

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL

DEEPAVALI
Festival of Lights
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Articles and advertisements are invited for Deepavali Special edition of The Indian Panorama. Please email to editor@theindianpanorama.com & salujaindra@gmail.com

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For any question, please call 646-247-9458

She said, He Said at Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing of the Accuser and the Accused

'Feared being raped, killed', says the accuser Dr. Ford. The accused SC Nominee Kavanaugh proclaims innocence, terms it a smear campaign against him

WASHINGTON (TIP): Dr. Christine Blasey Ford, a university professor on Thursday, September 27, detailed her allegations that Brett Kavanaugh, President Donald Trump's Supreme Court nominee, sexually assaulted her 36 years ago, saying she thought he was going to rape and perhaps accidentally kill her, during a dramatic US Senate Judiciary Committee hearing.

Christine Blasey Ford, whose voice sometimes cracked with emotion, testified to the Senate Judiciary Committee during a hearing that could determine whether Kavanaugh will be confirmed to the lifetime job after a pitched political battle between Trump's fellow Republicans and Democrats who oppose the nominee.

"With what degree of certainty do you believe Brett Kavanaugh assaulted you?" Democratic Senator Richard Durbin asked Ford. "One hundred per cent," she replied, remaining firm and unruffled through hours of questioning.



Dr. Christine Blasey Ford and Judge Brett Kavanaugh testify before the US Senate Judiciary Committee on Capitol Hill on Thursday, September 27

Trump says he prefers to keep Deputy A-G Rosenstein: Thursday Meeting postponed: White House



WASHINGTON (TIP): President Donald Trump has postponed his planned meeting with Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein until next week, the White

House announced on Thursday, September 27.

contd on Page 20

Peace, security in S Asia essential for progress: Swaraj at SAARC meet; Pakistan says India obstructing



India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said the number of incidents endangering South Asia are on the rise and terrorism remains the single-largest threat to peace and stability in the geopolitical region, and the world. Photo / Courtesy PTI

NEW YORK (TIP): External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj emphasized to SAARC countries that an environment of peace and security in

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Ayodhya dispute: SC declines to refer to larger bench whether mosque is integral to Islam

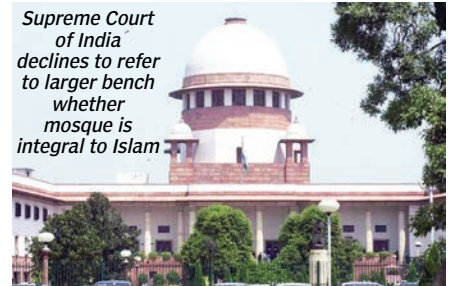
Hindu groups hail Supreme Court verdict. 'High-powered' saints' panel to decide future action on Oct 5

NEW DELHI (TIP): Hindu groups welcomed, September 28, the Supreme Court decision refusing to refer to a larger Bench its 1994 verdict that said mosque is not integral to Islam, thereby

weakening the Sunni Wakf Board's claim over the disputed land.

The BJP's ideological fountainhead RSS and its affiliate Vishwa Hindu Parishad expressed satisfaction while hoping for an early decision on the matter. Stating that all sorts of impediments to "delay the matter" (construction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya) have now been removed,

contd on Page 20



Supreme Court of India declines to refer to larger bench whether mosque is integral to Islam

After a Snub, Google CEO to Meet with US Lawmakers

WASHINGTON (TIP): Google CEO Sundar Pichai is scheduled to meet privately with members of Congress Friday, September 28 after he and his boss, Google co-founder Larry Page, stood up lawmakers at a public hearing earlier this month.

The closed-door gathering is expected to include discussions about President Donald Trump's recent allegations that Google has been rigging the results of its influential search engine to suppress conservative viewpoints. Google has denied any political bias.

Recent reports that Google is poised to re-enter China with a search engine generating censored search results to comply with the demands of that country's Communist government are also expected to be on the agenda. Also, potential new regulations that would define how much personal information that internet companies can collect about people using their services.

Both Trump and some U.S. lawmakers also have been raising the possibility of asking government regulators to investigate whether Google has abused



Friday's meetings will be a prelude to his anticipated return to Washington in November for a public hearing before the House Judiciary Committee that's scheduled for after the midterm elections

its power to thwart competition through its dominant search engine and other widely used services that include Gmail, YouTube, the Chrome web browser and its Android software that runs most of the world's smartphones.

Pichai's meeting with about two dozen

Republican lawmakers will be held in the Capitol office of House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, who represents a district in Google's home state of California.

"Google has a lot of questions to answer about reports of bias in its search results, violations of user privacy, anticompetitive behavior, and business dealings with repressive regimes like China," McCarthy said in a statement.

"These meetings will continue Google's long history of engaging with Congress, including testifying seven times to Congress this year," he said.

Google and its corporate parent, Alphabet, may also be trying to mend some political fences after Pichai and Page - now Alphabet's CEO - snubbed Congress a few weeks ago. Neither of them appeared at a high-profile hearing looking into what Twitter, Facebook and Google have been doing to prevent Russia and other foreign governments from using their services to sow discord among U.S. voters in an attempt to sway elections.

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Indian Origin Canadian Entrepreneur Ken Singh Donates \$20,000 for Kerala Flood Relief

NEW YORK(TIP): The Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) Life Member Ken (Kanhai) Singh of Toronto, Canada, has donated \$20,000 CAN (\$16,000 USD) towards Kerala Flood relief.

The donation was made to the Vishnu Mandir to channel the desperately needed funds appropriately and for optimum reach and relief to those "affected by the recent devastating floods which that have caused numerous deaths, displacement, suffering, pain and anguish. Several local and international news reports have compared this flooding as the worst in Kerala in a century".

Ken Singh remarked that his "contribution is to help those in urgent need in Kerala, being of service to humanity at such times of massive despair and destruction"

Ken Singh made the generous donation upon solicitation of Cliff Rajkumar, president of IC Canada, who conferred with IDC on the most efficient and expedient way for optimum effect.

Guyana born Ken is President of Atlas Cargo, International Freight Transportation in Toronto with branches in Calgary, Edmonton Montreal and Vancouver. He was recently profiled in



Ken (Kanhai) Singh of Toronto, Canada, has donated \$20,000 CAN (\$16,000 USD) to towards Kerala Flood relief

IDC JOURNAL Newsletter: <http://www.indiandiasporacouncil.org/dc-journal-march-2018.php>

Excerpt from IDC profile: "Ken believes in giving back to society and he finds the time, amidst his busy schedule to actively assist in his local community and many other social causes worldwide. The Life Illustrated magazine article states, "He volunteers with the CPPS, a catholic mission project that works on projects to

provide health care and clean water in Africa. The Central American arm of World Vision; Bosnian Children Cultural Heritage Center are all beneficiaries of his efforts to contribute to the various communities."

IDC commends Ken Singh on his generous contribution and continues to urge relief contributions online and desperately needed clothing, materials and non-perishable food via bona fide international relief agencies and community organizations.

For more information contact:
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AshookRamsaran@gmail.com
Mobile (USA) +1 917 519 5783

Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.

<http://www.indiandiasporacouncil.org/news.php?id=86>

Indian-Origin man arrested for making derogatory Racist Comments against South African President



Kessie Nair has been arrested in South Africa for making derogatory racist comments against President Cyril Ramaphosa in a video posted on Facebook

JOHANNESBURG, SA (TIP): A former Indian-origin city councilor has been arrested in South Africa for making derogatory racist comments against President Cyril Ramaphosa in a video posted on Facebook.

In the viral video, former Durban councilor Kessie Nair, who was earlier sentenced to six years in prison for fraud in 2005, called Mr Ramaphosa a "kaffir" -- a derogatory term used against black people during the racist apartheid

era. In the video, Kessie Nair said that he is prepared to take a bullet or go to prison for the rest of his life.

"I... do hereby call for that kaffir state president Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, yes I mean the kaffir state president Cyril Ramaphosa, to be charged for frauding [sic] this nation, for oppressing this nation, for high treason, for failing and he's the source to all crime violence poor healthcare, poverty that prevails in a so-called true democracy," he said in the nearly five-minute-long video.

"I'm ready to go to jail for the rest of my life or take a bullet, I just want to say that the truth will hurt." Media reported. In 2005, he was sentenced to six years in prison for fraud.

He said that it took 13 years of introspection to release the video, reported. "Nobody wakes up one morning and makes a statement and a video like that on social media," Kessie Nair further reported.

He was arrested in Durban and was charged with incitement of public violence and crimen injuria or injuring a person's dignity.

Nair, the nephew of late struggle stalwart Billy Nair, has received widespread condemnation from various quarters, including the provincial ANC, community and religious organizations, as well as the presidency.

His family has distanced themselves from his utterances. They issued a statement urging South Africans to forgive him and promising to do their best to "make amends". "We have a history of being in the trenches fighting apartheid and being involved in the struggle for the liberation of this country from the shackles of the nationalist government," said his brother Krishnan Nair.

Krishnan added that his brother suffered from a chronic illness and "needs immediate medical care and attention." Presidential spokeswoman Khusela Diko said that the rant did not deserve attention and that Nair needed support from friends and family.

Indian- Origin British Sikh Woman Jailed for Harassing Hindu Ex-Boyfriend and Family

LONDON (TIP): An Indian- origin British Sikh woman was handed down a two-year suspended jail term by a UK court for launching a campaign of racist abuse and harassment against her Hindu ex-boyfriend and his family over a period of five years, including posting beef through their door as an attack on their faith.

Amandeep Mudhar had pleaded guilty to racially aggravated harassment and was handed down a two-year sentence at Swindon Crown Court in south-west England on September 25.

"Most people from religious backgrounds seek to find a common ground on what they share, be it a faith in god or human nature. Not from you: your behavior was unrelenting, provocative and extremely frightening," said Judge Robert Pawson during the sentencing hearing.

The court was told of Amandeep Mudhar orchestrating a series of attacks on the unnamed family of her former boyfriend, including abusive and threatening phone calls and attacks on social media.

The court was told that the 26-year-old had a brief relationship with the man, which was "never fully intimate", over a few weeks in 2012. But after he ended the affair citing cultural differences, Amandeep Mudhar and her family launched into the attacks which included threats of rape against his sisters and mother and also to blow up their home and cars, the local daily reported.

Prosecutor Sue Cavender told the court that after 2015, she was made subject to a harassment warning by the police and a civil injunction brought by the family, which prevented her from contacting them.

Read full story on
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Indian-Origin UK Based Couple Slashed with Knife in UK Fruit Store Robbery



Armed robbers injured Chamamn Lal and his wife Vidya Wati in their fruit and vegetable store in Handsworth, West Midlands

LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin UK based couple were slashed in a knife-point robbery at their fruit and vegetable shop in Handsworth, in the West Midlands region of England.

Chaman Lal, a local politician, and his wife Vidya Wati were taken to a hospital with minor cuts and injuries after the armed robbery at their shop Uplands Fruits on Sandwell Road.

West Midlands Police said a 45-year-old man and woman aged 33 were arrested on suspicion of the robbery and remain in police custody for questioning.

"We don't underestimate how distressing this would have been for the two victims. We have managed to quickly identify and arrest the suspects who will now be questioned," said Detective Inspector Gemma Currie of West Midlands Police.

Chaman Lal, a Labour Party Councillor for Soho and Jewellery Quarter in Handsworth, near the city of Birmingham, runs the fruit and vegetable business with his family. The couple's son, Bal, had released CCTV footage of the attack and offered GBP 1,000 reward to anyone with information about the attackers.

"We are still shocked at the moment. It was a bad experience," Councillor Lal said.

"We have had very good support from our family and the community. We are grateful for all the support we have been getting," he said.

The shop reopened as usual and attracted a number of well-wishers.

22-Year-Old Sikh Soldier who made history in UK faces expulsion after being tested positive for Cocaine



Charanpreet Singh Lall could be kicked out from his post after he tested positive for cocaine

LONDON (TIP): The 22-year-old Sikh soldier Charanpreet Singh Lall, who created history by becoming the first to wear a turban during an annual parade to mark British Queen Elizabeth II's birthday ceremony, could be kicked out from his post after he was tested positive for cocaine, according to a media report.

Singh made headlines across the world for wearing the turban during Trooping the Color in June.

However, last week he failed a random drugs test at his barracks, with insiders claiming he registered "high levels" of cocaine, according to media reports.

"Guardsmen Lall has been discussing it openly in the barracks. The Guards carry out public duties at the Palace, it's disgraceful behavior," a source was quoted as saying by the report.

Brigadier Christopher Coles, Head of Army Personnel Services Group, said: "I can confirm that a number of soldiers from the Coldstream Guards are under investigation for alleged drugs misuse." Mr Lall, who was born in Punjab, moved to the UK with his family as a baby. He later joined the British Army in January 2016.

Read full story on
www.theindianpanorama.news

US not considering oil reserve release over Iran: US Energy Secretary Rick Perry

WASHINGTON (TIP): The Trump administration is not considering a release from the US emergency oil stockpile to offset the impact of looming Iran sanctions, and will instead rely on big global producers to keep the market stable, Energy Secretary Rick Perry said on Wednesday.

"If you look at the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and you were to introduce it into the market, it has a fairly minor and short-term impact. The numbers I've seen do anyway," Perry told reporters at the Department of Energy, explaining the administration's thinking.

The US Strategic Petroleum Reserve currently holds about 660 million barrels of mostly sour grade crude in underground caverns in Texas and Louisiana. Under US law, the government can sell up to 30 million barrels of oil, or about the amount of petroleum the United States uses in 36 hours, from the reserve over a number of weeks.

Perry said that, while price spikes are possible in the short-term, "I'm comfortable that the world supply can absorb the sanctions that are coming." Up to 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil could reach markets if Iraq allows it to flow from the Kurdistan region in the north, Perry said.

He also said up to an additional 300,000 bpd could soon come to market from an oilfield in the Neutral Zone that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait share, if they come to agreement.

Prices for oil traded in London have risen steadily above \$80 a barrel ahead of the reimposition of US sanctions on Nov. 4 on Iran, a member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Oil producers from OPEC and Russia met over the weekend but ruled out any immediate increase in output. The move effectively rebuffed President Donald Trump's calls on oil producers to take action.

Saudi Arabian Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said on Sunday he does not influence oil prices, after Trump called on OPEC to bring down the cost of fuel. (PTI)

US senators seek preservation of employment authorisation for immigrant women on H-4 visas

WASHINGTON (TIP): Two powerful Democratic women senators have urged the Trump administration not to go ahead with its decision to revoke authorisation to immigrants on H-4 visas, a majority of who are Indian-Americans, as doing so would impact about 100,000 women.

H-4 visas are issued by US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to immediate family members — spouse and children under 21 years of age — of the holder of H-1B visa, the most sought-after among Indian IT professionals. Senators Kamala Harris from California and Kirsten Gillibrand from New York wrote a letter on the matter to Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen and USCIS Director L Francis Cissna. The letter comes after Department of Homeland Security told a US court last week it is going to revoke employment authorisation of H-4 visa holders and a notification in this connection is to be issued in less than three months. The Trump administration is reviewing the H-1B visa policy that it thinks is being misused by companies to replace American workers. (PTI)

World leaders laughing at me during UNGA address 'fake news': Donald Trump

Heads of state and government present at the UNGA Hall on Tuesday audibly laughed as Trump began his address by reciting US economic gains under his leadership.

WASHINGTON (TIP): Dismissing as "fake news" the reports that world leaders were laughing at him during his speech to a session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), US President Donald Trump asserted that the delegates were not laughing at him but "laughing with me".

Heads of state and government present at the UNGA Hall on Tuesday audibly laughed as Trump began his address by reciting US economic gains under his leadership.

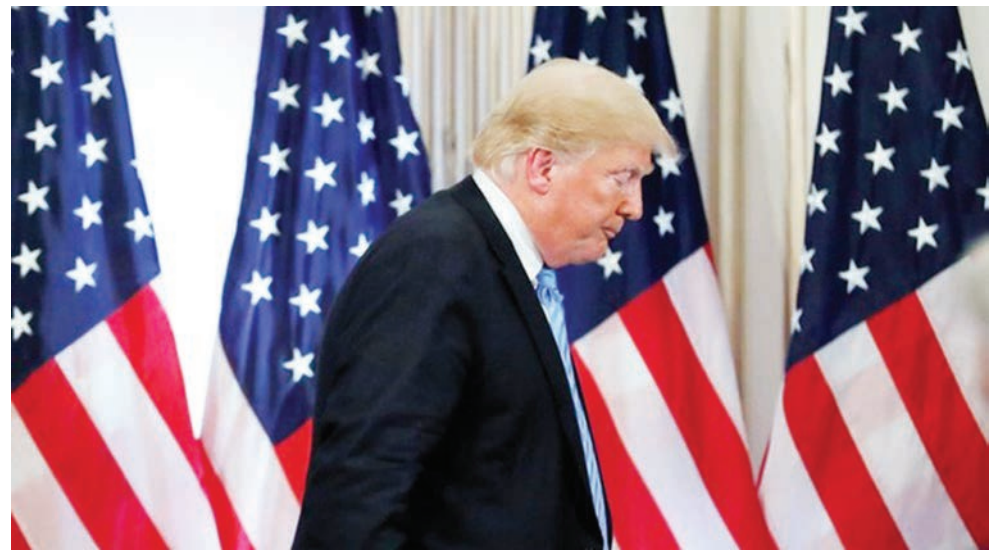
"That's fake news, and it was covered that way," Trump said at a press conference on Wednesday.

"I was in front of a large group of highly professional people, most of whom are from either other countries or the United Nations, people that aren't big into clapping, applauding, smiling, and I heard a little rustle as I said our country is now stronger than ever before. It is true. I mean it is true. I heard a little rustle. And I said, it is true.

"And I heard smiles. I said, I didn't know there would be — they weren't laughing at me. They were laughing with me. We had fun. That was not laughing at me. So the fake news said, people laughed at President Trump. They didn't laugh at me. People had a good time with me. We were doing it together," Trump said.

The world leaders laughed as Trump touted the accomplishments of his administration, beginning his UNGA address by saying that his administration has "accomplished more than almost any...in the history of our country".

"Today, I stand before the UNGA to share



the extraordinary progress we have made. In less than two years, my administration has accomplished more than almost any administration in the history of our country. So True," Trump had said. His remarks elicited laughter and claps from the world leaders gathered at the UNGA hall for the General Debate. "Didn't expect that reaction but that's OK," Trump had responded.

He said America's economy is booming like never before and since his election, the US have added USD 10 trillion in wealth.

"The stock market is at an all-time high in history...African-American, Hispanic-American, and Asian-American unemployment have all achieved their lowest levels ever recorded," Trump said.

He said his administration has added four million new jobs, including half-a-million manufacturing jobs and has passed the biggest tax cuts and reforms in American history. "We have started the construction of a major border wall and we have greatly strengthened border security. We have secured record funding for our military, USD 700 billion this year and USD 716 billion next year. Our military will soon be more powerful than it has ever been before.

"In other words, the US is stronger, safer, and a richer country than it was when I assumed office two years ago. We are standing up for America and the American people, and we are also standing up for the world," he said. (PTI)

Trump, Abe agree two-way trade talks, Japan dodges US auto tariffs

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe agreed on Wednesday to start trade talks in an arrangement that, for now, protects Japanese automakers from further tariffs, seen as a major threat to the export-dependent economy.

