahatma Gandhi

We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future? - Jawaharlal Nehru

"Freedom is not given; it is taken" - Subhas Chandra Bose

"India's stature in the world is rising. Our India is at the door of great achievements. New India must include that integral humanist component that is in our DNA, and which has defined our country and our civilization. New India must be a society rushing towards the future, but also a compassionate society. Gone are the days when people gave up all hope from the government", Hon. PM Narendra Modi '2017.

Ashook Ramsaran, New York, ashookramsaran@gmail.com



72 Years of Independence has brought India to where it is today - **Devraj Aiyar**

As much as we ought to be proud, lets us not take our Freedom and Independence for granted. Many have sacrificed their breath for this to happen. We must celebrate this true spirit of Freedom by giving back to society as much as we could.

India is a country of rich diversity in culture, religion, arts and every field we can think of. As we rally together, behind our great leader Narendra Modi, we pray that the next decade will witness the India that we dream of. India whose richness will filter down to every single state, every city, every home. I take this opportunity to congratulate and thank the Chief editor of Indian Panorama, Prof Indrajit Saluja and his entire team for their outstanding effort in bringing the Indian community closer.

*Devraj Aiyar
CEO, Indo American Quartz LLC, New Jersey
dev@indoamericanstone.com*



Indian Diaspora has contributed much to India's growth - **Paul Sihota**

It was a Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa who led the movement for India's independence. It was a whole lot of Indians abroad who struggled and suffered for India's freedom from British rule. In independent India's history, again, it is the Indians abroad who have contributed significantly to India's growth. It is not just the remittances and investments; they introduced a culture which led to India's modernization characterized by a scientific temper which changed the face of India. I am glad, India has recognized the contribution of Indian Diaspora. However, much more needs to be done by government of India to attract their fullest cooperation. One, for example, is a right to them to contest elections to legislative bodies and get involved in governance of India. I hope, this demand from the Indian Diaspora will be met soon.

Paul Sihota, Fresno, CA

Jackson Heights Indian Merchants Association celebrates 72nd Independence Day of India

Extreme heat does not prevent people from participating

JACKSON HEIGHTS, NY (TIP): Jackson Heights Indian Merchants Association organized a celebration, August 15 to mark the 72nd Independence Day of India. The Indian National Flag was unfurled, and the Indian National Anthem sung by the gathering. Mohinder Verma, General Secretary of JHIMA conducted the brief program. Despite the heat of the day, a group of Indian merchants gathered to celebrate the Independence Day.

Shiv Dass congratulated the gathering on the historic day and reminded them of the need to promote friendliness and cooperation between India and America. He also emphasized how very important it is for the business community to promote trade relations between the two great democratic countries of the world.

Speaking on the occasion, Mohinder Verma made a passionate plea to never forget the freedom fighters of India who sacrificed their own interests for the sake of the country. He encouraged the business community of Jackson Heights to get involved in politics to get a better deal for themselves. He praised Shiv Dass for being instrumental in getting the 74th Street named as Kalpana Chawla Way.

Attendees were treated to lunch at Jackson Diner.

Organizers, including Shiv Dass and Mohinder Verma, President and General Secretary of Jackson Heights Indian Merchants Association at the celebration in Diversity Plaza in Jackson Heights
Photo / Nisha



contd from page 3

The Colossus of Indian Politics bids good bye

Vajpayee, who joined the Rastriya Swamsevak Sangha (RSS) in 1947 rose through ranks to become a stalwart of the BJP and was the first non-Congress prime minister to complete a full term in office.

"It was due to the perseverance and struggles of Atal Ji that the BJP was built brick by brick," Modi said in a tweet.

"He travelled across the length and breadth of India to spread the BJP's message, which led to the BJP becoming a strong force in our national polity and in several states," he added.

India grieves the demise of our beloved Atal Ji.

His passing away marks the end of an era. He lived for the nation and served it assiduously for decades. My thoughts are with his family, BJP Karyakartas and millions of admirers in this hour of sadness. Om Shanti.

- Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) August 16, 2018

It was Atal Ji's exemplary leadership that set the foundations for a strong, prosperous and inclusive India in the 21st century. His futuristic policies across various sectors touched the lives of each and every citizen of India.

- Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) August 16, 2018

Atal Ji's passing away is a personal and irreplaceable loss for me. I have countless fond memories with him. He was an inspiration to Karyakartas like me. I will particularly remember his sharp intellect and outstanding wit.

- Narendra Modi (@narendramodi) August 16, 2018

Vajpayee was born on December 25, 1924 in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh to a schoolteacher, Krishna Bihari Vajpayee, and Krishna Devi. Today, his birthday is celebrated as 'Good Governance Day'.

Mr. Vajpayee was Prime Minister thrice in 1996, 1998-1999 and 1999-2004. As his health deteriorated, he slowly withdrew himself from public life and was confined to his residence for several years.

In his tribute, BJP president Amit Shah said he was a "rare politician, brilliant speaker, poet and patriot, his demise is not just an irreparable loss for the BJP but also for the entire country."

