



"We remember everyone we lost on 9/11 and honor all who defend our country and our ideals. No act of terror will ever change who we are".

- Barack Obama (@BarackObama)
September 11, 2017

India flags concern over H1B visa issue



Sushma Swaraj

NEW DELHI (TIP): During the inaugural 2+2 dialogue on Thursday, India flagged its concerns about pending changes in the US Congress to H1B visas and H4 visas for spouses that could severely impact Indians working in America. Sources said External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj raised the issue 'forcefully'. India made a case of the track

contd on Page 20

Supreme Court of India legalizes homosexuality; Says Section 377 is irrational, arbitrary

UN lauds SC verdict



LGBT supporters at the Supreme Court during the judgement of Article 377 in New Delhi on Thursday, September 6.

Photo / Courtesy Tribune

NEW DELHI (TIP): In a historic verdict, the Supreme Court, on Thursday, September 6, de-criminalized homo sexual acts between consenting adults in private, bringing cheers to millions of members of the LGBT

contd on Page 20

2+2 talks take Indo-US ties to new high

Defense, trade, terror top agenda; Concerns on Russia, Iran sanctions highlighted



Inaugural 2+2 dialogue in New Delhi on Thursday, September 6. L to R: US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and India's Defense Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

Photo / Courtesy TOI

NEW DELHI (TIP): India and the United States on Thursday, September 6, sought greater political convergence with a long-term view of relations and enhanced synergy between respective foreign and defense ministries through the inaugural 2+2 dialogue.

Defense Ministers Nirmala Sitharaman and James Mattis and Foreign Ministers Sushma Swaraj and Michael Pompeo sat down for separate discussions before the 2+2 dialogue.

Three sessions on energy and people-to-people ties, defense and regional security were part of the dialogue that included all four principals and their delegations. Followed by lunch and joint press statements, the leaders collectively called on PM Modi.

contd on Page 20

Air India gets fresh fund infusion from Centre; disinvestment on hold for now

Government working on new turnaround plan for Air India

NEW DELHI (TIP): Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the International Aviation Summit on Tuesday, September 4, civil aviation secretary RN Choubey said that the government was continuing to fund Air India despite a decision being taken to sell it so that the company's value doesn't erode till the time it is disinvested in. "Our first aim is to work out the necessary support for Air India's healthy functioning.



Aim is to make Air India saleable when macro conditions improve

contd on Page 20

Pakistan may become 5th largest nuclear state by 2025: Report

LONDON (TIP): Pakistan is expanding its uranium-enrichment and plutonium production facilities, triggering fears that it may become the 5th largest nuclear-weapon state and have 220 to 250 warheads within the next seven years, a report has said.

The report published on August 31 by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists authored by members of the Federation of American Scientists says that Pakistan was also developing several delivery systems.

contd on Page 20

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Asian Indian population booming in Dallas-Fort Worth

TEXAS (TIP): A strong Asian Indian community is nothing new to North Texas — but the growth of the past 10 years is unprecedented. Census numbers show that from 2000 to 2010, the population more than doubled, going from 49,181 to 106,964 for Collin, Dallas, Denton, Rockwall and Tarrant counties.

Richardson has a long-established Indian population, and it was there that a group of Indian businessmen founded the India Association of North Texas in 1962.

Irving was not far behind, and both cities now boast Indian movie theaters along with numerous Indian restaurants and grocery stores.

But the changes in recent years are staggering. Asian Indian business leaders say the rapid growth is a result of several factors: the draw of high-tech and medical jobs, the economic relief brought by a lower cost of living, the chance to send children to strong schools — and just good word-of-mouth. Friends and family already living in North Texas have persuaded others to move to the area, many say.

Those with roots and connections are willing to "leverage those connections to help the community," said Mehul "Mike" Patel, treasurer and North Texas regional director for the Asian American Hotel Owners Association. "It's always been people open to help each other out ... to put them in business and try to find them work." "People are just looking for a better lifestyle and D-FW provides that," Patel said. "Spirituality, it's here, culture is here and the professional needs are also here."

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Beautiful, fearless, confident, graceful Prachi Tehlan: Super Sportsperson, TV/ Cine Star

By I.S. Saluja

A shining name in sports and a rising TV and Cinema star, Prachi is a rare combination of many conflicting endowments. As a sportsperson, she developed physical strength, stamina and energy; and as a TV and film star she imbibed the soft aspects of physical beauty and grace.

Prachi was in New York recently. One of her family friends, Mr. Rajeev Bhambri of India Abroad introduced her to me and Mr. Baldev Singh Grewal, publisher/editor of Sher-e-Panjab, the leading Punjabi weekly published from New York. We got together in a family setting at Mr. Grewal's residence in East Meadow. It was a huge pleasure to find this eminent personality so affectionate and simple, with no attitude, characteristic of successful TV and film artists. She made herself comfortable on a sofa and was a delight to talk to. In her conversation, she was gracefully communicative. It was a pleasure to have her to speak to The Indian Panorama and Sher-e-Panjab. After she had left, Mr. Grewal's wife and daughter in law commented that they had seen her on TV and were full of admiration for her acting prowess, and now that they had spent some time with her they will remember her as a fine person.

Born in Delhi, Prachi shares her birthday with Father of Indian Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Sorry, we don't divulge the age of a lady, particularly when she is in to entertainment industry.

An imposing personality with a height of 5'11 (a Charlie Chaplin will need a few raised steps to reach her face), Prachi is the former Captain of the Indian Netball Team which she led in Commonwealth Games 2010 held in Delhi and in other major Asian Championships in 2010-11.

Indian team won its First Silver Medal in South Asian Beach Games under her Captaincy in 2011. For her feats, she is fondly known as "Queen of The Court" and "Lass of The Rings". These are the titles given her by renowned publishing houses TOI and Indian Express.

Prachi is Brand ambassador and mentor of Netball Development Trust- India.

Here is a brief biography of the rising star in TV and cinema world.

Graduated in B.com Hons from Delhi University- Jesus and Mary College and completed her MBA degree in Human Relations and Marketing from Indraprastha University, New Delhi.

Worked on various projects with the Development Bank of Singapore, Deloitte, Accenture, Philips

and 1800Sports.in as a consultant.

Worked with Accenture on a major skill development project named UDAAN - Skills to Succeed for Mobilization, Training and Employment of youths from Jammu and Kashmir under National Skill Development Council, Delhi

Currently working as an Actress and has won many accolades for her stellar performances in Star Plus TV Series Diya Aur Baati Hum as 'Aarzo' in a short span of time.

Started her sports career with Basketball and played at National Level representing Delhi. Attended the Indian Camp thrice in 2004, in Cuttack, Orissa 2002-2007

- Played Indo-Singapore Series, 2010 held in Delhi & Noida, Won it by 5-0
- Captain of the team in 7th YouthAsia Championship, 2010 held in Delhi.
- Holds the distinction of being the Youngest Captain of the Indian Netball Team in Commonwealth Games 2010, held in Delhi
- Captain of the senior team to represent India in 6th Nation Cup, Singapore, 2010
- Captain of the senior team to represent India in South Asian Beach Games, 2011 in which the team got silver medal for the first time under her captaincy.
- Gold Medal in 54th National Games

After having made her mark in sports, Prachi decided to go in for acting in TV serials and movies. She made her acting debut as an actor in the famous TV series Diya Aur Baati Hum on Star Plus. She played in it the role of "Arzo", famously known as "Mushtandi". The serial became an instant hit and Prachi became with it a star.

Prachi had a lead role as "Nimmy" in the Punjabi Film "Arjan" directed by Manduip Singh. Next came "Bailaras" in October 2017. It was directed by Kshitij Chaudhary.

She will be seen in the lead role in a Malayalam film, due to be released in April 2019 with the megastar Mammothy. She considers working with Mammothy a golden opportunity and a challenging task.

Prachi is in a lead role in "Ikyawann", a Star Plus TV which has been on air since November 13, 2017. She stars with Namish Taneja. Written by Manasvi Arya, the show is directed by Ismail Khan/Arshad Khan.

Asked about her future plans, she said she had a long way to go. Asked about what films she enjoyed working in, she jumped to say it was the Punjabi films she enjoyed working in because Punjabis are so fun loving and straightforward. Asked about her favorite Bollywood actor, she said she was a fan of Salman Khan. She added that Salman has a charisma and he can pull crowds which makes him a superstar. Asked if she would like to work with him, Prachi sighed and said, "wish I could".

With such luminous record in sports and a successful career in TV and films, it should not be a surprise that Prachi came to be profusely recognized and honored. She has many distinctions to be proud of.

- India won its First International Medal under her captaincy in South Asian Beach Games, 2011, Sri Lanka
- Youngest Captain to represent India in Netball in the Commonwealth Games 2010
- Awarded the Sports Women of the Year 2010 by Jesus and Mary College and recognized as a Sports Achiever in Delhi University Achievers List
- Was part of Short films made by Delhi Aaj Tak, Pragya T.V, Focus T.V, Living India by Ayur Group and NDTV. (2010, 2011 Subject of various articles published by leading newspapers,

magazines and internet-

- NDTV (2011) featured her as one of the Top 10 Hottest Sports Women In India
- India Today (2010) featured her as one of the Top 10 Glamorous Faces Of Commonwealth Games-2010
- Sports Keeda (2010)
- Cupid Speaks (2010)
- Hindustan Times (2010)
- Times Of India (2010), article "Queen Of The Courts"
- Indian Express (2005), article "Lass Of The Rings"
- Chief Guest for various sports meets and social events (2010- present)
- Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University Sports Meet (2010) with Sushil Kumar and Dhanraj Pillay
- Terry For Marathon with Satpal Singh and Mohammad Azaharuddin (2010)
- Guest at Limca Book of Records with Vijender Singh, Jwala Gutta, Gagan Narang, Mary Kom, Sushil Kumar, etc. (2011)
- Chal Leh Bhag Leh Sports Event, Deepalaya School Sports Meet (2011), Dev Samaj School Sports Meet (2012)
- KAPSONS for its Brand Promotion, Kirti Nagar, 2012
- Awarded the AAS and Aadhi Aabadi Women Achiever Award for excellence in the field of sports

Just a few. There are many more. And many more are yet to come. The Indian Panorama wishes Prachi all success in whatever she undertakes to do, because she has the qualities, faculties and character to achieve even the seemingly unachievable.



Indian American Tech Executive Anita Malik wins Arizona 6th district Democratic congressional primary

ARIZONA (TIP): Indian American Anita Malik has won the Democratic party primary in Arizona's 6th congressional district. She is the 11th Indian American to win the nomination of one of the two major parties in the midterm elections.

Malik will face GOP Rep. David Schweikert, who won the Republican primary unopposed, on November 6.

The primary in Arizona was held on August 28, but the 6th district race was too close to call on the election night, with Malik leading her nearest rival Heather Ross by a narrow margin of 383 votes.

But, as the absentee ballots were counted and certified, the Indian American's lead grew to 2,402, according to the official results posted on the Maricopa County Recorder website.

Malik, who quit her job as the chief operating officer of the tech startup ClearVoice to run for Congress, was declared the winner.

According to the official tally, Malik received 22,522 (42.04 percent) votes, while Ross received 20,120 (37.55 percent) votes.

"I am proud that my campaign reflected a broad, grassroots coalition of Arizonans who came together to support our vision of creating jobs and ensuring the ability of families to work, live, and thrive in the 6th congressional district," Malik said in a statement posted on her Twitter account on August 31st.

"Arizonans deserve someone who will work hard to represent them and build a stronger future for our community, our state and our country," she added. "As the daughter of immigrants - people who believed in the promise of American - I want to help everyone have that opportunity to build a better life for themselves and their families."

As soon as her victory was announced, Malik quickly went on the general election campaign mode. Focusing on corruption, which is likely to be a major midterm issue, she tweeted: "Indictments, corruption, and ethical violations are the norm in today's Congress. I'll fight to root out corruption and enact higher ethical standards, starting with our own district."

On Labor Day, she tweeted in support of workers: "Today we honor those who have built this country. It's a strong reminder of the course correction the country needs to bring our voices back to the table. The future of work is already here, it's time to move boldly and swiftly to protect and support American workers."

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Malik's family moved to Arizona when she was 7. She graduated summa cum laude with degrees in computer information systems and finance from Arizona State University.

She also has a master's degree in journalism from the University of Southern California.

Indian-Origin CEO of IT Companies in US Arrested for Visa Fraud

SEATTLE (TIP): Indian-origin Pradyumna Kumar Samal, CEO of two information technology companies in the US, was arrested in connection with a multi-year visa-fraud scheme involving forged and fraudulent documents to get visas such as H-1B for over 200 foreign workers.



Indian-origin Pradyumna Kumar Samal, CEO of two information technology companies was arrested in connection with a multi-year visa-fraud scheme

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian-Origin British Lawmaker Challenges Theresa May's Brexit Strategy with a 'Stand Up 4 Brexit' campaign

LONDON (TIP): Indian-origin Conservative party lawmaker and former UK Cabinet minister Priti Patel has joined the race along with 20 other party rebels who are challenging British Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit strategy with a 'Stand Up 4 Brexit' campaign.

The grassroots drive against any negotiations with the European Union (EU) that could lead to a so-called soft Brexit is being backed by another ex-minister Ian Duncan Smith and is expected to mount pressure on May to ditch her Chequers plan, which is rejected by Eurosceptic lawmakers within her Conservative party.

'Stand Up 4 Brexit' supporters, who also include former foreign secretary Boris Johnson's key ally Tory lawmaker Conor Burns, pledge to fight plans to keep the EU rules on British goods and free movement in terms of migration.

Ms Patel, a leading pro-Brexit voice in the lead up to the referendum in favor of Britain's exit from the EU in June 2016, has previously called on the government to be "tougher" in its negotiations with Brussels.

The Stand Up 4 Brexit campaign is building momentum as Mr Johnson, the



Priti Patel has joined the race along with 20 other party rebels who are challenging British Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit strategy with a 'Stand Up 4 Brexit' campaign.

poster boy for the pro-Brexit camp, launched a scathing attack on Theresa May's plans in his weekly newspaper column in 'The Daily Telegraph' on Monday, saying the approach agreed at Chequers "means disaster" for Britain.

Mr Johnson said negotiations based on the Chequers plan had so far seen the EU take "every important trick", adding, "The UK has agreed to hand over GBP 40 billion of taxpayers' money for two-thirds of diddly squat [nothing]."

The so-called Chequers plan put forth by PM May would see Britain agreeing a "common rulebook" with the European Union for trading in goods, in an attempt to maintain frictionless trade at the border.

Critics of the strategy argue this would leave the UK tied to the EU rules even after it formally leaves the economic bloc on March 29 next year and prevent Britain from striking its own trade deals in years to come.

As the UK's parliamentary recess period of August comes to an end and the political parties in the country prepare for their annual party conferences this month, the battle lines around Brexit are expected to deepen further.

Even after the UK and the EU have reached some sort of an agreement over their future trading relationship, any agreed plan will then be tabled before lawmakers for a vote - a process which will be accompanied with its own share of upheavals.

Indian American Assistant Professor wins prestigious Blavatnik Young Scientists award

NEW YORK (TIP): Indian American Shruti Naik, an assistant professor at NYU School of Medicine, has won the prestigious Blavatnik Regional Awards for Young Scientists in the "Life Sciences" category. A postdoctoral researcher at Stony Brook University Priyanka Sharma, another Indian American, received honorable mention in the "Chemistry" category.

The Blavatnik Family Foundation and the New York Academy of Sciences, award and support outstanding postdoctoral researchers in Tri-State of New York. The Foundation said in a press release that 125 nominated researchers competed for the nine spots. The winners and finalists will be honored at the New York Academy of Sciences' annual gala in New York on November 5, 2018.

Naik, who was nominated while she was doing a postdoctoral fellow at The Rockefeller University, is being recognized for "demonstrating that skin stem cells retain a 'memory' of previous inflammatory experiences, allowing for a more robust and rapid response to subsequent injury," the release said.

Her groundbreaking work uncovered a new property of skin stem cells that explains how our largest and most vulnerable organ - the skin - responds to and remembers injuries and inflammatory stimuli such as injury or exposure to skin irritants. The skin is the body's primary barrier to the outside world and it is critical to our survival that it remains intact."

Her discovery that skin stem cells "can be sensitized to inflammation may aid the development of better treatment strategies for a variety of skin conditions," it added. Naik earned her bachelor's degree in cellular and molecular biology from the University of Maryland College Park, and graduate and doctoral degrees from University of Pennsylvania.

Sharma, a polymer chemist, is being honored for "her pioneering work on the low-cost conversion of untreated biomass to carboxycellulose nanofibers, which have applications in biomedicine and in water purification in developing nations," the release added.

The Blavatnik Family Foundation, founded by industrialist and philanthropist Len Blavatnik, supports educational, scientific, cultural, and charitable institutions in the United States and other parts of the world.

The New York Academy of Sciences, a 200-year-old nonprofit, advances scientific research, education, and policy.



Shruti Naik, who was nominated while she was doing a postdoctoral fellow at The Rockefeller University, is being recognized for "demonstrating that skin stem cells retain a 'memory' of previous inflammatory experiences, allowing for a more robust and rapid response to subsequent injury,"

Indian American Doctor and Husband Jailed for Health Care Fraud in California

Parminder S. Aujla

SACRAMENTO (TIP): An Indian American lady doctor and her husband has been sentenced for health care fraud and making false statements related to a health care benefits program.

Vilasini Ganesh was sentenced on August 28 to 63 months in prison, US Attorney Alex

Tse said. Vilasini Ganesh, 47 and her husband Gregory Belcher, 56, both of California were convicted of the charges in December last year after an eight-week trial.