In a joint statement, the two countries said the talks "will respect positions of the other government," drawing lines on autos and Japan's agriculture sector.

Trump has made clear he is unhappy with Japan's \$69 billion trade surplus with the United States — nearly two-thirds of it from auto exports — and wants a two-way agreement to address it.

Tokyo had worried that Trump would demand a reduction in auto imports from Japan or that he could impose steep tariffs on such imports on national security grounds.

Abe said the billions of dollars in investments and jobs created by Japanese companies in the United States were built on the spirit of free trade, and that Trump had affirmed this view at their meeting. Any measures to restrict trade, he said, would be harmful. "We must by no means turn back the clock," he told a news conference following his meeting with Trump on the sidelines of

the U.N. General Assembly. "In fact, we need to be more active in trade investments to build on this relationship."

Abe said that as part of the agreement, the United States would not impose additional tariffs on the auto sector, while also protecting the politically important farm sector from access that goes beyond what had been agreed under the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement that Trump abandoned in 2017.

For Trump's part, he said he was "happy" to have gotten Japan to agree to bilateral trade talks and expected a "satisfactory conclusion". "This was something that for various reasons over the years Japan was unwilling to do and now they are willing to do," Trump said at a summit with Abe in New York.

TAG NOT FTA: Abe later stressed that the new framework would be a Trade Agreement on Goods (TAG), not a more wide-ranging Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that includes rules on investments and services that Japan has resisted.

Still, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer told reporters he is aiming for a full free trade deal requiring approval by Congress under the "fast track" trade negotiating authority law. The law requires Congress to be notified 90 days before

negotiations can begin and Lighthizer said that he will start consultations with lawmakers on Thursday.

Lighthizer said the talks would be tackled in two "tranches" with hopes for an "early harvest" from the initial talks on reductions to tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers in goods. He declined to specify when an imbalance in autos trade would be addressed but acknowledged autos were a key goods area. Wednesday's joint statement said that for the United States, "market access outcomes in the motor vehicle sector will be designed to increase production and jobs in the United States in the motor vehicle industries."

"Actually I think we will probably come to a conclusion and I think it'll be something very exciting," Trump said. "We're going to have a really great relationship, better than ever before on trade. I think it's going to be better for Japan and better for the United States."

On Tuesday, top trade officials from Japan, the United States and the European Union agreed to cooperate on steps aimed at reining in China's "non-market" economic policies, such as those aimed at technology transfers and subsidies in the form of state bank loans to state-owned enterprises. (Reuters)

First Ever Women's Business Expo & Job Fair in Chicago Indian community organized

CHICAGO, IL (TIP): The Womens Empowerment Campaign of Chicago (WE) organized the very first Womens Business Expo & Job Fair on Sunday Sept 16th, 2018 at the Waterford Banquets, Elmhurst IL. The goal was to serve as a platform for women-owned businesses & women professionals. The event was a huge success including a business expo, job fair, motivational speakers, high-level public officials, personality pageant, fashion show, dance performances, youth forum & more. WE is a networking & empowerment platform for Indian women in Chicagoland with over 1700 members. Council General of India Neeta Bhushan was the chief guest of the event. "What organizations like WE is doing for the women of our community is commendable. Platforms like WE are very needed. For our community to prosper women business owners must be supported" said Neeta Bhushan.

WE was launched by Rita Singh, Shital Daftari & Dr. Anuja Gupta in Nov 2017. "We wanted to form a group that showed the power of Indian women in Chicago" said the founders. The philosophy of the founders and leadership team was to build a powerful community of support for Indian women in Chicagoland thru this platform. The founders are prominent businesswomen & community leaders in Chicagoland. "I was looking for a networking platform specifically for Indians in



From L to R. Dr. Anuja Gupta, Rita Singh (Founders of the Women's Empowerment Campaign), William Menezes, Marketing for Malabar Gold & Diamonds, US, the keynote speaker for the event Jayshree Patel with her daughter

Chicago. There was no major networks & the existing organizations seemed small. That's when I thought there's definitely a need for a big organized network" says Dr. Anuja Gupta who is a physician and real estate developer of Verandah Retirement Community. Rita Singh who is an IT business owner and also has experience in show business says, "I had a very gratifying experience mentoring other people who wanted to start their own business and wanted to do it on a larger scale thru this platform. I wanted to make a meaningful difference in the Indian community". Shital Daftari who is an e-commerce business owner of Saris & Things had a different perspective, "when I came to this country on an H1B visa I didn't know where to start to find friends and other like-minded people. Having a network like this makes it easy".

The WE Womens Expo 2018 was the first of its kind to serve as a platform for women-owned businesses. Over 75 women-owned businesses were present including a wide range of businesses such as clothes, jewelry, home products, professional services & women's organizations. Even the food vendors at the event were women-owned services. "It was very important for us to limit the businesses to women-owned only. Most other community events have 90% men-owned businesses present. At our event we wanted to give full opportunity to women business owners" says Dr. Anuja Gupta, one of the founders of WE. Rita Singh, another founder of WE, added "Empowering small businesses owned by women is one of the best services we can provide on our platform. As business-owners ourselves we know the barriers other women business owners face & our event was specially designed to overcome some of the challenges.

The event was combined with a Job Fair presented by GEC Council, a company specializing in job fairs supported by private & public companies. Nazneen Begum is president of the company which offers job fairs all over the state of IL. "For GEC Council it was a great opportunity to team up with WE to do the job fair. The WE platform attracts a crowd known for women professionals & business owners" said Nazneen



L to R, Dr Anuja Gupta, Arshia Wajid, First Lady of IL Diana Rauner, Shital Daftari, Rita Singh with Consul General of India, Neeta Bhushan

Begum. Over 25 recruiters from private & public companies were present at the event. The type of companies represented included public and private job openings. To supplement the job fair GEC Council organized a Jobs Workshop with high-level speakers including Syed Hussiani, banker at Wintrust Bank who does a lot of business with small business owners, Dr John Kalares from State of IL and Chicago Bears player Desmond Clark. "Presenting a diversity women's job fair was a good opportunity for GEC Council" said Nazneen Begum

The kind of vendors represented at the business expo included small & medium sized women-owned businesses. For many vendors this was the first opportunity to showcase their business. The pageant was sponsored by Malabar Gold and Diamonds, US, having its presence in 9 countries with 230 Stores Globally. Malabar Gold and Diamonds is shortly opening up its 1st Showroom in Chicago thereby making its presence in the 10th Country. The group is amongst the top 5 Jewelers in the world. Mr. William Menezes, Marketing for US said "Malabar Gold and Diamonds is a very exclusive brand. The members of the WE group are the perfect kind of clientele that our jewelry is made for." "My business sells Pashmina shawls and this expo was a good opportunity for many people who have never touched real Pashmina to know what it feels like" said Meenu Mann owner of Kashmina Shawls Inc. Sarla's Skillet was another business for whom this was the first expo. "I got a lot of useful feedback from a niche clientele that I would like to service" said Sarla Verma, owner of Sarla's Skillet. The two food vendors present at the event were both women-owned businesses. "This is a very well-organized event which got us great exposure for our business" said Nala, owner of Nala's Delight a food catering business based in Schaumburg IL.

The business expo & job fair was accompanied by thoughtfully organized stage activities to keep the visitors engaged. This included motivational speakers, high-level dignitaries, a beauty with purpose pageant, fashion show, youth forum and dance performances performed by local children's groups. Cosmetic & Reconstructive surgeon Dr. Tripti Burt was one of the speakers. Her topic was "Look Your Best" focused on newer plastic surgery procedures & beauty tips. Shirley Hogsett, president of Destiny Speaks & founder of Women2020 was another speaker at the event. "Women leadership is very important in our community. Events like this focus the highlight on women leaders & women in business" said Shirley Hogsett.

The keynote speaker of the event was Jayshree Patel from New York Life Insurance. Jayshree was selected as she recently was awarded the top agent award from New York Life. It was the first time in the 173-year-old history of the company that the award went to a woman and to an Indian. Her speech titled, "Shattering the ceiling - My journey to the Top" was very well received by the audience. "Winning the top spot at a company like New York Life is a sign that Indian women are rising to the very top in big American corporations. It reflects the changing status of Indian women in American society" said Jayshree Patel. The event was opened by a special "Ganesh Vandana" presented by the Maharashtra Mandal. There were 6 dance performances by local dance groups including women & children.

The dignitaries attending the event included top-level public officials from both the Republican & Democrat parties. IL First Lady Diana Rauner, Lieutenant Governor Evelyn Sanguinetti, Attorney General candidate Erika Harold,

Congresswomen Laura Murphy, Congresswomen Michelle Mussman, State Representative Karina Villa & more were in attendance. "It is very important for women, especially minority-women to vote and also to consider public office as a career. Women are the backbone of our system and highly underrepresented in public office. It is very encouraging that organizations like WE support women public candidates" said Diana Rauner, First Lady of IL. Other dignitaries present included Raees Yawer, Trustee of Village of Streamwood & Dupage County judge Linda Davenport. "Women voters are a very important segment that is often over-looked. Each one of you present has the potential to choose the next President,



With the pageant sponsored by Malabar Gold & Diamonds, L to R: Jasar - Operations for Malabar Gold & Diamonds, US, Ms. Monica, "Winner as the Woman of Substance" for the pageant Competition held at the WE Expo'2018, William Menezes - Marketing for Malabar Gold & Diamonds, US.

Vice-President or Judge" said Linda Davenport.

For entertaining the visitors, the event had thoughtfully planned beauty with a purpose pageant, fashion show and dance performances. The beauty pageant attracted a good level of professional women as candidates. "The WE Woman of Substance pageant is a beauty with a purpose pageant to celebrate the modern woman who lives her life with grace & intelligence" said Sonica Singh, one of the WE Team members who helped to organize the pageant. The Fashion Show at the event was presented by Yamini Kalra Saggur owner of The Purple Closet boutique. "I wanted to participate in the event to showcase bold new Indian looks that my customers find stylish but comfortable" said Yamini Kalra Saggur.

More information about WE is available on their website www.ChicagoWE.com and their facebook page @ChicagoWE

INDIA UNHAPPY OVER PAK RAISING KASHMIR AT OIC

NEW YORK (TIP): India has raised objections over Pakistan raking up the Kashmir issue at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) meeting, saying it is completely "unwarranted" for the grouping as well as its member countries to discuss matters related to India's internal affairs in any multilateral set up.

Pakistan raked up the Kashmir issue at the OIC Contact Group meeting held Wednesday, September 26, on the sidelines of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly.

"We always note with regret that the matter which is very internal to Indian affairs was again discussed at the OIC," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar told reporters here when asked about Pakistan raising the issue at the OIC meeting. He said India rejects such references to a matter which is very internal to it.

"We have said in the past that OIC has no locus standi to comment on India's internal affairs" and it is completely unwarranted for OIC as well as its member countries to discuss matters related to India's internal affairs in any multi-organization set up.

When asked about Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi also raising the Kashmir issue in his bilateral meetings on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, Kumar said Islamabad has been doing this for a long time.

"It is not the first time they are raising the issue in their bilateral meetings. You would note that what they come up with is their side of the story. What they share and what they say has no acceptance anywhere in the international community," he said. He said Pakistan has realized its "falsehood" and what it has been projecting had already been rejected by the global community. *Source: PTI*

Important to keep peace at border, India tells China



NEW DELHI (TIP): India and China on Thursday reviewed progress in maintaining tranquillity along the disputed boundary following the informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping in April, when the leaders decided to give strategic guidance to border troops to keep the peace at the border.

Besides discussing the situation at the frontier, Indian officials reiterated the importance of keeping the peace along the boundary in overall bilateral ties. Though not specifically mentioned, the two sides are believed to have discussed the importance of increasing military-to-military contacts at different levels.

Officials from the two countries gathered in Chengdu, the capital of China's southwestern province of Sichuan, on Thursday for the 12th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC).

"They (officials) discussed ways to effectively manage border areas in accordance with the strategic guidance provided by the leaders of the two countries at the Wuhan Summit," said a late-night statement from the Indian embassy in Beijing. The officials also "explored various confidence-building measures with a view to further enhance mutual trust and understanding".

The statement added: "The Indian side emphasised that peace and tranquillity in the India-China border areas is an important prerequisite for smooth development of their bilateral relations."

The Chinese side was yet to comment on the talks till late Thursday night. It was the first time officials of the two countries met under the WMCC mechanism since Modi and Xi held talks in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in April. Ties between the two countries have seemingly been on the upswing following the summit despite old differences – including the border – remaining unresolved. *Source: HT*

Adultery no longer a crime, wife is not property of husband: Supreme Court

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on September 27 ruled for equality with a Constitution bench unanimously striking down as unconstitutional the adultery law that only punished a married man for having consensual relations while exempting the woman from punishment.

The court found section 497 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860, which governs adultery to be "arbitrary and violative of Article 14 (right to equality) of the Constitution". The provision imposes culpability on the person who has sexual intercourse with a woman who is, and whom he knows or has reason to believe to be, the wife of another man, without the consent or connivance of the husband.

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dipak Misra, who led the five-judge Constitution bench that also included Justices D.Y. Chandrachud, Indu Malhotra, A.M. Khanwilkar and R.F. Nariman, upheld the tenets of privacy in the marital sphere. Criminalizing adultery would amount to "immense intrusion into the extreme privacy of the matrimonial sphere" and is "unlikely to establish commitment", the chief justice said.

"Mere adultery cannot be a crime. But if any aggrieved spouse committed suicide because of a life partner's adulterous relation and evidence is produced, it could be treated as abetment to suicide," said CJI Misra.

The 158-year-old provision was also quashed upon examination of its underlying patriarchal notion that conceives of women as property and thus the need to realign the law.

Justice Chandrachud, in his concurring judgement, held that the law was also based on sexual stereotypes that view women as being passive and devoid of sexual agency.

Justice Chandrachud held that there



was "manifest arbitrariness" in section 497, which deprived a woman of her agency, autonomy and dignity. "Section 497 lacks an adequately determining principle to criminalize consensual sexual activity and is manifestly arbitrary," he said. Justice Chandrachud also questioned how the law failed to recognize the agency of a woman whose spouse was engaged in a sexual relationship outside of marriage.

"Parameters of fundamental rights should include rights of women. Individual dignity is important in a sanctified society. The system cannot treat women unequally. Women can't be asked to think what a society desires," Justice Misra said.

The verdict also goes to show how jurisprudence around the subject of criminalizing adultery, constitutional morality and sexual agency has evolved through the years. "Decriminalizing adultery is a welcome step on so many levels. It reflects the journey the law has taken over the years. There was a time when a bench comprising Justice D.Y.

Chandrachud's father had upheld its criminality. So it has been a beautiful journey of interpretation of constitutional morality and guarantees to have found a new meaning in today's times," said lawyer Aishwarya Bhati.

The court was hearing a batch of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the legal provisions governing adultery, in so far as it discriminated against men.

The counsels for the petitioners had asserted section 497 to be in violation of Article 14 (equality before law), 15 (prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, caste or sex) and 21 (right to life) of the Constitution of India, as it was heavily gender biased.

"Criminal law is supposed to be neutral. Section 497 is prejudiced against males and imposes an excessive penalty," it was submitted.

The petitioners also sought that section 497 be looked at from a fresh perspective in light of the judgement of the Supreme Court on the right to privacy.

Sabarimala temple can't shut doors on women, rules SC

NEW DELHI (TIP): No woman can be stopped from entering Sabarimala temple, the Supreme Court ruled on Sept 28 (Friday), ending a traditional ban on the entry of women between 10 and 50 years of age to the hilltop shrine in Kerala.

Women of an age to menstruate have been restricted from entering the over 800-year-old shrine in south Kerala's Pathanamthitta district as its presiding deity, Lord Ayyappa, is considered to be a celibate. Five judges of the Supreme Court, who tested this traditional ban against the constitutional right to equality before law, had asked the temple board to establish that the restriction was an "essential and integral" part of religious faith.

But after hearing the board and other parties, the bench indicated that the practice appeared to be based on the "patriarchal" belief that a man's dominant status in the society makes him capable of austerity. Chief Justice Dipak Misra headed the constitution bench, which also comprises justices Rohinton Fali Nariman, AM Khanwilkar, DY Chandrachud and Indu Malhotra. Acknowledging the presiding deity has rights including the right to privacy with regard to certain rites observed at the shrine, CJI Misra had said, "But whether the right



of privacy is the same as reflected in the judgment that recognizes privacy as a fundamental right will have to be examined."

Lawyer Indira Jaising, who appeared for the petitioners, the Indian Young Lawyers Association, argued the temple rules on entry of women were discriminatory as they were based on sex alone. Citing the Constitution, she contended that any custom or practice which violates its Articles 14 and 15 pertaining to equality should be struck down.

Congress' 'Stink And Sink' jibe at govt on Rafale row

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Congress on Sept 27 (Thursday) stepped up attack on the PM Modi government over the Rafale fighter jet deal, alleging it targeted the official who had reportedly raised "objections" on its price.

Staging a protest march in Mumbai, the party demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman submit their resignation to facilitate a free and fair probe into the matter.

The opposition party also claimed that French President Emmanuel Macron did not contradict Francois Hollande's claim that the PM Modi dispensation had suggested the private offset partner, instead of the state-run Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), for the deal, which was tantamount to the confirmation of his predecessor's claim.

The Congress said the Rafale scam has begun to "stink" and the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government has "begun to sink".

Congress chief Rahul Gandhi hit out at the PM Modi government for reportedly targeting the Defence Ministry official who allegedly raised "objections" over the price of the Rafale jets.

He took to Twitter to take a swipe at PM Modi with a poem in Hindi alleging that he gave benefits to "crony capitalists" at the cost of the state-run Hindustan Aeronautics Limited in the Rafale deal.

Gandhi also alleged that the officer who raised questions over the deal was penalised, while those who sided with the government were rewarded.

He tagged a media report that alleged that the Defence Ministry official who raised objections over the price of the Rafale jets "proceeded" on a month's leave and the 36-Rafale deal was approved by the Defence Acquisition Council thereafter.

Citing the same media report, Congress's chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala, in a Tweet, claimed that the PM Modi government "sent on leave the 'whistleblower'", who questioned the loss to the state exchequer "by paying 300%



Modi govt refutes Congress' allegations

The Narendra Modi government on Thursday rejected Congress party's allegations that laid down procedures were not followed in the Rafale fighter jet deal, and a bureaucrat who had flagged the benchmark price of the deal was sent on forced leave.

At a press conference, Congress leader S Jaipal Reddy said then joint secretary and acquisition manager (Air) in the defence ministry Rajeev Verma had raised questions about the benchmark price of the Rafale fighter jet. Reddy, and also Congress chief Rahul Gandhi in a tweet, cited an Indian Express report on the subject.

Official sources dismissed media reports as well as allegations by Congress leaders. They said the newspaper report suffered from several "factual errors". Defence

extra for 36 Rafale".

He also alleged that a senior officer, who overruled the official who raised questions over the Rafale jets pricing, was made a member of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).

"Perks of pleasing Modi Govt cover corruption tracks," he claimed.

Gandhi at a poll rally in Chitrakoot in



Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the official was a signatory to the final note on the agreement which was presented to the Union Cabinet for approval in August 2016. "The note that was presented to the Cabinet had the signature of the official. At the time of discussions, there may be divergent views which are recorded. But at the end, a decision is taken collectively," Sitharaman told India Today news channel.