Congress president Rahul Gandhi said on Twitter: "Today

India lost a great son. Former PM, Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, was loved and respected by millions. My condolences to his family and all his admirers. We will miss him." *(With inputs from PTI)*

Nation Celebrates 72nd Independence Day

The speech, at 82 minutes, repeatedly compared his own government's achievements to the "situation in 2013".

The speech was not just a report card of his tenure as Prime Minister but also a signal on future priorities if elected back next year.

He said India will launch its first manned space mission by 2022, which could make it the fourth nation to do so after the United States, Russia and China.

As emphasis went, the speech dwelt the longest on women and the poor. Mr. Modi decried the "demonic tendencies" of violence against women, and lauded fast track courts handing out death penalties in several cases -- a mention that got a round of applause from the audience.

He also announced that women short service commission officers in uniformed forces would get permanent commissions on transparent lines. "I'm proud to say that my Cabinet has the largest representation of women since independence," he said. He made a special mention of his government's efforts at bringing a Bill banning the practice of instant Triple Talaq among Muslims. "We tried to pass the Bill in the last session but there are those who have an interest in blocking it. It is my promise to my Muslim sisters that my government will try get the Bill passed," he said.

Prime Minister Modi also emphasized the speed at which his government had moved on basic developmental work like providing power, housing and toilets in villages and small towns. "We have the same people and systems but look at the speed at which things have been done. Achievements of this government have to be weighed in against what went on before, in 2013," he said, targeting the previous UPA government.

He announced anti-corruption measures and reassured tax payers that their money was not being wasted in leakages of government funds. The Prime Minister pointed to several pieces of

legislation passed by his government to tackle graft. "We have passed the banking reforms bill, the bankruptcy code and the benami properties act. We are a government that has the will to take tough decisions," he said.

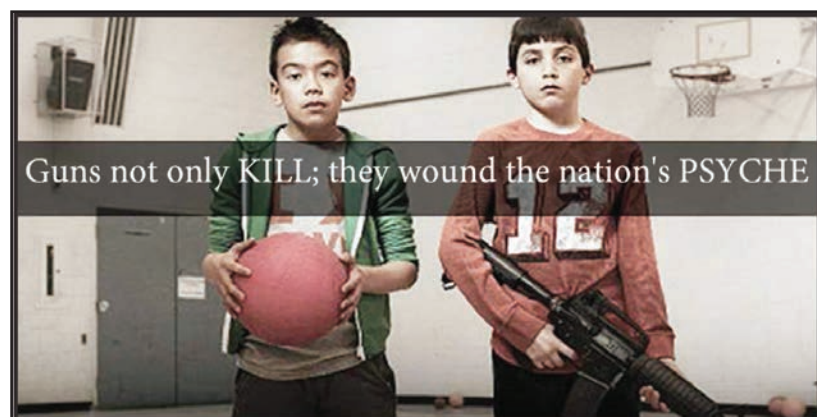
"Our government has added, in the last four years, double the number of direct tax payers from the last 70 years. I want the unsung tax payers of this country to know that my government is committed to ending leakage of public funds, and when you sit down for a meal be assured that a poor man and his family is also getting a meal under welfare programs funded by your honestly paid tax," he said.

While the speech in 2017 was dominated by Jammu and Kashmir, this year Mr. Modi repeated his call for dialogue and reconciliation, plumping for gale milna (a hug) rather than gali (abuse) or goli (bullet) and former Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's approach of 'Insaaniyat, Kashmiriyat and Jamhooriyat.'

He also said that panchayat polls in Jammu and Kashmir would be held soon and wished for a "balanced development" of all regions of the State.

He quoted Tamil poet Subramania Bharathiyar to emphasize that India was on its way to assuming some leadership in international fora: "India will show the world the way to freedom from all forms of slavery" he quoted from a poem by Bharathiyar and said that India was being heard seriously at international multilateral fora. "The strength of the Indian passport has gone up and Indians know that wherever they are in trouble, the Indian government will not abandon them," he said.

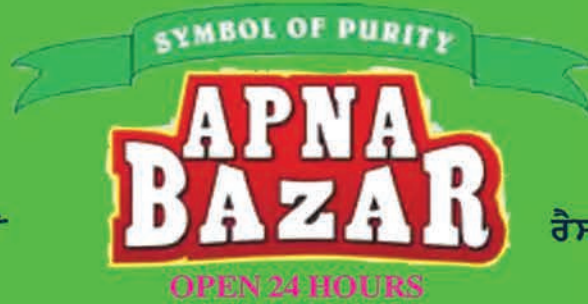
He ended the speech on a poetic note, exhorting the dawn of a "Navyug" or a new era, hewing to the meta narrative of the speech for a political renaissance.