The evidence at trial demonstrated Vilasini Ganesh submitted a series of false medical claims related to the family medical practice she owned in California's Saratoga town. She submitted claims for days when a patient had not been seen by the provider and claims for patients who had been seen by a physician provider who no longer was affiliated with her practice. Additionally, she billed insurers with claims that certain patients were seen 12-15 times in a single month. In July 2017, a federal grand jury indicted Vilasini Ganesh and Gregory Belcher, charging them with one count of conspiracy to commit health care fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering as well as on multiple other counts of health care fraud.



Vilasini Ganesh was sentenced on August 28 to 63 months in prison

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

High-end defense tech pact with US: Delhi firm on military ties with Russia

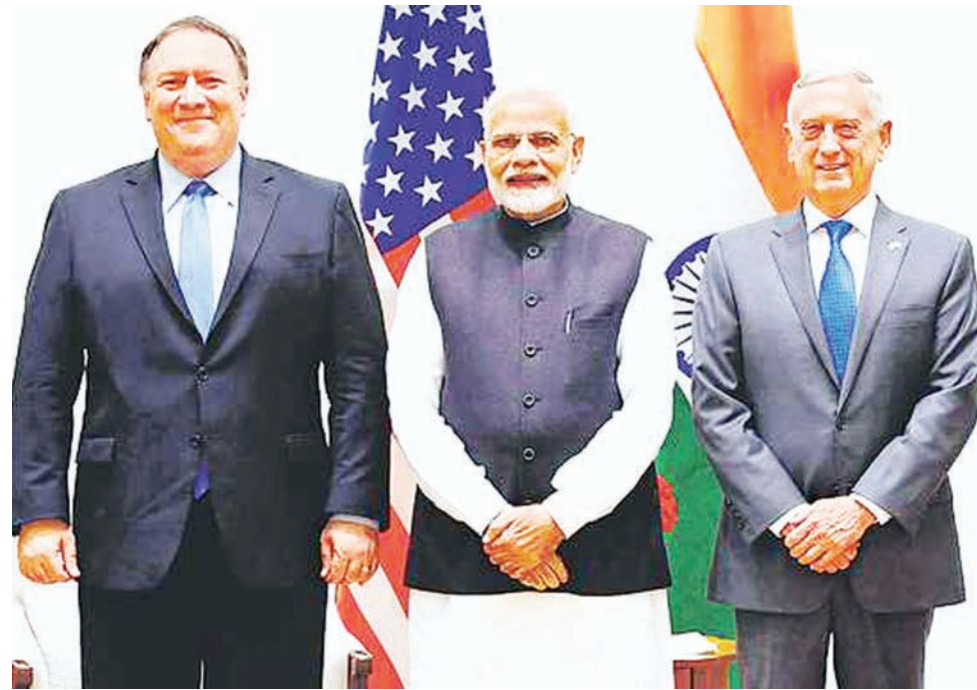
NEW DELHI (TIP): India and the US on Thursday, September 6, inked a vital agreement on seamless exchange of military information - Communications, Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) - even as New Delhi is clear that it will "stay the course" in its military relations with Moscow.

The purchase of state-of-the-art S-400 Russian air-defense missile system is at the heart of the threat of US sanctions against countries dealing with Moscow.

Russia was literally the "elephant in the room" when Indian and US delegations sat down for their first-ever 2+2 dialogue, sources confirmed, as External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Defense Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met their US counterparts Mike Pompeo and Jim Mattis.

Sources said the US told India that it understood the need for New Delhi to maintain its Russian-origin military equipment, but in case big-ticket items (like the S-400) are purchased, cooperation with the US could be "affected". India is buying the system for Rs 39,000 crore to have a protective air-defense umbrella.

India, in turn, has assured the US that its purchases from Russia do not harm the US' interests in any manner. A US legislation Countering America's Adversaries



PM Narendra Modi with US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (L) and Secretary of Defense James Mattis on Thursday, September 6
Photo/ Courtesy PTI

Though Sanctions Act (CAATSA) provides for a waiver against sanctions to India, it's not a blanket waiver. Pompeo's

remarks released to the press say, "Our effort here, too, is not to penalize great strategic partners like India, a major

defense partner. The sanctions aren't intended to adversely impact countries like India. They are intended to have an impact on the sanctioned country, which is Russia. And so, we'll work our way through the waiver decision as the days and weeks proceed, and we'll do that alongside our partner, India, as well."

In another important development the two countries committed to start exchanges between the US Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) and the Indian Navy. India will post an attaché at Bahrain to coordinate with US forces. India and the US will begin negotiations on an Industrial Security Annex (ISA) that would support closer defense industry cooperation and collaboration.

About COMCASA

Communications, Compatibility and Security Agreement will allow Indian defense forces to receive military-grade communications equipment from the US and ensure access to real-time encrypted information

It will help India gain access to critical communication network of the US armed forces. The pact, valid for 10 years, will ensure interoperability among the US and the Indian armed forces.

18th Annual National Book Festival Draws Tens of Thousands of Book Lovers

Next Year's Festival Set for Aug. 31, 2019, at Washington Convention Center

WASHINGTON (TIP): Book lovers of all ages came together by the tens of thousands to celebrate reading and meet their favorite authors Saturday at the 18th annual Library of Congress National Book Festival, held at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. Thousands more watched the festival's Main Stage streamed live on the Library's Facebook page.

Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden interviewed U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who launched a children's book on the festival's 2,500-seat Main Stage. Hayden also interviewed Jacqueline Woodson, the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, who is debuting two new books this fall.

Hayden announced the 19th National Book Festival will be held Aug. 31, 2019.

"The National Book Festival is a thrilling, immersive experience that gives so many readers a unique opportunity to reflect on great books all day long," Hayden said. "We are so proud to feature a diverse lineup of more than 100 authors who give visitors a new reading list for the year ahead."

In total, 13 authors launched new books at the festival - the most new books in the festival's history - including Sotomayor's "Turning Pages: My Life Story," Doris Kearns Goodwin's "Leadership: In Turbulent Times," Girl Scouts of the USA CEO Sylvia Acevedo's "Path to the Stars: My Journey from Girl Scout to Rocket Scientist," Kate DiCamillo and Harry Bliss' "Good Rosie!" Meg Medina's "Merci Suárez Changes Gears;" Jennifer Nielsen's "Resistance;" David Shannon's "Grow Up David!" Suzanne Slade's "Countdown: 2979 Days to the Moon;" David Ezra Stein's "Interrupting Chicken and the Elephant of Surprise;" Woodson's "The Day You Begin" and "Harbor Me;" Ellen Hopkins'



"People Kill People;" Hank Phillippi Ryan's "Trust Me;" and U.S. Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith's selections for "American Journal: Fifty Poems for Our Time."

On the festival's Fiction Stage, Hayden awarded the Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction to acclaimed writer Annie Proulx, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "The Shipping News" and the short story "Brokeback Mountain." The prize, one of the Library's most prestigious awards, honors an American literary writer whose body of work is distinguished for its mastery of the art, originality and imagination.

Proulx urged the crowd to make literacy a top priority for children.

"You can never introduce your child to reading too early," Proulx told the crowd, adding that they should start reading to babies before they're born and as often as possible. "If you repeat this recipe every day ... you will have a smart, intelligent, involved

person in your life."

On Friday, Hayden also announced the winners of the 2018 Library of Congress Literacy Awards, honoring organizations for their exemplary, innovative work to confront illiteracy, raise reading levels and promote reading. The top prizes were awarded to: Reading Is Fundamental of Washington, D.C.; East Side Community School of New York City; and Instituto Pedagógico para Problemas del Lenguaje of Mexico City.

The festival's celebration of reading and writing kicked off earlier in the week with a pinning ceremony for the 2018 National Student Poets, who represent five regions of the country and presented their work on the festival's Parade of the States Stage.

The National Book Festival is made possible by the generous support of private- and public-sector sponsors who share the Library's commitment to reading and literacy, led by National Book Festival Co-Chairman

David M. Rubenstein. Charter sponsors are the Institute of Museum and Library Services, The Washington Post and Wells Fargo; Patron sponsors are The James Madison Council, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Champion-level sponsor is PBS; Contributor-level sponsors are National Geographic and Scholastic Inc.; and, in the Friends category, AARP, Booklovers Circle members, Bookshare - a Benetech initiative, Buffy Cafritz, Marshall B. Coyne Foundation Inc., Joseph and Lynn Deutsch, Dollar General Literacy Foundation, Harper Lee Prize for Legal Fiction administered by The University of Alabama School of Law, The Hay-Adams, The Junior League of Washington, Leon Levy Center for Biography (CUNY), Library of Congress Federal Credit Union, J.J. Medveckis Foundation, Mensa Foundation, Lissa Muscatine and Bradley Graham, Timothy and Diane Naughton, Pizza Hut BOOK IT! Program Reading Is Fundamental, Small Press Expo (SPX), Split This Rock and the Whittle School & Studios. Media Partners are C-SPAN2's Book TV, The New York Times, NPR and PBS Books. Those interested in supporting the National Book Festival can contact the Library at devofc@loc.gov.

The Library of Congress is the world's largest library, offering access to the creative record of the United States - and extensive materials from around the world - both on-site and online. It is the main research arm of the U.S. Congress and the home of the U.S. Copyright Office. Explore collections, reference services and other programs and plan a visit at loc.gov; access the official site for U.S. federal legislative information at congress.gov; and register creative works of authorship at copyright.gov.

Xomatic Staffing Tool- Product Launched by ITConnectUS

CHICAGO, IL (TIP); ITConnectUS & Law Offices of Mary Kennedy held, on Thursday, August 16, 2018, the ITServe Chicago monthly event at Hoffman Estates, IL. With over 200 prestigious businesses as attendees, the formal event was marked with cocktail and networking before presentations from the sponsors followed by dinner. The American IT consulting company, ITConnectUS releases their first of its kind web application, Xomatic, an empowered staffing tool designed for customizable recruitment needs.

Xomatic is an automated workflow management system for vendors, clients, recruiters and managers to handle the entire hiring process all in one easy to use platform. Xomatic runs on your secured domain to build applicant databases for your organization, so you don't have to.

Unlike traditional recruitment solutions portals, Xomatic offers real time status updates for clients and applicants to find out the status of their application. It is designed to be concise and provide a simplistic interface behind a robust automated tool. With 24/7 technical support, Here at Xomatic we will help automate your entire workflow.

Pre-screening Services

Within Xomatic's user experience we offer a Staffing Solution and Pre-screening Service All in one. Our Xomatic's Prescreening services offer any organization the unique



Staff of ITConnectUS & Law Offices of Mary Kennedy, with invited guest

opportunity to receive only verified, genuine candidate profiles, eliminating falsified and spam profiles. These candidates can then be tracked and managed through the Pre-screening Module within the Xomatic portal. The overall result is speed and accountability, increasing the probability by simplifying your pre-screening step of any organizations hiring process.

12 individual modules makeup the Xomatic sphere, with their own specializations for

account management, recruiting, pre-screening, vendor management, team leader, client, legal & finance, consultant and vendor submission module. A super admin module includes the ability to manage all other modules with admin level control, which is ideal for any size organization.

Xomatic offers packages for every company size and offers the ability to customize your package to fit your exact company need.

About ITConnectUS

ITConnectUS was established in 2016 with offices in Chicago (United States), Mohali and Bangalore (India) and Singapore. ITConnectUS's latest tool Xomatic is offered for a 14 days trial purposes absolutely free.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for more explanation or a detailed demonstration.

Visit us at www.xomatic.com

Photographs and Press release by: Asian Media USA

World Hindu Congress set to welcome more than 2,500 delegates for 2018 conference

Vice President of the Republic of India to Commemorate 125th Anniversary of the Landmark Parliament of Religions Speech in Special Ceremony

Manu Shah

CHICAGO, IL (TIP): The World Hindu Congress (WHC) announced, September 5, that attendance goals for the 2018 conference have been smashed, with more than 2,500 delegates and 220 eminent speakers confirmed for this year's iteration. Convening September 7-9 at The Westin Hotel in the Yorktown Shopping Center, Lombard, IL, the 2018 WHC is celebrating the 125th anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's Parliament of Religions speech in Chicago in 1893. Upon completion of WHC deliberations, the Honorable Mr. M. Venkaiah Naidu, Vice President of the Republic of India, will participate in a special ceremony to commemorate the 125th anniversary of Swamiji's Chicago speech.

"The 2018 World Hindu Congress will be a landmark event," said WHC Coordinator Dr. AbhayaAsthana. "We are primed and eager to host an unprecedented convergence of Hindu leadership unified in purpose: To connect, share ideas, inspire one another, and impact the common good.

The WHC provides a unique opportunity for participants to exchange ideas on a global stage and draws upon expertise of speakers from a wide range of fields and backgrounds." Featuring seven parallel conferences that will explore economics, education, media, politics, women, youth and organization, the 2018 WHC will feature prominent speakers such as economist Dr. Arvind Panagariya, academic Dr. Makarand Paranjape, author Amish Tripathi, and Grammy-nominated artist



and entrepreneur Chandrika Tandon.

Additionally, there will be poster presentations at the event that includes 55 posters from various Hindu Leaders and Researchers on topics such as Non-Violence: Our Greatest Gift to the World and Hindu Culture and Life-style studies.

About World Hindu Congress

Held once every four years, the World Hindu Congress (WHC) is a global platform

for Hindus to connect, share ideas, inspire one another, and impact the common good. Founded in 2014, the first World Hindu Congress in Delhi birthed the seven parallel conference platform to showcase the values, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit of the global Hindu community.

For more information, visit www.worldhinducongress.org

US has seen 'evidence' of Syria preparing chemical weapons in Idlib: Jim Jeffrey

WASHINGTON (TIP): There is "lots of evidence" that chemical weapons are being prepared by Syrian government forces in Idlib in northwest Syria, the new US adviser for Syria said on Thursday, as he warned of the risks of an offensive on the country's last big rebel enclave.

"I am very sure that we have very, very good grounds to be making these warnings," said Jim Jeffrey, who was named on August 17 as Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's special adviser on Syria overseeing talks on a political transition in that country.

"Any offensive is to us objectionable as a reckless escalation," Jeffrey told a few reporters in his first interview on the situation in Syria since his appointment. "There is lots of evidence that chemical weapons are being prepared."

The White House has warned that the United States and its allies would respond "swiftly and vigorously" if government forces used chemical weapons in the widely expected offensive.

Jeffrey said an attack by Russian and Syrian forces, and the use of chemical weapons, would force huge refugee flows into southeastern Turkey or areas in Syria under Turkish control.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has massed his army and allied forces on the frontlines in the northwest, and Russian planes have joined his bombardment of rebels there, in a prelude to a possible assault.

The fate of the insurgent stronghold in and around Idlib province rests on a meeting to be held in Tehran on September 7 between the leaders of Assad's supporters Russia and Iran, and the rebels' ally, Turkey. (Reuters)

SP VAID REMOVED AS JAMMU AND KASHMIR POLICE CHIEF

SRINAGAR (TIP): Jammu and Kashmir director general of police (DGP) SP Vaid was removed from his post and appointed transport commissioner, a state government order issued late on September 6 said.

Dilbag Singh, currently director general, prisons, will be acting DGP, the order said.

The removal of Vaid came two days after additional director general, CID, Abdul Gani Mir was replaced by B Srinivas, who had returned from central deputation.

The reshuffle came as Centre and the new governor Satya Pal Malik were not happy over the spike in the incidents of militancy in the Valley, especially the abduction of 12 relatives of policemen by the militants in south Kashmir last week. All 12 were freed unharmed after the father of a top Hizbul Mujahideen fighter was released.

However, a few days ago, Vaid has termed talk of his removal as media speculation. *Source: HT*



Lankesh murder accused 'key conspirator' in Dabholkar case

MUMBAI (TIP): Amol Kale, the prime accused in the murder of journalist Gauri Lankesh, is now in the custody of the Central Bureau of Investigation in connection with the murder of rationalist Narendra Dabholkar.

The CBI took Kale into the custody on Wednesday evening from the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Karnataka Police. He was produced before the Sessions Court in Pune which remanded him to custody till September 14.

Sources said Kale might have masterminded the murder of Dabholkar. He is said to have met Sachin Andure, the main shooter involved in Dabholkar's killing, in Aurangabad some weeks before the murder. The two stayed in a local guest house where Kale is said to have provided Andure with the murder weapon.

Andure is said to have passed on the pistol allegedly used in the shooting to his brother-in-law Shubham Surale when he realized that the CBI's dragnet was closing around him, according to officials here.

Surale, however, passed on the weapon to his friend Rohit Rege from whom it was recovered and sent for forensic analysis, sources said.

The rationalist was killed in Pune on August 20, 2013. Lankesh was shot dead on September 5 last year in Bengaluru. As part of the investigation, the CBI will confront Kale with Sharad Kalaskar, Amit Digvekar and Rajesh Bangera who are all accused in the Dabholkar murder case. *Source: The Tribune*



Congress calls for Bharat Bandh on Monday over fuel prices

New Delhi (TIP): The Congress party on Thursday announced a nationwide protest, Bharat Bandh, on Monday, over rising fuel prices. The party has also reached out to key Opposition parties to lend support to the programme.

"Everyone in the party has decided. Simultaneously we spoke to Opposition parties and a decision was taken to organise a nationwide Bharat Bandh on Monday. We will appeal to the common man to join us," said Ashok Gehlot, Congress' general secretary in charge of the organisation.

The bandh, slated between 9AM and 3PM, will include symbolic dharnas (sit in) at petrol pumps. "This is the carelessness of the government that prices are increasing despite international prices going down...prices increased during UPA's time also, but we took measures to contain it and give relief to people," according to Gehlot.

This is the first big pan-India ground campaign which the Congress party will run to take on the BJP government on the issue of fuel prices. The decision was taken after a meeting of top party leaders, including general secretaries, chiefs of state units and other senior functionaries.

SC/ST Act: Lok Sabha speaker says 'can't take back chocolate from kid'

INDORE (TIP): Amid widespread anger, including calls of 'Bharat bandh', against the amendment to the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan Thursday said all political parties should get together to discuss the issue.