Madhya Pradesh said, "The man, who claims to be the country's watchman, has himself put Rs. 30,000 crore in the pocket of (industrialist) Anil Ambani in the Rafale deal."

Describing Anil Ambani as PM Modi's "friend", the Congress leader alleged that the industrialist has a debt of Rs. 45,000 crore.



HOW SUPREME COURT'S AADHAAR ORDER AFFECTS YOU?

NEW DELHI (TIP): With the Supreme Court (SC) holding Aadhaar to be constitutionally sound, a lot is set to change for the state, and its citizens, besides other stakeholders such as private firms. Mint analyses the proposed changes and how these will lead to a more secure Aadhaar ecosystem.

What are the key takeaways from the judgement?

The SC has held the biometric-based identification programme, Aadhaar, to be constitutionally valid. It has also provided legal sanction to its architecture and privacy framework, which had earlier attracted criticism. Concerns about privacy of personal data have been addressed by striking down and reading down certain provisions. The verdict marks the end of any confusion regarding the services for which Aadhaar is mandated, and by whom. It retains the primacy of its use in distribution of subsidies and social welfare benefits to the poor and the needy.

For what is Aadhaar not mandatory?

Aadhaar need not be linked with bank accounts and mobile phone numbers. This sounds neat on paper, but will be tough to enforce, as bank accounts need permanent account number (PAN), which has to be linked with Aadhaar. Mandatory linking of Aadhaar has been denied for school admissions and enrolling in UGC and CBSE exams. Curbs have been placed on its use by private companies—including payment banks, fintech firms—that relied on Aadhaar-based know-your-customer norms for digital authentication. Private firms/websites selling air, train, rail and movie tickets cannot insist on Aadhaar any more.

Is it compulsory for children to get Aadhaar?

A child may be enrolled for Aadhaar any time before the age of majority through their parents or guardians. Upon attaining majority, the child is at liberty to opt out of Aadhaar.

For which services is Aadhaar mandatory?

Taking forward the government's vision for inception of Aadhaar, it remains key for availing benefits under central and state government welfare schemes (PDS, LPG, MGNREGA) and for subsidies. It is also compulsory to link Aadhaar to a person's permanent account number (PAN) and for filing of income-tax returns. A person cannot be asked to compulsorily provide Aadhaar for any other service. A person can, however, voluntarily choose to use his Aadhaar number for other services.

What changes are likely due to the provisions that have been struck down or reworked?

Striking down of Regulation 27(1) and reducing storage period of authentication data from five years to six months will ensure personal data is not misused. Amending Regulation 26 and making metabase relating to a transaction impermissible will prevent fake profiling of an Aadhaar holder. Striking down of Section 47 means citizens can file a complaint in case of data theft, which earlier could be done by the government alone. *Source: Livemint*

1930/31 - 25 September 2018

Jasdev Singh, voice behind Olympics, R-Day broadcasts, dead

NEW DELHI (TIP): Renowned commentator Jasdev Singh, considered the voice of Indian sports on Doordarshan, died Tuesday after prolonged illness. He was 87 and is survived by his son and daughter. During the late '70s and early '80s, considered to be Doordarshan's best days in sports coverage, Jasdev Singh, along with Ravi Chaturvedi and Sushil Doshi, were some of the household names for sports-lovers.

Interestingly, he started his career in All India Radio in 1955 at their Jaipur station. He was also the voice of sports in AIR for a long time. Minister of State for Sports and Information and Broadcast Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore expressed his condolences at Singh's demise.

"It is with deep sadness that I note the



demise of Sh Jasdev Singh, one of our finest commentators. A veteran of @AkashvaniAIR & @DDNational, he

covered 9 Olympics, 6 Asian Games & countless Independence Day & Republic Day broadcasts," Rathore tweeted.

While Chaturvedi and Doshi were primarily into cricket commentary, Singh was a regular at the Olympic Games and covered nine editions of the quadrennial extravaganza from Helsinki (1968) to Melbourne (2000).

Former International Olympic Council chief Juan Antonio Samaranch honoured him with the 'Olympic Order' at the Seoul edition in 1988, for his role in spreading the Olympic movement. He also covered six Asian Games and an equal number of Hockey World Cups.

From 1963, he also did commentary for the Republic Day celebrations for 48 long years. He was conferred with the Padma Shri in 1985 and the Padma Bhushan in 2008. *Source: PTI*



GUEST COMMENT

A FRAUGHT TIMELINE: ON AYODHYA TITLE SUIT

The stage is set for a final hearing on the title suit to the disputed site in Ayodhya

The Supreme Court's refusal to refer some questions of law in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute to a seven-judge Bench has one immediate consequence: it could expedite the final hearing in the appeals against the Allahabad High Court's compromise judgment of 2010 in the main title suit. The two-judge majority opinion has fixed the date for the hearing as October 29, a development that may mean that a final verdict is not far off and it could have a bearing on political events in the run-up to the general election due next summer. The final hearing ought to have begun a year ago but was delayed because some parties wanted the reference to a larger Bench so that certain observations in a Constitution Bench decision in *Ismail Faruqui* (1994) could be reconsidered. The apprehension was that remarks to the effect that "a mosque is not an essential part of the practice of Islam" and that namaz can be offered anywhere, even in the open, would influence the outcome of the appeal. Justice Ashok Bhushan's main opinion has sought to give a quietus to the controversy by declaring that "the questionable observations" were to be treated only as observations made in the context of whether land on which a mosque stood can be acquired by the government. It should not be taken into account while deciding suits and appeals. It is difficult to fault this approach, as it is a fact that the respective claims of the U.P. Sunni Central Wakf Board, Nirmohi Akhara and Ram Lalla, the deity, can only be tested against evidence adduced during trial and not by pronouncements on the significance of places of worship or practices in a particular religion.

At the same time, can one brush aside the possibility that observations on a sensitive religious issue would be exploited by one side to gain legal advantage? In his dissenting opinion favoring a reconsideration of *Ismail Faruqui*, Justice Abdul Nazeer notes that its observations have permeated the High Court judgment. *Ismail Faruqui* was a ruling on petitions challenging the validity of a Central law that acquired the land on which the Babri Masjid stood before it was razed by a frenzied and fanatical mob on December 6, 1992. The judgment was notable for upholding the rule of law by restoring the title suits that had been declared as having "abated" in the Act. It also declined to answer a Presidential reference on whether a Hindu temple stood on the disputed site before the mosque was built. Any observation made in the course of such a decision is bound to have a profound impact on the courts below. It is easy to contend that courts should work to their own timelines and not be influenced by such things as election season. But in the life of this nation, the Ayodhya dispute has gone through dark political phases and been more than a mere legal issue. The onus is on the apex court to dispose of the appeals at its convenience without giving any scope for the exploitation of religious sentiments. *(The Hindu)*



By Anees Jillani

More wars have been fought in the name of religion than anything else in the history of our world. In other words, more people have been killed for causes that supposedly espouse peace. It is thus always advisable if one wishes to achieve peace and harmony to lower the religious sentiments. Ironically, this conflicts with the fact that it is always easier to exploit people's feelings in the name of religion and attain popularity and what one wishes to gain politically or otherwise.

I was in China a couple of years ago and was surprised when the youth I was talking to, gave me a blank expression when I raised the subject of God. They had absolutely no idea about it. There are few places left on our planet now where this is the case. Almost all communities have religions and they have to live together despite all their attempts to maintain homogeneity. Hindus, perhaps, have always been in majority in the Indian subcontinent, but Jains and Buddhists have lived along with them. The Muslims invaded India and most of the Muslim rulers had a liberal, if not totally secular approach towards other religious communities. However, the Muslims in India are now paying the price for some of the follies committed by them. The British brought Christianity and a set of laws and a system which continues to exist in all of their colonies. The Indian Penal Code 1860, which is called the Pakistan Penal Code across the border, is one such law that continues to remain in force despite a lapse of 157 years. Its Section 295 says:

"Whoever destroys, damages or defiles any place of worship, or any object held sacred by any class of persons with the intention to thereby insulting the religion of any class of persons or with the knowledge that any class of persons is likely to consider such destruction, damage or defilement as an insult to their religion, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both."

Section 295-A was added to the Penal Code by the British in 1927 to avert outraging of religious feelings of any community. It states: "Whoever, with deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of any class of the citizens of India, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, insults or attempts to insult the religion or the religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, or with fine, or with both."

As luck would have it, in 1986, when General Zia-ul-Haq was the President and a

The problem with religious laws is that they are easy to enact but difficult to amend or repeal

"This is the problem with religious laws. They are easy to enact but very difficult to amend or repeal. Consequently, one should move extremely cautiously while introducing a feature in the legal system which has religious connotations. It may earn one brownie points with the religious community in the short term but is not good for maintaining religious harmony in the long run. They become a tool in the hands of criminal-minded persons who start using them to embroil their opponents in highly questionable litigations that get so controversial during the course of trial that it becomes almost infeasible to decipher the truth".

civilian government led by PM (Mohammad Khan) Junejo was in power, human rights activist Asma Jehangir, in a press conference, commented on the educational status of Prophet Muhammad. It led to a huge controversy and the government in panic

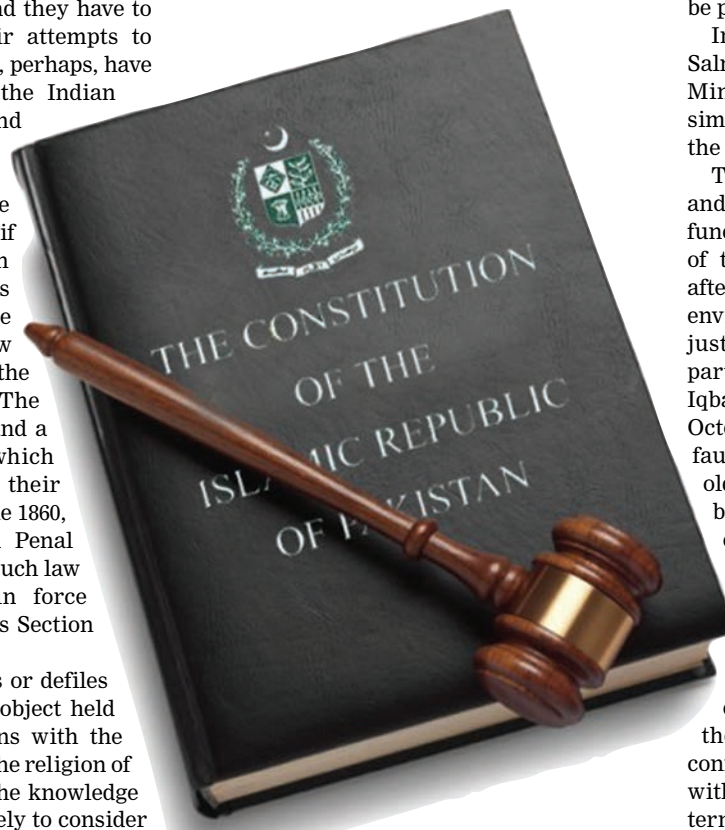
Procedure Code 1898 was also amended to state that an accused under this Section or under 295-B (dealing with defiling of the Koran), again inserted by General Zia, can be held without warrant, and that the court of session trying a case under Section 295-C must be presided over by a Muslim.

In 2011, governor of Punjab province Salman Taseer and the Federal Minister for Minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti, were killed simply because they had talked of amending the above sections in the Penal Code.

The governor was killed by his own guard and only a few dozen dared to attend his funeral prayers. As opposed to this, hundreds of thousands attended his assassin's funeral after he was hanged. The judges in the present environment rarely feel secure to dispense justice; and they can hardly be blamed, particularly after the fate of Justice Arif Iqbal Hussain Bhatti, who was assassinated in October 1997 in Lahore. What was the judge's fault? He had acquitted Salamat (a 14-year-old), Rehmat and Manzoor Masih, from the blasphemy charge in 1995. The judge who convicted the governor's assassin had to leave the country for a couple of years.

This is the problem with religious laws. They are easy to enact but very difficult to amend or repeal. Consequently, one should move extremely cautiously while introducing a feature in the legal system which has religious connotations. It may earn one brownie points with the religious community in the short term but is not good for maintaining religious harmony in the long run. They become a tool in the hands of criminal-minded persons who start using them to embroil their opponents in highly questionable litigations that get so controversial during the course of trial that it becomes almost infeasible to decipher the truth. No doubt more Muslims are tried under these laws than minorities but most of the convicted ones belong to the religious minorities. In other words, the laws have become a tool in the hands of a section of the population to crush the religious minorities; if the latter gets into any kind of dispute whatsoever with a Muslim, the easiest way to punish the adversary is by accusing him or her of blasphemy. The state machinery takes care of the rest.

(The author is a lawyer in the Supreme Court of Pakistan)



inserted Section 295-C in the Penal Code which read as follows:

"Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine."

There was no looking back. The Federal Shariat Court, another creation of General Zia, in a subsequent ruling held that the words "or imprisonment for life" be deleted from this provision; it now carries the mandatory death penalty. At the time of addition of Section 295-C, the Criminal

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A Nationalism That's Anti-National

What the RSS needs is an exposure to Indian culture and a deeper understanding of Hinduism itself



"The secessionists challenge the territorial integrity of India. The left-wing extremists challenge the writ of the Indian state. The challenge posed by the RSS is much deeper: it challenges the very idea of India, the swadharma of the Republic of India. If this is not anti-national, what is anti-national?"

“

The RSS was among the few organizations in independent India that refused to honor some of the key symbols of the Indian republic: the national flag, the national anthem and, of course, the Constitution of India. It speaks volumes that the head of the RSS has to clarify, nearly seven decades after the promulgation of the Constitution, that his organization believes in it, something explicitly contradicted by his predecessor. Notwithstanding its recent claims to the contrary, the RSS does not quite subscribe to any of the key tenets of the Constitution: socialism, secularism, federalism and, indeed, democracy.”

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The recent outreach by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) at Vigyan Bhavan in Delhi seems to have succeeded in its principal objective: an image makeover for a niche audience. Thanks to an obsequious media and a commentariat ever willing to suspend disbelief, the event has yielded the soft, liberal gloss the RSS needed and desired. Sadly, the critics limited themselves to questions that the RSS anticipated, indeed wanted: Does the RSS exercise influence on this government? Is the RSS anti-Muslim?

It is time we asked a harder and deeper question: Is the RSS anti-national?

THEORY AND PRACTICE: On the face of it, this is an odd question. Nationalism, Indian-ness and Hindutva are very much the calling card of the RSS. This is not put on. I have known the RSS from inside and outside. Having met hundreds of swayamsevaks and many pracharaks, I know that an average RSS volunteer carries this nationalist self-image. I can also attest that just like the communists or old-time socialists, an average RSS worker tends to be more honest and idealist than a run-of-the-mill political leader. I am aware that on more than one occasion, the RSS has done exemplary rescue and relief work during national disasters. If anything, its critics accuse it of being ultra-nationalist. Thus, to question its nationalist credentials might appear outrageous.

Yet this question needs to be debated in all seriousness and all fairness. Given the salience of the RSS in our national public life today, this is a pressing question. We worry, rightly so, about the impact of Islamic fundamentalist groups and Maoist insurgents on our nation. We debate, as we should, the challenge posed by separatism in Kashmir and Nagaland to our nationhood. But we no longer debate with any seriousness the challenge posed by the RSS and its associates to the project of nation-building the Indian nation. The question is about the theory and practice of the RSS as an organization and its relation to the Indian nation, its past, present and future.

THE NATION AND THE PAST: Let's begin with some indisputable facts about its past. Right from its inception in 1925, the RSS was not in any way active during the national movement. In fact, its associates such as the Hindu Mahasabha actively opposed the national movement. It is also a well-documented fact that V.D. Savarkar, whose ideology inspired the RSS's founders and who remains its icon, was released from Cellular Jail in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands after he wrote four mercy petitions to the Viceroy pledging loyalty to the British empire. After his release, he lived off a stipend from the British government and obeyed faithfully the conditions it had imposed on him. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, another Hindu Mahasabha leader, actively collaborated with the British during the Quit India movement while the RSS kept aloof from this biggest anti-colonial uprising. The two-nation theory was propagated by Hindu nationalists, much before the Muslim League. And it is no secret that Nathuram Godse was once an RSS



RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat
Photo / Courtesy PTI

member and was very much a part of its extended family when he murdered Mahatma Gandhi. Bluntly put, the RSS made zero, if not negative, contribution to the national struggle. But that is not sufficient to dub it anti-national today.

The role of the RSS after Independence is more relevant here. How did the RSS contribute to the project of nation-building? Sadly, the answer is again in the negative. The RSS was among the few organizations in independent India that refused to honor some of the key symbols of the Indian republic: the national flag, the national anthem and, of course, the Constitution of India. It speaks volumes that the head of the RSS has to clarify, nearly seven decades after the promulgation of the Constitution, that his organization believes in it, something explicitly contradicted by his predecessor. Notwithstanding its recent claims to the contrary, the RSS does not quite subscribe to any of the key tenets of the Constitution: socialism, secularism, federalism and, indeed, democracy.

In practice, far from being a part of the solution, the RSS was always a part of the problem that India faced in its difficult journey of nation-building. The legacy of Partition and the challenge of bringing together immense diversities posed an unprecedented challenge to the nascent Indian nation. During this delicate phase, the RSS was at best an irresponsible denominational pressure group for the Hinduisation of the Indian state, opposing any and every concession to minorities and advocating a hawkish foreign policy. At worst the RSS became a fulcrum of organized subversion of the constitutional order, as in the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992. If constitutional patriotism is the heart of national political life, the RSS has repeatedly stood in opposition to the nation.

More than anything else, it is the theory and practice of its nationalism that shows the RSS to be a European import, out of sync with Indian nationalism. The RSS subscribes to the now outdated European model of nation-state which assumed that the cultural boundaries of a nation must match the political boundaries of a state. In Europe it meant a uniform race, religion, language and culture

as the defining features of a nation. In India it meant Hindu-Hindi-Hindustan, the slogan coined by Savarkar. India's home-grown nationalism challenged this European model and its futile and bloody quest for matching cultural and political boundaries. Instead, Indian nationalism was about creating political unity in conditions of deep diversity of culture, religion and language.

PARADOX OF ITS WORKINGS: Today, as a rapidly diversifying world seeks to learn from the Indian model, the RSS clings on to an alien, borrowed and fractious understanding of nationalism. Worse, its model of separatism of the majority is clearly the biggest obstacle for Indian nationalism. Isn't it odd that an organization that claims to work for national integration has, or has had, little time and energy for an amicable resolution of some of the issues that challenge our national unity? These include intractable regional disputes (the Karnataka-Tamil Nadu and Punjab-Haryana water disputes), intra-regional tensions (demand for Telangana or Vidarbha), language issues (Punjabi-Hindi, Kannada-Marathi) or differences with racial and ethnic dimensions (violence against migrants from the Northeast in Bengaluru, Hindi speakers in Mumbai).

The RSS version of nationalism comes into play only when there is a religious angle to any issue. It is not that they care for Hinduism either. The RSS ideologues have little knowledge of or interest in Hindu traditions. In fact, the version of Hinduism that it seeks to impose is itself a parody of orthodox Islam and orthodox Christianity and against the basic spirit of Hinduism, let alone the spirit of humanism that informs all religions. Unfortunately, the principal focus of the RSS has been to foment Hindu-Muslim differences, division and hatred. Since Hindu-Muslim violence poses the biggest single threat to national unity today, those who work for the exacerbation of Hindu-Muslim tension must be seen as anti-national, and guilty of treason.