ਜੀ ਹਾਂ! ਨਾਰਥਈਸਟ ਯੂ ਐਸ ਏ 'ਚ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਮਾਲ
ਆਪ ਆਓ, ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਆਓ, ਪੂਰਾ ਦਿਨ ਇਥੇ
ਮੇਲੇ ਵਰਗਾ ਅਨੰਦ ਮਾਣੋ

KUNDAN GALLERIA

ਗ੍ਰੋਸਰੀ ਤੋਂ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਕਪੜੇ, ਜਿਊਲਰੀ ਤੱਕ ਹਰ ਚੀਜ਼ ਇਕੋ ਥਾਂ ਖ਼ੀਦੋ



ਆਪ ਬਿਊਟੀ ਸੈਲੋਨ ਤੋਂ
ਹੋਅਰ ਸਟਾਈਲ ਬਣਵਾਓ ਤੇ
ਪਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਣਾ ਬਾਜ਼ਾਰ ਤੋਂ
ਗ੍ਰੋਸਰੀ ਕਰਵਾਓ!

ਪੰਜ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ
ਰੈਸਟੋਰੈਂਟਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਚੱਟਪਟੇ ਤੇ
ਸਵਾਦਿਸ਼ਟ ਖਾਣੇ
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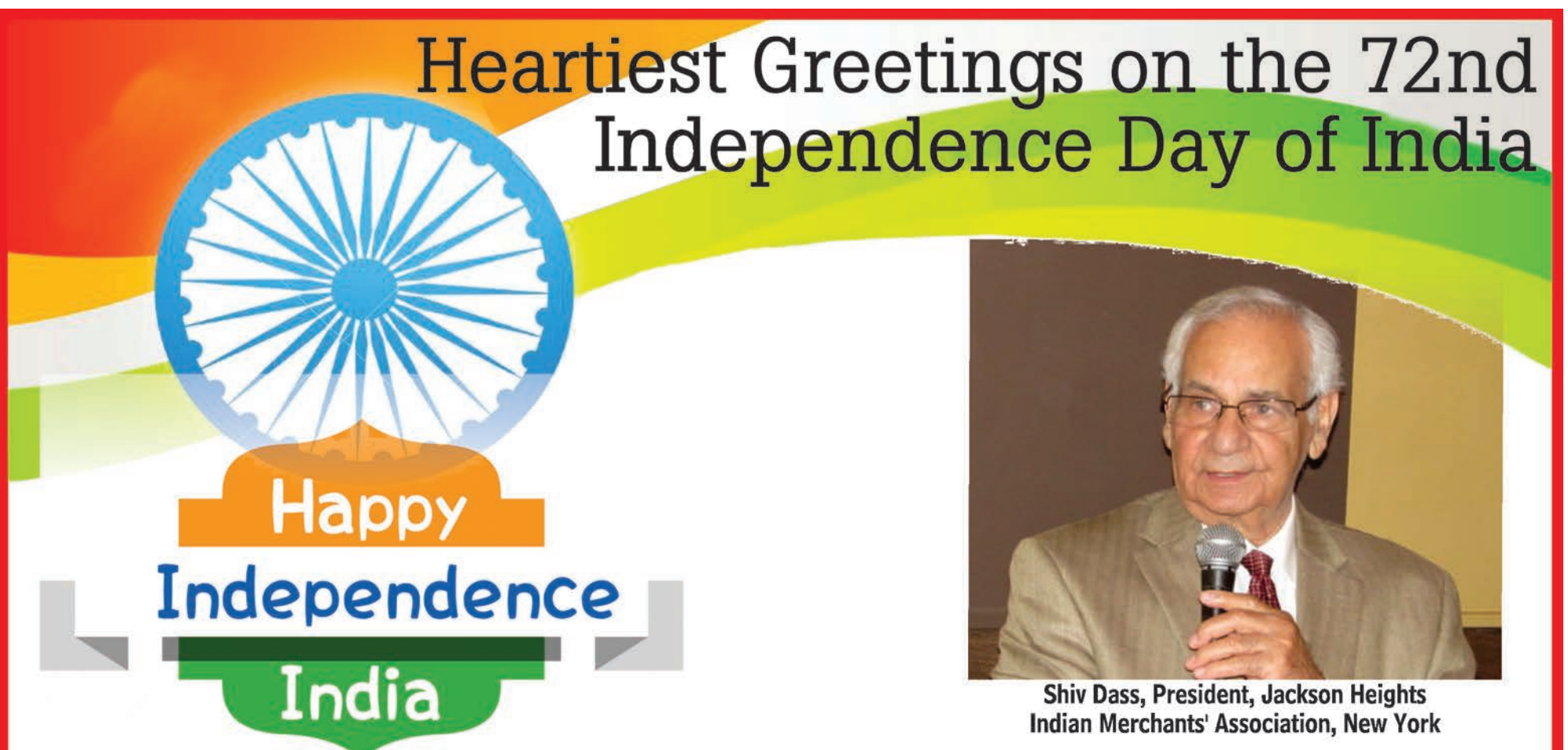


15th August
HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY



Peter and Dorothy Bheddah

Dorothy and Peter Bheddah extend warm greetings to the readers of The Indian Panorama on the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day



Heartiest Greetings on the 72nd Independence Day of India



Shiv Dass, President, Jackson Heights Indian Merchants' Association, New York

Ellis Island Medal of Honor awardee, Shiv Dass is the First Vice Chair of Queens Borough Community Board 3, of which he has been a member for 16 long years. He is a member of Advisory Board of Elmhurst Hospital since 2016. For decades Shiv Dass has been a voice for the South Asian business community in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York. He is a business leader, a community organizer, and member of the local community board and has worked tirelessly to establish a positive and open relationship between the community and the elected officials, and in turn, he is often sought out by politicians seeking to get their message out.