A Bharat bandh was called Thursday by some anti-reservation bodies against the amendment to the act last month.

The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha had, on August 6 and August 9 respectively, passed the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Bill to overturn a Supreme Court order concerning certain safeguards against arrest under this act.

Speaking at a programme of Bhartiya Janata Party's (BJP) traders cell meet,



Mahajan said the issue must not be politicised because all parties had voted in favour of maintaining the basic structure of the act.

"The Parliament's work is to enact laws but all MPs should think on this subject (amendments made in the SC/ST Act). It is the responsibility of all the

people in society to create a proper environment for this discussion," she said.

Explaining her point, the Lok Sabha Speaker said, "Suppose if I give a big chocolate to my son and I later realise that it is not good for him to have so much of it at one go, one will try to take back the chocolate from the child. But you cannot take it as he will get angry and start crying".

"But some sensible person can make the child understand and take back the chocolate from him," she said.

"If anybody immediately tries to snatch anything given to a person, there may be an explosion," Mahajan claimed.

She stressed on the need for discussions regarding relevant legal changes.

Interpol Issues Red Corner Notice Against Nirav Modi's Close Executive

NEW DELHI (TIP): Interpol has issued a Red Corner Notice (RCN) against Mihir R Bhansali, an executive of absconding billionaire jeweller Nirav Modi, in connection with the alleged USD 2 billion PNB money-laundering case, officials said Thursday. The notice, which acts as an international arrest warrant, mentions that Mihir R Bhansali, 40, is required on charges of "money laundering".

The Red Corner Notice against Mihir Rashmi Bhansali, CEO of Nirav Modi's jewellery firm Firestar International, was requested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), they said.

If Pak stops terrorism, we will also be 'like Neeraj Chopra': Rawat

NEW DELHI (TIP): If Pakistan stops terrorism, the Army would also be "like Neeraj Chopra", Army Chief General Bipin Rawat has said, referring to the Asian Games javelin gold medallist's gesture of reaching out to his Pakistani competitor.

Rawat, while speaking at an event on Wednesday to felicitate Asian Games medallists from the Army, said the situation in Kashmir improved in 2017 as compared to the year before and it was improving further in 2018.

Asked if there was any "sportsmanship" on display at the Indo-Pak border, Rawat said, "They should make the first move; they should stop terrorism. If they stop terrorism, we will also be like Neeraj Chopra."

It was quite a moment at the Asian Games when Chopra stood flanked by a Chinese and a Pakistani on the podium. The picture of Chopra shaking hands with Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who won bronze, on the podium went viral on social media.

Rawat said that contrary to the figures that kept coming up in the media that terrorism was rising, local youths getting radicalised and taking up arms were getting killed by the security forces or arrested or surrendering in



one to two months.

"This action (by the security forces) will continue, but I can say with confidence that among the youth and their families there is a belief that this is not the right path.

"I see in many places that the mothers have urged their sons to come back and if this action continues, I am confident that we will be able to address the problem of terrorism. And slowly the youths who have become radicalised will come home," he said.

Source: PTI

Rahul Gandhi 'biggest buffoon' in the country, says KCR

HYDERABAD (TIP): Describing AICC president Rahul Gandhi as the country's "buffoon," Telangana caretaker chief minister K Chandrasekhar Rao on Thursday said the Congress party was the "biggest enemy and villain number one" of the state.

Soon after recommending the dissolution of the Telangana Assembly, Rao announced candidates for 105 seats and launched a blistering attack on the Congress.

Recalling how the Congress president had hugged Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the debate on the no-confidence motion and his subsequent wink, Rao said, "Everybody knows Rahul Gandhi. He is the biggest buffoon



in the country.

Whole country has seen in the open assembly (Lok Sabha) how he went to Mr Narendra Modi and hugged him, the way he was winking," the TRS president said. "Rahul Gandhi has inherited the

legacy of the Congress Delhi Sultanate. He is the legal heir of the Congress empire of Delhi. That is the reason I appeal to the people, let's not become slaves to Congress, slaves to Delhi." He described the Congress as the "biggest enemy" of Telangana, flaying it for "baseless, mindless and meaningless" allegations against the TRS government.

"The number one villain and biggest enemy to Telangana is Congress.

"Jawaharlal Nehru defeated Telangana...November 1, 1956 (states' reorganisation, formation of unified AP) is Telanganas black day. After that late Indira Gandhi acted as a dictator," he said when asked about the Congress' claim that it created Telangana as separate state. *Source: PTI*

11th Bhavanjali Mahotsav - A Grand Celebration in Dallas, TX

Grand celebration by Saints and devotees; Blessings to all the devotees by the saints
Noteworthy seva by women devotees; Devotees around the globe rejoiced



DALLAS, TX (TIP): Around the time when India became an independent nation, Shastriji Maharaj Shri Dharmajivandasji Swami laid the foundation for propagating true wisdom to help build the best character in students through an education that was both academic as well as spiritual. He started this effort by initiating the very first Gurukul of Swaminarayan Sampraday. Today more than 150 Gurukul centers exist across the Swaminarayan Sampraday where more than 100,000 students are enrolled in Gurukuls around the globe.

Shastri Shri Dharmajivandasji Swami renounced his home in 1917 when he was merely 14 years old. To commemorate the centennial anniversary of the event, a grand Bhavanjali Mahotsav was celebrated across several branches of Rajkot Gurukul including Rajkot, Junagadh, Taravda, Una, Sarangpur, Morbi, Ahmedabad, Surat, Mumbai, Hyderabad and also Dallas, TX.

Shri Dhirubhai Babaria and Shri Manubhai Patolia of USA, who have dedicated themselves to the noble vision of Shastriji Maharaj, performed the very first poojan of Guruvarya Shri Devkrushnadasji Swami. 35 saints were present for the celebration including Shri Devprasaddasji Swami, Shri Laxminarayandasji Swami, Shri Narayanprasaddasji Swami and others. Devotees from Canada, Latin America, India, Dubai, Africa, UK, Australia as well as different parts of USA including New Jersey, Chicago, Washington, California, Boston, Atlanta, Phoenix, Pennsylvania, Huston, etc. were present to witness the grand celebration. Devotees including Shri Chaturbhai Vaghasia, Shri Gordhanbhai Paghdal, Shri Dhiubhai



Kotadia, Shri Rakeshbhai Dudhat (Africa), Shri Jasmatbhai Sutaria, Shri Ashwinbhai Babaria were also present for the auspicious occasion.

Under the guidance of Shri Vishwaswaroopdasji Swami, several kids (born and raised in the US) took part in traditional Indian folk dances as a tribute to the grand celebration. The kids performed with great flare and poise which reflected their wholehearted dedication. Guruvarya Shri Devkrushnadasji Swami gave his blessings to Shri Vishwaswaroopdasji Swami for his tireless efforts.

There were more than 150 devotees who had dedicated their time to the temple for the past 50 days. Their efforts were blessed by Guruvarya Shri Devkrushnadasji Swami by

presenting them all with a personalized memento. Women devotees also had a huge contribution to the celebration with their tremendous help by providing fresh chapatis, theplas and puris for lunch & dinner for roughly 2500 people each day.

Guruvarya Shri Devkrushnadasji Swami, in his blessings to all the devotees said, "Just like how a broom cleans the dust and other garbage, performing seva cleanses a human soul from bad vices." He also added that, "Lord Swaminarayan always accepts selfless acts of seva. Shastriji Maharaj used to perform selfless seva like fetching water from the well for elderly saints to bathe, make chapatis from 30 kgs of flour every day to feed the saints as well as devotees. And in his free time, he

focused on learning. He learned the 18 Adhyays of Geetaji in 18 days. He had memorized more than 800 kirtans and more than 700 shlokas. Seeing the selfless efforts of each and every devotee here in Dallas makes me very happy. I pray for all your wellbeing."

Shri Dharmavallabhdasji Swami had sent a kanthi (made of tulsii) of Nilkanth Varnindra Bhagwan which was graciously accepted by Shri Devkrushnadasji Swami.

More than 150 volunteers worked day and night, taking off from their office work, for last 50 days. Santo blessed these volunteers with memento. Also, women volunteers of Bhakti Mahila Mandal prepared rotli and thepla for more than 10000 visitors during this celebration.




**GUEST
COMMENT**

The right to love: The Supreme Court ruling on Section 377 furthers the frontiers of personal freedom

The stirring message from the Supreme Court's landmark judgment decriminalizing gay sex is that social morality cannot trump constitutional morality. It is a reaffirmation of the right to love. In a 5-0 verdict, a Constitution Bench has corrected the flagrant judicial error committed by a two-member Bench in Suresh Kumar Koushal (2013), in overturning a reasoned judgment of the Delhi High Court reading down Section 377 of the IPC. The 2013 decision meant that the LGBTQ community's belatedly recognized right to equal protection of the law was withdrawn on spurious grounds: that there was nothing wrong in the law treating people having sex "against the order of nature" differently from those who abide by "nature", and that it was up to Parliament to act if it wanted to change the law against unnatural sex. The court has overruled Koushal and upheld homosexuals' right to have intimate relations with people of their choice, their inherent right to privacy and dignity and the freedom to live without fear. The outcome was not unexpected. When the courts considered Section 377 earlier, the litigation was initiated by voluntary organizations. When those affected by the 2013 verdict approached the Supreme Court, it was referred to a larger Bench to reconsider Koushal.

In the intervening years, two landmark judgments took forward the law on sexual orientation and privacy and formed the jurisprudential basis for the latest judgment. In National Legal Services Authority (2014), a case concerning the rights of transgender people, the court ruled that there could be no discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. In Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (2017), or the 'privacy case', a nine-judge Bench ruled that sexual orientation is a facet of privacy, and constitutionally protected. Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra's opinion lays emphasis on transformative constitutionalism, that is, treating the Constitution as a dynamic document that progressively realizes various rights. In particular, he invokes the doctrine of non-retrogression, which means that once a right is recognized, it cannot be reversed. Taken together, the four opinions have furthered the frontiers of personal freedom and liberated the idea of individual rights from the pressure of public opinion. Constitutional morality trumps any imposition of a particular view of social morality, says Justice R.H. Nariman, while Justice D.Y. Chandrachud underscores the "unbridgeable divide" between the moral values on which Section 377 is based and the values of the Constitution. Justice Indu Malhotra strikes a poignant note when she says history owes an apology to the LGBTQ community for the delay in providing the redress. The dilution of Section 377 marks a welcome departure from centuries of heteronormative thinking. This is a verdict that will, to borrow a phrase from Justice Chandrachud, help sexual minorities 'confront the closet' and realize their rights.

(The Hindu)

Why These Trade Talks with Canada are getting so Tough



By A.D. Amar

Watching the currently going US-Canadian trade talks will make anyone understand why no US president in decades, spanning both political parties, dared to get into renegotiating America's trade deals that had been sealed and practiced for so, so long ago, even though unfair.

The deal with Canada, or NAFTA on a broader scale, is not an isolated case of a trade deal that is unfair to America. Almost all American trade deals are unfair, and that is why, American Presidents decided to stay away from them. They knew that the reopened trade talks will open tough issues that had been so negotiated that America had to open its borders to the other country such that it could export to America unabated, whatever and how much it wanted to export. However, when it came to importing from America, the other country, according to the deal, could engage in protectionism in whatever form it wanted. Take, for example, Canada's imposition of a 300% tariff on all dairy products imported from America. And America tolerated this. In essence, basically, America always became the only free market in every deal. There was no laterality.

Through the kind of trade deals described above, for the last more than seventy years, America has made the whole world wealthy, whether it had been the countries in Asia, Europe, or North America, including Germany, Japan, China, South Korea, Canada, and Mexico, to name just a few. The trade agreements that they signed legitimized the unfair trade practices against the USA. The outcome had been a constant outflow of wealth from the United States to other countries. Consequently, during the ensuing decades, America fell from holding the top position in almost every measurable economic or social indicator to the bottom of its heap. And, the previously named are the countries among those that replaced America. Since it had been going on for so long, these nations had gotten used to exporting to America to earn cash to pay for imports for their needs from other countries who sold them at the lower prices, or they did it to fulfill their obligations of the deals they signed with the other countries who traded with them. They treated their trade deal with the USA as an entitlement. Because of the effort needed to conduct these negotiations afresh, and the low probability of an outcome that would satisfy the populations involved had the American presidents maintain their status-quo.

Let us, again, take the case of Canada. By rank, it is the 38th country in the world by population size, but 10th when it comes to exports, making it a very powerful, global exporter. Until 2007, it was America's largest

“By far, the biggest contributor to its export income has been the USA. Seventy-five percent of its exports are to America. Because of this enormity of its exports to America that bring in many billion dollars into the Canadian economy (about \$50 billion just for selling cars to the USA), if American exports are interrupted, Canada will face huge economic and social problems. That is why, it is understandable that Canada is going to fight tooth and nail to keep its exports to America going unhindered, while not importing goods to protect its local producers and to preserve its cash. Ironically, American political and business leaders, because of Canada's influence on American politics and business, want the status-quo to continue”.



US President Trump (left) and Canada's Prime Minister Trudeau-No headway

trading partner (lost that position to China). By far, the biggest contributor to its export income has been the USA. Seventy-five percent of its exports are to America. Because of this enormity of its exports to America that bring in many billion dollars into the Canadian economy (about \$50 billion just for selling cars to the USA), if American exports are interrupted, Canada will face huge economic and social problems. That is why, it is understandable that Canada is going to fight tooth and nail to keep its exports to America going unhindered, while not importing goods to protect its local producers and to preserve its cash. Ironically, American political and business leaders, because of Canada's influence on American politics and business, want the status-quo to continue.

Now, let's take the other side of Canadian foreign trade. While America takes in 75% of Canadian exports, America is not Canada's largest trading partner. No surprise, it is China. And, do not wonder; that is the case in almost all America's trading partners. That is how, America did not have well-paying jobs for its population, and had to fund its budgets by taking loans, mostly from its trading partners.

The above given analysis provides us

enough to accept that, in spite of exporting so much to America, mostly America's trading partners do not import enough from the US to help balance the bilateral trade. Each of these countries uses its export dollars earned from America to buy more from China, European Union and other countries, leaving for America an annual trade deficit that was \$566 billion in 2017. This is the problem that the Trump Administration is attempting to rectify through these, so called, the new NAFTA negotiations. The situation is exactly the same when we look at almost all of America's major trade deals. The toughest and the largest one of them all is the trade deals with China. And only Trump has the understanding, desire and the stamina to take on these trade fights, simultaneously, to halt the outflow of these many, many billion American dollars every year that we could use to bring back to the top of the global ranks the standard-of-living and quality-of-life of our population.

(The Author is Business Professor at Seton Hall University. His areas of expertise are strategy, knowledge, and operations. He can be reached at AD.Amar@shu.edu; Tel: (973) 761 9684)

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PRIME MINISTER MODI'S PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL IN THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION



By Ven Parameswaran

“

Modi has failed so far. It is possible that between now and the election, Modi will wake up and execute political skills of Kautilya. I must say it is too early to make any predictions. In six months, there could be big changes. Will Modi use his vision and modernize India?"

”

Prime Minister Modi will be facing voters in India's General Election six months from now. It is therefore timely to evaluate his success and failure and give him a suitable grade. Modi started off with new energy and enthusiasm. Though BJP alone received only 31% support, he was able to convince others to join him. Thus, he was able to form the government with a large mandate from the people. The expectations were high, and the results speak for themselves. However, I would give him only B for his government.

MODI'S POLITICAL SKILLS ARE A+ IN CAMPAIGNING AND GETTING ELECTED

Modi has charisma. His political skills have delivered him huge success in the elections and delivered mandate. Unfortunately, he has not been able to transform his success to governing. One gets the impression that he is operating in a vacuum. We also get the impression that the all powerful Indian bureaucracy retains control and fails to implement his policies. Modi has failed to beef up the Office of the Prime Minister, equivalent to the White House in the USA.

"However, I would give him only B for his government", says the author.



Will Modi use his vision and modernize India?

Photo / Courtesy PTI

Will Modi take action to win the corrupt and powerful bureaucracy. I must point out that the Indian bureaucracy is very powerful, and no Prime Minister can govern and rule India without its cooperation. Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Vajpayee had powerful and most competent Principal Secretary to Prime Minister. P.N. Haksar delivered Bangladesh to Indira Gandhi. Brajesh Mishra emboldened the Office of Prime Minister Vajpayee. He was the architect behind the nuclear test, that was kept as secret even from the C.I.A. He also established a direct pipeline with the Bush White House. If Modi selects a topnotch bureaucrat with reputation and competence, it will go a long way to streamline Modi's policies.

MODI'S ACHIEVEMENTS

It was reported last week that India's GDP is growing at 8.2%. This is a great news on the eve of the general election. Indian stock market has gone up from 25000 to 38000. 390 million have access to internet. India is fortunate that 50% of its population is under 25 and 2/3rds under 35. This is a huge asset for India. When every major country is getting older and older, India is the only country getting younger and younger. Educated and developed population is an asset. Modi must capitalize on this strength. India has invested \$15 billion in the USA and continue to invest. But the US has invested in India only \$20 billion during the same period. India must deregulate and encourage foreign private investment. Modi has enabled issuance of visas online helping the tourists and businessmen. These days we do not hear of complaints from visa/passport applicants in the USA - Modi changed it for better.

FAILURE TO MODERNIZE INDIA

India has been unable to deliver water and electricity for 24/7 to all its people. It has failed to build mass transportation in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai. New Delhi metro system seems to be working efficiently. It is taking too long to build mass transportation in Bangalore. The subway system in Calcutta is inadequate. India has built most modern airports in New Delhi,

Bombay, Hyderabad, Bangalore, and Calcutta.

There is no system in India to remove garbage. Modi delivered toilets but there is no sewerage system.