The secessionists challenge the territorial integrity of India. The left-wing extremists challenge the writ of the Indian state. The challenge posed by the RSS is much deeper: it challenges the very idea of India, the swadharma of the Republic of India. If this is not anti-national, what is anti-national?

I am not for a ban on the RSS. Its theory and practice represent a cultural-political malady that needs a deeper cure rather than a ban. It originates in an inferiority complex of a modern Hindu, made worse by a westernized, deracinated form of our secularism. This might sound odd, but what the RSS needs is exposure to Indian culture and its multiple traditions, greater appreciation of culturally more confident Indians such as Tagore and Gandhi and a deeper understanding of Hinduism itself. If it introspects rather than hold an outreach at Vigyan Bhavan, I am sure its Sarsanghchalak would recommend to the RSS what Gandhiji suggested to the Congress party: dissolve itself.

(The author is National President of Swaraj India and a psephologist/academic formerly with Lokniti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi)

Cyclone warning as gale-force winds batter Greece

ATHENS (TIP): Meteorologists are warning of a high probability of a tropical-like cyclone forming in the Ionian Sea to the southwest of the Greek mainland, as gale-force winds continued to batter the country and forced the closure of most schools.

Ferries remained in port Thursday, severing islands' connection to the mainland. Trees have fallen on power lines in the capital's northern suburbs, while the fire department said it received more than 350 calls to remove debris.

Authorities in the Saronic municipality near Athens, on the Ionian island of Zakynthos and the Aegean islands of Tinos, Andros and Mykonos ordered schools to remain shut.

Meteorologists have warned of the formation of a Mediterranean cyclone, known as a medicane, which combines the words Mediterranean and hurricane, in the Ionian Friday. (AP)

Iran oil exports fall before US sanctions: Global banking group

TEHRAN (TIP): Iranian oil exports are declining ahead of a second round of US sanctions to be imposed on Nov. 4 and Iran's economy is likely to contract 3 percent this year and 4 percent in 2019, the Institute of International Finance said on Tuesday.

Exports of crude oil and condensates have declined by 0.8 million barrels a day (mbd) from April to September 2018, the IIF, which represents major banks and financial institutions from around the world, said.

It said crude oil and condensates exports were 2.8 mbd in April and are now estimated at 2.0 mbd in September.

The IIF said in an updated note on Iran's economy that oil exports are falling even although Iran is selling key grades at a deep discount and using its own tankers to ship products to China and India at no extra cost.

The IIF said Iranian shippers were also providing generous payment terms and, in some cases, accepting euros and Chinese yuan instead of US dollars. The IIF said barter trade and cash could play a bigger role as US sanctions are enforced.

The updated report comes as US President Donald Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani exchanged taunts at the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday.

The remaining parties to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, which curbed Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief and from which Trump withdrew the United States in May, agreed on Monday to work to maintain trade with Tehran despite skepticism this is possible as US sanctions to choke off Iranian oil sales resume in November.

In a statement after a meeting of Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and Iran, the group said they were determined to develop payment mechanisms to continue trade with Iran despite skepticism by many diplomats that this will be possible.

The European Union's plans for a "special purpose vehicle" (SPV) designed to circumvent US sanctions against Iran's oil exports is deeply counterproductive, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Tuesday. (Reuters)

Iran says Israel will 'regret' further attacks on Syria

Iran and Russia have both backed Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in a seven-year war against rebels.

GENEVA (TIP): The secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council has said Israel will be sorry if it continues to attack Syria's army and its allies.

Iran and Russia have both backed Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in a seven-year war against rebels.

But Israel, increasingly concerned that its enemy Iran may establish a long-term military presence in its neighbour, says it has carried out more than 200 attacks against Iranian targets in Syria in the last two years.

"The Zionist regime has been trying to establish a crisis in Syria and has taken steps to directly support terrorist groups and target the Syrian army and forces who are confronting terrorism," Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said on Thursday, according to the semi-official Tasnim news agency.

"And if it continues, it will face reactions that will cause regret." He did not specify what this might mean.

The Supreme National Security Council, chaired by President Hassan Rouhani,



decides on Iran's foreign and security policy together with Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Shamkhani made the comments during a meeting with his Russian counterpart, Nikolai Patrushev, in Tehran.

Russia said on Monday it would supply Syria with an S-300 surface-to-air missile system despite strong Israeli objections, a week after Moscow accused Israel of indirectly causing the downing of a Russian military jet by Syria air defences. (Reuters)

Japanese carrier drills with British warship heading to contested South China Sea

In a rare public announcement this month, Japan's Ministry of Defence said one of its submarines had carried out a naval exercise in the disputed waterway with two Japanese destroyers and the Kaga.

BEIJING (TIP): Japan's biggest warship, the Kaga helicopter carrier, joined naval drills with Britain's HMS Argyll in the Indian Ocean on Wednesday as the frigate headed toward the contested South China Sea and East Asia.

Britain, Japan and their close ally the United States have found common cause in countering growing Chinese influence in the region that they worry could put key commercial sea lanes linking Asia with Europe, the United States and elsewhere under Beijing's sway.

"We have traditional ties with the British navy and we are both close U.S. allies and these drills are an opportunity for us to strengthen cooperation," Kenji Sakaguchi, the Maritime Self Defence Force (MSDF) commander of the Kaga group's four helicopters said on the hangar deck.

The more frequent presence of the Royal Navy in a region is a chance for the two navies to train more closely in the future, he added.

The Argyll, Kaga and its destroyer escort the Inazuma practiced formations on calm seas in the Indian Ocean close to commercial sea lanes plied by container vessels and oil tankers. Three helicopters from the Japanese carrier hovered above, monitoring the drill.

The Argyll's arrival in the region comes after Britain's amphibious assault ship HMS Albion, last month challenged Beijing's territorial claims in the South China Sea on its way to Vietnam from Japan by sailing close to Chinese bases in the Paracel islands in a freedom of navigation operation (FONOP).

China dispatched a warship and helicopters to counter the British presence and warned London that similar actions in the future



could endanger talks for a possible trade deal that Britain is seeking as it prepares to leave the European Union.

GLOBAL HOTSPOT: China, which says its intentions are peaceful, claims most of the South China, through which some \$3 trillion of seaborne trade passes every year. Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Brunei also claim parts of the sea, which has oil and gas deposits as well as rich fishing grounds.

Japan, which is embroiled in separate territorial dispute with China in the neighbouring East China Sea, has yet to conduct a FONOP in the south China Sea.

However, in a rare public announcement this month, Japan's Ministry of Defence said one of its submarines had carried out a naval exercise in the disputed waterway with two Japanese destroyers and the Kaga, which is

on a two-month deployment in the Indo-Pacific.

After crossing the South China Sea, the Argyll will operate in waters around Japan, including a stint monitoring sanctions imposed on North Korea by the United Nations to force it to abandon nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, said a British government source, who asked not to be identified because he is not authorised to talk to the media.

The Argyll is the third Royal Navy ship in Asia's waters this year following the tour of the Albion and another frigate. "Normally we hold discussion with other countries before joint drills, but with the British there is no need to, so they are easy to work with," said Tatsuhiko Mizuno, an operation planning officer for the Kaga group. (Reuters)

Iran says it doesn't want war with the US

Rouhani told a wide-ranging news conference that the US decision to pull out of the 2015 nuclear deal in May was "a mistake" because there are no benefits for the people of the United States, Iran, Europe or any other country.

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): Iran's President Hassan Rouhani said Wednesday his country doesn't want a war with the United States and believes America will "sooner or later" support the Iran nuclear agreement again following the Trump administration's withdrawal.

Rouhani told a wide-ranging news conference that the US decision to pull out of the 2015 nuclear deal in May was "a mistake" because there are no benefits for the people of the United States, Iran, Europe or any other country.

"The United States of America one day will come back, sooner or later," he said.

He said the Trump administration made a "second mistake" in holding a meeting of the U.N. Security Council earlier Wednesday during which 14 countries either directly or indirectly backed the nuclear agreement between Iran, the US and five other major powers.

Only US President Donald Trump, who chaired the session, spoke against the deal known as the JCPOA and appeared isolated as a result, Rouhani said.

Addressing the council, Trump called the JCPOA a "horrible one-sided deal," declaring that Iran "must never be allowed to possess a nuclear weapon" and accusing its government of exporting "violence, terror and turmoil."

Rouhani said it was "quite strange, unprecedented and amazing" that while presiding over the Security Council as its president Trump also called on the 14 other council members to violate the legally binding resolution endorsing the JCPOA that the council adopted unanimously in 2015 – including a "yes" vote from the United States.

He added that Trump not only disagreed with that resolution but said whoever implements it "will be punished."

Responding to a question about whether the harsh language that Trump and his top official have used about Iran might lead to



war, Rouhani said Iran since the 1979 revolution "has been subjected to that type of language many times." But he said Trump administration officials "speak with a different style, presumably because they're new to politics."

As for war, Rouhani said, "We do not wish to go to war with American forces anywhere in the region. We do not wish to attack them. We do not wish to increase tensions – none of the above."

"But we ask the United States of America to adhere to laws and respect national sovereignty of nations," he said.

Rouhani also said "America must think again about her presence in the region, in the Persian Gulf, in the Sea of Oman, in Afghanistan, in Iraq and other places."

Trump has vowed to continue to isolate Iran through US sanctions that are being reinstated following the US pullout from the nuclear agreement in May. The next round of sanctions will take effect in early November.

But Rouhani told reporters that sanctions which "were supposed to be proactive in

November became proactive in September, so there are no other sanctions that will start in November."

He complained that the United States "has spared no effort" to exert pressure on Iran's oil sales and banking relationships, and there is not much left for the Trump administration to do.

Rouhani said Iran will continue working with countries that support the nuclear deal.

He called Monday's decision by the five other signatories to the agreement who still support it – Russia, China, Britain France and Germany – to establish a financial facility in the European Union to facilitate payments for Iranian imports and exports "a very good step forward."

"We have lived up to the JCPOA," Rouhani said. "Up until such time when we keep reaping the benefits promised within that agreement for our nation and our people, we will remain in the agreement." But he said without elaborating: "Should this situation change, we have other paths and other solutions which we will embark upon." (AP)

Two guards killed in explosion in southeastern Turkey

ANKARA (TIP): Turkey's state-run news agency says an improvised explosive device believed to have been planted by Kurdish rebels has exploded on a road in the country's southeast, killing two government-paid village guards. Anadolu Agency said two other village guards were wounded Wednesday in the explosion in the mainly Kurdish-populated Sirnak province, near the border with Iraq.

Anadolu said an operation has been launched to catch the perpetrators. The village guards support Turkey's military in fighting the rebels of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which has waged a more than three-decade-long insurgency in Turkey's southeastern region.

The conflict has killed tens of thousands of people since 1984. The group is considered a terror organization by Turkey and its allies. (AP)

Israel opens high-speed rail link between Tel Aviv airport and Jerusalem

JERUSALEM (TIP): Israel opened a high-speed rail link between Tel Aviv's international airport and Jerusalem on Tuesday, part of a \$2 billion project that has drawn Palestinian complaints over its route through small parts of the occupied West Bank. The train will cut travel time between Ben-Gurion Airport and a new, 80-metre-(260-foot)-deep underground terminal at the entrance to Jerusalem to around 20 minutes. By road, the trip takes at least 40 minutes.

At the airport, the bright red train drew smiles from eager passengers.

"It was like a dream come true ... It's really quite amazing and will be a valuable asset to people wanting to get to and from the airport," said Manchester-born Eli Rothbard, 45, a ground services employee at Ben Gurion.

The train, travelling at speeds of up to 160 kilometres per hour (100 mph), traverses a series of new tunnels and bridges, passing through hills between Jerusalem and the airport, about 40 km (25 miles) away.

The line runs through sections of land Israel captured in the 1967 Middle East war near the Palestinian village of Beit Surik, on the outskirts of Jerusalem, and in the Latrun Valley, about midway between the holy city and Ben-Gurion airport.

Palestinians who live in the West Bank are largely barred by Israel from travelling abroad via Ben-Gurion, and cross overland to Jordan instead to fly out of the airport in Amman. Israel cites security concerns for the ban. "It is very sad that you see a railway and see modern technology on your land and inside your land and you cannot use it or exploit it because of the element of power of the occupation," said Mohammed al-Tari, 55, from Beit Surik.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat accused Israel of "illegally making use of occupied Palestinian land" in setting the train's route, which will eventually include a direct high-speed link between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv city itself.

Erekat said the train was part of Israel's "agenda of turning its occupation into annexation". On a test run last week, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the opening of the line was "an historic moment" heralding a "new era for Jerusalem and the state of Israel." (Reuters)

Swedish skit mocks Chinese tourists, drawing backlash in China

HONG KONG (TIP): Tension between China and Sweden over the treatment of a group of tourists in Stockholm has escalated after a satirical skit depicted Chinese travellers as people who eat dogs and need to be told not to defecate in public. The incident has led to repeated complaints from Chinese diplomats and calls on Chinese social media for boycotts of Swedish products and travel to the country.

The tensions began earlier this month when a Chinese man and his parents arrived at a hostel in Stockholm after midnight, hours before they could check in for a reservation beginning the next afternoon. The hostel said they could not stay overnight in the lobby and called the police when they refused to leave.

Video of police forcibly removing the family, who were protesting their treatment, was posted online. At one point the son surnamed Zeng, shouted, "This is killing!" The incident has been given extensive

coverage by Chinese media outlets. The ire from the Chinese side increased after the skit was aired last week by the Swedish national broadcaster SVT.

The satirical skit was billed as a guide for Chinese tourists to avoid causing problems while abroad. It said that pet dogs should not be seen as potential meals and warned against defecating outside historical monuments. The show uploaded a portion of the skit on Youku, a Chinese online video service. Geng Shuang, a spokesman for China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, called the program "a gross insult to and vicious attack on China and the Chinese people" in a statement Monday. He said the host's comments were "full of prejudices, biases and provocations against China and some other ethnic groups."

Thomas Hall, the program manager for SVT, said in a statement Monday that it had been a mistake to upload a portion of the skit onto Youku. He said that the intention of the

skit was to mock racism and highlight how "sinophobia" was not considered as much of a concern as other forms of discrimination in Sweden.

SVT's program director, Jan Helin, said the network would not apologize for the satire, the network's news division reported.

The Chinese Embassy in Stockholm on Tuesday called for the program to engage in "profound reflection and immediately issue a sincere apology."

The Swedish Foreign Ministry said Wednesday: "We have no comment. Freedom of expression applies." But on Wednesday evening, Hall apologized on his blog "to those individuals who were offended by our program."

"Our intention with last week's much-discussed program was anti-racist," he wrote. "It was poking at a blind spot in Sweden where racist expressions about Chinese are often for some reason allowed to go unnoticed." (NYT Times)



TAHIRA KASHYAP, WIFE OF AYUSHMANN KHURRANA, DIAGNOSED WITH BREAST CANCER

Tahira Kashyap, wife of actor Ayushmann Khurrana, has been diagnosed with Stage 0 breast cancer, she shared in an Instagram post.

In her post, she said that she was examined to be suffering from DCIS (ductal carcinoma in situ) in her right breast. In a jocular tone, she said that she had become a half Indian version of Angelina Jolie "(since only one breast was involved)!"

Explaining her condition, Tahira said that high-grade malignant cells were multiplying in a contained space, adding that the experience made her respect the unpredictability of life and gave her the faith and courage to overcome it.

She even stated that spreading awareness about breast cancer was imperative. "I want women of all ages to be aware. I am 35, and I was returned twice over from a mammogram. If any symptoms come up, think of it as a protective force and get yourselves examined. Also, we are so obsessed with boobs. This mastectomy has left me with even more self-love! Big, small, left or right inclined, gravity pulling or defying, or even none, each breast the presence or lack of it has a story to tell. Mine has made me a 2.0 version of myself! This post is dedicated to awareness, self-love and resilience of a warrior that I know each one of us possesses," she wrote.

KAREENA KAPOOR'S FIRST GUEST ON HER RADIO SHOW IS SUNNY LEONE



Kareena Kapoor Khan, who will be hosting a radio chat show, has recorded her first ever show and her guest is none other than Sunny Leone. In the first picture released, Kareena can be seen with Sunny in a room full of warm vibes.

The duo is sitting on a comfortable sofa, with a huge mike placed on the table in front. The picture is bright with colour yellow as its dominant shade. There is a big yellow-framed mirror behind the ladies and on either side of the mirror are two photo frames. On one is scribbled girl power (GRL PWR).

Kareena is obviously excited about the new venture. Confirming the news, she had told Mumbai Mirror earlier this month: "I couldn't have asked for a better start on this platform. I am doing my first radio show and I can't wait for everyone to hear it."

In mid September, Kareena did a photo shoot for her show too. Sharing it online, a post said: "Go ahead call her and ask her about #kareenakapoorkhan is the new rj with ishq FM @viralbhayani."

According to the Mumbai Mirror report, Kareena's show is expected to go live in

December this year.

A host of Bollywood personalities are taking to hosting some form of chat show or the other: Neha Dhupia's audio chat show, No Filter Neha, where she interviews film stars, is hugely popular.

Karan, otherwise popular for his TV chat show Koffee With Karan among other things, began with his own radio chat show, Calling Karan, some time back and this too is quite popular with stars. Anaita Shroff Adajania, fashion stylist, has her chat show too, where she recently interviewed Sonam Kapoor.

Shah Rukh Khan, Aishwarya Rai Bachchan find place in new 100 outstanding Asians list

Asian Geographic magazine on Wednesday released a list of 100 outstanding people, titled 'Astonishing Asians' in which Bollywood actors Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan including many Indian personalities were featured in the people list for 2017.

Apart from these Bollywood actors, many celebrities, activists, writers, cricketers and businessmen have been named in the coveted 100 Outstanding People list.

The list includes Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, India's richest man Mukesh Ambani, economist Amartya Sen, author-activist Arundhati Roy and billionaire entrepreneur Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw.

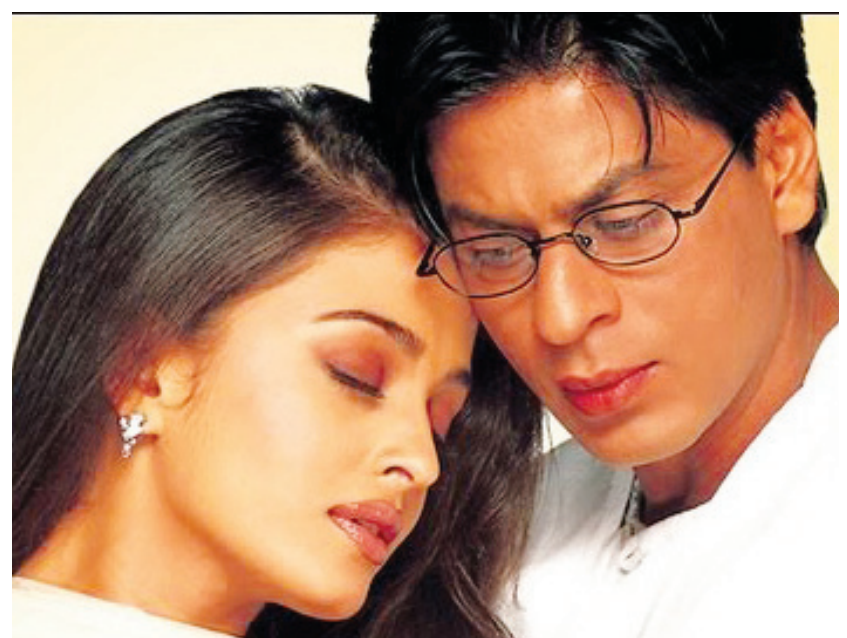
A couple of weeks ago, Aishwarya was honoured with the inaugural event of Meryl Streep Award for Excellence, as the first Women in Film and Television (WIFT) India Award in the global entertainment industry.