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Kudos to FIA team for hosting largest India Day Parade

I, President of the Global Interfaith Foundation, congratulate Srujal Parikh and his team at FIA including Chairman – Ramesh Patel, Vice Chairman – Yash Paul Soi and trustees including H.R Shah, Sudhir Parikh and Kanu Chauhan. They have come together to create the largest India Day Parade being held on August 19th. Srujal Parikh came from New Jersey to Hicksville, NY to join me at my event and to invite everyone in attendance, which included town Judges and officials, to the India Day Parade in Manhattan. During my July 22 event we launched the Global Interfaith Foundation which is publishing a biweekly journal titled 'One World under God' with articles from scholars of the 6 major world religions: Sikhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism and Jainism. The Global Interfaith Foundation has also declared giving scholarships to graduating students from Hicksville High School. The purpose for starting this foundation is for me to give back to the community to create peace and harmony.

Darshan Singh Bagga



Darshan Singh Bagga, publisher of One World Under God, honoring his longtime friend Bobby Kumar with Man of The Year Award from Global Interfaith Foundation. Bobby is Chairman of Nassau County Commission of Human Rights and has deep knowledge of the Sikh holy book, the Guru Granth Sahib. He is admired by both Republicans and Democrats.



At the India Day Parade on August 9 hosted by IDP-USA in Hicksville NY, Darshan Singh Bagga joins Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Hon. Joseph Saladino



Darshan Singh Bagga honoring Indu Jaiswal with the Woman of the Year award from the Global Interfaith Foundation. She has a great ability to maintain peace regardless of what anyone might say to her. (From left to right Mr Bagga, Indu Jaiswal, Bobby Kumar and Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Hon. Joseph Saladino)



Srujal Parikh, President of FIA-NYNJCT, giving a speech on July 22 at the Grand Opening of Bagga Plaza II in Hicksville and launch of 'One World Under God'. He is the IT manager in the New York Police Department and trustee of NYPD Indian Police Officers Society. Women's empowerment is an issue close to Parikh's heart: half of his executive committee are women!



Ahmed Shakir extends warm greetings on the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day

Happy Independence Day





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AR RAHMAN LIVE CONCERT

Celebrates 25 Glorious Years in NEW YORK - September 1

By Mabel Pais

A.R. Rahman, in celebrating his Silver Anniversary of glorious years in music, will embark on a highly anticipated North America tour.

The internationally renowned 2-time Oscar Award and 2-time Grammy Award winning virtuoso musician and composer A.R. Rahman will be accompanied by a troupe of Bollywood's well-acclaimed artists. The musical evening in New York will be held at the Nassau Coliseum, Long Island, New York on Saturday, September 1, 2018 at 8 PM.

A.R. Rahman is an Indian film composer, record producer, musician and singer. His film scoring career began in the early 1990s. He has won twenty five Filmfare Awards, four National Film Awards, a BAFTA Award, a Golden Globe, two Grammys and two Academy Awards. Rahman in 2003 in a career spanning over a decade and working in India's various film industries, international cinema and theatre has sold more than 100 million records of his film scores and soundtracks worldwide, and sold over 200 million cassettes, making him one of the world's all-time top selling recording artists. Time Magazine has referred to him as the "Mozart of Madras" and several Tamil commentators have coined him the nickname Isai Puyal (Musical Storm).

On September 1, the audience will witness a concert of a lifetime, brimful of entertainment, spectacle and nostalgia that no music enthusiast should miss. The event looks to set a new benchmark for Indian concerts in the region with a show of this scale.

AR Rahman and his team have taken time to create and perfect performances that are enriched with the best technology and production, by engineers and designers from around the world. You will experience the best lighting, visuals, sophisticated gadgetry, lasers, kinetic backdrop, along with a spectacular cast of musicians and dancers.

The concert will see the prolific singer-songwriter and composer, eclipse his previous performances by taking audiences through a dazzling tour of his greatest musical achievements including songs from Slumdog Millionaire as well as landmark Indian films like Roja. Roja was a run-away success and brought nationwide fame and acclaim to Rahman. TIME Magazine rated the soundtrack of Roja in the Top 10 of their all time best movie soundtracks of the world; the movie also won Rahman the Indian National Award for the best music composer, the first time ever by a debutant.