There are more vehicles than the roads everywhere. As a result, the traffic does not move. This contributes to economic waste of valuable time. Time is money.

The courts have too many backlogs resulting in justice delayed or denied.

Failure to build modern infrastructure has impacted on manufacturing, shortage of housing, and loss of export business. India is unable to accept orders to deliver 100 million under wears unlike China.

MODI'S RELATIONS WITH THE MINORITIES NOT LAUDABLE

The Sikhs and the Christians may be small in number. But they are highly educated and economically well to do. They are also a source of foreign exchange. Modi has failed to develop satisfactory relations with these minorities. The U.A.E. offered \$200 million to Kerala victims of floods, but Modi government rejected it. Why? Is he not spiting Kerala, not governed by BJP?

India has the second largest Muslim population in the world. Indian Muslims are peace loving. The BJP has not treated them with the respect they command. Beef is banned from the restaurants. Muslims are punished for killing cows. But India is a leading exporter of meat, primarily buffalo meat, deriving \$5 billion in foreign exchange. If it is o.k. to slaughter cows for export why it does not apply for domestic consumption.

MODI MAKES GOOD IMPRESSION ON FOREIGN LEADERS BUT FAILS TO TRANSFORM THE RELATIONSHIP

Modi visited the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and others and created most favorable relationships. He addressed huge rallies of Non-Resident Indians. On his return to India, he has been unable to transform the goodwill and solid relationship into meaningful policies. Because he has no link with the mighty Indian bureaucracy, nothing gets implemented. Lack of strong Principal Secretary to Prime Minister is the

main cause of his failure.

FAILURE TO FOLLOW KAUTILYA'S PRINCIPLE - KING MUST BE FEARED AND LOVED.

Modi is not feared. Modi has been unable to formulate dynamic and meaningful political and foreign policy strategies. He started off well by inviting the heads of all South Asian neighbors including Pakistan. Here again, there was no follow up. During Modi's term, China has encircled India by dominating its power and influence in Nepal, Maldives Islands, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Sikkim and Bangladesh. India should not have allowed China to interfere in the coastal waters of India - Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal. The US, Japan, Australia, S. Korea had offered joint naval exercises, but India has not taken full advantages. Instead, India has joined naval exercises with China, Pakistan and Russia!

INDIA NEEDS ACCESS TO LATEST TECHNOLOGIES. WILL MODI EMBRACE TRUMP'S OFFER?

Technology is the ultimate weapon that wins modern wars, not large army. India was shut off from the Western technology for over 30 years till President George W Bush gave India civil nuclear deal. The US Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense are now in India for 2+2 talks. Trump has offered India relationship on a par with its closest allies. The offer was made six months ago and if Modi were a master strategist and followed Kautilya he could have solidified the closest strategic relationship with the superpower, USA. Modi is forgetting that relations with others such as Russia and Iran should be secondary. Hope Modi will not miss the big picture and conclude the deal with the Americans. Agreeing to close strategic relationship with the USA will prevent China from its adventures in South Asia. The US also has decided to support and finance several developing countries to prevent domination by China.

WHAT ARE THE CHANCES FOR MODI TO GET REELECTED?

In U.P. Modi's performance was par excellence grabbing almost 100%. But in his own Gujarat, BJP barely won, and this was shocking. Why did this happen? The Congress Party gave him a shock. Modi is not in power in many important States - West Bengal, Punjab, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and others. Modi has failed to privatize public sector corporations. He has not sold even the loss-stricken Air India. Skilled politician should be able to negotiate with the opposition be it Rajya Sabha or important States where his party is not in power. The fact remains that has failed in 4-1/2 years to consolidate and influence. Who influences whom, when, where and how is the essence of politics. Modi has failed so far. It is possible that between now and the election, Modi will wake up and execute political skills of Kautilya. I must say it is too early to make any predictions. In six months, there could be big changes. Will Modi use his vision and modernize India?

(The author is Diplomat-in-Residence and Senior Adviser to Imagindia Institute, New Delhi; Chairman, Asian American Republican Committee, Scarsdale, N.Y. He can be reached at vpwaren@gmail.com)



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OPINIO

Brazil far-right presidential candidate Bolsonaro in grave condition after stabbing

BRAZIL (TIP): The leading candidate in Brazil's presidential election is in a grave but stable condition after being stabbed by an assailant at a campaign rally on Thursday, doctors said, pushing an already chaotic campaign into further disarray. Far-right firebrand Congressman Jair Bolsonaro, a controversial figure who has enraged many Brazilians for years with hateful comments, but has a devout following among conservative voters, could take two months to fully recover and will spend at least a week in the hospital, said Dr. Luiz Henrique Borsato, who operated on the candidate.

"His internal wounds were grave and put the patient's life at risk," Borsato said, adding that a serious challenge now would be preventing an infection that could be caused by the perforation of Bolsonaro's intestines.

The attack on Bolsonaro is a dramatic twist in what is already Brazil's most unpredictable election since the country's return to democracy three decades ago. Corruption investigations have jailed scores of powerful businessmen and politicians and alienated infuriated voters. Under Brazilian campaign laws, Bolsonaro's tiny coalition has almost no campaign time on government-regulated candidate ad blocs on TV and radio. That means he relies deeply on social media and raucous rallies around the country to drum up support. If Bolsonaro is not able to go out in the streets, it could jeopardize his campaign. Bolsonaro, a retired Army captain, is running as the law-and-order



candidate and positioned himself as the anti-politician despite having spent nearly three decades in Congress where he has managed to author just few laws. He has long espoused taking a radical stance on public security in Brazil, which according to a United Nations study has more homicides than any other nation. Bolsonaro, whose trademark pose at rallies is a "guns up" gesture with both hands to make them resemble pistols, says he would encourage police to kill suspected drug gang members and other armed criminals with abandon.

He has openly praised Brazil's military dictatorship and in the past said it should have killed more people. In casting his vote on the floor of Congress for the 2016 impeachment of former President Dilma Rousseff, he dedicated his ballot to the military regime figure who oversaw the

prison where Rousseff was jailed for three years and brutally tortured. Bolsonaro faces trial before the Supreme Court for speech that prosecutors said incited hate and rape. He has called the charges politically motivated. Political violence is rampant in Brazil at the local level. For instance, in the months before 2016 city council elections in Baixada Fluminense, a hardscrabble region the size of Denmark that surrounds Rio de Janeiro, at least 13 politicians or candidates were murdered before ballots were cast. Earlier this year, Marielle Franco, a Rio city councilwoman who was an outspoken critic of police violence against slum residents, was assassinated. But violence against national political figures, even in the extremely heated political climate that has engulfed Brazil in recent years, is rare. (Reuters)

British Navy warship sails near Beijing-claimed South China Sea islands: Sources

BEIJING (TI): A British Royal Navy warship sailed close to islands claimed by China in the South China Sea as it headed towards Vietnam, asserting "freedom of navigation" rights and challenging Beijing's "excessive claims" in the region, two sources said.

The HMS Albion, a 22,000 ton amphibious warship carrying a contingent of Royal Marines, passed by the Paracel Islands in recent days, said the sources, who were familiar with the matter but who asked not to be identified.

The Albion was on its way to Hanoi, where it docked on Monday following a deployment in and around Japan.

One of the sources said Beijing dispatched a frigate and two helicopters to challenge the British vessel, but both sides remained calm during the encounter.

The other source the Albion did not enter the territorial seas around any features in the hotly disputed region but demonstrated that Britain does not recognize excessive maritime claims around the Paracel Islands. Twelve nautical miles is an internationally recognized territorial limit.

The Paracels are occupied entirely by

China but also claimed by Vietnam and Taiwan.

A spokesman for the Royal Navy said, "HMS Albion exercised her rights for freedom of navigation in full compliance with international law and norms."

Neither China's Foreign nor Defence Ministries immediately responded to a request for comment.

FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION:

China's claims in the South China Sea, through which some \$3 trillion of ship-borne trade passes each year, are contested by Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Vietnam. Britain does not have any territorial claims in the area.

While the US Navy has conducted Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) in the same area in the past, this British challenge to China's growing control of the strategic waterway comes after the United States has said it would like to see more international participation in such actions.

Both Britain and the United States say they conduct FONOP operations throughout the world, including in areas

claimed by allies.

The British Navy has previously sailed close to the disputed Spratly Islands, further south in the South China Sea, but not within the 12 nautical mile limit, diplomatic sources have said.

FONOPs, which are largely symbolic, have so far not persuaded Beijing to curtail its South China Sea activities, which have included extensive reclamation of reefs and islands and the construction of runways, hangars and missile systems.

Beijing says it is entitled to build on its territories and says the facilities are for civilian use and necessary self-defence purposes. China blames Washington for militarising the region with its freedom of navigation patrols.

Foreign aircraft and vessels in the region are routinely challenged by Chinese naval ships and monitoring stations on the fortified islands, sources have said previously. In April, warships from Australia – which like Britain is a close US ally – had what Canberra described as a close "encounter" with Chinese naval vessels in the contested sea. (Reuters)

Japan quake death toll rises to 16: Shinzo Abe

TOKYO (TIP): The death toll from a powerful earthquake that rattled the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido doubled to at least 16, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said on Friday, with more than half the island's 5.3 million residents still without power.

The 6.7-magnitude quake, which hit before dawn on Thursday, triggered landslides that buried houses and paralysed Hokkaido with widespread power and transport cuts.

The death toll had been put at eight overnight but NHK cited Abe in reporting the new total soon after he held an emergency meeting early on Friday.

Another 26 people were missing, disaster management authorities said.

The island, a tourist destination about the size of Austria known for its mountains, lakes and seafood, lost all power after the quake when Hokkaido Electric Power Co shut its fossil fuel-fired power plants as a precaution.

The utility had restored power to about 1.31 million of 2.95 million customers by early Friday, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said. It could take at least a week to restore power fully, Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko has said.

The quake was the second disaster to hit Japan this week alone after a summer during which the country has been battered by deadly typhoons, flooding and a record heat wave. (Reuters)

UK nerve agent attack: France, Germany, Canada and US back Britain over Salisbury poisoning

LONDON (TIP): Britain, France, Germany, Canada and the United States pledged on Thursday to work to disrupt "the hostile activities of foreign intelligence networks" and called on Russia to disclose its nerve agent programme.

In a joint statement, the other four countries said they backed Britain's assessment that Russian officers were behind a nerve agent attack on a former Russian spy and his daughter using Novichok after London charged two Russians in absentia.

"We have full confidence in the British assessment that the two suspects were officers from the Russian military intelligence service, also known as the GRU, and that this operation was almost certainly approved at a senior government level," the statement said, adding that the countries urged Russia to provide "full disclosure of its Novichok programme".

"Yesterday's announcement further strengthens our intent to continue to disrupt together the hostile activities of foreign intelligence networks on our territories, uphold the prohibition of chemical weapons, protect our citizens and defend ourselves from all forms of malign state activity directed against us and our societies." (Reuters)

Kim Jong Un says two Koreas should further efforts for denuclearisation: KCNA

The North Korean premier said that the two Koreas should keep advancing their joint ties that have neared a state of peace and reconciliation.

SEOUL (TIP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said the two Koreas should further their efforts to realize the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, as he met with South Korean special envoys on Wednesday, state media KCNA said on Thursday.

Kim added the two Koreas should keep advancing their joint ties that have neared a state of peace and reconciliation, and discussed with South Korean envoys the Pyongyang inter-Korean summit planned for September – coming to a satisfactory agreement, KCNA said without elaborating. (Reuters)



Nimrat Kaur dismisses rumours of dating Ravi Shastri in style

Actor Nimrat Kaur posted a cryptic tweet today, dismissing speculation that she is dating former cricketer Ravi Shastri.

Nimrat's name appeared in various reports, which speculated that the actor was dating the ex cricketer. According to a report in Mumbai Mirror, the cricket coach who separated from his wife Ritu more than a decade ago, is in a relationship with Nimrat now. The Lunchbox actor, however, took to Twitter and posted, "Fact: I may need a root canal. Fiction: Everything else I read about me today. More facts: Fiction can be more hurtful, monday blues exist and I love ice cream. Here's to trash free happy days ahead."

The report in Mumbai Mirror stated that Nimrat and Ravi Shastri have been dating for a couple of year now, and discreetly too. The report also noted that both of them have been roped in by a luxury German-based carmaker to launch their cars since 2015. This report resulted in the speculations going viral on social media.

A report in Bollywoodlife also claimed that it was a common friend of Nimrat and Ravi Shastri who played cupid in their life. The same report also suggested that the two broke it off and are no longer together.

SHAHID KAPOOR, MIRA RAJPUT WELCOME BABY BOY



Shahid Kapoor and Mira Rajput have become proud parents to their second child. The Bollywood couple welcomed a baby boy on Wednesday, Delhi Times reported.

Mira was admitted to Hinduja Hospital in Mumbai on Wednesday evening. Her mother was also spotted at the hospital by photographers.

Shahid and Mira are also parents to their elder daughter, two-year-old Misha. They tied the knot in 2015 and in a recent interview to Rajeev Masand, Shahid talked about his wife with a lot of love. "I got lucky. I married Mira," Shahid said. "She's as normal as it gets. We kind of hit it off and

decided to get into an arranged marriage. By God's grace it's been wonderful, the last three years, and she's been a huge part of that for me."

Mira was a student in Delhi University when Shahid met her. They married after a brief courtship. But despite the fame, Shahid said he has always craved normalcy in his life. "I'm very simple as a person," he said. "And although I might live a very lavish lifestyle, I'm very happy I share my life with someone who has a similar mindset."

The actor, who is currently busy promoting his next, Batti Gul Meter Chalu and has begun his prep for the Hindi

remake of Telugu hit, Arjun Reddy, says he can barely manage a week's off for his second child. He will also be seen in a biopic on Asian gold medallist boxer Dingko Singh.

Speaking to Mid Day, Shahid said that while in the case of Misha, he was off work for several months, in case of his second child, despite his best efforts, he just couldn't do much. "During Misha's birth (in 2016), I took a couple of months off. This time too, I was negotiating to take a month-long break, but things didn't work out. I will get only a week off from work. It is too short a duration, but such are the circumstances."

Pataakha song Hello Hello: Malaika Arora dances in a tent, sings about Whatsapp

As promised, Malaika Arora has performed a special song for the film Pataakha, directed by Vishal Bhardwaj. The filmmaker is known to have featured one of the most well-known special songs in one of his films - Beedi, featuring Bipasha Basu, in Omkara - and Malaika is known as one of the most famous performers of these dance numbers, with classics such as Chaiyya Chaiyya, Munni Badnaam Hui and Anarkali Disco Chali in her back catalogue.

In Hello Hello, Malaika makes an appearance after the lead pair discusses job prospects. When Namit Das' character tells Radhika Madan's character that he has applied for a job at the telephone authority, she asks him what that means. This line provides a smooth transition to the song, titled Hello Hello.

The lyrics include references to Whatsapp and late night phone calls between

sweethearts. "Aaja network ke bhitari keh ke hello hello," Malaika's 'character' sings as she dances in a circus tent and men with rifles stare lecherously at her.

The song has been composed by Bhardwaj, written by Gulzar, choreographed by Ganesh Acharya and performed by Rekha Bhardwaj. In an earlier statement, producer Ajay Kapoor had said about featuring Malaika, in what is considered to be her element, "So when we came up with this track for Pataakha, she was the first one we thought of casting. When I approached her for the song, she was very excited and immediately agreed. We are happy to have her on board and this song is tailor-made for her," the producer said.

Pataakha is based on an acclaimed short story by renowned writer Charan Singh Pathik. Also starring Sunil Grover and Vijay Raaz, the movie is all set to hit the screens on September 28.





Kylie Jenner wears a neon bikini as she and daughter bask in the sun

Kylie Jenner is celebrating the last days of summer with her littlest love in style! The 21-year-old Keeping Up With the Kardashians star posted on her Instagram page this weekend photos of her and her and Travis Scott's 7-month-old daughter Stormi Webster basking in the sun while sitting together on a lounge chair outside.

Kylie is wearing a neon green sporty bikini—the same color her sister Kim Kardashian showcased multiple times during a recent family trip to Miami—and watermelon-colored nail polish. Stormi is wearing a frilly, cream-colored one-piece swimsuit and straw hat.

In July, Kylie started working out for the first time since giving birth to her daughter, saying on YouTube, "I feel like I have like, fake abs right now. It's just like, genetics, but I want like, real abs. I know I can have like a super fit body and just for my health, like, I want to do this and I want to feel good."

Kylie occasionally posts photos of Stormi online, although she stopped for a few weeks in June. Since giving birth, she has been candid about her pregnancy, which she had hidden from the public, and motherhood.

HILARY DUFF HAS MATERNITY PHOTOSHOOT

Hilary Duff is gearing up to give birth to her second child, a baby girl.

But before that happens, the Younger star organized a sweet photo shoot with her 6-year-old son, Luca Comrie, and her boyfriend, Matthew Koma. The actress uploaded the two separate pictures to Instagram. In the photo with Luca, Duff sits on her knees with her feet behind her holding onto her belly while she smiles and looks up at her son. The 6-year-old looks at the camera laughing and he climbs a giant brown chair. Luca wears yellow shoes, jeans and a blue shirt whereas his mom opts for a tight grey dress, baby bump on full display.

The second picture of Duff and Koma could essentially pass as an album cover. Duff wears the same dress as the picture with Luca and a big hat, while Koma's aesthetic melds with the hip Instagram filter. He wears a light blue shirt tucked into black skinny jeans. She had a playful caption for the photo itself. "And this photo is making papa bear and I look a lot cooler than we are," she wrote.

The Lizzie McGuire star is due any day now. In June, the actress announced she and Koma "made a little princess of our own and we couldn't be more excited!"

A few weeks ago, Duff shared a photo on her Instagram story baring her baby belly and expressed how eager she was to meet her little baby girl. "Babbbb! Hurry it on up damnit," she captioned it.

