

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL

DEEPAVALI Festival of Lights

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Journalist Jamal Khashoggi most likely dead: Trump

Khashoggi disappeared, October 2, under mysterious circumstances in Saudi Consulate in Istanbul

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman behind journalist's disappearance?



Khashoggi disappeared after entering the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul on October 2, and Turkish officials have accused the Saudis of brutally killing Khashoggi there.

WASHINGTON (TIP): President Donald Trump on Thursday, October 18, told reporters that it "certainly looks" as if the Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi is dead, based on 'intelligence coming from every side'.

"Unless the miracle of all miracles happens, I would acknowledge that he's dead," Trump said to The Times. "That's based on everything - intelligence coming from every side." The president also said consequences would have to be "very severe" if it turns out Saudi Arabia is responsible for Khashoggi's death.

Additionally, Trump said he would not make a statement on the case until several investigations into Khashoggi's disappearance have concluded. *contd on Page 20*

Trump administration to propose major changes in H-1B visas by January 2019



WASHINGTON (TIP): The Trump administration has said it is coming out with new proposals to not only revise the definition of specialty occupations under H-1B visas, but also the definition of employment under this foreign work visa category which is popular among Indian companies.

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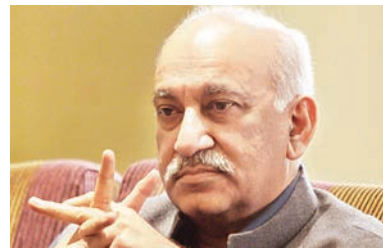
Union Minister Piyush Goyal to Receive University of Pennsylvania's Top Prize in Energy Policy



Mr. Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways and Coal, Government of India, is visiting USA from 19 to 22 Oct 2018

NEW YORK (TIP): On October 19, 2018, the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania will award Energy Policy's 2018 Carnot Prize to Mr. Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways and Coal, Government of India. The award ceremony will be held at Kleinman Center Forum, 220 S. 34th St., Philadelphia, PA 19104. The award is being given to Mr. Goyal for *contd on Page 20*

#MeToo Storm: Union Minister M.J. Akbar Resigns a Day before Hearing in Defamation Case against Scribe



Union Minister of State for External Affairs MJ Akbar on Wednesday, October 17, resigned from his post, in the face of allegations of sexual harassment

NEW DELHI (TIP): Three days after he returned from his foreign trip to face embarrassing allegations of sexual harassment, Union Minister of State for External Affairs MJ Akbar on Wednesday, October 17, resigned from his post, maintaining that he would challenge the false accusations against him.

Akbar has slapped a criminal defamation case against Priya Ramani, the first journalist who publicly named and shamed the junior minister. The hearing in the defamation case is scheduled to come up for *contd on Page 20*

Ms Bhuvana Rao succeeds Mrs. Vandana Sharma as Air India Regional Manager-Americas

NEW YORK (TIP): Ms Bhuvana Rao took over as Air India Regional Manager-Americas, October 17. She succeeds Mrs Vandana Sharma who has been transferred as Deputy General Manager at Indira Gandhi International Airport. *contd on Page 20*



Ms Bhuvana Rao has taken over as Air India Regional Manager-Americas, succeeding Mrs. Vandana Sharma

7th Diwali & Dussehra Festival Celebrations by Shri Sita Ram Foundation

HOUSTON, TX (TIP): Diwali & Dussehra are the largest festivals of India celebrated by more than 1.3 billion people worldwide. It is also called the 'Festival of Lights', celebrating the 'Victory of Good Over Evil'. This festival is celebrated by the people of Indian origin in the Houston area on a large scale in the month of October. This is the 7th year that Shri Sita Ram Foundation is organizing this festival at the Skeeter's Stadium in Sugar Land. This year the festival is on Saturday, October 20, from 4:00 to 10:00 p.m.

The chief guest for festival is the Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, and the Parade Marshal is Congressman, Pete Olson. The stadium is brilliantly decorated in dazzling multicolored lights for the 'Festival of lights'. This festival showcases the rich and ancient culture of India through various activities and presentations like Folk Dance Ensemble, historical plays, bridal fusion show, and cuisines from different parts of India, Dussehra Parade - an embellishment of about 50 floats showcasing historical representations from ancient scriptures. Amongst other floats Wells Fargo ornate their chariot looking carriage with four horses. The festival shall also have beautifully decorated booths selling traditional jewelry, clothing and a host of other items. There will be freebies from 4 pm to 6 pm from various vendors.