Focusing on stories about Asia continent, the Asian Geographic magazine usually draws inspiration from

influential leadership icons, philanthropic champions, business magnates, science icons, sports and cultural figures who have influenced and inspired people globally.

For those of you who don't know, Asian Geographic magazine that proudly holds the tagline of "Asia without borders", carries stories on geography, culture, heritage, society, environment, exploration, conservation and art.

Meanwhile, Shah Rukh Khan will be seen next in Aanand L Rai's Zero. It is learned that Shah Rukh Khan is giving his best to make sure his upcoming film Zero reaches out to the fan's hearts. According to a report in DNA, a source has revealed to the publication, "This is undoubtedly SRK's most ambitious film till date and he wants it at par with international standards. The first half of Zero is edited and even the VFX is complete. King Khan and his team have loved what they have seen. They are also cutting a trailer, which will release on his birthday (November 2). He has shown a few rushes of the movie to his industry friends, too, who have liked it."





KIM KARDASHIAN BONDS WITH KOURTNEY'S EX SCOTT DISICK

He is still an amicable co-parent with his ex Kourtney Kardashian.

And a gaunt Scott Disick was glimpsed out and about with Kourtney's younger sister Kim Kardashian when at a car dealership in Calabasas on Wednesday.

This comes after the 37-year-old Mrs Kanye West said on Twitter she 'hates' the way her sister says 'issues'; Kourtney responded by telling her to stay more 'positive.'

Scott, 35, draped his slender frame in a flowing olive green sweater and a pair of charcoal pants, slipping into black leather boots. Meanwhile, Kim wore a wavy black hairdo and a set of sweats that emphasized her hourglass frame, balancing on an eye-popping pair of white boots.

The reality star and sex tape icon, who told her Instagram following her bum injections were to treat psoriasis, shaded her face with sunglasses.

Kim has three children by West, whom she married in Italy in 2014, the year after their firstborn daughter North was born.

The couple affectionately known as 'Kimye' also share a two-year-old son called Saint, as well as an infant daughter Chicago born this January via surrogacy.

ANGELINA JOLIE UNRECOGNIZABLE WITH BLONDE HAIR ON MOVIE SET



Angelina Jolie's known for her flowing, raven locks, but she just traded them in for something totally different. The actress is in the process of filming the fantasy period drama *Come Away*, and for her character, Rose, she's wearing a curly, blonde wig! Combined with her period-appropriate costume (the movie is set in the early 1900s), she doesn't even look like the same person. Who knew that a simple wig could do just that!

The actress, 43, is a vision in this costume. Her wavy, blonde hair is pinned in a perfectly done updo with a shell comb. With a crisp, white blouse, long skirt, and half-apron, she looks like she stepped right out of the 1900s. We're used to seeing her in sexy and simple outfits lately, with her long, brown hair in loose waves, so this is a big departure. You know what, though? This totally works on her! If she ever wants to go blonde, she should do it.

We're really excited to see *Come Away*, especially after seeing all of these pics. The movie is a sort of prequel to both *Alice in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan*. If that sounds weird, it's because it is! In this reimagined story, Alice (Keira Chansa) and Peter (Jordan Nash) are actually siblings. Before Alice fell down the rabbit hole to Wonderland, and before Peter journeyed to Neverland, they were normal kids whose family experienced a tragedy. Their older brother dies, and their parents Rose (Angelina) and Jack (David Oyelowo) are devastated. Alice and Peter are "forced to choose between home and imagination," says our sister site Deadline. We can't wait for this one!

Angelina Jolie is pictured for the first time filming her new fantasy drama *Come Away*.

Despite her ongoing divorce negotiations with Brad Pitt, it was back to work for the 43-year-old as she got into character wearing a period costume on set in Hollywood on Monday.

Angelina stars alongside David Oyelowo in the adventure movie which is a prequel to *Alice In Wonderland* and *Peter Pan*.

Katy Perry & Orlando Bloom finally make their red carpet debut after 2 years of dating

Katy Perry, 33, and Orlando Bloom, 41, were all smiles when they happily made their red carpet debut at the Gala for the Global Ocean at the Opera of Monte-Carlo in Monaco on Sept. 26 and it was adorable! The sweet couple looked gorgeous for the event too. Katy wore a nude colored fitted dress with silver sequined sleeves and Orlando chose a black blazer over a white button down shirt and matching black pants.

The stunning appearance by Katy and Orlando doesn't come as too much of a surprise considering how close these two seem to be getting lately. Although they broke up for a period of time before reconciling, it's clear to see that this time they seem closer than they've ever been. They were seen out and about together this summer when they went to a restaurant in London and things got pretty cozy.

In addition to the happiness seen in their casual and work outings, a source close to Orlando confirmed that things are getting more serious with the couple. "Orlando is doing well," the source told People. "He is still very happy with Katy. This has been an amazing year for their relationship. It was like they needed to split and get back together again to get to this point. Orlando is very excited about his life with Katy," the insider said. "It definitely seems like they could have a future together."

We can't wait to see more of Orlando and Katy's moments together. We always love seeing loving couples whenever there's a chance and appearing on the red carpet at a public event is definitely proof that the actor and singer are confident in their relationship.



Myanmar's delaying tactics blocking Rohingya return: Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina

DHAKA (TIP): Bangladesh's leader accused neighboring Myanmar of finding new excuses to delay the return of more than 700,000 Rohingya who were forced across the border over the past year, and said in an interview late Tuesday that under no circumstance would the refugees remain permanently in her already crowded country.

"I already have 160 million people in my country," Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, when asked whether Bangladesh would be willing to walk back its policy against permanent integration. "I can't take any other burden. I can't take it. My country cannot bear."

Hasina was speaking to Reuters in New York, where she is attending the annual United Nations meeting of world leaders.

The prime minister, who faces a national election in December, said she does not want to pick a fight with Myanmar over the refugees.

But she suggested patience is growing thin with Myanmar's leader, Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, and its military that she said wields the "main power" there.

Hasina has previously called on the international community to pressure Myanmar to implement the deal.

Calls to Myanmar's government spokesman, Zaw Htay, went unanswered. He said recently that he will no longer answer media questions by phone, but will answer questions at a biweekly press conference.

Rohingya fled to refugee camps in Bangladesh after a bloody military campaign against the Muslim minority in Myanmar's Rakhine State. The two countries reached a deal in November to begin repatriation within two months, but it has not started, with stateless Rohingya still crossing the border into Bangladesh and the refugee camps at Cox's Bazar.

"They agree everything, but unfortunately they don't act, that is the problem," Hasina said of Myanmar. "Everything is set but ... every time they try to find some new excuse," she told Reuters.

Myanmar has said it is ready to take back the refugees and has built transit centers to house them initially on their return.

But it has complained that Bangladesh has not provided its officials with the correct forms. Bangladesh has rejected those claims and U.N. aid agencies say it is not yet safe for the refugees to return.

Given the delays, Bangladesh has been preparing new homes on a remote island called Bhasan Char, which rights groups have said could be subject to flooding. Cox's Bazar is also vulnerable to flooding but this year's monsoon season was light. Hasina said building permanent structures for refugees on the mainland "is not at all a possibility (and) not acceptable" since they are Myanmar citizens and must return.

Rohingya regard themselves as native to Myanmar's Rakhine state, but are widely considered interlopers by the country's Buddhist majority and are denied citizenship.

Human rights groups and Rohingya activists have estimated thousands died in last year's security crackdown, which was sparked by attacks by Rohingya insurgents on security forces in Rakhine in August 2017.

This week, a U.S. government investigation reported that Myanmar's military waged a planned, coordinated campaign of mass killings, gang rapes and other atrocities against the Rohingya. (Reuters).

Cash-starved Imran Khan govt auctions 8 buffaloes kept by Nawaz Sharif at PM House

Naeem-ul-Haq, the Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Political Affairs has said that the eight buffaloes were kept by Nawaz Sharif when he was the prime minister.

ISLAMABAD (PTI): The cash-strapped government of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Thursday garnered Rs 23 lakh when it auctioned eight buffaloes kept by his predecessor Nawaz Sharif at the PM House for his "gastronomic requirements".

Facing huge debts and liabilities, Prime Minister Khan has launched a massive austerity drive. Under the plan, the government auctioned 61 luxury cars last week, raising some Rs 200 million.

The plan is to auction 102 surplus cars, including bullet proof vehicles, and four helicopters used by the Cabinet Division.

The sale of three buffaloes and five calves belonging to the PM house fetched a total of Rs 2,302,000 in an auction held in Islamabad, Dawn newspaper reported.

The buffaloes were sold within two hours. The bidders were told they could only pay in cash.

Some reports said all the buffaloes were purchased by supporters of the three-time prime minister and they plan to gift them back to Sharif.

A Sharif supporter, Qalb Ali, spent Rs 385,000 for one of the buffaloes.

Though the animal's actual valuation was a mere Rs 120,000, Ali, a resident of Jhangi Sayedan, an area close to Islamabad, said he paid triple the amount on account of its sentimental value.

"I purchased this buffalo owing to my affection for Nawaz Sharif," he said. "I will keep it as a symbol of Nawaz Sharif and our sister, Maryam Nawaz (Sharif's daughter)."

Two of the four calves were purchased by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)



worker Fakharr Warraich for Rs 215,000 and Rs 270,000. Another man purchased the third calf for Rs 182,000, Geo News reported.

Sharif, 68, was sentenced to 10-years in jail in a corruption case in July. He was released on bail this month after a top court suspended the sentence.

Naeem-ul-Haq, the Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Political Affairs has said that the eight buffaloes were kept by Sharif when he was the prime minister.

"After the surplus car auction, 4 surplus helicopters will be sold which are lying unused with the cabinet division. Plus, now listen to this, 8 buffaloes which Nawaz kept at the PM house for his gastronomic requirements. So all potential buyers please get ready," Haq, also a senior Pakistan

Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader tweeted this month.

Six caretakers and an inspection officer were also hired to look after the animals.

Federal Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry said that the first batch of cars were sold above their market price.

The Pakistani rupee has sunk by over 20 per cent in the past seven months owing to a balance of payment crisis. The last fiscal year ended with a current account deficit of USD 18 billion, 5.7 per cent of the GDP. The budget deficit has crossed 2 trillion rupees, according to media reports.

To overcome the financial woes, Pakistan is mulling to go to the International Monetary Fund for another bailout package – the 13th for the country since the 1980s. (PTI)

Maldives opposition: President Yameen Abdul Gayoom attempting to stay in power

MALE (MALDIVES) (TIP): Maldives President Yameen Abdul Gayoom is working on how to stay in power despite having conceded defeat in this week's election, the opposition alliance said Wednesday.

Joint opposition spokesman Ahmed Mahloof told The Associated Press that government officials say Yameen is planning to complain to the Maldives Election Commission about the conduct of the vote and pressure the commission to delay releasing the final results, due Sunday. Mahloof said Yameen is also trying to get police officers loyal to him to prepare intelligence reports saying the election was flawed.

"It's serious. After conceding the election he is trying to play dirty," Mahloof said of Yameen. Provisional results released Monday showed joint opposition candidate Ibrahim Mohamed Solih decisively defeated Yameen with about 58 per cent of the vote in Sunday's election.

Presidential spokesman Ibrahim Hussain Shihab noted that Yameen had conceded the election in a speech Monday. He said Yameen accepted the results and pledged to ensure a smooth transition when his term ends Nov. 17. However, Shihab did not comment on whether Yameen's stance has changed since then. The election outcome surprised many given opposition warnings that the voting could be rigged. The European Union didn't send election observers because the Maldives failed to meet conditions for monitoring, and few foreign media were allowed into the country to cover the vote. The U.S., which earlier threatened sanctions if the elections were not free and fair, urged calm while the election results were being finalized.

Maldives became a multiparty democracy in 2008 after decades of autocratic rule. However, after Yameen became president in 2013 the country lost many of its democratic gains. He jailed almost all of his political opponents following allegedly flawed trials and forced some into exile. Yameen also consolidated power by exerting control over the courts, bureaucracy, police and the military. (AP)

Indian national jailed for running off with employer's cash in Singapore

SINGAPORE (TIP): An Indian national was jailed for three-and-a-half years on Monday for encashing cheques worth 4,70,000 Singapore dollars of his employer and absconding to Malaysia in March.

Bahurudeen Kuthpudeen, 44, pleaded guilty to one count each of criminal breach of trust and removing from Singapore the benefits of his criminal conduct, reported The Straits Times Tuesday.

The court heard that his employer, AM Mohamed Farook, who operates the Mohamed Thahir Exchange in Collyer Quay, signed three cheques for a total amount of 4,69,900 Singapore dollars at around 3 pm on March 27. The cheques were meant to be encashed for the purchase of foreign currencies.

He handed the cheques to an employee known only as Babu, who passed them to Bahurudeen. The business development manager then encashed the cheques at an RHB Bank branch at the nearby Cecil Street.

Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP) Melissa Ng said: "Instead of returning to the company, the accused left Singapore via the Woodlands Checkpoint bus hall at 4.46 pm for Malaysia." When his colleagues failed to find him, they alerted AM Mohamed. He tried to contact Bahurudeen on his mobile phone, but received a ringtone that is usually heard in overseas calls.

He then lodged a police report. DPP Ng told District Judge Luke Tan that Bahurudeen was later detained at the border of Kedah when he attempted to leave Malaysia for Thailand. Cash totalling almost USD 24,000 was found in his possession and seized. (PTI)

RAMESHWARAM: THE TEMPLE CITY

Rameshwaram is called the temple city of Tamilnadu. Located at the South-Eastern corner of the state this city is the foremost religious city for both Vaishnavites and Shaivites pilgrims.

Rameshwaram is one city that has a brief mention in the ancient Hindu mythology. According to Ramayana, before going to Lanka Lord Rama performed Shiv puja here for victory. And it was later that at the same place Rameshwaram temple was built.

Know an interesting mystical tale associated with Rameshwaram Tamil Nadu with Rameshwaram tourism. The pious land has witnessed a significant event related to Lord Rama. Legend says that after Lord Rama's triumph over the demon king Ravana in the war at Sri Lanka, he performed a thank giving rituals to Lord Shiva on this very majestic land of Rameshwaram Tamil Nadu.

PLACES TO VISIT

Dotted with some really nice travel destinations, Rameshwaram tourism is a real treat for the travelers to see. Lets have a look at the famous travel places to see here.

Ramanathaswamy Temple

Ramanathaswamy Temple - was built in the 12 century AD and is a fine specimen of late Dravidian architecture

World over it is know for its amazing sculpted pillars and corridors with elaborative design, carving and style.

According to legends Lord Rama sanctified this place by offering prayers to Lord Shiva after his victory over demon ruler Ravana.

Only Hindu pilgrims have permission to enter the Ramanathaswamy temple premises.

Kothandaramaswamy temple

Located just 8 km away from Rameshwaram temple, Dhanushkodi the place got its name after Lord Rama's bow 'Dhanush'.

Kothandaramaswamy is home to Kothandaramaswamy temple which was completely destroyed in 1964 by the terrible cyclones.

The temple has many beautiful statues of Lord Rama, Sita, Hanuman, Lakshmana and Vibhishana.

Adam's Bridge

Adam bridge is a chain of natural reefs, islets and sandbanks, that connects India with Sri Lanka.

According to legends, this series of steeping stones was used by Hanuman when he was chasing Ravana while resuing Sita.

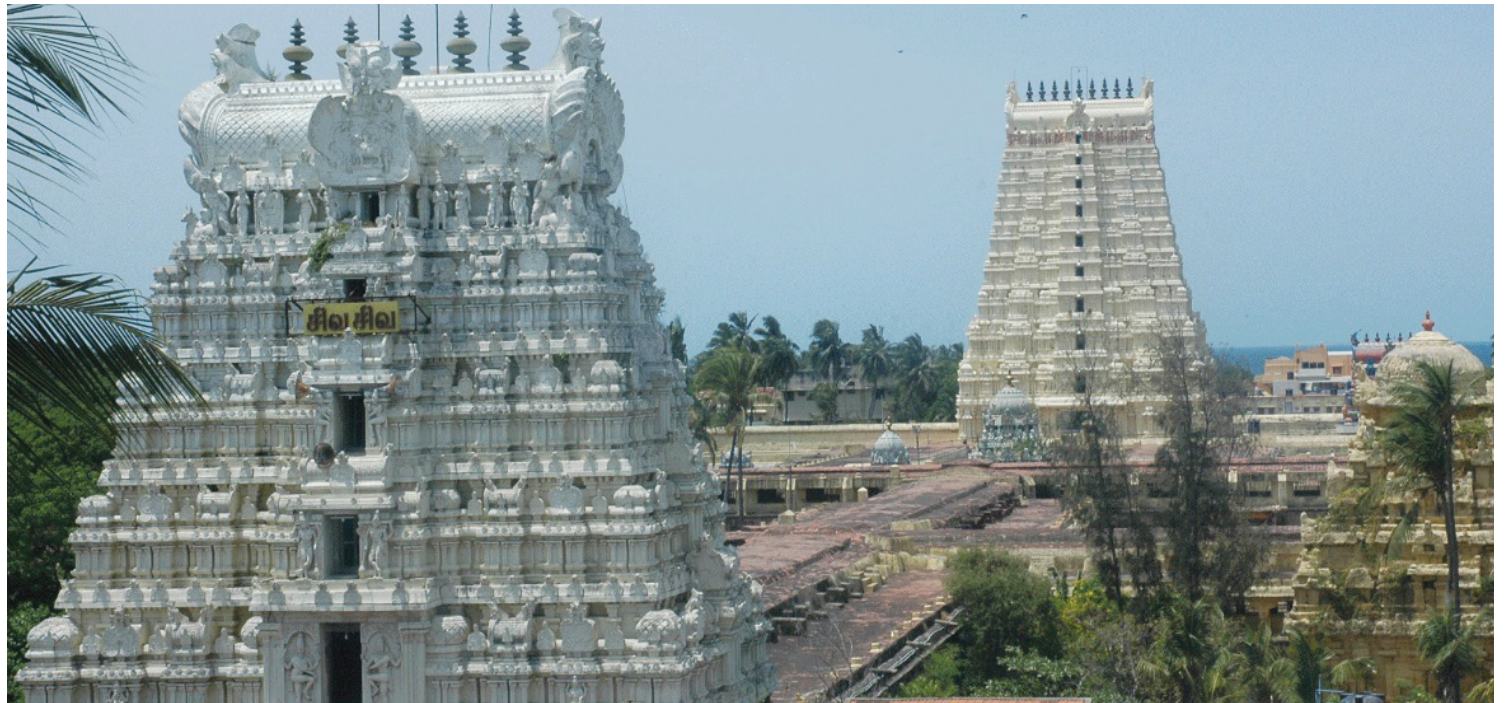
Gandhamadana Parvatam

Gandhamadana Parvatam is an ideal location to enjoy the natural view of the island along with Ramanathaswamy temple.