Duff has shared a number of photos and updates throughout her pregnancy. In July, the actress posted a picture of herself in a bra and underwear and wrote about the changes her body has been going through. "The boobs are big the belly is big the body is big. Man... pregnancy is hard. Giving love to all mamas who make it look effortless... this journey is hard as hell and also incredibly special," she composed.

She continued, "Lovely to have a little life inside and to day dream of all the new adventures to come buuuut almost



impossible to get my own shoes on...sick of getting up 9 times a night to pee and looking at this weird body in the mirror that is not my own at the moment. Women are so bad ass." It's a big change for Luca, too. Duff has talked openly about her son's reaction to the pregnancy and her own ups and downs with motherhood. Last week, Duff shared on Today that Luca was "on the fence" about baby no. 2, but she believes that "everything will be fine when she arrives."

She mentioned she and Koma are "ready" and "excited" for the newest addition to the

family.

Duff spoke to InStyle about one incident with Luca that was particularly heartwarming for the mom. "It was just one of those mornings where everything that could have gone wrong, was wrong, and we were running late. I was burning the toast over and over again, and I think I had literally been through three pieces of toast. He was finishing his homework, and it was just crazy, and I was like, 'Oh my God, I just suck right now.' And I said it out loud," she told the magazine.

Justin Bieber, Hailey Baldwin moving to Canada?

Justin Bieber is following his compass. After living in the States since his rise to fame in 2008, the singer is ready to pack his bags and head north to his birthplace. "He wants to make his full-time home in Canada," a source reveals in the new issue of Us Weekly. "He needs to get out of the L.A., NYC scene."

The constant attention and tremendous fame the 24-year-old has faced in the last decade has been "overwhelming for him," explains the source. "He's trying to climatize what a normal life should look like." For now, that means getting away from the public eye. Adds the pal, "He feels most at peace at home."

Joining him in the big move would be his fiancée, Hailey Baldwin. But wedding planning is still taking precedence. "They want to get married really soon," a second insider says of the couple, who have been engaged for two months.

Even a small roadblock such as the wedding venue they wanted being booked won't stall them. "They didn't hit pause," the insider notes. They simply won't settle for just anything. Adds the insider, "They want to make sure their day is perfect and exactly what they want."

As for their relationship? Things are going well for

the lovebirds. In fact, the 21-year-old has even been a good role model for her love. "Justin is really in love with Hailey. He loves that she is super chill and down to do anything," another insider says. "Hailey has calmed Justin down a lot, and she has changed him as a man. He thinks she is his forever and considers her his best friend and soulmate."

HAILEY BALDWIN ROCKS HER ENGAGEMENT RING

Hailey Baldwin is proudly showing off her engagement ring on the runway.

The 21-year-old model, who is set to tie the knot with beau Justin Bieber, traveled to Shanghai to walk in Tommy Hilfiger's TommyNow Icons show on Tuesday. Photos from the fashion event show Baldwin walking down the catwalk in a sporty red and white ensemble, pairing the look with her stunning diamond ring from her fiancé. While Bieber wasn't in attendance at the event, he was definitely on Baldwin's mind on Tuesday.

Before hitting the runway, Baldwin took to Instagram to post about her "perfect" summer, writing, "kissing goodbye the most perfect summer of my life!! Feeling insanely grateful for everything this season of my life has brought me and even more excited for what's next."



12 Thais arrested for sharing Facebook post on rape

BANGKOK (TIP): Police in Thailand have arrested 12 people who shared a Facebook post about a rape allegation by a British tourist who claims that the police refused to accept her complaint when she reported the crime.

Winyat Chatmontree, a lawyer for the 12 Thai men said Thursday they were arrested in several different provinces this week for violating the Computer Crime Act. They could face up to five years in prison and fines for spreading false information and damaging national security.

Police deny turning away the British woman and say their investigation determined her claim of being raped on the island of Koh Tao in June was untrue.

The 19-year-old woman, who has since returned to England, has told journalists she believes she was drugged by someone who spiked her drink, and woke up on a beach to find that she had been raped and robbed.

"From our initial investigation, we concluded and reported to our police commissioner that at the moment there is no evidence or witnesses to prove that the incident has happened, not on a drug claim or a rape claim," Deputy Tourist Police chief Maj. Gen. Surachet Hakpan, head of the investigation, said at a news conference Thursday.

Koh Tao, though popular with foreign backpackers, has gained an unsavory reputation since the murders of British nationals Hannah Witheridge and David Miller, who were beaten to death on a beach there in 2014.

That case has been plagued with speculation that the two migrant workers from Myanmar convicted and sentenced to death for the crime were only scapegoats. Skeptics point to several other unexplained tourist deaths on the island, suggesting that well-connected local residents have covered up deadly attacks. (AP)

World criticism doesn't have Aung San Suu Kyi or Myanmar on the ropes

BANGKOK (TIP): Myanmar's government looks as if it's under siege from an international community concerned about the condition of its nascent democracy, with widespread calls for a genocide tribunal to hold its military to account for the brutal treatment of its Muslim Rohingya minority.

But experts say not to expect any change of course from the country's leader, State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, even after a fresh round of withering criticism from abroad following Monday's show-trial conviction of two Reuters reporters who helped expose extrajudicial killings of 10 Rohingya men and boys. Suu Kyi's motivations are opaque. Even as a revered pro-democracy activist, the Nobel Peace laureate had a reputation for being autocratic, but now her core ideology has come into question.

There is at least a loose consensus that she faces real restrictions on her actions due to the power retained by the military that is enshrined in the constitution it imposed in 2007. "Aung San Suu Kyi has tried to balance her delicate and antagonistic relationship with the military and her conception of society's needs, perhaps fearing too strident a stance could prompt an overt return to military rule, which is possible under the constitution in certain circumstances," David Steinberg, professor emeritus at Georgetown University, wrote in July in the online magazine *The Diplomat*. (AP)

China's foreign minister to visit Pakistan tomorrow to hold talks with new government

The visit by Wang, who is also designated as the State Councillor which makes him the top diplomat of China, comes two days after that of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

BEIJING / LAHORE (TIP): China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi will visit Pakistan Friday to hold talks with the country's new leadership to consolidate cooperation and elevate the all-weather bilateral strategic partnership. This is the first high-level visit by a Chinese official to Islamabad since the new government of Prime Minister Imran Khan assumed office after the July 25 elections.

The visit by Wang, who is also designated as the State Councillor which makes him the top diplomat of China, comes two days after that of US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Pompeo met new Prime Minister Khan and pressed him to take "sustained and decisive measures" against terrorists threatening the regional peace and stability.

Announcing Wang's visit, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told the media that besides holding talks with Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, he would also meet top leaders of the new Pakistan government and exchange views on bilateral ties, regional and international issues of mutual interest.

"This is the first high-level visit between the two sides after the establishment of the new government in Pakistan. We hope that through the visit the two sides could consolidate our traditional friendship, all-round cooperation and elevate China-Pakistan all-weather strategic and cooperative partnership," she said when asked about China's expectations from the visit from September 7-9 "China and Pakistan



are all-weather strategic and cooperative partners. We are good neighbours, good friends and good brothers. Our bilateral ties have been developing with sound momentum. We have frequent high-level exchanges, practical cooperation moving forward and rich outcomes from the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)," she said.

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday congratulated Pakistan's newly-elected President Arif Alvi, saying the strategic significance of the bilateral ties is "more prominent under the current circumstances" and both sides should support each other "more staunchly". Wang's visit also comes amidst reports of unease in Beijing over how

the new PTI government would approach over USD 50 billion Chinese investments in various projects under the CPEC connecting China's Muslim-majority Xinjiang province with Gwadar port in Pakistan.

Khan in the past criticised former prime minister Nawaz Sharif for the lack of transparency and corruption in the CPEC projects.

Newly-appointed Finance Minister Asad Umar has promised to bring about transparency to the CPEC projects whose details remained closely guarded secrets.

India has protested to China over the CPEC, which is being built through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). (PTI)

A bomber targeted a wrestling match in Kabul, followed by a bigger blast as rescuers rushed there

KABUL (TIP): A suicide bomber detonated his explosives during a wrestling match in the Afghan capital Wednesday, and as emergency medical workers and journalists rushed to the scene, a second, much larger explosion went off, killing at least 20 people in total, officials said.

Two journalists were among those killed and four others were among the scores wounded in the second blast, Afghan news organizations said.

ToloNews, the country's most prominent news channel, identified the dead as members of its staff — a correspondent and a cameraman who were reporting live on national television when the second blast went off.

The two bombings injured at least 70, said Nasrat Rahimi, a spokesman for the Afghan Interior Ministry.

Rahimi said the second blast had been caused by explosives packed into a vehicle, and he added that the toll might change.

A similar double bombing April 30, in which a second explosion went off among journalists covering the carnage of the first blast, killed nine reporters and photographers.

The Islamic State claimed responsibility for the explosions Wednesday, according to its



Amaq news agency, continuing a pattern of attacking soft targets in the western part of the capital, Kabul, where Afghans from the Shiite minority live.

The group has attacked schools, mosques and training centers in the area. In the last such attack, at least 48 people were killed when a suicide bomber detonated his explosives in a packed university preparatory course.

Amir Yagana, a witness to the bombing Wednesday, said that after the blast, young athletes still in their wrestling clothes had carried the bodies of wounded friends out of the gym and into any vehicle they could find.

Mohammed Dawood Azimi, a resident of the area, said: "After the first explosion, I went to the roof to see what happened. I feared that there could be a second explosion, so I didn't go to the scene. (PTI)

SIKKIM — THE LAND OF PEACE & TRANQUILITY

Sikkim, an untouched, timeless land whose smiling people offer you unforgettable friendliness.

Sikkim is the second smallest state in India, and is wedged between Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and West Bengal, but encompasses an astounding range of pristine natural beauty of the Himalayas. A traveller's guide to Sikkim explores the stunning beauty of this Himalayas hill town. The Sikkimese call their land 'Ney Mayal Lyang' that translates to 'heaven.'

Sikkim is located in the north eastern part of India, but is not a part of the Seven Sister states. The state is famous for dazzling waterfalls, virgin forests, Tibetan style Buddhist Gompas, alpine meadows, rhododendron flowers and more. Kanchenjunga (also Kanchendzonga) at 8598 m is the third highest peak in the world, and lies in Sikkim.

More than 60 percent of the former Himalayan Kingdom of Sikkim is mountainous, and there are sizeable numbers of 6000 m peaks on the eastern and western borders of the state. Sikkim has an impressive literacy rate of more than 70 percent. It was merged with India in 1975, and is a prosperous state today.

PELLING

Pelling lies in West Sikkim, perched at an altitude of 2100 m and is approximately 120 km away from Gangtok. At first glance Pelling looks like a cluster of concrete hotels, but there are unparalleled views of the snowy peaks. Sunrise over the Kanchenjunga is Pelling's biggest charm. With plenty of budget accommodation options, it also makes for a great base to explore other parts of West Sikkim.

Chief sights in and around Pelling are Pemangyatse Monastery, built more than 300 years ago, which is beautifully located amid green gardens; a huge Buddha statue and statues of reincarnations of Padmasambhava; and Pemangyatse Monastery, famous for the Chaam dances (masked dances) held in February/March.

Interestingly, the ruins of Sikkim's ancient capital at Rabdentse, is located at a short distance from Pelling. Rabdentse is a lovely spot accessed by a short walk through a dense forest. The views are spectacular after the walk that arrives at the ruins which are located on top of a ridge with clouds on the other side. The ruins are maintained by ASI these days.

Also, the second oldest monastery in Sikkim, SangaCholing Monastery, is a bit farther away than Pemangyatse. The steep trail will take no more than one hour from Pelling and is a great delight. Views from top of the monastery are astounding and great for photography enthusiasts.

YUKSOM

The historic little town of Yuksom was the first capital of Sikkim when three Lamas converged from different directions and crowned the first Chogyal (King) in 1641. There is still a stone throne that marks the coronation spot, and is known as Norbugang Chorten, the site is called Norbugang Park. Yuksom has the charming feel of a hamlet; it is lower in altitude than Pelling and is situated in a valley.

If you are coming to Yuksom (Also Yuksam) from Pelling, then a short detour will bring you to Rimbi Waterfalls which is quite a sight in the



monsoon. Just 9 km before Yuksom, you will cross the Kanchenjunga Waterfall, which is a majestic waterfall falling from a great height.

There is a small pond known by the name of Kathok Lake in Yuksom, a short walk will bring you to a ridge where once stood a palace of the King of Sikkim. There are also two new colourful Gompas above Yuksom, but the most beautiful monastery is the 1701 built Dubdi Monastery. The path to Dubdi Monastery is lined with prayer flags and is located amid lush greenery.

There are no views of the mountains as such from Yuksom, yet it is this place you may remember long after your Sikkim holiday is over. There are quite a number of hotels and homestays in Yuksom. Yuksom's chief claim to fame is that it is the starting point for the treks to Dzongri and Goecha La (4940 m), for splendid views of the Kanchenjunga.

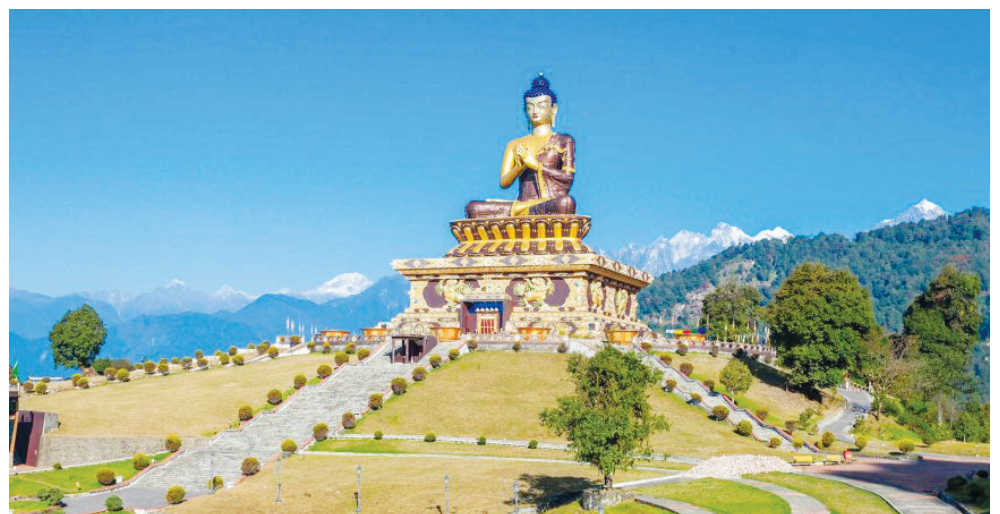
RUMTEK MONASTERY

Undoubtedly, this is Sikkim's most famous monastery, and every visitor to Sikkim is likely to visit the Rumtek Monastery, even in a 3-4 day trip to Sikkim. Rumtek Village is 24 km away from Gangtok (Sikkim's capital), and the monastery is the headquarters of the Black Hat Sect (one of the oldest sects of Tibetan Buddhism).

There are two buildings of Rumtek Monastery, one is relatively newer (built in 1966), and the older Rumtek Monastery was founded in 1740 by the fourth Chogyal of Sikkim. A path leads to a shrine called Golden Stupa, it is a chorten made of silver and gold, and studded with precious stones such as turquoise, amber and coral. It is recommended to attend the morning prayers at Rumtek Monastery.

The Old Rumtek Monastery is around 2 kms away from the newer one, and the path is surrounded by white prayer flags. The exterior of the monastery is in a light shade of blue, and is built in traditional Sikkimese alpine style, with latticed wooden windows.

Presence of armed personnel comes as a rude shock in the heavily guarded complex; there have been disputes over the future Rinpoche of this monastery resulting in a tense situation. There is a wide range of



accommodation available in Rumtek; from home-stays, hotels, guesthouses to boutique stays.

NATHU LA

The road climbs around 18 km higher from the spectacular road that continues from Tsomgo Lake to the nearly 4200 m Nathu La (La is pass in Tibetan). It is always windy and cold at this altitude. There is a sizeable army presence due to the Chinese border on the other side of the pass. It is advised to not spend more than 30 minutes - 1 hour at the top of the pass to avoid the risk of Acute Mountain Sickness

(AMS). A visit to the Nathu La pass is out of bounds for foreigners.

You could then head towards North Sikkim, which is perhaps the prettiest region in all of Sikkim. North Sikkim is higher in altitude than other regions, and is an area of unspoiled natural beauty, framed by snow-capped Himalayan peaks. A permit is required to visit North Sikkim. Although it is widely believed that a package tour is necessary to explore North Sikkim, in reality it is not so. A unique social system called Dzumsa prevails in North Sikkim, and Pipon (a village headman) is an influential person.

HOW VITAMIN E CAN BENEFIT YOUR HAIR?

Vitamin E is best known for its antioxidant properties that help reduce free radical damage and protect the body's cells. Although you can find it in the supplement aisle, many companies add vitamin E to their beauty products. And for good reason!

Vitamin E has been used in dermatology since the 1950s to help protect the skin against aging, inflammation, and sun damage. The fat-soluble antioxidant is vital for maintaining healthy skin and a strong immune system.

Recently, vitamin E has been hailed as a cure-all to turn frizzy, damaged, unmanageable hair into shiny, luscious locks worthy of a shampoo commercial — or a sun-soaked Instagram image.

Keep reading to learn how the skin-boosting properties of vitamin E may be used to improve hair health and promote growth.

Early research suggests that vitamin E can help improve overall scalp and hair health. More studies are needed to truly understand its possible benefits.

Prevent hair loss

A small trial from 2010 found that vitamin E supplements improved hair growth in people with hair loss. It's thought that the vitamin's antioxidant properties helped reduce oxidative stress in the scalp. Oxidative stress has been linked with hair loss.