Since Roja, Rahman has gone on to win 2 Academy Awards, 2 Grammy Awards, 1 BAFTA Award, 1 Golden Globe, 4 National Film Awards, 15 Filmfare Awards and 13 Filmfare Awards-South in addition to numerous other awards and nominations. Time magazine, who dubbed him "the Mozart of Madras", placed him in its list of the world's 100 most influential people in 2009. TIME describes him as "the world's most prolific and popular composer."

Accompanying AR Rahman on the North America tour are artists Udit Narayan, Javed Ali, Ranjit Barot, Mano, Haricharan, Linda Lind, Jonita Gandhi and Neeti Mohan.

Udit Narayan, one of the most popular singers of the Hindi film industry, is appreciated for his original style and voice quality. This multi talented playback singer has sung in numerous films and in many languages as Nepali, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Bengali and Oriya.

Born in Nepal, he started initially with a brief stint on the Nepal Radio. He sang Maithili, Nepali and Bhojpuri songs during the 1970's. By the end of the 70's he moved to Bombay to pursue music training in Indian classical music at the Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan.



AR Rahman with 8 performing artists

Photo / Courtesy Prria Haider Productions/27th Investment/Yollay

His first break in a Hindi film was in 1980 when music director Rajesh Roshan offered him a song in the movie "Unees Bees." It was an incredible honor for Udit when he sang with his mentor Mohammed Rafi.

However, his real big break came in 1988 with Papa Kehte Hain" ("Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak"), that year's biggest hit. This song gave him instant stardom and he went on to win his first Filmfare award. After the movie's huge success, Udit Narayan and Alka Yagnik sang together for hit movies.

He is the onscreen voice of three major superstars of Indian cinema: Shah Rukh Khan, Aamir Khan and Salman Khan.

He is one of the top choices of acclaimed music directors like A.R. Rahman, Nadeem Shrivani, Rajesh Roshan and Shankar Mahadevan, Yash Chopra, Sanjay Leela Bhansali and Karan Johar. Javed Ali, known as the versatile golden voice of all time, is a prolific Indian playback singer and live performer in the Bollywood Film Industry.

Ali started singing at an early age, under the direction of his father Ustad Hamid Hussian, with jingles (advertisements) and title tracks for TV soaps (TV serials). Then gradually moving into film music, he got his 1st break as a playback singer in the year 1998 for the film "Beti" no.1. Thereafter Ali's career expanded in Hindi films with songs including the lively Nagada Nagada ("Jab We Met") in 2007.

In 2008, Ali under the direction of A.R Rahman sang the soulful track Jashn-e-Bahara (Epic Film "Jodha Akbar"). He won further acclaim, when he became the voice for Aamir Khan and the track Guzarish under the direction of A.R Rahman. Another song Tu Muskura ("Yuvraaj" in 2008) got immense popularity. Simultaneously Javed Ali started performing live with his band internationally and in A.R. Rahman's world tour.

Ali sings in 16 Indian languages in films featuring many leading actors.

In the year 2011 Ali started his television career as a mentor in the popular reality show Zee TV Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Ill Champ. In 2012 he was the presenter/host of the very popular singing reality show Zee TV SaReGaMaPa 2012.

For learn more on Javed Ali, visit www.javedali.in

Ranjit Barot is an Indian film score composer, music director, music arranger, drummer and singer. He has been described by guitar legend John McLaughlin as "one of the leading edges in drumming", and is part of John McLaughlin and

the 4th Dimension, touring Europe. His collaborations with musicians overseas have included artists such as John McLaughlin, Jonas Helborg, Ayden Esen, and Tim Garland.

In 1980, he performed at the Jazz Yatra in Europe with the Jazz Yatra Sextet (with Louis Banks), besides performing with Pandit Ravi Shankar's ensemble on the same tour. This phase saw journeys to Europe and the West with leading Indian jazz/pop and classical musicians.

He has been a featured drummer and arranger for R.D. Burman, Laxmikant Pyarelal, Kalyanji Anandji, Anu Malik and Ismail Darbar, and to the present, as arranger/producer. Barot has been an integral part of some of A.R. Rahmans work through the years.

Barot was the music composer and sound designer for the entire opening and closing ceremonies of the Commonwealth Games Delhi 2010 and represented India with his Live Performance at the "India Inclusive" showcase at THE World Economic Forum (WEF), Davos, 2011.

Mano, is an Indian playback singer, voice-over artist, actor, producer, television anchor and music composer who has performed in over 3,000 concerts across continents. He is a recipient of several awards from the Indian states of Andhra and Tamilnadu. Mano has recorded over 30,000 songs for several Telugu, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, Oriya and Bollywood films; of particular note are 2,000 songs for music director Ilayaraja.

Haricharan is a trained classical Carnatic vocalist-playback singer, Computer Science Engineer and an MBA.

He debuted in Producer Shankar's "Kaadal" in Joshua Shridhar's music, delivering 3 runaway hits. Unakena Irupaen was nominated for the national awards in 2005.

Following these Haricharan has sung almost 300 songs in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada and Malayalam with leading music directors like Isaignaani Ilayaraja and AR Rahman.