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Sri Kulkarni: This Indian-American Texas Congress candidate is campaigning in 13 languages

HOUSTON, TX (TIP): Sri Preston Kulkarni, an Indian American Democrat, running for Congress in Texas' 22nd district, has adopted a unique way to campaign for votes. Kulkarni and his troop of multicultural, multilingual volunteers are painting the election campaign with a more personal touch by asking for votes in 13 different languages, including six major dialects spoken in India and a Nigerian language called Igbo.

Kulkarni's election campaign website 'Kulkarni for Congress' says he speaks Spanish, Hindi, Mandarin Chinese, Hebrew, and Russian.

Counting on the minority communities, Kulkarni claims this multilingual outreach is one of its kind in the 2nd most diverse congressional district in America. A report by The Intercept describes how minority communities historically didn't vote because of inactive participation in the campaigning process. But Kulkarni's approach may change the face of politics in this region, bringing them to



the fore. Volunteers from all age groups in his election campaigns add another layer of inclusivity.

Citing his campaign's internal figures, the report says they increased the Asian-American percentage of the primary electorate from 6 percent in 2014, the last midterm election, to 28 percent in 2018.

Fighting against the incumbent Pete Olsen - who called him a "liberal Indo-American carpetbagger" - 40-year-old Harvard graduate Kulkarni, whose Texan roots (maternal) go as far back as 1600s (he is a direct descendant of the founding father of Texas Sam Houston), could flip the mood in Texas in the November elections this year.

Kama: The Riddle of Desire



By Gurcharan Das

“

But when Das speaks metaphorically through Kama's arrows and contemplates the kinds of love they can generate, he brings to each love a sense of loss and a fleeting nostalgia which often catches the reader by surprise. For him, Kama's first two arrows ensure that we fall in love and move towards intimacy. The third arrow reminds us that we have to work to make love flourish and grow. The fourth arrow makes us see that love is waning, that we need to shore it up at a time when we have run out of the resources that nurture love. The fifth arrow leads love to annihilation and this, Das says, can only be the moment of surrender to the divine, an elevation available to the mystic, if not to the rest of us.

”

This is a most unexpected book. From anyone, let alone a public figure. Let alone from Gurcharan Das—optimistic prophet of the Indian economy, philosopher of personal and public ethics, staunch supporter of neo-liberalism, recent cheerleader for Modi-nomics, grand old man of newspaper columns and a hundred corporate consultancies, a man who has also written at least one fine play and a sensitive family saga about Partition. *Kama: The Riddle of Desire* is a book about desire in the fullest sense of the word—it is about love and vulnerability, about self-doubt and betrayal, about wanting more of everything and being haunted by settling for less. These are not declarations that one associates with a man who appears greatly assured in all his public avatars, a man who has spent the last three decades telling us what we should be thinking. *Kama* is also a book about sex, not in the abstract sense, but about physical pleasure located in the body of the narrator (could he be the author himself, one wonders). When we read *Kama*, Das offers us a journey into the life of a body as much as the life of a mind, and in Das' narrative, the body diminishes through life, but the mind expands.

There are multiple strands in this complex book which is part memoir, part treatise, part life-lesson and most obviously, a tantalizing roman-à-clef. It is a book that could only have been written by an older man who looks back with a sense of satisfaction on a life well and fully lived, a life packed with great good fortune, sometimes brought to a stutter by small mistakes, but an overall success when judged in terms of all the purusharthas, the goals of life, as prescribed for an average Hindu male householder.