Improve scalp circulation

Vitamin E may increase blood flow, which is said to improve hair health. Researchers in one 1999 study found that high doses of vitamin E increased blood flow to the eyes in people with type 1 diabetes.

A separate 2001 study found that increased blood supply encouraged hair growth and increased the hair follicle and size in mice.

However, more research is needed to see if vitamin E directly affects blood



supply to the scalp and if so, what that means for hair growth.

Balance oil production

Vitamin E is important for creating a protective barrier on the skin's surface. This barrier helps lock in moisture. Dry, irritated skin can be a sign of vitamin E deficiency. Although it's unclear whether topical vitamin E can balance out scalp oil production, oils that contain vitamin E — like avocado oil — may help moisturize the scalp. They may also help prevent excess oil production.

Add shine

Hair can look dull and frizzy when it's damaged. When the protective fat layer

on the outside of the hair's cuticle is removed, it loses its shine and becomes difficult to manage or style according to the Academy of Dermatology. A vitamin E-rich oil can help replace that protective layer and bring back shine. Oil in general also helps seal out moisture, reduce breakage, and protect the hair from damage.

Support a healthy scalp

Vitamin E is essential for healthy skin — and this includes your scalp. Poor scalp health is linked to lackluster hair quality. Vitamin E supports the scalp and gives your hair a strong base to grow from by reducing oxidative stress and preserving the protective lipid layer.

Homemade face masks for glowing skin

Getting a professional treatment every week at the salon is not only expensive, but also exposes our skin to harmful chemicals. Low-cost homemade facial remedies are best bets to keep your skin glowing and younger looking.

Honey face mask



Best suited for all skin types, the naturally moisturising honey mask helps lighten skin tone and cleans the pores, leaving you glowing.

Rinse face with lukewarm water and apply honey all over for twenty minutes. Remove it with a wet towel or sponge soaked in warm water. Then wash with cold water as it helps close open pores of skin. A tablespoon of lemon juice or one part of cinnamon powder to three parts of honey, or even egg yolk of an egg with two tablespoons of milk can be used to obtain even better results.

Oatmeal face mask

An oatmeal mask has a drying effect on skin and absorbs extra oil from the pores and also cures itchiness on the skin and several other skin problems.

Blend oatmeal and add hot water to it, the paste thickens in a few minutes. Add a teaspoon of honey, a tablespoon of lemon juice and two teaspoons of yoghurt. Apply this paste evenly on your face, when the facial mask completely dries and tightens around your skin, rinse it with lukewarm water.

Avocado face mask



Rich in potassium, avocado face mask nourishes the skin and helps maintain its glow and health.

Mix mashed ripe avocado with a teaspoon of yoghurt and few drops of lemon juice. Apply the mixture all over the face and wash with cold water after twenty minutes. This face mask can be stored in an airtight jar, if made in a larger quantity.

Turmeric and sandalwood face mask

An easy and fast way to get a long-lasting and instant glow, this face mask helps to cure pimples and acne.

Mix one tablespoon sandalwood powder with one tablespoon turmeric powder and three tablespoons rose water, wash after 20 minutes of application.

Strawberry face pack

This multi-beneficial facial reduces puffiness and dark circles. A large content of salicylic acid in it removes dead cells from skin and makes the skin smooth and soft as that of a baby.

Mash ripe strawberries completely to get a smooth paste. Add a tablespoon of olive oil and two tablespoons of honey. Apply it on clean face and wash it once it dries.

FOOD CORNER

KASHMIRI HALWA

Ingredients

1 Cup Oats, 1/2 Cup Grain sugar, 2 Cup Milk, 4 tsp Desi ghee, 1 tsp Green cardamom powder, Few Saffron threads, Few Cashew nuts, almonds and raisins



Method

- In a non-stick pan heat 2-3 teaspoon ghee and fry oats on low heat till colour changes.
- Heat milk and sugar in a pan and bring it to boil. Once the sugar is dissolved completely, add fried oats and stir continuously.
- After this, add cardamom powder and the remaining ghee.
- Add saffron threads for color and aroma. Stir until the mixture leaves sides of the pan.
- Remove from fire and garnish with fried cashews and raisins. Serve warm.

WALNUT HALWA

Ingredients

1 Cup Walnuts, 1/2 Cup Rock sugar powder, 1 Tbsp Cucumber seeds, 1/2 tsp Cardamom powder, A pinch of Saffron, 1 tsp Dates, finely chopped. 1/4 Cup Milk



Method

- Soak walnuts in hot water for 15 minutes or in normal water for 2-3 hours.
- Drain the water, remove walnuts and wipe it with a cloth. Coarsely grind these walnuts with cucumber seeds.
- In a pan roast the ground walnuts for 5 minutes (without ghee), add milk, rock sugar powder, cardamom powder and saffron and cook for 10 minutes on medium flame. Keep stirring continuously.
- Remove from flame and add dates.
- Garnish it with pumpkin seeds and dates and serve hot.

COMMON PAINKILLER MAY INCREASE STROKE RISK

The commonly used painkiller diclofenac may increase the risk of major cardiovascular events, such as heart attack and stroke, a study warns.

The study, published in *The BMJ*, compared diclofenac use with no use, paracetamol use, and use of other traditional painkillers.

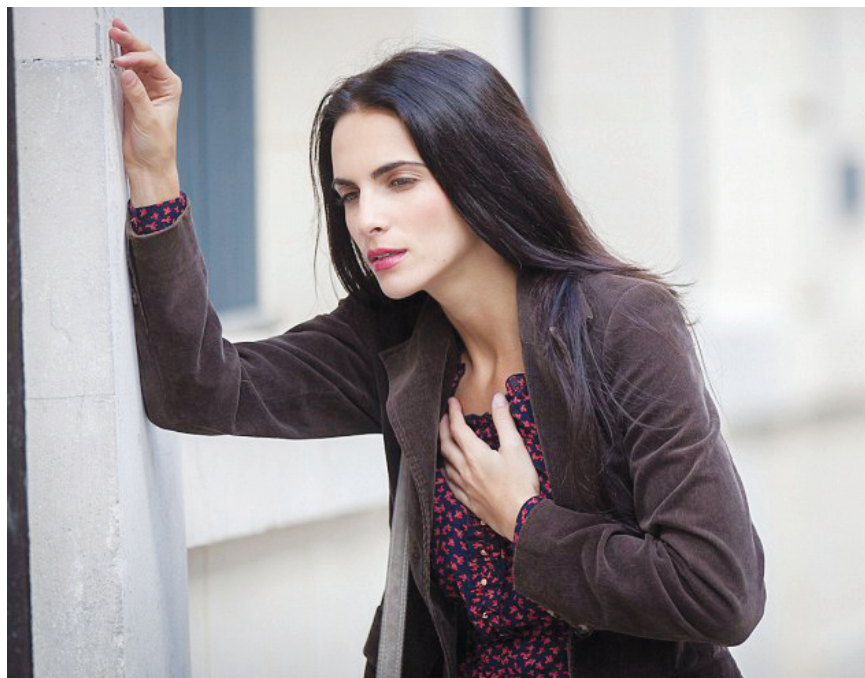
Researchers at Aarhus University Hospital in Denmark said that diclofenac should not be available over the counter, and when prescribed, should be accompanied by an appropriate front package warning about its potential risks.

Diclofenac is a traditional non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) for treating pain and inflammation and is widely used across the world.

However, its cardiovascular risks compared with those of other traditional NSAIDs have never been examined in large randomised controlled trials, researchers said.

They examined the cardiovascular risks of starting diclofenac compared with no NSAIDs, starting other traditional NSAIDs and paracetamol.

The results are based on national registry data for more than 6.3 million adults in Denmark with at least one year of continuous prescription records



before study entry in January 1996.

Participants were split into low, moderate, and high baseline cardiovascular risk. Average age was 46-49 years among participants starting NSAIDs and 56 years among those starting paracetamol.

After taking account of potentially

influential factors, starting diclofenac during the study period (1996-2016) was associated with an increased rate of major adverse cardiovascular events within 30 days compared with starting other traditional NSAIDs (ibuprofen or naproxen) or starting paracetamol.

Source: PTI

HEALTH OF OVER 1.4 BN ADULTS AT RISK DUE TO INACTIVITY: WHO

Insufficient physical activity is negatively impacting more than 1.4 billion adults globally, putting them at the heightened risk of deadly diseases, the WHO has warned in a new study published Wednesday.

There has been no improvement in global levels of physical activity since 2001 and some one-in-three women and one-in-four men globally are not active enough to stay healthy, according to the findings by the United Nations health agency.

The study, published in the *Lancet Global Health* journal, highlights the well-established benefits of being physically active, including a lower risk of cardiovascular disease, hypertension and diabetes, as well as breast and colon cancer.

Additionally, physical activity has positive effects on mental health, can delay the onset of dementia and help people maintain a healthy weight.

"Unlike other major global health risks, levels of insufficient physical activity are not falling worldwide, on average, and over a quarter of all adults are not reaching the recommended levels of physical activity for good health," the study's lead author Regina Guthold of the World Health Organization (WHO) said.

The study details the levels of insufficient physical activity in different countries and estimates global and regional trends.

Moreover, levels of insufficient physical activity are more than twice as great in high-income countries as compared to that of low-income nations, with a five per cent increase in higher income countries between 2001 and 2016.

There has been little progress in improving physical activity levels during that 15-year period, with data projecting that if these trends continue, the 2025 global activity target of a 10 per cent relative reduction in insufficient physical activity, will not be met.

Other main findings showed that by the end of 2016, in 55 of 168 countries, more than one-third of the population was insufficiently physically active, more than half of all adults in Kuwait, American Samoa, Saudi Arabia and Iraq were insufficiently active, while inadequate levels elsewhere of 40 per cent appeared in the US, 36 per cent in the UK and 14 per cent in China.

The greatest levels of insufficient activity comparing



women and men appeared in South Asia (43 versus 24 per cent), Central Asia, Middle East and north Africa (40 versus 26 per cent), and high-income Western countries (42 versus 31 per cent).

It also found that around one-in-three women and one-in-four men worldwide did not reach the recommended 150 minutes of moderate intensity, or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week.

Across regions, many individual countries recorded large differences in insufficient activity between women and men, such as 40 versus 16 per cent in Bangladesh, 31 versus 14 per cent in Eritrea, 44 versus 25 per cent in India, 48 versus 32 per cent in the US and 40 versus 32 per cent in the UK.

"Addressing these inequalities in physical activity levels between men and women will be critical to achieving global activity targets and will require interventions to promote and improve women's access to opportunities that are safe, affordable and culturally acceptable," said WHO co-author Fiona Bull.

The study is based on self-reported activity levels - including at work, home and in transit, as well as during leisure time - for those aged 18 and above, from 358 population-based surveys in 168 countries, consisting of around 1.9 million people.

Source: PTI



HEART-HEALTHY DIET BEST OPTION FOR CUTTING DOWN ON BELLY FAT

If you wish to get rid of that belly fat then listen up. Following a heart-healthy diet - high in fiber and low in saturated fats - to cut abdominal obesity is the way out, suggests a study.

"There is still no miracle diet, food, nutrient or bioactive component that will target abdominal fat," wrote Kari D. Pilolla. But a heart-healthy diet is a great way to prevent and reduce abdominal obesity.

Amid the ongoing obesity epidemic, there is increasing attention to the health risks associated with abdominal obesity - excess fat stored around the abdomen.

"Independent of body weight, a larger waist circumference increases risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome," Dr. Pilolla wrote. These risks are mainly related to visceral adipose tissue - fat stored below the abdominal muscles, surrounding the major internal organs. Visceral adipose tissue appears to be more "metabolically active" than subcutaneous fat, stored under the skin but above the abdominal muscles.

While definitions vary, abdominal obesity has been defined as a waist circumference of about 34 inches in women and 40 inches in men. Measuring waist circumference is the most common and convenient method of assessing abdominal obesity, and it corresponds well to other techniques (dual-energy x-ray absorptiometry and CT/MRI scans). Risk of abdominal obesity increases with age, especially in women, and with changes in hormone levels.

Can diet help to fight abdominal obesity? These days, the Internet is full of extravagant claims of "new discoveries" to "cure belly fat." Diets touted as reducing abdominal obesity include intermittent fasting, high-protein diets, the "Paleo" diet, and green tea, among many others. But there's a lack of high-quality evidence on these trending diets, none of which has been shown more effective than other types of energy-restricted (reduced-calorie) diets.

The good news is, some diet characteristics appear helpful in reducing or preventing abdominal obesity - particularly lower intake of trans and saturated fats and higher intake of fiber.

The study has been published in *ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal*.

Source ANI

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NASA'S ROCKET TO VIEW SUN WITH X-RAY VISION



WASHINGTON (TIP): NASA is set to launch a sounding rocket that will take short journey to the Earth's atmosphere to catch a glimpse of the Sun with X-ray vision.

The Focusing Optics X-ray Solar Imager (FOXSI) mission is set to take its third flight from the New Mexico on September 7. FOXSI is a sounding rocket mission. Derived from the nautical term 'to sound,' meaning to measure, sounding rockets make brief 15-minute journeys above Earth's atmosphere for a peek at space before falling back to the ground.

Smaller, cheaper and faster to develop than large-scale satellite missions, sounding rockets offer a way for scientists to test their latest ideas and instruments. Without special instrumentation, the Sun looks calm and inert. However, beneath that placid facade are countless miniature explosions called nanoflares.

These small but intense eruptions are born when magnetic field lines in the Sun's atmosphere tangle up and stretch until they break like a rubber band

The energy they release accelerates particles to near lightspeed and according to some scientists, heats the solar atmosphere to its searing million-degree Fahrenheit temperature.

FOXSI will travel above the shield of Earth's atmosphere, to stare directly at the Sun and search for nanoflares using its X-ray vision.

"FOXSI is the first instrument built specially to image high-energy X-rays from the Sun by directly focusing them," said Lindsay Glesener, space physicist at the University of Minnesota in the US. *Source: PTI*

SOON, WASTE PLASTIC MAY POWER YOUR CAR



LONDON (TIP): Scientists say they have successfully converted discarded plastic into hydrogen fuel, which in turn could be used to run cars.

Light-absorbing material is added to the plastic before it is placed in an alkaline solution and then exposed to sunlight, which creates hydrogen, said researchers from Swansea University in the UK.

The process could be cheaper than recycling because any kind of plastic can be used and it does not need to be cleaned first, they said.

"There's a lot of plastic used every year—billions of tonnes—and only a fraction of it is being recycled. We are trying to find a use for what is not being recycled," said Moritz Kuehnelt from Swansea University.

Most plastic bottles are made from PET (polyethylene terephthalate) which can be recycled but often end up being burned or thrown into landfill.

"But even if you do recycle it, it needs to be very pure -- so only PET, nothing else mixed in with it... and it has to be clean, no grease, no oil," said Kuehnelt.

"Potentially you need to wash it which is very expensive, and even if you do all of that, the plastic you get is not always as nice as virgin material," said Kuehnelt.

"The beauty of this process is that it is not very picky. It can degrade all sorts of waste," he said.

COLOUR-CHANGING SENSOR DETECTS EYE DAMAGE

WASHINGTON (TIP): Scientists, including those of Indian origin, have developed a colour-changing contact lens that can detect a key marker of eye injury in minutes — a time frame crucial to treating eye trauma.

The researchers from University of Illinois in the US used the sensor, called OjoGel, to measure ascorbic acid levels in artificial tears and in clinical samples of fluid from patients' eyes.

The gel laden with gold nanoparticles changes colour when it reacts with a teardrop containing ascorbic acid, released from a wound to the eye, according to the study published in the journal *Biosensors and Bioelectronics*.

"We expect a significant potential impact of this biosensor for evaluating the eye in post-surgical patients as well as trauma patients," said Dipanjan Pan, a professor at the University of Illinois.

Ascorbic acid, also known as vitamin C, is found in high concentrations in the fluid inside the eye, called aqueous humour, but normally has very low concentration in tears.

"Deep damage to the cornea from trauma or incisional surgery releases aqueous humour into the tear film,



which increases the concentration of ascorbic acid in tears to a measurably higher level than that found in normal eyes," said Pan.

"OjoGel offers a unique biosensing technique that provides an effective and simple method for testing ascorbic acid in a point-of-care delivery system," he said. A tiny teardrop is all that is needed to cause a color-change reaction in the OjoGel. The extent of the colour change correlates to the concentration of

ascorbic acid in the tear sample, shifting from pale yellow to a dark reddish-brown as the concentration increases.

The researchers, including visiting scholar Ketan Dighe, did extensive testing to determine the concentrations associated with each degree of colour change. They developed a colour key and guidelines for using a mobile phone app, Pixel Picker, to precisely measure the concentration indicated by a reacted gel sample. *Source: PTI*

Social media may help reduce political polarisation: Study

WASHINGTON (TIP): Social media networks, which often foster partisan antagonism, may also offer a solution to reducing political polarisation, according to a US study.

Researchers from the University of Pennsylvania in the US asked 2,400 Republicans and Democrats to interpret recent climate-change data on Arctic sea-ice levels.

Initially, nearly 40 per cent of Republicans incorrectly interpreted the data, saying that Arctic sea-ice levels were increasing; 26 per cent of Democrats made the same mistake, according to the study published in the journal *PNAS*.

However, after participants interacted in anonymous social media networks sharing opinions about the data and its meaning for future levels of Arctic sea ice—88 per cent of Republicans and 86 per cent of Democrats correctly analysed it, agreeing that sea-ice levels were dropping.

Republicans and Democrats who were not permitted to interact with each other in social media networks but instead had several additional minutes to reflect on the climate data before updating their responses remained highly polarised and offered significantly less accurate forecasts.

"New scientific information does not change people's minds. They can always interpret it to match their beliefs," said Damon Centola from the University of Pennsylvania.