The footprint that are seen here are believed to be of Lord Rama.

Beach Attractions

Being an island city (and a famous attraction of Tamilnadu tourism), Rameshwaram is surrounded by the Arabian sea giving this place its pristine beauty. The picture perfect beaches and the colorful sandy beaches make this place one of its kind and ideal for water sports. Try out



scuba diving here or just relax under the sun sipping coconut water.

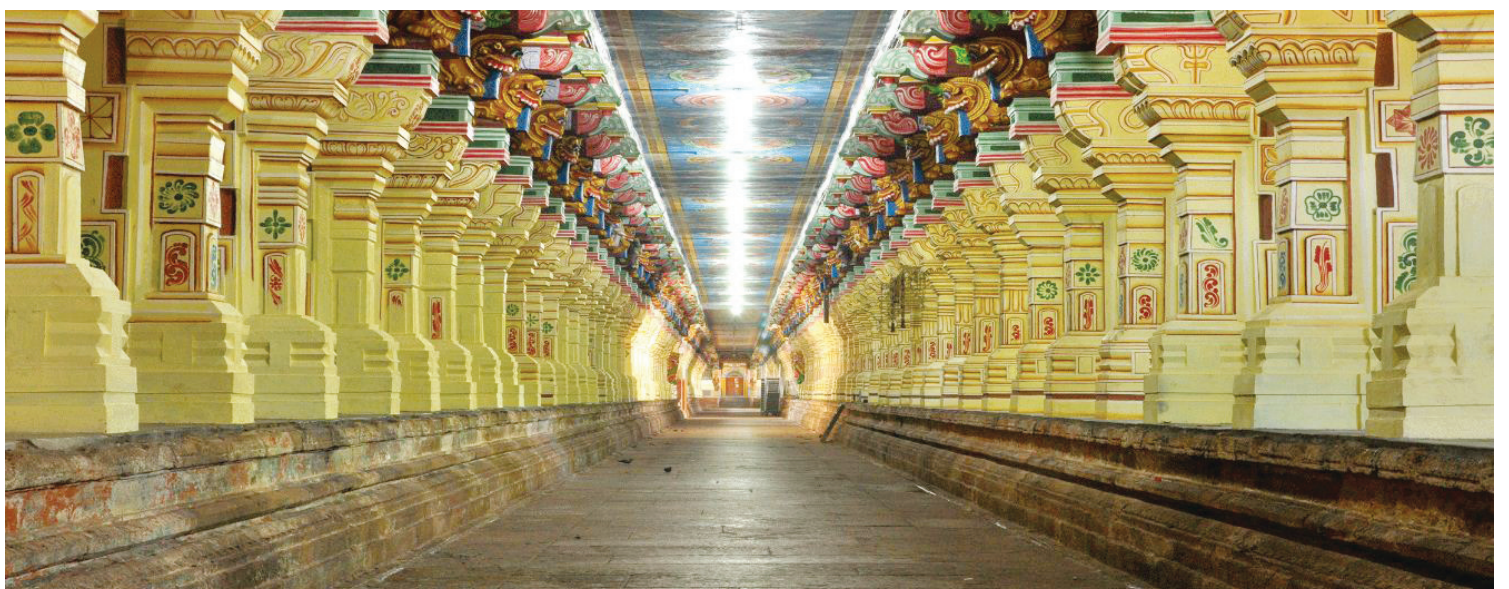
Rameshwaram tourism offers info on best nearby destination to the pious city. Several fascinating excursion destinations can be explored on your tour to Rameshwaram. Erwadi tucked 24 km from the city, is popular for the tomb of saint Ibrahim Syed Aulia. Another worth visiting nearby place id Ramanathapuram, renowned for its magnificent Ram Vilas Palace of Sethupati Rajas. Also Take a tour to Uthirakosamangai, known for the ancient Shiva temple.

How To Reach

BY AIR: Madurai is the nearest airport at a distance of 163 km

BY TRAIN: The rail network connects the city to and from Madurai, Chennai, Thanjavur and Trichy. Island of Rameshwaram is connected with mainland of Mandapam with 2 km long Indira Gandhi bridge

BY ROAD: The city is well connected by road to main cities like Chennai, Trichy, Thiruvallur, Tanjore, Kanyakumari and Pondicherry. Tourists can also hire jeeps, auto rickshaws and even cycle rickshaws for sightseeing tour of the city.



LIPSTICK RULES EVERY WOMAN MUST KNOW

Who doesn't desire a well-painted kissable pout? It's the thought of applying the wrong shade that many of us dread.

The thought of getting the right colour and the right pout is no ordinary task, unless you follow these easy but important steps for the perfect pout.

EXFOLIATE WITH A LIP BALM

Treat your lips just like you would treat your face. Ex-foliate lips, moisturise with a balm. Repeat the regimen daily.

KEEP YOUR MAKEUP MINIMAL

It's always safe to highlight only one feature of your face. If you are going for bold lips then better keep the rest of your face makeup minimal for perfect balance.

AVOID TOO MUCH SPARKLE

"Shimmer can look cheap," says make-up artist Troy. Look for lipsticks with a creamy finish. "Light reflection should come from moisture in the formula, not metallic pigments," he says.

CHOOSE RIGHT COLOUR

Finding the right shade is important. Different colours work differently on various complexion types, so try on a bunch of shades before zeroing down on the most suitable one. Advice: go for a shade that complements your skin tone. Lighter shades of reds and burgundy look fabulous with warm skin tones, while pinks and true reds work brilliantly for fairer skin.

USE PRIMER

Always use primer before you start applying the lipstick. Because

- It will give the lipstick shade a better colour contrast.
- It will help your lipstick last longer (throughout the day).
- In case you run out of primer or



you don't have one, you can use foundation instead.

PICK A LIP LINER

They say liner can either be your best friend or your worst enemy. Either case liner has a significant role in achieving the perfect pout. Just find the right lip liner, probably a shade that's closest to your lip colour, and outline your lips before applying the lipstick. This will give the required shape to your lip, either making them fuller or thinner. It also keeps your lipstick from feathering. FYI: Opting a much darker shade than your lipstick is the worst make-up disaster.

START IN THE MIDDLE

Always. Start your lipstick applying session from the centre of your lips and then spread outward with the help of lip brush. Experts always use lip brush

when applying lipstick because it leave less room for mistakes as compared to applying it directly from the tube.

SOFTEN THE EDGES

Just smudge the border of your lips slightly so as to get a natural, not-overly-done look.

BLOT! BLOT! BLOT!

After you are done applying lipstick, blot it with a tissue, then apply another layer. Blotting removes excess oils and emollients from the first layer of lipstick while leaving the pigments largely intact. "Blotting will create a base, and the second coat adds shine and coverage," says Troy. Adding a second layer of lipstick after blotting increases the pigment concentration in proportion to the creamy ingredients that are the enemies of lipstick longevity.



BEST HERBS FOR A HOME GARDEN

Herbs are easy to grow and have infinite medicinal properties. Presently, when the world around you is fighting with incurable diseases like chikungunya, dengue and other fatal virals, these herbs are a must in your home garden. They will also prove to be your kitchen's best friend.

Thyme

Thyme boosts the flavor of meat and vegetables, and the oil in thyme helps to break down the fats in many foods, making them more digestible. The leaves are easy to dry, and it also makes nice vinegar.

Lemongrass

Although lemon grass is core to the Asian cuisine, especially Thai, it works well in Western dishes too. This mixing of flavours is sometimes called 'fusion'. Lemongrass helps in preventing the growth of some bacteria and yeast. It also contains substances that are thought to relieve pain, reduce fever, stimulate the uterus and menstrual flow, and have antioxidant properties.

Aloe Vera

Christopher Columbus took the plant on board of his ships to treat wounds of his mercenaries.

Clinical studies showed an efficacy of the gel in inflammatory skin diseases, wounds, burns, sun burns, frostbites as well as acne, psoriasis, eczema and insect bites. The intake of the plant is also useful for strengthening the immune system.

Sage

Sage has antiseptic and antioxidant properties, which can help in fighting against early aging—a bonus for any beauty product. Sage has also been used as a natural remedy for anxiety and fatigue, and is thought to be a memory enhancer.

Parsley

Mix parsley leaves into salads, soups, stews, casseroles, and omelets. Serve fresh as garnish with meat, fish, and onion dishes.

As a natural anti-bacterial remedy, parsley can bolster your immune system and neutralize bad breath. It is also a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory which makes it great for digestion and detoxification.

Oregano

Oils distilled from oregano leaves can be used to treat respiratory maladies, digestive upset, parasitic infections including fungal infections, skin conditions including dandruff and psoriasis, muscle aches and joint pain.

Lemon Balm

A member of the mint family of herbs, lemon balm is easy to grow and offers several health benefits in addition to its wonderful citrus aroma. It naturally eases nerve and muscle tension. The fresh herb can be used as poultice to reduce inflammation and prevent infection. When ingested, lemon balm relieves gas, cramping, and stomach upset.

Fennel

This fragrant herb is used in cooking pork or veal, in soups and in salads. The fennel seeds have sharper taste. Fennel contains significant amounts of fiber, which helps lower the total amount of cholesterol in the blood, thereby decreasing the risk of heart disease.

FOOD CORNER

MUTTON FRY

If you happen to be a mutton lover, then this recipe is perfect for you! Easy-to-prepare, what makes this mutton recipe a perfect treat for your taste buds is the melange of spices, stir fried to perfection.

Ingredients

- 1/2 kg Mutton
- 1 tsp Ginger-Garlic Paste (alternatively crush 2 inch size Ginger and 1 pod Garlic)
- 1 Onion
- 1 big Tomato
- 1 tsp Cumin seeds
- 8-10 Red chilli
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp vinegar
- Pinch of turmeric powder
- 4 tsp oil
- 1 tsp Garam Masala (optional)

Method

- Soak chillies for few minutes.



- Add salt, turmeric powder to the mutton and boil it.
- Take oil in a non-stick pan.
- Put onion and garlic-ginger paste.
- Fry it in simmer for few minutes.
- Add tomato and again fry it.
- Put mutton and chilli-cumin paste in it.
- Finally add vinegar

TEST YOUR FITNESS LEVEL

So how fit are you? You most likely have mapped your fitness level in your head by seeing the number on your weighing scale. But mind you, that is not the entire story. Your weight alone is not the deciding factor of your fitness level.

We bring you some tests that you can do at home to measure and realign your fitness goals. Here's how:

HEART/CARDIO

Stairs test

If you can climb 2 flights of stairs or walk 2kms without breathlessness and without fatigue, you can call yourself fit. If your fatigue lasts beyond 30 minutes after exercising, you are unfit.

Walk test

If you can walk for more than 500 meters in 6 minutes, you are fit. But if you can walk less than 200 meters in 6 minutes, then you are probably unwell and need medical attention. If you can walk between 200-500 meters, then you need to consult a doctor to overrule any underlying ailment.

Rate of Perceived Exertion:

If you don't have a heart rate monitor at home, there is a simple technique called Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) that can help you with the assessment. For RPE, 0 means fresh and 10 means breathless. Try jumping jacks for 2 minutes and rate your exertion between 0-10. If it is below 4, consider your heart health poor.

FLEXIBILITY TEST

Flexibility makes you agile. Every muscle has a range of motion (ROM) and it should be stretched to its functions range to ensure you avoid injuries. A person who is flexible slips on a banana peel, he will land up in a split and not tear his muscles. Test your flexibility:

Hamstrings

Lie down straight on your back. Now lift your leg up and if you are able to effortlessly reach 90 degrees, it means



your hamstrings are flexible enough.

Quadriceps

When you fold your knee, your heel should be able to touch your hips.

Shoulders

Stand straight with your back and neck in a straight line. Now take your left arm across your body and use your right arm to pull it a little further. Try holding it. If you are able to do this with little effort, your shoulder flexibility is fine.

MUSCLE STRENGTH

Push-ups and planks

The perfect way to assess your muscular strength is through push-ups and planks. If you are able to do 10-20 repetitions without over exerting yourself, your muscle strength is rated fine.

Vertical jump test

This is used to determine leg muscle strength. To perform the test, the attempt is to reach the highest point on a wall by jumping. In males reaching a height over 28 inches is excellent, between 24 and 28 inches is very good, 20 and 24 inches is above average and less than 8 inches is very poor. For women this gets reduced by 4 inches per

scale.

BODY MASS INDEX

Pinch test

In case of men, the fat percentage should be 18-24 percent and for women it should be 15-18 percent. To assess your body mass percentage, you can do the pinch test at home. "Pinch and hold the flesh from the side of your waist, arms, thighs and if you are able to pinch more than 2 inches of flesh, it means your fat percentage is higher than what it should be.

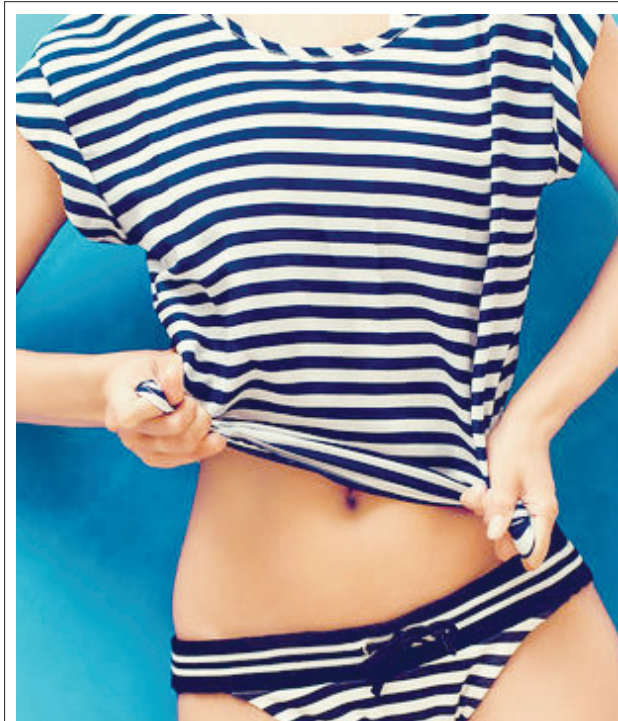
Waist to hip ratio

According to a study in the European Heart Journal, both your waist-to-hip ratio and waist circumference are linked to heart disease risk. To map the waist-to-hip ratio, measure the widest parts of your waist and hips. Now use this number to assess your ratio online. There are a couple of online apps available for the same (HealthStatus, BMI calculator and more)

LUNG HEALTH

Hold your breath

A home technique to assess your lung health. If you can hold your breath for 30 seconds to a minute, your lungs are in proper working condition.



Gut bacteria can help lose flab

Biologists at Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden have for the first time identified in detail how some of our most common intestinal bacteria interact during metabolism.

New research enables "tailored" diet advice - based on our personal gut microbiome - for people who want to lose weight and reduce the disease risk.

The researchers developed a mathematical calculation platform that makes it possible to predict how different patients will respond to a modified diet, depending on how their gut microbiome is composed.

"This allows us to begin identifying each individual bacteria type's metabolism and thus get a handle on the basic mechanisms in human metabolism," said Jens Nielsen, professor of systems biology at Chalmers in a statement.

There can be up to 1,000 different types of bacteria and other microorganisms in the human digestive system, many of which take part in metabolism in one way or another.

"This is clear as regards to Type 2 diabetes, hardening of the arteries and obesity, for example. There are also indications that the same might apply to depression and the body's ability to respond to various cancer treatments," Nielsen explained.

The research will make it easier for physicians to identify overweight patients who are at higher risk of cardiometabolic disease and could truly achieve major health benefits by modifying their diet and losing weight.

"In the long term we might be able to add intestinal bacteria for patients whose metabolism does not function properly," she explained.

What are known as probiotics are already being used - various yoghurt cultures are one example - but the task of these bacteria is primarily to stabilise the intestines and create a favourable environment.

"The next generation of probiotics will pertain more to adding bacteria that integrate directly with the existing gut microbiome and make a lasting change to the composition," Nielsen noted.

Cocoa and dark chocolates can boost your Vitamin D intake, strengthen bones

Love chocolates or other products containing cocoa? A new study has found that foods rich in cocoa, such as cocoa butter, cocoa beans, cocoa powder, and dark chocolates may improve your vitamin D intake. Vitamin D comes in two types — vitamin D2 and D3. While, vitamin D3 is produced in the human skin through exposure to the sun, the rest is ideally consumed through food such as fatty fish, chicken or eggs.

The findings, published in the journal Food Chemistry, revealed that products containing cocoa are indeed a source of vitamin D2. However, the amount varied greatly from food to food. "This is not surprising as the cocoa content in white chocolate is significantly lower. It confirms our assumption that cocoa is the source of vitamin D2," said co-author Gabriele Stangl, Professor from the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg in Germany.

The researchers said that brittle bones and an increased risk of respiratory diseases could be the result of a vitamin D deficiency and cocoa butter and dark chocolate have the highest amount of vitamin D2. For the study, the research team investigated cocoa and cocoa products to ascertain whether or not it contained the important source of vitamin D.

Cocoa beans were dried after fermentation, placed on mats



and exposed to the sun for one to two weeks. While dark chocolate has a relatively high vitamin D2 content, very little amount of vitamin D was found in white chocolate, the researchers said. However, the researchers do not recommend consuming large quantities of chocolates.

"You would have to eat enormous amounts of chocolate to cover your vitamin D2 requirements. That would be extremely unhealthy because of the high sugar and fat content," Stangl noted.

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'TWEETS REVEAL HOW AMERICAN ENGLISH DEVELOPS'

Analysis of billions of words contained within millions of tweets posted across the US between 2013 and 2014 has unveiled the regions from which new words tend to originate, scientists said Thursday.

The researchers from the University of Birmingham in the UK used advanced computer technology to analyse the geocoded tweets which revealed the precise location of the user at the time of posting.

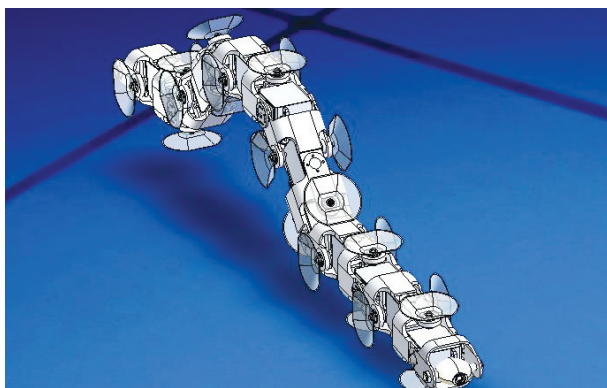
They tracked the origin of 54 newly emerging words in American English.

For example, they found that the word 'baeless', which mean 'to be single', originated from Deep South, while the word 'mutuals', which is short for 'mutual friends', originated from the West Coast.

Geo-coded data from Twitter allowed them to create maps for these 54 words, showing how the phrases had spread across the country over time.

Applying modern computational techniques to the study of language variation and change, the team identified that development of new words in Modern American English centred on five regions: The West Coast, the Northeast, the Mid Atlantic, the Deep South, and the Gulf Coast.

"This is the first time that such a large sample of emerging words or any type of linguistic innovation has been mapped in one language," said Jack Grieve, a professor at the University of Birmingham.



Robot caterpillar can deliver drugs inside human body

Scientists have developed a tiny, soft robot with caterpillar-like legs that can carry heavy loads and could be used to deliver drugs in the human body.