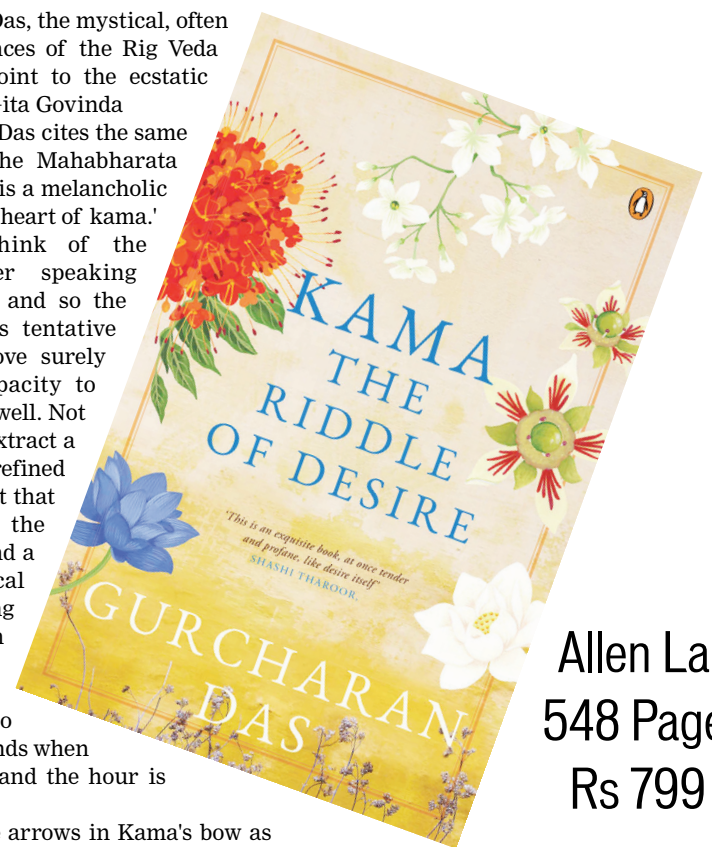
Das places *Kama* as the third in his series of explorations of the purusharthas as explicated within classical Hinduism. His earlier books *India Unbound* (2000) and *The Difficulty of Being Good: On the Subtle Art of Dharma* (2009), address the prescriptions and dilemmas of economic well-being (artha) and moral well-being (dharma), respectively. Like these two, *Kama* is also a door-stopper of a book, coming in at just under 550 pages. But then, tracing the history of kama and erotic love across centuries and cultures and traditions is no mean task. As in *The Difficulty of Being Good*, here in *Kama*, Das mines the intellectual and literary traditions of the West as well as those of Hinduism, showing us that humankind's profoundest ideas are shared. As are its greatest fears. Das is erudite at the best of times and there is nothing he enjoys more than mulling over an idea, passing it through the many filters that he has gathered from readings that are wide and deep. In Das' hands, the mystical, often mysterious utterances of the Rig Veda stand in counterpoint to the ecstatic certainties of the Gita Govinda. Vatsyayana, a celebrant of sexual pleasure, and St Augustine, a denouncer of the body, can rub elbows as ideas of spiritual love, physical love, platonic love, romantic love, renunciation, sublimation, lust, desire and even the mellow sweetness of old and tired love run across pages, tripping over each other with mostly gay abandon. The ancient Greeks are as much a part of *Kama* as classical Hindu thinkers and poets. Proust appears with metronomic regularity, offering Das a prism through which his own life and experience can be refracted. The great Russian novelists of the 19th century open up a vast landscape in which the author can wander, noting the varieties of love as one might note and enjoy different flora and fauna. Das gains as much insight into love from the subtle nuances of Chekov's short stories as he does from the purple adornments of Kalidasa's *Kumarasambhava*.

In the hands of Das, the mystical, often mysterious utterances of the Rig Veda stand in counterpoint to the ecstatic certainties of the Gita Govinda.

More than once, Das cites the same half verse from the Mahabharata which says, 'There is a melancholic sadness at the very heart of kama.' One does not think of the Mahabharata ever speaking gently about love, and so the recurrence of this tentative endorsement of love surely points to Das' capacity to read carefully and well. Not only is he able to extract a statement of such refined delicacy from a text that is dominated by the language of war and a quest for political power, he can bring it to our attention in such a way that we embrace it as an adage for life, to be shared with friends when the lights are low and the hour is late.

Das uses the five arrows in Kama's bow as one of the ways to understand love in its different moments and manifestations. In their classical Sanskrit iteration, Kamadeva's arrows sequentially incite fascination or attraction, followed (somewhat darkly) by disturbance, burning, desiccation and destruction. But Das parses these moments differently, seeing love as a fundamentally elevating force rather than a movement towards destruction or annihilation. In his own exegesis, Das finds it more useful to acknowledge the fear of love's power when he divides kama into what he calls 'optimistic' and 'pessimistic'. 'The optimists focus on the creative, life-giving and transcendental powers of love, while the pessimists worry about its excess and subversive power.' Elsewhere, in the larger social commentary about the times in which we live that punctuates the book, Das speaks more loosely about the optimists who are open-minded and freethinking, while those who he calls pessimists tend to be conservative and less ready to embrace difference and change.