He is the recipient of the Virtuoso Award for best male-new-comer, the All India Radio award for the best-male-playback singer and the LG Sangam award for his debut song Unnakena Irupaen. His recent song Thuli Thuli from the movie "Paiyya" has created a record of being the song broadcasted the most number of times and found its place in the All India Top 20.(courtesy: Indian Broadcast corporation).

He was conferred the title of BALA KALA RATNA by Bharathiya Vidhya Bhavan. Haricharan has an orchestra of 6 renowned

"The Mozart of Madras..... the world's most prolific and popular composer"

Time Magazine

"It has been an incredible journey over these last 25 years.

.....the Almighty has been kind in giving me happiness that has only multiplied year after year. I've been immensely blessed to have the love and support of my fans, friends and family."

A.R. Rahman

musicians. He performs in Tamil, Hindi, Telugu and English. Besides being a trained classical musician, he organizes music-fusion concerts.

Linda Lind is a multi talented singer, songwriter, producer and influencer. Hailing from Sweden, Linda began her musical journey singing at local events and has since toured with Julio Iglesias and most recently performed solo at Times Square, NYC for World Kindness Day. Linda has independently released music that has amassed 400K + streams and has been featured in one of the best selling video games in the world! NBA2K18!

Jonita Gandhi, from Ontario, Canada, pursued an exciting musical career in Western Classical music and Bollywood music. She made her Bollywood debut in the title track of the 2013 Blockbuster hit film "Chennai Express." She has also been featured on MTV India's Coke Studio Season 3 in Clinton Cerejo's episode. She has recently sung two songs in the film "Highway", music by A.R. Rahman.

Neeti Mohan, an Indian playback singer from Delhi, was one of the winners of the Channel V's reality show Popstars, subsequently being chosen for "Aasma," with other winners of the show.

She rose to prominence after recording Ishq Wala Love from "Student of the Year" (2012), ultimately winning the Filmfare RD Burman Award for New Music Talent and was nominated for the Best Female Playback Singer for Jiya Re from "Jab Tak Hai Jaan" (2012).

In 2016, she received her second Filmfare nomination with the song Sau Aasmaan from ("Baar Baar Dekho"). That year, Mohan appeared as a coach in the 1st season of The Voice India Kids and the second season of The Voice India. Besides her career in music, she has also been involved in various charities and social causes.

A R Rahman to tour India to celebrate 25 years in music

Music maestro A.R. Rahman's confesses his passion for music..."From husband to father to composer to mentor, I have embraced different roles but the music has always been constant. Music for me serves as the spiritual bond between the audience and myself. I am excited to be performing at home after such a long gap,"

He with his team is all set to embark on a multi-city tour to commemorate 25 years in music that began with his debut with Mani Ratnam's 1992 film "Roja". The current tour, A R Rahman ENCORE - The Concert, will travel to Hyderabad (November 26), Ahmedabad (December 3), Mumbai (December 17) and Delhi (December 23).

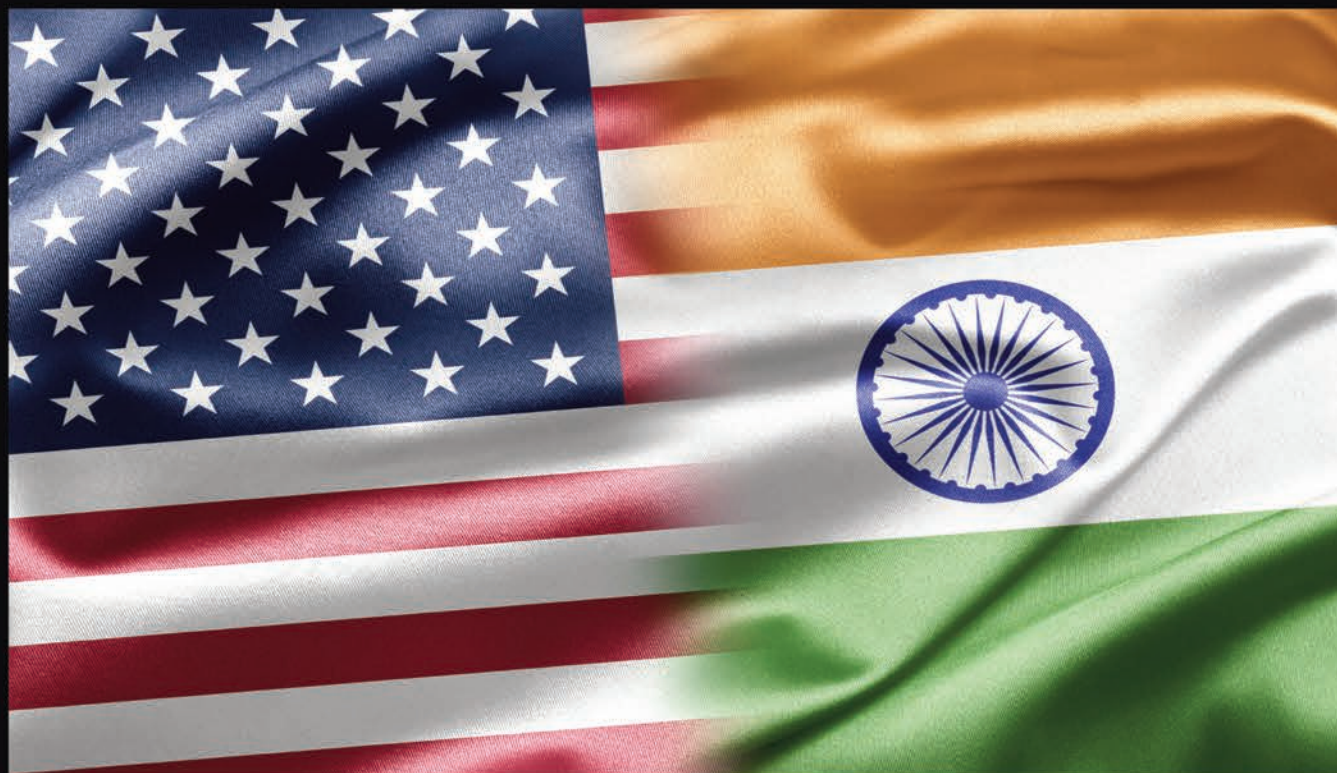
LIVE Viacom18, along with official ticketing partner BookMyShow have partnered to bring the tour in association with MTV.