The robot developed by researchers from the City University of Hong Kong (CityU) can move efficiently inside surfaces within the body lined with, or entirely immersed in, body fluids such as blood or mucus.

The robot has hundreds of pointed legs, measuring less than a millimetre. Researchers studied the leg structures of hundreds of ground animals, including those with 2, 4, 8 or more legs, in particular the ratio between leg-length and the gap between the legs.

"Most animals have a leg-length to leg-gap ratio of 2:1 to 1:1. So we decided to create our robot using 1:1 proportion," said Shen Yajing, an assistant professor at CityU, who led the research.

The robot's body thickness measures approximately 0.15 mm, with each conical leg measuring 0.65 mm long and the gap between the legs measuring approximately 0.6 mm, making the leg-length-to-gap ratio around 1:1.

Moreover, the robot's pointed legs have greatly reduced their contact area and hence the friction with the surface. Laboratory tests showed that the multi-legged robot has 40 times less friction than a limbless robot in both wet and dry environment.

NEW SMARTPHONE-BASED SYSTEM TO TEST FOR LEAD IN WATER

Scientists say they have created an inexpensive system, using a smartphone and a lens made with an inkjet printer, that can detect lead in tap water at levels commonly accepted as dangerous.

The system, described in the journal *Analytical Chemistry*, combines nanocolorimetry with dark-field microscopy, integrated into the smartphone microscope platform to detect levels of lead below the safety threshold set by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

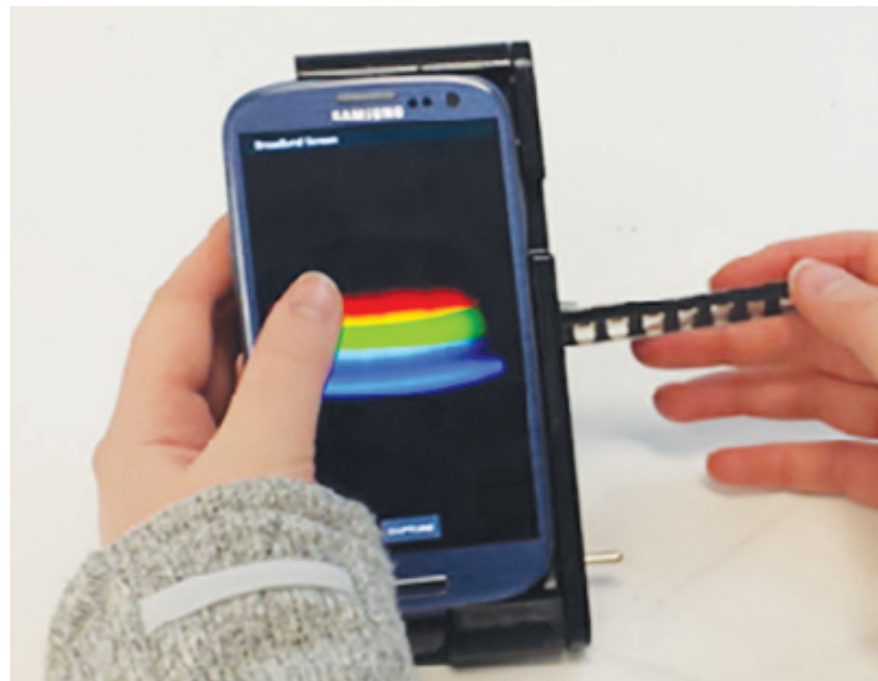
"Smartphone nano-colorimetry is rapid, low-cost, and has the potential to enable individual citizens to examine (lead) content in drinking water on-demand in virtually any environmental setting," said Wei-Chuan Shih, an associate professor at the University of Houston in the US.

Even small amounts of lead can cause serious health problems, with young children especially vulnerable to neurological damage.

EPA standards require lead levels in drinking water to be below 15 parts per billion, and Shih said currently available consumer test kits are not sensitive enough to accurately detect lead at that level.

The latest application incorporates colour analysis to detect nanoscale lead particles.

The researchers built a self-contained smartphone microscope that can operate in both fluorescence and dark-field imaging modes and paired it with an inexpensive smartphone with an 8-megapixel camera.



They spiked tap water with varying amounts of lead, ranging from 1.37 parts per billion to 175 parts per billion.

They then added chromate ions, which react with the lead to form lead chromate nanoparticles; the nanoparticles can be detected by combining colorimetric analysis and microscopy. The analysis measured both the intensity detected from the nanoparticles, correlating that to the lead concentration, and verified that the reaction was spurred by the presence of lead. The mixture was transferred to a polydimethylsiloxane slab attached to a glass slide; after it dried, deionised

water was used to rinse off the chromate compound and the remaining sediment was imaged for analysis.

The microscopy imaging capability proved essential, Shih said, because the quantity of sediment was too small to be imaged with an unassisted smartphone camera, making it impossible to detect relatively low levels of lead.

Building upon the smartphone microscope platform to create a useful consumer product was key, Shih said.

"We wanted to be sure we could do something that would be useful from the standpoint of detecting lead at the EPA standard," he said. *Source: PTI*

Facebook launches programme to boost coding skills of students

Facebook has launched in the US free online education programme CodeFWD to increase the numbers of underrepresented and female students interested in pursuing computer programming.

"We're working on a number of initiatives like CodeFWD to widen the pipeline of diverse talent studying computer science so the next generation of tech innovators reflects and incorporates diverse perspectives, building a future that benefits us all," Lauryn Ogbechie, Education Partnerships Director at Facebook, said in a statement on Tuesday.

Created in partnership with connected toys maker Sphero, CodeFWD by Facebook, has been designed for both English and Spanish speakers.

It is a three-step programme where educators and organisations introduce computer programming to 4th to 8th grade students.

With the first module "I do", CodeFWD prepares educators to introduce the basics of computer programming to their students, even as they may be discovering



the concepts themselves.

The "We do" module lets educators and students learn together. And the "You do" is designed to help students practice their new skills.

"After completing these three steps,

educators who want to continue developing their students' coding skills using a tangible, hands-on product can apply to earn a free classroom set of programmable robots from our partners at Sphero," Ogbechie said.

India will have to reduce or stop crude oil import from Iran from October: Moody's

NEW DELHI (TIP): Indian refiners will either have to significantly reduce or completely stop importing crude oil from Iran over the next month, increasing their dependence on other Middle Eastern suppliers like Saudi Arabia and Iraq, Moody's Investors Service said Thursday.

US President Donald Trump earlier this week in a speech to the United Nation's General Assembly reiterated sanctions on Iranian oil exports will take effect on November 5 and that the US is working with countries that import Iranian oil to cut their purchases substantially.

India is the second largest buyer of Iranian crude after China, accounting for about 30 per cent of total crude exports from the Persian Gulf nation during April-August 2018.

Indian refineries, which import over 80 per cent of their crude feedstock from overseas, sourced about 14 per cent of their imports from Iran.

"We expect Indian refiners will either have to significantly reduce or completely stop importing crude oil from Iran over the next month or so.

"As a result, Indian refiners will increase dependence on the remaining Middle Eastern crude oil suppliers (mainly Saudi Arabia and Iraq), aside from Iran," Moody's said.

Iranian crude is usually sold at a discount of up to USD 2-4 per barrel to other Middle Eastern crude oil grades.

Iran's national oil company, National Iranian Oil Company, also subsidises the



freight costs for crude oil delivery and offers extended payment terms to buyers.

"Assuming a complete cessation of imports of Iranian crude and USD 3 per barrel negative impact on earnings because of that, on the barrels being substituted, we estimate total decline in earnings for Indian refiners to be USD 400-500 million, against combined EBITDA of about USD 10 billion for the 3 largest state-owned Indian refiners in 2017-18," it said. "Thus we expect the impact on the refiners' credit metrics to be limited." Iranian crude oil is imported into India by refiners including Indian Oil Corp (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL), Reliance Industries, Nayara Energy and

Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL).

"The sanctions on Iranian oil are credit negative for Indian refiners because their supplier concentration will increase after the sanctions take effect.

"The refiners' exposure to oil price volatility will also increase if they turn to the spot market," Moody's said.

It said India imported 220.4 million tonne (MT) of crude oil in 2017-18 fiscal, out of which about 9.4 per cent was from Iran. During April-August 2018, India imported 94.9 MT of crude, out of which about 14.4 per cent was from Iran.

Exports to India accounted for 21 per cent of Iran's crude oil outbound shipments in 2017-18 and 30 per cent from April to August 2018. *Source: PTI*

INDIAN-ORIGIN STEEL TYCOON SANJEEV GUPTA NAMED 21ST CENTURY ICON IN UK

LONDON (TIP): Indian-origin steel tycoon Sanjeev Gupta has been awarded the title of 21st Century Icon at an awards ceremony in London in recognition of his success in building a flagship UK-based international metals, industrials, energy and financial services group.



Gupta, Executive Chairman of GFG Alliance, was named an "Icon" in the "Astute Finance and Investments" category for his "relentless pursuit of a strategy to revive metal manufacture and other heavy industry across the developed economies and his embrace of innovation in order to make industry both competitive and sustainable" by the judging panel for the 21st Century Icon Awards held last week.

The accolade, which also highlighted Gupta's work in establishing the industry-friendly Wyelands Bank, was announced during the second annual 21st Century Icon Awards at the Jumeirah Carlton Tower in London last Friday.

ELITE, the London Stock Exchange Group's business support and capital raising programme, had thrown its weight behind the awards ceremony aimed at recognising next-generation talent among businesses from India and around the world.

"This is a great honour for all of us in the worldwide GFG family and I'm thrilled for us to be recognised in a programme that specifically sets out to inspire future generations," said Gupta, in reference to his award, presented by Hinduja Group Co-Chairman GP Hinduja. "I received a lot of encouragement as a young man which has definitely been the foundation of my journey. It is now important for me to try to inspire and encourage the next generation of young entrepreneurs," he said. *Source: PTI*

US regulators charge Tesla CEO with fraud, seek his removal

WASHINGTON (TIP): The US Securities and Exchange Commission charged Tesla CEO Elon Musk with securities fraud, alleging he misled investors last month in tweets about taking the company private.



Musk tweeted August 7 that he had "secured" funding to privatize the electric automaker at \$420 a share, causing a brief spike in Tesla's share price. The SEC said Musk's statements on Twitter were "false and misleading" and that he had never discussed the plans with company officials or potential funders. Musk later said he later decided against the plan. The charges were a fresh blow to Musk and Tesla, which have also been buffeted in recent months as the company struggled to reach production targets and Musk gave emotional comments to the media, including one interview where he appeared to smoke marijuana.

Musk "knew that he had never discussed a going-private transaction at \$420 per share with any potential funding source," the SEC said in a complaint filed in federal court in New York Thursday. *Source: PTI*

OYO to raise \$1 billion through SoftBank fund

NEW DELHI (TIP): Hospitality firm OYO Tuesday announced a capital raise of \$1 billion (around Rs 7,280 crore) in a fresh round of funding led by SoftBank Investment Advisers (SBIA) through SoftBank Vision Fund for further expansion.

The funding round also saw participation from other existing investors Lightspeed Venture Partners, Sequoia and Greenoaks Capital. The company has already raised \$800 million, and has further commitment of \$200 million, OYO said in a statement.

"In the last 12 months, we have increased our international footprint to five countries - India, China, Malaysia and Nepal, and more recently in the UK. "With this additional funding, we plan to rapidly scale our business in these countries, while continuing to invest further in technology and talent," OYO Founder & CEO Ritesh Agarwal said.

Berkshire Hathaway closes \$300mn investment in Paytm

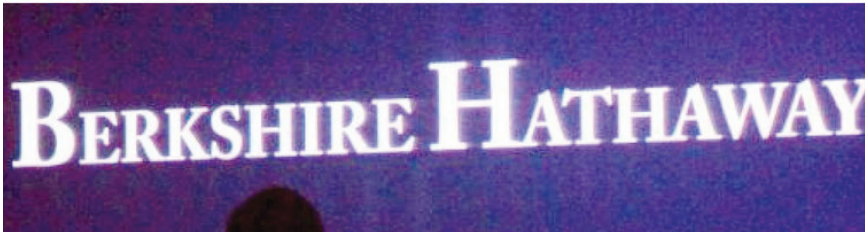
BENGALURU (TIP): One97 Communications, the parent entity of India's largest digital payments firm, Paytm, has received \$300 million (Rs 21.79 billion) in fresh funding from Berkshire Hathaway Inc. The deal is the Warren Buffett-led firm's first investment in the country.

According to regulatory filings sourced from Paper.vc, One97 Communications issued 1.7 million shares to BH International Holdings on September 27. Post the investment, Berkshire Hathaway will have around 2.9 per cent holding in the Indian firm.

Paytm's value post the investment will stand at Rs 731 billion (\$10 billion).

Earlier this month, Berkshire Hathaway had confirmed it was investing in Paytm, but clarified that Buffett himself wasn't involved in making the deal. The investment is yet to be officially announced by either Berkshire Hathaway or Paytm.

"We feel both excited and humbled by this endorsement. Berkshire's experience in financial services, and long-term investment horizon is going to be a huge advantage in Paytm's journey



of bringing 500 million Indians to the mainstream economy through financial inclusion," Paytm boss Vijay Shekhar Sharma had said in a statement soon after.

The investment comes at a time when Paytm is going up against global giants Google and Facebook-owned WhatsApp. Both the US giants have either launched or are in the process of launching their digital payment products built on top of

India's indigenous payment system UPI.

Google Pay (previously Google Tez) is already one among the most used UPI payment apps in the country. In August, the Mountain View company said its payment app had been downloaded over 50 million times in India. WhatsApp continues to await the go-ahead from RBI to launch its UPI service beyond the one million beta users who already have access to it.

contd from page 1

She said, He Said at...

Ford said "absolutely not" when Democratic Senator Dianne Feinstein asked her if it could be a case of mistaken identity. The hearing, which has riveted Americans and intensified the political polarization in the United States, occurred against the backdrop of the #MeToo movement against sexual harassment and assault. Kavanaugh has been accused of sexual misconduct by two other women as well. He has denied all the allegations.

While some Republicans and Trump have called the allegations by Ford and two other women against Kavanaugh part of a smear campaign, Ford told the committee, "I am an independent person and I am no pawn."

Democratic senators, who praised the credibility of her testimony and called her brave for coming forward, sought to score political points during their five minutes apiece of questioning Ford. The panel's Republican senators, all men, did not question her, assigning that task to Rachel Mitchell, a sex crimes prosecutor.

While Mitchell sought to probe Ford's account including any gaps in her story, her questioning seemed disjointed because she took turns with the Democratic senators to ask questions in five-minute segments, disrupting her flow.

"The first thing that struck me from your statement this morning was that you are terrified. And I just wanted to let you know, I'm very sorry. That's not right," Mitchell said.

Ford, a psychology professor at Palo Alto University in California, said a drunken Kavanaugh attacked her and tried to remove her clothing at a gathering of teenagers in Maryland when he was 17 years old and she was 15.

Brett groped me and tried to take off my clothes... he was very inebriated. I believed he was going to rape me. I tried to yell for help. Brett put his hand over my mouth. - Christine Blasey Ford

Under questioning from Feinstein, Ford said she has suffered from claustrophobia and anxiety, adding her strongest memory of the incident was the "uproarious laughter between the two (Kavanaugh and Judge) and their having fun at my expense."

Judge Brett Kavanaugh, in his testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, proclaimed his innocence.

In a passionate defense, the 53-year-old conservative judge insisted before the Senate Judiciary Committee that it never happened, accused Democrats of destroying his reputation and condemned his confirmation battle as a "national disgrace" and a "circus."

"Judge Kavanaugh showed America exactly why I nominated him," the President tweeted just minutes after the close of the hearing.

"His testimony was powerful, honest and riveting," Mr. Trump said. "Democrats' search and destroy strategy is disgraceful and this process has been a total sham and effort to delay, obstruct and resist. The Senate must vote!"

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Mr. Trump would get his wish, with the Judiciary Committee - which has 11 Republicans and 10 Democrats - set to vote on its recommendation Friday before the nomination goes to the full Senate, where Republicans hold a slim 51-49 edge.

"We're going to vote in the morning and we're going to move forward," Mr. McConnell told journalists.

Ayodhya dispute: SC...

VHP president Alok Kumar said the next course of action would be decided at a high-powered committee of saints on October 5.

"I am satisfied that this impediment has been removed and the way is now clear for hearing of appeals in the title suits on Ram janmabhoomi. We feel all sorts of impediments were being put up to delay the main matter (construction of Ram temple), including pleas that the matter be heard after

the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. We understand that the next hearing on the case has been fixed for October 29. The matter has been pending in the Supreme Court for long. We hope and expect that the SC will expeditiously hear the pleas," he said.

On whether the construction of the temple would begin before the 2019 elections, he said the two issues "were not related". A high-powered committee comprising saints associated with the Ram janmabhoomi issue will gather on October 5 and take a call on the next course of action, he said.

RSS office-bearers are expected to be present at the meeting to decide whether the matter should be left to the SC, Parliament or required fresh impetus. Notably, the issue related to the 1994 ruling has delayed the hearing in the title case. Now that the hearing will start on October 29, the most important implication of Thursday's order could be speeding up of the title case. With less than a year to go for the polls, political observers see it as a "favorable" situation for the BJP, which had promised a "grand Ram temple" in its manifesto.

Recently, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, while speaking at a Sangh conclave "Bhavishya Ka Bharat - An RSS Perspective", was also clear that a grand Ram temple should be constructed at Ayodhya as soon as possible. Rather, it should have been built by now, he had said.

"It (Ram temple) is the question of faith of crores of Hindus, it should have happened by now. It is only right that a grand Ram mandir is built at the place Bhagwan Ram was born. The building of the temple will end a major issue of friction between Hindus and Muslims. And if it is done amicably, it will automatically silence those who point fingers at the Muslim community," Bhagwat had said.

Trump says he prefers...

White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said Trump spoke briefly with Rosenstein on Thursday and the two men agreed to meet next week to avoid interfering with the focus on the Senate Judiciary Committee's hearings with Supreme Court nominee Judge Brett Kavanaugh and Christine Blasey Ford, who has accused Kavanaugh of sexually assaulting her when they were teenagers.

"They do not want to do anything to interfere with the hearing," Sanders said in a statement.

Trump and Rosenstein were set to meet Thursday in person to discuss Rosenstein's future in the administration after The New York Times reported last week that Rosenstein suggested secretly recording the President and attempting to remove him from office via the 25th Amendment.

Trump signaled during a news conference on Wednesday that he might delay his meeting with Rosenstein, saying he might "ask for a little bit of a delay to the meeting, because I don't want to do anything that gets in the way of this very important Supreme Court pick."

"I don't want it competing and hurting the decision, one way or the other," Trump said.

Trump declined to say whether he had made up his mind on Rosenstein's future in his administration but said he "would much prefer keeping Rod Rosenstein."

"We've had a good talk. He said he never said it, he said he doesn't believe it. He said he has a lot of respect for me, and he was very nice and we'll see," Trump said. "We have caught people doing things that are terrible. I would much prefer keeping Rod Rosenstein, much prefer."

Peace, security in...

South Asia is essential for cooperation and economic development, but Pakistan accused India of obstructing the region's progress and prosperity. Ms. Swaraj's statement on Thursday, September 27, came at a meeting of

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation on the sidelines of the ongoing United Nations General Assembly session in New York.