"But, if you allow people to interact with each other in egalitarian social networks, in which no individual is more powerful than another, we find remarkably strong effects of bipartisan social learning on eliminating polarization," Centola said.

To test this notion for politically charged topics like climate change, researchers constructed an experimental social media platform, which they used to test how different kinds of social media environments would affect political polarisation and group accuracy.

"Conservatives in particular were susceptible to this misinterpretation," said Penn doctoral student Douglas Guilbeault.

The researchers randomly assigned participants to one of three experimental groups.

The first group was a political-identity setup, which revealed the political affiliation of each person's social media contacts.

The second group was a political-symbols setup, in which



people interacted anonymously through social networks but with party symbols of the donkey and the elephant displayed at the bottom of their screens.

The third group was a non-political setup, in which people interacted anonymously.

Twenty Republicans and 20 Democrats made up each social network.

Once randomised, every individual forecasted Arctic sea-ice levels for the year 2025.

They first answered independently, and then viewed peers' answers before revising their guesses twice more.

"We all expected polarisation when Republicans and Democrats were isolated," said Centola.

"But we were amazed to see how dramatically bipartisan networks could improve participants' judgments," he said.

In the non-political setup, for example, polarisation disappeared entirely, with more than 85 per cent of participants agreeing on a future decrease in Arctic sea ice.

Source: PTI

Rupee breaches 72 mark against \$

MUMBAI (TIP): The unabating fall of the Indian rupee has spooked many Indians. On Thursday, the domestic currency breached the 72 mark against the US dollar for the first time ever. While the sharp decline in rupee's value has unnerved importers, it has also brought cheer to many Indians who stand to gain from its slide.

The INR which was around Rs 63.38 on January 1, 2018 against the USD has depreciated to nearly 72, recording a 13.6 per cent slump since the beginning of this year. The plunge in rupee indicates that foreign investors are losing faith in India and exiting their investments in the belief that their money can earn better returns elsewhere. Foreign investors and funds have pulled out \$280 million from the Indian equity markets so far this year.

It's not just FIIs who are skittish about the falling rupee. Among those affected by drop in rupee's value include importers, students studying overseas, people going abroad for vacation or other purposes. The relentless depreciation of rupee will hit domestic consumers too.

Carmakers, dependent on imports of parts, are likely to pass on the costs to car buyers. Electric appliances like laptops, TVs, etc. are also likely to turn dearer in the coming days. Mobile phones, for which components come from outside India, may see a price hike ahead of the festive season. Some consumer durable companies like LG, Haier, and Godrej Appliances have already hiked prices by 3-5 per cent this month. Executives at Chinese smartphone major Xiaomi have already hinted at a price hike if rupee continues its losing streak against the greenback.



Airlines, which are already facing headwinds due to higher oil prices, are also likely to face the brunt of falling rupee. Unlike state-run oil marketing companies, their ability to pass on higher costs to consumers is limited due to stiff competition.

A weak rupee will eat into the bottom line of companies which have taken foreign currency loans in the form of external commercial borrowings and FCCBs.

While there is a direct impact on imported goods, some companies will be indirectly hit by the rupee fall. To start with, the fall will slow economic growth as foreign funds lose confidence in India and take their capital elsewhere. This will compress margins and make it difficult for companies to pay off debts, in turn putting pressure on banks as well.

However, it's not all gloom and doom for India Inc. Indian IT and

pharmaceutical companies which earn a huge portion of their revenues in dollars are likely to make a windfall. Every dollar earned through exports means more rupees added to the bottom line. IT companies are likely to post higher revenue growth for this quarter. An industry thumb rule says that every 100 basis points, or bps, rupee movement impacts operating margins of IT companies by 30-50 bps.

India, also the world's highest receiver of remittances, is likely to get more money from NRIs and overseas workers who earn in dollars. People dependent on overseas remittances are likely to have more money at their disposal. Amid the downside, there is a silver lining too. Domestic tourism may get a boost as travellers may prefer holidaying in India rather than going abroad. Foreigners too, will find it cheaper to visit India.

Source: Business Today

Amazon founder Jeff Bezos is richest man on planet with net worth of about \$166 billion

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): As Amazon became the second US firm to hit a trillion-dollar value on the stock market, founder Jeff Bezos regained the crown as the richest person on the planet.

Amazon's share price has climbed during the year, lifting the personal wealth of the company's 54-year-old founder with it. Forbes estimated his net worth about \$166 billion.

He has gone on record with a formula for success that includes taking bold bets, riding change and rebounding from setbacks. "You need to be nimble and robust so you need to be able to take a punch and you also need to be quick and innovative and do new things at a higher speed, that's the best defense against the future," Bezos said in an interview published in Vanity Fair magazine last year. "You have to always be leaning into the future. If you're leaning away from the future, the future is gonna win, every time." Jeffrey Preston Bezos's penchant for experimenting reportedly dates to a young age - with one widely-recounted story telling that he tried to dismantle his own crib as a toddler.

His mother was a teenager when she gave birth to Bezos in Albuquerque, New Mexico, on January 12, 1964.

"You shaped us, you protected us, you let us fall, you picked us up, and you loved us, always and unconditionally," Bezos said in a Twitter message thanking his



mom "for everything" on Mother's Day in May. She remarried when her son was about four years old, and he was legally adopted by his Cuban immigrant stepfather who worked as an engineer at a major petrochemical company.

"My dad came here from Cuba all by himself without speaking English when he was 16 years old, and has been kicking ass ever since," Bezos said in a Father's Day tweet in June. "Thank you for all the love and heart, Dad!" His mother's family were settlers in Texas, where Bezos spent many a summer working at a ranch owned by a grandfather retired from a job as a regional director at the US Atomic

Energy Commission.

Bezos was enchanted by computer science when the IT industry was in its infancy and he studied engineering at Princeton University.

After graduating, he put his skills to work on Wall Street, where by 1990 he had risen to be a senior vice president at investment firm D.E. Shaw.

He surprised peers by leaving his high-paid position about four years later to open an online bookseller called Amazon.com, which according to legend was started in a garage in a Seattle suburb. Bezos was backed by money borrowed from his parents. Source: AFP



Fortis founders Malvinder Singh and his brother Shivinder.

FORTIS HEALTHCARE'S SHIVINDER SUES BROTHER AS EMPIRE COLLAPSES

NEW DELHI (TIP): The unraveling of one of India's most storied business empires has caused a rupture in its founding family, with one of the Singh brothers - synonymous with each other for decades - saying he has sued the other for alleged "oppression and mismanagement" of their companies.

In a statement, Shivinder Singh said he filed a case with India's National Company Law Tribunal against his elder brother Malvinder and Sunil Godhwani, former chairman of Religare Enterprises Ltd., the financial services company the brothers used to control. Shivinder alleges Malvinder and Godhwani were to blame for "a systematic undermining of the interests of the companies and their shareholders." Malvinder, 45, and Godhwani couldn't be reached for comment.

"I am now disassociating from my brother as a business partner and will be pursuing an independent path going forward," Shivinder, 43, wrote in the statement dated September 4. "I can no longer be party to activities in which transparency and ethics are continuously and consistently negated." Bloomberg News couldn't immediately obtain the case filing from the tribunal, which couldn't be reached.

Heirs to a generations-old business house once worth billions, the brothers have in recent months seen a dramatic fall in their fortunes. They've had their public shareholdings seized by lenders, and are under a criminal probe by financial authorities over Rs 23 billion (\$321 million) missing from their listed companies. They owe \$500 million over fraud allegations related to the 2008 sale of drugmaker Ranbaxy Laboratories.

Source: Bloomberg

TOYOTA RECALLS 1 MILLION HYBRID CARS

TOKYO (TIP): Japanese car giant Toyota on Wednesday recalled more than one million hybrid cars globally due to a technical problem which could in the worst case cause a fire in the vehicles. About 1.03 million vehicles built between June 2015 and May 2018 will be recalled for safety checks, the Toyota said. The affected models include Prius, Prius PHV and C-HR. Of the 1.03 million, 554,000 are in Japan, 217,000 in North America and 219,000 in Europe.

"The electrical wiring... could short circuit and generate heat as it wears down due to vibrations during driving," the company said in a recall document submitted to the transport ministry. "In the worst case, this could lead to a fire in the vehicle."

Source: AFP

Indian airline losses could reach \$1.9 billion this year

NEW DELHI (TIP): Indian airlines are expected to post combined losses of up to \$1.9 billion this financial year led by full-service carriers like Air India and Jet Airways driven by rising costs and low air fares, aviation consulting firm CAPA India said. The loss forecast for the 12 months ending March 31 is up from an estimated \$430 million to \$460 million sector-wide loss in January largely due to the depreciation of the rupee and a rise in oil prices, CAPA said in a report released on Monday evening.

Ticket prices have not risen to compensate for higher costs, and CAPA said with the exception of Interglobe Aviation Ltd's IndiGo, none of the airlines have strong enough balance sheets to comfortably withstand higher costs and lower yields.

contd from Page 1

2+2 talks take Indo-US...

According to sources, there was no laundry list of irritants to be resolved overnight, rather shared understanding of mutual concerns as regards trade ties, reducing the deficit, visas, US sanctions against Iran and Russia as well as counter-terrorism cooperation and Indo-Pacific strategy.

Pompeo shared notes following his meetings with Pakistan PM Imran Khan and Army Chief Bajwa in Islamabad en route Delhi and the missives shared to act on terror and towards reconciliation efforts in Afghanistan.

"On the 10th anniversary of the 26/11 attacks, we recognized the importance of justice and retribution for the masterminds behind this terrorist attack," said Swaraj.

"India supports President Trump's South Asia Policy. His call for Pakistan to stop its policy of supporting cross-border terrorism finds resonance with us," she added.

Pompeo reportedly mentioned that "it is too early to judge the new Imran Khan government, but Pakistan has been asked to step up counter-terrorism efforts and encouraged to take right decisions and actions".

"Pompeo assured the ministers that 'we have a long ask of the new Pakistan government', while sharing concerns about Hafiz Saeed roaming freely," said an official privy to discussions.

India has asked the US to sustain pressure on Islamabad to crack down on terror entities, sources say.

The sentiments are reflected in the joint statement issued after talks in a significant tweak.

India impressed upon the US to use "under Pakistan control, instead of territory" referring to terror groups operating out of PoK and driving home territorial integrity issue, pointed out officials. "The ministers denounced any use of terrorist proxies in the region, and in this context, they called on Pakistan to ensure that the territory under its control is not used to launch terrorist attacks on other countries," underlines the statement that was work in progress till late into the night.

Ties with Iran and Russia came up for discussion from the Indian side during the dialogue, but without any specific mention of the S400 missiles purchase, sources said.

Americans reportedly shared India's position that its defense security systems or energy suppliers could not be switched overnight to US platforms. But India assured it was working to reduce high bilateral trade deficit that Donald Trump has disapproved of openly.

Indian officials sounded hopeful of a carve out on Chabahar port, given its strategic importance to Afghanistan, to avoid heat of US sanctions against Iran.

Air India gets fresh fund..

We will not like value destruction to happen. If we do not support, there may be value erosion. Otherwise, when we actually find that environment has improved, oil prices have come down and we actually want to sell, we may find that value has eroded," Choubey said.

Late August, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, in its representation to the Parliamentary Standing Committee for transport, tourism and culture, said that disinvestment of Air India is not going to be happening any time soon. The first attempt by the government to sell its stake in the airline - codenamed Project Royal - failed mainly due to the government

not parting with the entire stake, the high debt-levels and a high employee-to-aircraft ratio. To help the airline survive, the government had announced a financial restructuring plan (FRP) in 2012 as part of the original turnaround plan, as per which the airline's working capital loans were restructured to long-term debt.

"If FRP was working, Air India wouldn't have been in a dire strait. FRP didn't go wrong. The FRP earmarked crude at \$45 a barrel and today the crude is at \$75 a barrel. Dollar was still high. The plan, now, is to make Air India stand on its own feet so that it can be sold in future when its conducive to sell the airline. Unlike the FRP, where the government did financial restructuring, the new plan will focus more on organizational reform. Will make it a board managed company. One more outsider may join the board," a senior Air India official said, on condition of anonymity. Last month, the government appointed ITC Chairman YC Deveshwar and Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla as independent directors on the board of Air India.

As per estimates by aviation consultancy CAPA India, the national carrier is expected to lose more than \$2 billion in value during 2018-19 and 2019-20. "Air India's value will continue to erode, making future privatization unlikely. In the absence of full recapitalization and a clear direction, Air India is likely to see a continued decline in its domestic and international market share, and head towards strategic irrelevance. This will diminish its potential to be revived and to secure a strategic investor. In the meantime, it will remain a structural distortion for the industry and a burden on the tax payer. The quantum of losses will become increasingly unacceptable," CAPA India said in its mid-year aviation outlook for 2018-19.

The Air India official pointed out that the carrier's financials for the 2017-18 did not show any signs of improvement, primarily due to the soaring fuel costs. "I can't reveal more on this as the results are being audited," he said. For the year 2016-17, Air India reported a net loss of Rs 6,288 crore. Choubey said the ministry was yet to take a call whether the new turnaround plan for Air India will require a Cabinet approval or can be done bilaterally between the ministries of civil aviation and finance.

Meanwhile, Air India Ltd will raise ₹500 crore in debt to meet working capital needs and pay interest on its outstanding loans, a senior official at the state-run carrier said on Wednesday, September 5.

"Air India will soon issue a tender to raise ₹500 crore from domestic banks," said the official who didn't want to be named.

The latest fundraiser will exhaust the sovereign guarantee limit of ₹2,000 crore offered by the government to the loss-making airline, the official said.

Air India had in August raised ₹1,500 crore from Bank of Baroda under a sovereign guarantee to service bank loans and dues of international vendors, including leasing companies.

The latest fund-raising follows a failed government attempt to privatize Air India to stem the flow of public funds into running the airline.

Civil aviation secretary Rajiv Nayan Choubey on Tuesday, August 4 said the government has agreed to make a fresh equity infusion in Air India and also provide a sovereign guarantee.

"At the moment, we are borrowing from domestic banks as it doesn't make sense to borrow from international lenders due to the value erosion of the rupee (against the dollar)," the official said.

Air India also used the ₹1,500 crore debt raised in August to "normalize debt accounts", some of which were in danger of turning into non-performing assets, the official said.

Air India has a net debt of about ₹55,000 crore, including about ₹21,000-22,000 crore of aircraft debt, the official said. "We are hoping to repay the aircraft debt fully by 2021." The carrier took on the loans to pay for new planes from Boeing and Airbus.

India flags concern over H1B visa issue

record and contribution of its diaspora to American society, asking the Donald Trump administration to take a favorable view on the matter.

"Specifically, I conveyed our expectation for a non-discriminatory and predictable approach to the H1B visa regime," said Swaraj in her press statement.

Officials privy to the discussion mentioned that the American delegation led by Secretary of State Pompeo and Defense Secretary James Mattis, acknowledged the positive role of the diaspora.

"I have mentioned this to Secretary Pompeo that on the basis of the friendship which exists between President Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indians believe that America will not work against their interest," Swaraj said.

"The US leaders assured it is review of the entire US immigration system and not specifically targeted at one country.. there have been no significant reductions in the number of H1B visas so far," said a highly placed source.

Supreme Court of India...

community who had been hounded for their sexual orientation under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code that made it a punishable offence.

A five-judge Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra, read down the British-era law, terming it "irrational, indefensible and manifestly arbitrary".

It reversed the top court's 2013 judgment which re-criminalized consensual gay sex. The 2013 verdict had overturned a 2009 judgment of the Delhi High Court which had de-criminalized homosexual acts between consenting adults in private.

The verdict will not reopen concluded cases under Section 377 but can be relied upon in pending matters against the LGBT community members.

The five judges wrote four concurring verdicts. While CJI Misra and Justice AM Khanwilkar delivered one verdict, Justices Rohinton Nariman, Dhananjay Chandrachud and Indu Malhotra wrote separate verdicts.

The top court said homosexuality was a type of sexual orientation and not a disease and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community deserved to be treated with human dignity. Terming sexual orientation a "biological phenomenon", it said any discrimination on this ground was violative of their fundamental rights.

Section 377 refers to 'unnatural offences' and says whoever voluntarily has carnal inter-course against the order of nature with any man, woman or animal shall be punished with imprisonment for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 10 years and shall also be liable to pay a fine.

The judgment came on petitions by dancer Navtej Jauhar, journalist Sunil Mehra, chef Ritu Dalmia, hoteliers Aman Nath and Keshav Suri, business executive Ayesha Kapur and 20 IITians challenging the validity of Section 377.

"Section 377, so far as it penalizes any consensual sexual relationship between two adults, be it homosexuals (man and a man), heterosexuals (man and a woman) or lesbians (woman and a woman), cannot be regarded as constitutional.

"However, if anyone, by which we mean both a man and a woman, engages in any kind of sexual activity with an animal, the said aspect of Section 377 is constitutional, and it shall remain a penal offence," the CJI ruled. Any act without the consent of the other person would also invite penal liability.

The SC also declared parts of Section 377 as an unreasonable restriction on right to freedom of speech and expression. In his separate but concurring verdict, Justice Chandrachud, said, "Members of LGBT community are entitled, as all other citizens, to the full range of constitutional rights."

Justice Nariman directed the Centre to ensure that the verdict was given wide publicity. He also asked for "programs to reduce and finally eliminate the stigma associated with such persons" and sensitize government officials, particularly police officials, about the plight of LGBT persons.

Meanwhile, United Nations India Thursday, September 6, lauded the Supreme Court for striking down a "key component" of IPC's Section 377 which criminalizes "specific sexual acts between adults" and said the judgment will boost efforts to eliminate stigma and discrimination against LGBTI persons.

It also hoped the ruling will be the first step towards guaranteeing the full range of fundamental rights to LGBTI persons.