The AR Rahman Live Concert is presented by Prria Haider Productions with Bollywood Hungama as the Marketing Partner and Yollay as the Media Partner.

Tickets for the concert are on sale on Ticketmaster, Yollay and Sulekha.

For more information, visit www.prriahaidproductions.com or www.yollay.com

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



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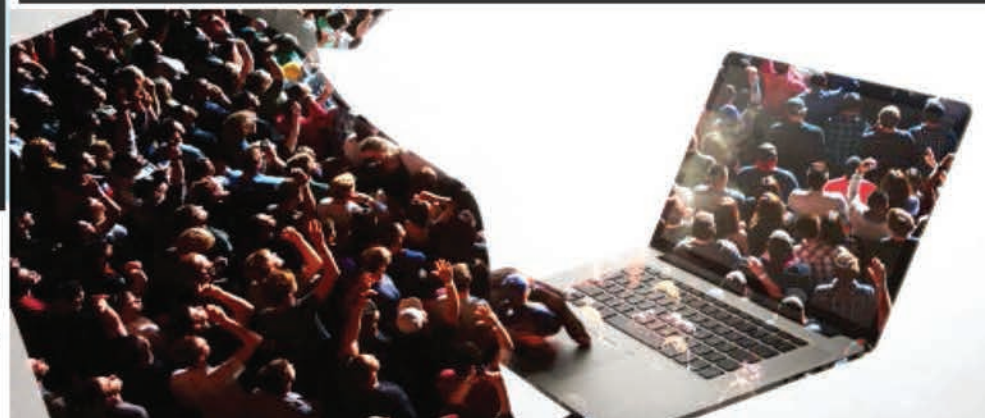
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AJIT WADEKAR: APRIL 1, 1941 — AUGUST 15, 2018

A SHREWD CAPTAIN AND A THOROUGH GENTLEMAN

AJIT Wadekar did not possess the princely demeanour of Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi, but with his middle-class grit coupled with pragmatic thinking, he scripted one of the most glorious chapters in the Indian cricket history.

An astute thinker of the game, Wadekar blended the copybook Bombay school of batsmanship with his carefree approach that included muscular pulls and audacious hook shots. His biggest achievement was leading the country to twin series victories in England and the West Indies in 1971 but he was much more than just that. The man who breathed his last in Mumbai on August 15 played 37 Tests and had only one hundred against his name. But the numbers do not tell the complete story of Wadekar the batsman and captain.

Wadekar epitomised the khadoos nature of Mumbai cricketers but he could also enthrall the cricket lovers with his audacious pull shots and slog-sweeps. When the late Vijay Merchant (erstwhile chairman of selectors) handed over the captaincy to Wadekar in 1971, little did anyone expect that an Indian team would be able to compete and win in the alien conditions of England and West Indies. He was lucky that Sunil Gavaskar's arrival coincided with his ascendancy to the hot seat but he should get the credit for throwing a 21-year-old to the deep end of the pool.

Add to it, his decision to form a four-pronged spin quartet with Bishan Singh Bedi, Bhagwat Chandrasekhar, Erapalli Prasanna and Srinivas Venkatraghavan. That attack formed the backbone of the Indian team, with Eknath Solkar at forward short-leg snapping up some unbelievable half-chances..

It was an era when India used Abid Ali, Eknath Solkar or Sunil Gavaskar to take the shine off the new ball with their millitary medium pace.

If Gavaskar was the hero in West Indies, Wadekar unleashed Chandrasekhar on the Englishmen at a time which could be aptly called the '70s show'.