But when Das speaks metaphorically through Kama's arrows and contemplates the kinds of love they can generate, he brings to each love a sense of loss and a fleeting nostalgia which often catches the reader by surprise. For him, Kama's first two arrows ensure that we fall in love and move towards intimacy. The third arrow reminds us that we have to work to make love flourish and grow. The fourth arrow makes us see that love is waning, that we need to shore it up at a time when we have run out of the resources that nurture love. The fifth arrow leads love to annihilation and this, Das says, can only be

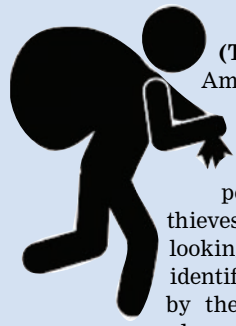


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the moment of surrender to the divine, an elevation available to the mystic, if not to the rest of us. Das rightly cites the Gita Govinda as a sublime example of this surrender while in a physical body (Bernini's sculpture of Saint Theresa expresses the same moment of ecstatic union), but it is here that I believe Das' erudition falls somewhat short. Sufi mystics have provided us with the most exquisite poetry about fana, the ecstatic moment when lover and beloved become one. The individual soul is annihilated in the love and by the love of the divine. That poetry offers us an entirely different teleology about love and an entirely different image of the end, as it were, of love. I would have been very pleased if Das had turned his eclectic and catholic gaze onto the difference between love that surrenders in the body and the love that dissolves this final, human separation from God. Das' frame, like that of many Indian intellectuals (including my own), is circumscribed by our knowledge of Western traditions of thinking and writing. There is still much to be gained from within that frame, but in the 21st century, our gaze must turn to a larger world in order to truly expand and challenge our ideas of desire and the power of transformative love. Although Das speaks almost exclusively of love between individuals, *Kama: The Riddle of Desire* reminds us that it is time to think beyond the personal, embodied beloved. As storms of hatred swirl around us, it is only love that can 'speak through the earthquake, wind and fire' and be 'the still small voice of calm'.



Indian Americans owning expensive Jewelry being targeted by thieves



WASHINGTON (TIP): Indian Americans who possess expensive jewelry, are being targeted by thieves in the US police said. The

thieves are also reportedly looking at online records to identify businesses owned by the Indian Americans and are likely pawning the jewelry. Police said the latest theft happened at a motel owned by an Indian American family in Norwalk city of Connecticut. They have also shared a surveillance video of the brazen heist in hopes of catching the thieves who stole jewelry worth \$20,000 dollars from the Indian American owner's living quarters.

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian-Origin Chirag Patel Jailed in UK for 19 High Value Stolen Vehicles



Stealing high value cars has been a passion with Chirag Patel

LONDON (TIP): Indian-origin Chirag Patel has been sentenced to eight years in jail by a UK court for handling of 19 stolen high-value vehicles worth over 7,00,000 pounds. Patel, 39, was found guilty of conspiracy to handle stolen goods and possession of criminal property at the end of a five-week trial at Croydon Crown Court. "Patel played the leading role in a sophisticated operation to handle high-value, stolen vehicles, motivated only by sheer greed," said Acting Detective Sergeant Billy Clough, who led the investigation for the Metropolitan Police.

"He even attempted to convince the jury that he was a legitimate businessman, who had simply been unlucky in obtaining such a vast quantity of stolen items, but the jury saw through this and convicted him of being the key player in a significant criminal enterprise," he said. Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian American US Congress Candidates Raise \$26 Million for Midterm Polls



WASHINGTON (TIP): More than 12 Indian Americans running for the US Congress have collectively raised over \$26 million for their election campaign with six of them out-raising their opponents, according to the latest official figures.

Raja Krishnamoorthi, Ro Khanna, Pramila Jayapal, Ami Bera, Hiral Tipirneni, and Aftab Pureval have out-raised their opponents in their respective seats for the US House of Representatives. For political pundits, funds raised by a candidate is considered the barometer of their popularity and one who raises more than his/her opponent is normally considered to win.

Most of the fund-raising figures released by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) are till September 30 and the final number before the November 6 polls is likely to jump further.

If they win the number of Indian Americans in the US House of Representatives could jump from the current four to six, with two of them being woman and one being of Tibetan origin.

Raja Krishnamoorthi from the eighth

Congressional District of Illinois till September 30, as per FEC figures, has raised more than \$5 million, topping the list.

His opponent, Jitender Diganvker also an Indian American has raised a paltry \$35,817, which is also the lowest fund-raising figure among the dozen Indian Americans in the race for the Congress this time.