Sexual orientation and gender expression form an integral part of an individual's identity the world over, and violence, stigma and discrimination based on these attributes constitute an "egregious" violation of human rights, it said.


"The United Nations in India welcomes the landmark ruling by the Supreme Court of India striking down a key component of Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code which criminalized specific sexual acts between adults, a law dating back to British colonial rule that has targeted in particular lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) individuals and communities," it said in a statement.

Pakistan may become...

"Pakistan continues to expand its nuclear arsenal with more warheads, more delivery systems, and a growing fissile materials production industry. We estimate that the country's stockpile could grow to 220 to 250 warheads by 2025, if the current trend continues," said the 12-page report.

The report first appeared in Jane's Defense Weekly, a London-based magazine that reports on military and corporate affairs said on Wednesday. (Source: IANS)

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GANESH CHATURTHI

Birth anniversary of Lord Ganesha

Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated as birth anniversary of Lord Ganesh. On Ganesh Chaturthi, Lord Ganesh is worshipped as the god of wisdom, prosperity and good fortune. It is believed that Lord Ganesh was born during Shukla Paksha of Bhadrapada month. Currently Ganesh Chaturthi day falls in month of August or September in English calendar.

This year, the festival will be celebrated on 13th September.

The Ganeshotsav, the festivity of Ganesh Chaturthi, ends after 10 days on Anant Chaturdashi which is also known as Ganesh Visarjan day. On Anant Chaturdashi, devotees immerse idol of Lord Ganesh in water body after a gala street procession.

Ganapati Sthapana and Ganapati Puja Muhurat

Ganesh Puja is preferred during Madhyahna as it is believed that Lord Ganesh was born during Madhyahna Kala. Madhyahna Kala is equivalent to midday according to Hindu division of the day.

As per Hindu time-keeping, the time duration between sunrise to sunset is divided into five equal parts. These five parts are known as Pratahkala, Sangava, Madhyahna, Aparahna and Sayankal. Ganapati Sthapana and Ganapati Puja on Ganesha Chaturthi are done during Madhyahna part of the day and as per Vedic astrology it is considered the most appropriate time for Ganesha Puja.

During midday, Ganesha devotees perform detailed ritualistic Ganesha Puja which is known as Shodashopachara Ganapati Puja.

Mythology and Belief Related to Ganesh Chaturthi

According to tradition, one should not to look at the moon during some specific times on Ganesh Chaturthi as it is believed if a person looks at the moon, he'll be cursed and will be accused of theft. The belief originated from the incident from Lord Krishna, who was falsely accused of stealing a valuable jewel. It was Sage Narada who suggested that Lord Krishna must've seen the moon on Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi (the occasion that Ganesh Chaturthi falls on) and was cursed because of it. Therefore it is believed, anyone who saw the moon during a specific time in Ganesh Chaturthi would be cursed in a similar way.

Why and How the Ganesh Chaturthi Festival is Celebrated?

Lord Ganesha, also known as Ganapati and Vinayaka, is believed to be the remover of obstacles, the patron of arts and sciences and the deva of intellect and wisdom. Although Lord Ganesha was one of the primary deities of the "Smartism" of 9th century but it is believed that he emerged as a distinct deity since the time of the Gupta period (4th - 5th century). Thereafter the "Ganapatya" distinguished Lord Ganesha as a supreme deity. Today, he is worshiped by almost all castes and it is believed that if Ganesha is propitiated, he grants success, prosperity and protection against adversity.

Lord Ganesha is a non-sectarian Hindu deity and hence at the time of the Ganesh Chaturthi Festival you will notice that there is a rendezvous of people belonging from different social status. The grand celebration starts with the installation of Ganesh idols in colorfully decorated pandals (erected temporary structures)... followed by 'pranapratishttha'



Lord Ganesha, also known as Ganapati and Vinayaka, is believed to be the remover of obstacles, the patron of arts and sciences and the deva of intellect and wisdom.

where the chanting of mantras invokes the presence of Ganesha. Thereafter, 'shhodashopachara (16 ways of paying tribute)' is followed. At the time of the ritual coconut, jaggery, modaks, durva (trefoil) blades of grass and red flowers are offered and throughout the ceremonial occasion several vedic hymns echoes down the mind of devotees bringing in a divine peace. Further... if you are in the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, you will notice several music and dance performances, especially the Bharatnatyam dance. On the last day, immersion of the statues in the ocean, or other bodies of water, and their subsequent destruction serves as a reminder of this belief. In Mumbai... the occasion is celebrated with great fervor bringing in celebrities, business tycoons and common man under a divine allegiance.

Significance of Anant Chaturdasi/ Immersion of the Idol

The immersion of the idol takes place on the day of Anant Chaturdasi. The word Anant means infinite or eternal energy or immortality, whereas Chaturdasi means 14th. Thus, the occasion falls on the 14th day of the Bhadrapada month of the Hindu calendar and on it Lord Ananta, which is the incarnation of Lord Vishnu is also worshipped.

Immersion of the idol has a belief attached to it; Hindus believe in the concept of constant change in the world which construes what it is there today in one form or the other will tomorrow be formless. The concept of immersion is thus, a reminder of this belief.



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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.'

ASIAD CHAMP SAURABH SHATTERS WORLD RECORD, WINS JUNIOR GOLD

CHANGWON (TIP): A couple of weeks after his triumph at the Asian Games, India's Saurabh Chaudhary hunted down yet another gold medal as he won the men's junior 10m air pistol title, even as teammate Arjun Singh Cheema took the bronze medal at the 52nd ISSF World Championships here on Thursday.

Saurabh, 16, shot a world record score of 245.5, shattering the previous record of 243.7 points that he had set at the ISSF Junior World Cup in June.

South Korea's Lim Honjin (243.1) finished second, ahead of Arjun (218.0).

Hojin had won the silver medal behind Saurabh in the June event as well. And on Thursday, the result didn't change as the Indian gained the lead after a superb 10.9 with his eighth shot in the first competition stage.

From there on, he kept on increasing his lead. At the end of the first competition stage, Saurabh had 103.0, while Hojin had 102.1 and Arjun had 101.0.

In the second competition stage — elimination round — Saurabh continued to widen the gap against Hojin and Arjun. With more than a four-point lead after the seventh series, it was easy for Saurabh even though Hojin tried his best to erase the deficit.

Arjun exited the competition after the eighth series. At that juncture, Saurabh had 225.0, while Hojin had 222.4 as the two shooters went into the ninth and final round.

In the final round, Hojin came up with 10.0 and 10.7, while the Meerut boy shot 10.6 and 9.9 to seal the gold and shatter the world record by almost two points.

In the 10m air pistol team event, South Korea, comprising Hojin, Sung Yunho and Shin Okcheol, clinched the gold with a new junior world record of 1732 points.

India, comprising Saurabh, Arjun and



Saurabh Chaudhary (center) with the World Championship junior gold in Korea on Sept 6. He is flanked by silver medalist Kim Hojin (left) of Korea and compatriot Arjun Singh Cheema.

Anmol, won the silver medal with 1730 points. Russia's team of Alexander Petrov, Aleksandr Kondrashin and Anton Aristarkhov came third with 1711 points. Saurabh has so far won three medals at the championships. He had teamed up with Abhidnya Patil to win the junior 10m air pistol mixed team bronze on Tuesday.

India also picked up a silver medal in the junior men's trap team competition, with Aman Ali Elahi, Vivaan Kapoor and Manavaditya Singh Rathore shooting a combined score of 348 to finish behind Australia.

Aman shot the best among the trio. He shot 118 in qualification and also overcome a four-man shoot-off to get to the six-man final. Aman ended sixth.

Seniors win silver

In the senior competition, Abhishek Verma missed out on an Olympics quota after finishing eighth in the 10m air pistol event. While the shooters failed to impress individually, the team, including Verma, won silver in the

event.

Verma, Om Prakash Mitharwal, who claimed the 50m pistol gold on Tuesday, and Shahzar Rizvi pocketed the team silver with a combined score of 1738.

In the individual competition, Asian Games bronze medallist Verma raised hopes for a medal by qualifying third for the final with a score of 583. However, Verma disappointed with an eighth-place finish in the final after shooting a score of 118. Korea's Jin Jongoh claimed the gold in this event. The local favourite was tied at 241.5 with Russia's Artem Chernousov but prevailed in the shoot-off. In women's trap, Commonwealth Games gold medallist Shreyasi Singh managed 110 out of 125 to finish 34th, followed by Seema Tomar (108) at 41st and Varsha Varman (107) at 42nd. The team signed off eighth with a combined score of 325.

India ended Day 5 with an overall tally of 14 medals — four gold, six silver and four bronze. India are third behind South Korea and Russia.

Source: Agencies



Serena storms into US Open final

NEW YORK (TIP): Six-time champion Serena Williams swept aside Anastasija Sevastova Thursday to reach a ninth US Open final, where she'll face Japanese trail blazer Naomi Osaka.

Williams, seeded 17th as she seeks to add to her 23 Grand Slam titles for the first time since the birth of her daughter Olympia last year, needed just 66 minutes to dispatch the 19th-seeded Sevastova 6-3, 6-0.

Osaka, seeded 20th, became the first Japanese woman to reach a Grand Slam final with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over American Madison Keys -- last year's beaten finalist.

Williams called her return to the US Open final for a ninth time "incredible" given that she was undergoing surgery for life threatening blood clots this time last year in the wake of giving birth.

"To come from that, in the hospital bed, not being able to move and walk and do anything, now only a year later, I'm not training, but I'm actually in these finals, in two in a row," said Williams, who also reached the final at Wimbledon.

"To come this far so fast I'm really looking forward to the possibilities," she said.

Williams lost out in the semi-finals of her last two US Opens, in 2015 and 2016.

But with six titles in New York she needs just one more to surpass Chris Evert for most all-time -- and she needs just one more Grand Slam title to equal Australian Margaret Court's all-time record of 24.

Osaka, 20 and in the last four at a Slam for the first time, admitted she was driven by the idea of facing Williams.

Asked how she managed to save all 13 break points she faced, Osaka said: "I was just thinking I really want to play Serena." Osaka, who had already made history along with men's semi-finalist Kei Nishikori as the first Japanese man and woman to reach the last four at the same Slam, had lost three prior meetings with Keys. Source: AFP

Novak Djokovic beats John Millman, enters semifinals

NEW YORK (TIP) Novak Djokovic managed to do what Roger Federer could not: beat 55th-ranked John Millman at the US Open.

Djokovic moved a step closer to a third championship at Flushing Meadows and 14th Grand Slam title overall by eliminating Millman 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 in the quarterfinals.

The No. 6-seeded Djokovic, who won Wimbledon in July, had been drawn to face Federer with a semi-final berth at stake. But Millman scuttled that showdown by stunning the 20-time Grand Slam champ in four sets in the fourth round on a hot and humid evening that Federer said sapped his energy and made it hard to breathe.

This one wasn't exactly simple for Djokovic: He only converted four of 20 break points. And he finished with 53 unforced errors. But he did move on, and now will face Kei Nishikori in the semi-finals. Source: AP



India seek breezy end to English summer

LONDON (TIP): Battered after yet another series defeat, the Indian cricket team will be aiming to pick up the pieces and spoil Alastair Cook's farewell party in the fifth and final Test against England starting Friday.

With England taking an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-Test series, the final match at The Oval is only of academic importance but skipper Virat Kohli will want to finish on a high. A scoreline of 2-3 will definitely look much better than 1-4. Chief coach Ravi Shastri has tried to keep the morale of the team high by calling it the "best travelling side in the last 15 years", something that is not corroborated by facts.

Having lost back-to-back overseas series in South Africa and England, the myth of being good travellers has been busted and the team has not been able to convince the fans that they are good enough to win a series outside the Subcontinent. The Kohli-led side,



though, has retained though has retained its No. 1 Test rankings despite series losses in both the overseas tours in 2018 thus far.

In this backdrop, Kohli's India will be

playing a Test match where team combination will again come in focus. While they would want to play the best possible XI, there is also a case for experimentation with the line-up.



Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE SEPTEMBER 10 - SEPTEMBER 16, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says you are moving fast and furious, and getting things done in a tearing hurry. You have no time for laggards or passengers. This can be a difficult period in the sense that you are inclined to feel touchy and irritable. There are strong ego drives that you should watch out for. You may get into trouble with the law. Ganesha tells you in no uncertain terms to avoid altercations at all costs. Don't go looking for a battle with a torch.

Taurus:

You are looking to become complete. It is not easy. You still belong to the world, with its cravings, enchantments and disappointments. You go searching for a guru and look for answers in tantra, mantra and yantra. You may enroll in a gym or take to yoga, or even attend a course at a nature-cure center. You are looking at detoxification, regeneration and rejuvenation. Ganesha journeys with you.

Gemini:

There is a cryptic message from Ram Dass which I want to use here. 'Be here now,' he said. That's it. Short, sweet and yet very profound. Your mind is wandering like a mendicant without a destination. 'The mind is a drunken monkey,' said Swami Vivekananda. Rein it in. Your plate is full and overflowing and it is time to decide on the direction to take. You are ambitious, even avaricious, and want it all. But that, alas, can never be.

Cancer:

You roll up your sleeves and get down to the hard slog. You have played along with your emotions and they have done you no good. Instead, they have taken you on a roller-coaster ride. 'Everyone can be great because everyone can serve,' said Martin Luther King. You look for greatness. You are ambitious and realize that there are no short cuts to success. Unless you work hard, you will have to remain content with the short end of the stick. Ganesha is pleased.

Leo:

You show disdain to all the challenges confronting you and walk over them with consummate ease. You love and live large. There are expenses and family issues to deal with. But you sail through. 'Be selfish, be generous,' said the Dalai Lama. You are both in this phase. You are clearly looking for results. Nothing else matters. Ganesha watches over you.

Virgo:

The bull run continues with strong passions and ego drives. You leave no stone unturned and prove to be a formidable adversary. You are like Muhammad Ali in the legendary title bout against Joe Frazier. You pulverize your opponents and emerge as a person of considerable substance. This can be a great time for women. You could get through examinations and interviews with flying colors and have the pick of plum job offers.

Libra:

There are secret deals and liaisons. You could tend to stray. There could be trouble in the Garden of Eden or, to put it simply, on the home front. An old flame may enter your life and shred sanity to pieces. You are oozing with love and longing and if you are unable to control your desires the bite of the apple could cause more than worms! There are also other issues like the health of elders to deal with. The cloud will pass, assures Ganesha. Nothing lasts forever.

Scorpio:

'Whatever you do, whatever you see, whatever you speak, saturate it with divinity,' said Sai Baba. Like it is said, blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love. But love, like other emotions, is seasonal. There are maudlin notes that seize you in its coil. You spend time basking in the glory of days long past. You cry over spilt milk. It is not an easy phase. Ganesha holds your hand.

Sagittarius:

You are in travel mode. You could also be communicating with others with great alacrity. Every technological tool is at your disposal. Chances are that you will take a long holiday with family or friends. Like I said earlier, you are not intrinsically a solo player. Good company brings out the best in you and you revel in groups and idle banter. I don't have your personal chart, and this is a general reading. I am also not God and astrology never compels. Use your free will to advantage. Ganesha agrees.

Capricorn:

The mood is good. Health is also good. So, you are back into churning the wheel of life. There is hard work and its rewards. Osho said, 'When your creativity comes to a climax, when your whole life becomes creative, you live in God. Love what you do. Be meditative while you are doing it - whatsoever it is!' Ganesha agrees. So, do I. If you love your work and if you make it a kind of worship, success cannot elude you. You take calculated risks come out trumps.

Aquarius:

There could be an overseas holiday, or you may move abroad for a new job. The indications of movements are very strong in this phase. There are expenses, passions, ego drives, optimism, energy and genuine fellowship. You communicate with everyone and are in a social and jovial mood. Brownie points fall on your lap. There are also many expenses as you party away and have fun times with friends and loved ones. You are content and so is Ganesha.

Pisces:

This can be a very productive phase for creative folk. It all depends on how you use it. There are maudlin moments and you travel down memory lane. I can't but help quote George Santayana here. 'Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.' You could also get self-indulgent and experiment with recreational drugs. Beware of substance abuse. Ganesha wants you to watch your step. Those in a committed relationship have to tie for their partner.



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All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay. **\$240 Savings Offer:** Valid for activation and installation of qualifying new DISH service. Requires subscription to a qualifying American or DishLATINO package in addition to Hindi Elite Pack. Receive a monthly credit of \$10 for the first 24 months. **Important Terms and Conditions:** **Promotional Offers:** International programming requires America's Top 120 or higher. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. After 24-month promotional period, then-current monthly price applies and is subject to change. Offer ends 10/24/18. **2 Year Commitment:** Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. **Hopper:** Monthly fees: Hopper, \$15; Joey, \$7; Super Joey, \$10. With PrimeTime Anytime record ABC, CBS, FOX and NBC plus two channels. With addition of Super Joey record two additional channels. Watching live and recorded TV anywhere requires an Internet-connected, Sling-enabled DVR and compatible mobile device. **Premium Channels:** Subject to credit qualification. After 3 mos., you will be billed \$60/mo. for HBO, Cinemax, Showtime, Starz and DISH Movie Pack unless you call to cancel. **Installation/Equipment Requirements:** A second dish antenna may be required to view both International and American programming. Free Standard Professional Installation only. Leased equipment must be returned to DISH upon cancellation or unreturned equipment fees apply. **Other:** All prices, fees, charges, packages, programming, features, functionality and offers subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., you will be billed \$8/mo for Protection Plan unless you call to cancel. Free standard professional installation only. Taxes or reimbursement charges for state gross earnings taxes may apply. Additional restrictions and taxes may apply. © 2018 DISH Network L.L.C. All rights reserved. HBO®, Cinemax® and related channels and service marks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc. SHOWTIME is a registered trademark of Showtime Networks Inc., a CBS Company. STARZ and related channels and service marks are property of Starz Entertainment, LLC.