Wadekar was a product of a time when education was paramount and university cricket produced stalwarts. Wadekar was a



late starter as he aspired to become an engineer before cricket consumed him. Mumbai's old-timers recall that he was a very good student from his days at the famous Elphinstone College, where he got a princely Rs 3 as tiffin allowance for being the 12th man in a college match. But the college principal had cautioned him against pursuing the game, reminding Wadekar that he was a science student.

But destiny had other plans for him. Wadekar would be remembered as the finest product of university cricket. His record triple-hundred in the Vizzy Trophy (for West Zone Universities) was incidentally bettered by Gavaskar. He was perhaps the most elegant left-handed Indian batsman to have graced the field before Sourav Ganguly arrived on the

scene.

There is an interesting anecdote about Wadekar's Test debut against West Indies at the Brabourne Stadium in 1966. A few days before the match, rival captain Sir Garfield Sobers saw a young man bat at the nets wearing tattered boots. Sobers asked him: "Why are you wearing torn shoes?" and pat came the reply from Wadekar: "These are my lucky shoes." The next day Sobers bought a brand new pair of boots for him. Sobers told him to wear them during the debut Test. During a Ranji Trophy match in 1970, Wadekar broke his bat after scoring a century and substitute fielder Sunil Gavaskar rushed in with replacement bats, including his own. Wadekar hit four boundaries and then got out. When he came to the dressing room, he asked,

whose bat it was and Gavaskar told him that it was his. "It brought you bad luck," Gavaskar said, and Wadekar replied: "But those four boundaries were the best shots in the innings."

Wadekar's rise as a captain was as sharp as his fall but those were the times when BCCI mandarins believed in knee-jerk reactions and one bad tour ended his playing career at 33. Wadekar lost his captaincy after a disastrous England tour of 1974, when India lost 0-3 in the Test matches. And to humiliate him further, the selectors dropped him from the West Zone and Mumbai teams.

In the aftermath of the 1974 defeat, a giant bat erected in Indore commemorating the '71 win was defaced and his house in Mumbai was stoned. Wadekar retired from cricket and concentrated on his banking career. He reached the top position in State Bank of India, and in 1992, was summoned to take over as the manager of an under-performing Indian team and a low-on-confidence skipper Mohammed Azharuddin.

In the next four years, India were unbeatable at home with Wadekar unleashing three young spinners — Anil Kumble, Rajesh Chauhan and Venkatpathy Raju — on the visiting teams.

It was an instant success formula that teams follow even now. He had a brilliant sense of humour but knew when to crack the whip too. A former India captain was seen endorsing a shoe brand during a practice session of the India team. Wadekar saw it and did not say a word in public but didn't forget to tell the cricketer how he felt about it. He got Sachin Tendulkar to open the innings in the ODIs, and the rest is history. He was the first coach-cum-manager who understood the need for man-management, trying to understand the psyche of each and every player separately.

His father's name was LB Wadekar and he would often jokingly say, "Mere toh naam mein hi LBW hain." With his demise, Indian cricket has lost one of its finest cricketing brains, a statesman and a raconteur.

Source: PTI

Does this Kohli-reliant team have a leadership group at all?

Aakash Chopra

NEW DELHI (TIP): Success is like a magnet that brings the players closer. On the other hand, failure is a repellant that can push players away from each other. But like happy families, good teams also come closer in the moment of crisis. An abject loss can be very demoralising and if not handled sensitively, it can lead to players drifting away, and the moment it happens, there's no recourse to past glory. At least, not in the immediate future.

Every dressing room in the world shares the same DNA — it'll always comprise of supremely confident players (who have found their path and can be trusted to be left alone), players who often need an arm around their shoulder (need comforting and handling with kid gloves), players who need to be constantly challenged (harsh words and actions are necessary for their betterment) and players who tend to gravitate towards the happy areas in the room (generally the younger lot that can be called the fringe players).

Understanding the dynamics of a dressing room is critical to chart a new course of action following a dreadful loss. While



it's almost a norm that a loss like Lord's, as opposed to the loss at Edgbaston, would invite some harsh words from the captain

and coach, a good coach-captain understands that everyone is equally hurt and therefore, showing them a mirror is going to be enough. It's also important to avoid singling out individuals, for you run a risk of losing that player.

Good teams identify a leadership group really early and that makes all kinds of crisis management a lot easier. Coach-captain are never going to be enough to address everyone's needs and concerns individually and therefore, you need more hands on deck to firefight properly.

In my time with the Indian team, seniors like Rahul Dravid, VVS Laxman, Anil Kumble and Sachin Tendulkar had assumed that responsibility, which not only left Sourav Ganguly and John Wright to focus on team strategies but also, took a huge burden off their shoulders.

The defeats in Melbourne and Lahore hurt us deeply but the leadership group never allowed it to become big enough for the younger lot to be affected by it. It'll be interesting to know if the current Indian team has a leadership group and what kind of roles they've assumed and are assigned, for getting the team together in the right spirit after back to back losses can be quite a task.

Source: HT

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