The SAARC grouping includes India, Pakistan and six other regional countries. It was established in December 1985 with an aim to promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia.

"An environment of peace and security is essential for regional cooperation to progress and achieve economic development and prosperity of our people," Ms. Swaraj said at the SAARC Ministers Meeting.

She said the number of incidents endangering South Asia are on the rise and terrorism remains the single-largest threat to peace and stability in the geopolitical region, and the world.

"It is necessary that we eliminate the scourge of terrorism in all its forms, without any discrimination, and end the ecosystem of its support," she said according to sources.

Shortly after her statement, Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told reporters that Pakistan wants to see SAARC become result-oriented.

"We have to decide the next step. I have no hesitation in saying that in the way of SAARC's progress and in the way of the region's connectivity and prosperity, there is only one obstruction and one attitude. The attitude of one nation is making the spirit of SAARC and the spirit of the founding fathers of SAARC unfulfilled," he said, without naming India.

Asked if he had talks with Ms. Swaraj at the meeting, Mr. Qureshi denied. "She left the meeting mid-way, maybe she was not feeling well," he said.

He said Ms. Swaraj talked about regional cooperation, but "my question is how will regional cooperation be possible when the regional nations are ready to sit together, and you are the obstruction in that dialogue and discussion."

Mr. Qureshi said a majority of the members present in the meeting understands the significance of SAARC. "They want to move on. I can't speak for them, but I can deduce from their body language, disappointment; because if you do not move on and if you do not sit and convene meetings how do you move on," he said.

He cited other regional groupings such as ASEAN and the EU and said "look at this (SAARC) atmosphere"

He called Ms. Swaraj's statement at the meeting "very vague".

He said "you said the next summit will not happen until there is conducive environment. How do you define what conducive environment is? It can vary from country to country."

Mr. Qureshi's remarks came days after New Delhi cancelled a proposed meeting between foreign ministers of India and Pakistan in New York.

India cited attacks by Islamabad-backed groups in Jammu and Kashmir and stamps released by Pakistan glorifying Kashmiri terrorists as reasons for cancellation of the proposed talks. SAARC member-states have previously said they view the strained relations between India and Pakistan as one of the reasons for the little progress achieved by the geopolitical grouping in recent years.

Nepal And Sri Lanka have expressed interest in reviving the summit postponed in 2016 after New Delhi pulled out over Islamabad's unrelenting support to terrorist activities in India and after Pakistan-based terrorists attack an Indian Army base in Uri.

Bhutan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan had also joined India in boycotting the summit.

SAARC summits are usually held biennially. The member-state hosting the summit assumes the Chair of the association. The last SAARC Summit in 2014 was held in Kathmandu, which was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. (Source: PTI)

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SUDARSANA CHAKRA

The Sudarshana Chakra is a spinning, disk-like weapon with 108 serrated edges used by the Hindu god Vishnu. The Sudarshana Chakra is generally portrayed on the right rear hand of the four hands of Vishnu, who also holds a shankha (conch shell), a Gada (mace) and a padma (lotus).

The Sudarshana Chakra may be depicted as an ayudhapurusha (anthropomorphic form). He is depicted as a fierce form of Vishnu. While the Sudarshana Chakra is depicted as a subordinate figure with Vishnu, in many South Indian Vishnu temples, the Chakra as an ayudhapurusha is worshipped in its own shrine attached to the central temple.

According to the Puranas, Sudarshana Chakra is used for the ultimate destruction of an enemy. The depiction of Vishnu with Sudarshana Chakra also means that Vishnu is the keeper-owner of the celestial bodies and heavens.

What kind of weapon was Krishna's Sudarshan Chakra?

The word Sudarshan Chakra is derived from two words, 'su' and 'darshan'. It means the vision (Darshan) which is auspicious (Su). The word chakra is derived from 'chruhu', which means movement and 'kruhu', which means to do. Thus, chakra means something which is mobile. Of all divine weapons, this is the only one which is constantly in motion but not much is written about its source, make and abilities. Read on to uncover the unknown...

The origin of Sudarshana Chakra

There are various schools of thought regarding the creation of the divine discus. Some scriptures say that it was created by the combined energy of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh and Brahaspati, the Guru of the deities, gave the discus to Lord Vishnu. Other scriptures state that Sri Krishna procured it from the demi gods (devata mandal). As per the Mahabharata, Krishna and Arjun assisted the fire lord (Agnidev) in burning the Khandav forest. In return He presented Krishna with a discus and a Koumodaki mace.

Special features of Sudarshana Chakra

Krishna usually perched the discus on His little finger while Lord Vishnu on His index finger. It is believed that once the divine chakra has destroyed its enemy, it returns to the attacker. This means that even after the launch, it remains within the control of the warrior. It travels along the path of zero stress nature and can reach anywhere within a moment. Sudarshan Chakra is silent and when an obstruction is posed in its way, the speed of the discus amplifies.

Legends behind the origin of Sudarshan Chakra

Since the word Sudarshana collectively means "vision of which is auspicious". Lord Sudarshana is generally worshiped during Holy Yagyas to ward off negative energies or vibrations. There are various mythological stories that narrate how this divine weapon came into being. One such legend says that Sudarshana Chakra was made by the architect of gods, Vishvakarma. Vishvakarma's daughter Sanjana was married to Surya, the Sun God. But, due to the Sun's blazing light and heat, she was unable to go near him.

Made of Sun Dust

She complained to her father about this.



Viswakarma took the Sun and made him shine less so that his daughter could live a normal married life. The left over Sun "dust" was collected by Viswakarma and he created three divine things out of it. The first one was the famous aerial vehicle Pushpaka Vimana, the second being the Trishula (Trident) of Lord Shiva, and the third was the Sudarshana Chakra of Lord Vishnu.

Sudarshan Chakra was not Lord Krishna's weapon

This is another story of how the Sudarshan Chakra came into existence. There was a time when asuras, or demons, tortured the cosmic gods almost every other day. The cosmic gods were suffering so much that they went to see Lord Vishnu to seek his help and defeat the demons once in for all. However, Vishnu told them that he doesn't have enough power to destroy the demons and he will have to ask Lord Shiva for help. When Vishnu went to Shiva, he found Lord Shiva in trance.

Vishnu did not want to disturb Shiva's meditation, so he started praying to Shiva with the hope that his voice would reach Shiva one day. Many years passed by but Vishnu didn't give up; he prayed and chanted Shiva's name with great devotion. He offered one thousand lotus blossoms to Shiva every day. In the meanwhile the gods were being mercilessly tortured by the demons. Finally, after many long years, Shiva came out of his trance.

An act to please the Lord

Lord Vishnu ran to gather one thousand lotus blossoms so that he could worship Lord Shiva. Shiva had already decided that he would grant Vishnu whatever he wants, but first he wanted to play a trick on Vishnu. He secretly went to the spot where Vishnu had placed the lotus flowers and stole one of

them. While offering his prayers, when Lord Vishnu realized that one flower is missing, he immediately plucked out one of his eyes and placed it before Shiva.

Lord Shiva gave Sudarshan Chakra to Lord Vishnu

When Shiva saw that Vishnu had such devotion for him, he said, "I will grant you anything that you ask for." "Please give me something that will help me to conquer the asuras," said Vishnu. Shiva replied, "I give you this round disc. It will help you to conquer all your enemies. No matter how many demons come to attack you and the other gods, you will be able to defeat them all with this disc."

The make of Sudarshan Chakra

The Chakra comprises 10 million spikes in two rows moving in opposite directions to give it a serrated edge. The Sudarshana Chakra is not thrown. With will-power it is

sent against the enemy. It rotates very, very fast after leaving the finger and chases the enemy. The chakra itself is round and has something like the points of arrows all around its edge. It has tremendous occult and spiritual power to destroy everything.

Composition of the divine discus

It is said that the discus has six spokes and its center is composed of Vajra. It is believed that the words, "Sahasrat hum phat" are inscribed on each of the spokes. A novel description of the discus has been written in the Vaman Puran (82.23-26). Mr. Vasudevsharan Agraval expresses it as: The discus has been described as the discus of time (Kalachakra). It consists of twelve spokes and six navels. The twelve spokes represent the twelve months and the six navels represent the six seasons.

What kind of weapon was Krishna's Sudarshan Chakra?

Sudarshan chakra startlingly resembles the Chakram, which is a throwing weapon from India. It is circular in shape with a sharpened outer edge and ranges in size from approximately 12-30 centimeters in diameter. The Chakram is primarily a throwing weapon but can also be used hand-to-hand. It was later used extensively by the Sikhs as recently as the days of Ranjit Singh. It came to be associated with Sikhs because of the Nihang practice of wearing chakram on their arms and around the neck.

From the scriptures

The use of the Sudarshana Chakra is occasionally mentioned in the Hindu texts of Rigveda, Yajurveda and Puranas, as an ultimate weapon of law, order and preservation to eliminate the enemy. Such enemies are enumerated variously as rakshasas, asura, and vikrutatma. In one such instance, as scribed in the Mahabharat, Lord Shri Krishna, beheads Shishupala with Sudarshana Chakra, for his rapacious behavior. It was also used to cut the celestial mountain Mandrachal Parvat for churning the ocean of milk (Samudra Manthan).

Various accounts of Sudarshan Chakra

As per the legends, when Lord Krishna lifted the Govardhan mountain for support He held the discus below it. Sudarshan Chakra was also used to create an artificial sunset so that Jayadrath could be annihilated. However, Lord Krishna did not use it in the Bharatiya war (battle of Mahabharata) or in any other battle to slay anyone. It is quoted in a Holy text of the Nath sect that once Gorakh Nath had stopped the discus.

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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.'

GERMANY WINS RIGHT TO HOST EURO 2024



UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin, announces that Germany will stage the 2024 European Championships, in Nyon, Switzerland. Pic source: AP/PTI

NYON (TIP): Germany will host the Euro 2024 soccer tournament after comfortably beating the only other bidders Turkey in a two-horse contest on Thursday. Germany, which previously staged the event as West Germany in 1988 and successfully held the 2006 World Cup, won the vote among UEFA's executive committee after a four-year campaign which, for the first time, featured human rights as one of the specific bid criteria.

Germany received 12 of the 17 votes with four for Turkey and one abstention.

The decision was a bitter disappointment for Turkey who have yet to stage a major football tournament and also failed with bids to host the event in 2008, 2012 and 2016.

Source: Reuters

Badminton players Saina Nehwal, Parupalli Kashyap to exchange vows



NEW DELHI (TIP): Badminton stars Saina Nehwal and Parupalli Kashyap are ready to enter into a new partnership, however, not on the court as the duo are set to tie the knot on December 16, according to reports.

The shuttlers are going to get married in a private ceremony which will be followed by a grand reception slated for December 21, a report in the Times of India said.

"Both families had been planning the wedding for a while now. They have finalised the date. The arrangements are all for December 16," the report quoted a source as saying.

Both Saina and Kashyap have repeatedly maintained that they were just friends and practice partners.

32-year-old Kashyap, an Arjuna Awardee, became the first Indian to reach the men's singles quarterfinals at the 2012 London Olympics.

Kashyap, who clinched gold in Commonwealth Games 2004, once reached world no. 6 ranking in 2013 but his progress was later marred by long spells of injury.

West Indies arrive in India, post 'welcome' video on Twitter

NEW DELHI (TIP): The West Indies cricketers arrived in Vadodara earlier on Thursday to a 'vibrant welcome'. The Caribbean team will start their tour with a match against the Board President's XI on September 29.

The first Test of the series will be played in Rajkot from October 4, which will also be the city's debut as a Test venue. The second match of the series will be played in Hyderabad. This will be followed by the limited-overs series.

The West Indian cricket team's official twitter handle posted a video of the arrival with a message, "We got a vibrant welcome to the hotel earlier today with a display of India's rich culture."

MS Dhoni should go back and play domestic cricket, says Sunil Gavaskar

NEW DELHI (TIP): MS Dhoni has not been at his best with the bat in the recent past and despite a prolific season in the Indian Premier League, the former captain has not been able to replicate this form in International cricket.

Former captain Sunil Gavaskar believes that Dhoni should move back to domestic cricket and ply his trade there in order to regain his form and then stake a claim for the Indian team.

"Absolutely (when asked if Dhoni should feature in domestic cricket). Dhoni should be playing domestic cricket and should be playing the four-day games as well because he will help so many of the emerging players from Jharkhand," Gavaskar told India Today.

"In the 50-over game you have limited opportunities but if you play a four-day game and play a long innings its great for your stamina, for your legs, for the rhythm that you want in limited-overs cricket," Gavaskar added.

Dhoni has been an influential member with the side as he is the go-to man for Virat Kohli or Rohit Sharma in



order to forge any tactical play, but his sluggish form with the bat has been a cause for worry for India, more so in the death overs, a phase which has troubled India for quite some time now.

This year Dhoni has aggregated just 189 runs in 9 ODI innings at a paltry

average of 27 with a highest score of just 42 and this is impeding India from getting the explosive finishes to the innings, which has come back to bite the team quite over, especially in England.

Source: HT

Asia Cup 2018: Sarfraz loses sleep after Pakistan's abject Asia Cup showing

DUBAI (TIP): Disappointed Pakistan captain Sarfraz Ahmed has revealed he lost sleep for six days during his team's flop at the Asia Cup.

Pakistan lost their must-win game against Bangladesh by 37 runs in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday, meaning they failed to qualify for Friday's final in Dubai.

Bangladesh will face defending champions India in the final.

Pakistan lost both their games against arch rivals India -- by eight and nine wickets -- while narrowly beating Afghanistan by three wickets.

Sarfraz said the pressure of captaincy and not scoring runs led to some disturbed nights.

"Look, the pressures of captaincy are always there," said Sarfraz. "Pakistani captains, whoever they are, always have pressure.

"Obviously when you aren't performing and the team is losing then there is more pressure. The truth is that if I say I haven't slept for the last six nights nobody will believe me, but... this is part of life and it will go on."

Sarfraz, who was appointed captain for all three formats last year, urged the authorities not to take any hasty decisions.

"I will say again we don't need to press the panic button. We need to back the players who have been doing well in the recent past," said Sarfraz, who managed just 68 runs in four matches.

"My performance isn't good so the team lost. The team lost because of me. I should've performed as a captain but I didn't and we lost because of that."

Sarfraz, who has been playing all three



formats since the World Cup 2015, said it was up to the selectors to decide whether he should be rested.

"This is not my job, this is the job of the selection committee and the PCB. Let them decide. I gave you an answer, it is not my job. My job is to play, I will play. I will keep playing." Sarfraz said with next year's World Cup still eight months away, there was time to correct mistakes.

"World Cup is far (away) and we have to play so many series," said Sarfraz.

Before that Pakistan play 20 one-day internationals against New Zealand, South Africa, Australia and England.

"We have to look at the various mistakes we committed. Our middle order comes on the new ball and that is why it struggled. We should not lose early wickets so we should work on that.

"It is alarming that we lost confidence during the Asia Cup. If you talk about the Champions trophy of the last year then we lost the first match to India badly, but then we lifted the trophy," said Sarfraz of Pakistan's win in England last year.

Pakistan play Australia in two Tests, starting in Dubai from October 5.

Source: AFP



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@bejandaruwala.com and on phone **011-91-8141234275 www.bejandaruwala.com**

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE OCTOBER 1 - OCTOBER 7, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says there is more stability and you know where you are headed. You have emerged much stronger from all the confusions that have assailed you, 'Put down your shield and stand in the rain of blessings,' says life coach Danielle LaPorte. There is powerful bonding with loved ones and you feel amiable, content, charitable, cherubic, warm and loving. The work front takes top priority and you surge ahead.

Taurus:

Once again you are powered and sprinting away. You are fast off the blocks. I must remind my readers that I was a sprinter in my youth, and a hockey goalkeeper, and know my sport well. In this period, you formulate your goals and identify ways to achieve them. Your ego drives are high, and you are able to work with others too. That is the best part. You know what is good for you and are shrewd enough to keep ego drives in check for the larger good.

Gemini:

There are upsets this period. There are disruptions to your life and schedule. Routine goes for a toss. Others will also find your behavior bizarre. There could be altercations, arguments, fights and accidents. Ganesha urges you not to drink and drive. Astrology never compels. It only impels. You can expect the unexpected today as your world in the way in which you have defined it all along gets a beating. Your spirit is restless and you take undue risks.

Cancer:

There is a sharp schism between your personal needs and your public and professional duties. You are pulled in different directions. At some point, you may even feel that your world is in tatters. You are simply unable to be rational, and hinge your life and all decision making on your emotions. Ego issues and passions run deep, and there could be avoidable outbursts. Fortune favors the brave. Ganesha agrees.

Leo:

Trends of one period often slip into the other. You may be deceived by trusted friends. If you are signing on the dotted line, I suggest you have witnesses and take the help of someone proficient in the law. In simple words, take precautions. Of course, I am not God and I could be wrong. This can be a tricky time in dealing with people, as they won't be representing themselves truthfully. Do not take anything at face value. This is not the time to take risks or to be unethical and take short cuts.

Virgo:

You could be prone to hysterics and histrionics, but one eye is firmly placed on the balance sheet, and that helps. Nothing brings more stability to the mind, body and soul than sheer hard work. Once you are gainfully occupied every other distraction falls by the wayside. Your feelings are deep and powerful in this phase. There are love and longing. You are caught in the orgasmic delights of armor. Love is your muse. Ganesha keeps you balanced.

Libra:

Your energies are in harmony with your intentions. This is a good time for starting new projects. You are motivated and want to make things happen. You think and act big. You are brimming with confidence and it shows. You excel at tests and interviews. Youngsters do exceedingly well. There could be immigration on the cards or a new overseas job which excites you. If you use the energies of this period well, you will go places.

Scorpio:

There is a lot of movement in your life now. This is also the time to reach out and travel. You want to know more of the world you live in. You are in the throes of communication and look at e-Books, Mac, Kindle, I-Pad, I-Phone and every other technological marvel. In this phase every kind of activity is favored. You are able to assert yourself without offending others. You call a spade a spade and don't hold back your punches.

Sagittarius:

'Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value,' said Albert Einstein. I love this quote. In this period, you dwell on the lighter aspects of life. You are not particularly disciplined and are not in the mood for hard, sustained work. You feel like stepping back from the hurly-burly of life and having fun. You spend like there is no tomorrow and if there are harmful habits like smoking, drinking and taking recourse to recreational drugs I am afraid they may get the better of you.

Capricorn:

Your instincts are heightened, and this could lead to wrong assumptions. You may then work on these assumptions and act recklessly. Impulsive behavior could lead to trouble. So, take care and watch your step. Ego drives are high, and you could get into altercations and brushes with the law. Children will be particularly rebellious, and parents will have a tough time harnessing them. You may have to make changes in your personality.

Aquarius:

'Life is an adventure in forgiveness,' said Norman Cousins. You run through the gauntlet of the past and work your way through misadventures, grudges, hurts and recriminations. You want to come clean and embark on a new journey. You go looking for a guru, take to yoga and meditation and wade through yantra, tantra and mantra. New vistas open up dramatically and you are on the verge of regeneration like a sapling that has finally seen its first drop of rain hit the parched earth.

Pisces:

Your energies are bursting at the seams and the exuberance makes you take unnecessary risks. You could take a shot at adventure sport, gambling or speculative financial pursuits. This may also be a time when you lose control and go overboard with your indulgences. There is a risk of accidents and wrong calculations. You could be foolishly overconfident, and may overreach.



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