Shiv Ayyadurai who is running for a Senate seat in Massachusetts against the powerful Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren, has surprised many by raising \$5 million. But political pundits give him very little chance against the Warren, who has raised \$20 million so far.

Indian American physician Hiral Tipirneni has raised over \$3.76 million. Tipirneni lost to incumbent Debbie Lesko during the special elections early this year.

The momentum looks like is with the Indian American woman in this eighth Congressional District of Arizona as her opponent so far has raised \$1.8 million.

And so has Aftab Pureval, who is seeking to enter the US House of Representatives from

the first Congressional District of Ohio.

The only Indian American to be endorsed by former US President Barack Obama, Pureval has raised \$3.1 million, as against his Republican opponent and incumbent Steve Chabot of about \$1 million. Chabot's latest figures with FEC are only till June 30.

Three-time Congressman from seventh Congressional District of California Dr Ami Bera has raised \$2.69 million as against \$373,000 by his Republican opponent Andrew Grant.

All the previous three elections bids for him had been tough and all the three times he was declared elected only after recounting of votes. Representing Silicon Valley, Ro Khanna from the 17th Congressional District of California is pretty close with \$2.62 million. He virtually has no contest at all.

Pramila Jayapal, the first Indian American woman to be elected to the US House of Representatives has raised \$1.66 million, according to the FEC figures till July 18. Her opponent Craig Keller has raised about \$3,000 till the same period.

Indian-Origin Man suffering from a Degenerative Eye Condition first to get Guide Horse in UK

LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin man, who suffers from a degenerative eye condition, is set to become the first person in the UK to get a guide horse to assist him with daily tasks once he loses his vision completely.

Mohammed Salim Patel, a journalist based in Blackburn at Lancashire, suffers from a condition called Retinitis Pigmentosa, due to which he is left with a very small amount of sight in his right eye and will eventually become totally blind.

The 24-year-old, who suffers from a deep-seated fear of dogs since a scary childhood encounter, could not rely on the more commonly used guide dogs for the blind and that is how the concept of a miniature guide horse came to his attention.

"Digby (guide horse) is still a baby and will be two years old in May 2019. His training will take around two more years, so I expect to be able to bring him home to Blackburn once he's finished his training," Mr Patel told the media.

"There is no rush though, as there would be for a guide dog. Digby will be able to work into his 40s, whereas a guide dog has to retire at the age of eight," he said.

After spending some time with his companion-to-be, Patel believes a guide horse has many added benefits over guide dogs, including a much longer working life, 350-degree vision and ability to see in the dark.

"Guide horses can work for a lot longer, therefore even if his training takes longer than two years, it doesn't matter too much as once he's trained, I will have decades with him as my assistant animal," Mr Patel explained.

The story of Digby caught the attention of the annual Amplifon Awards for Brave Britons, where the horse is among the finalists in the Hero Pet category - aimed at honoring animals who have transformed the life of their owners.

"It's very nice to have Digby recognized for his great work, despite still being in training. He is a star," said Patel, in reference to the awards, which were announced on Tuesday October 16.

The BBC journalist began working with his local station, BBC Radio Lancashire, before moving on to BBC North West Tonight TV after completing a Journalism Trainee Scheme.

"I fancied being a TV presenter and decided to give media studies a go. I found myself making documentaries on taboo subjects, and essentially creating journalistic pieces. This is when I strongly considered pursuing a career in journalism, as a journalist rather than a TV presenter," he said.

However, it was not an easy journey, being told that a broadcast journalism course would be too difficult for a blind person to complete.

"I used my time at university to get as much broadcasting

experience as I could. I loved radio. I was fortunate to achieve a First Class BA Honors in International Journalism and got a job as a reporter at my local BBC radio station," said Patel, whose family has their roots in Gujarat.

"My mother was born in India but then came to the UK to marry my dad. He has family in Gujarat too," he said.

"I love visiting India as it's a beautiful country that fascinates me. I take every opportunity I can to visit my cousins who live there and to also visit the many different cities in India," he added.

It remains to be seen if Digby might join him on one of these visits in the future.



US fund investors pull most cash since June from stocks: Lipper data

NEW YORK (TIP): Investors slammed US-based stock funds during the latest week, pulling \$17.5 billion, the most cash from such investments since June, according to Lipper data on Thursday.

The withdrawals came during a volatile week for markets as minutes from the most recent Federal Reserve policy meeting showed broad agreement on the need to raise borrowing costs further, cementing investor concerns that had helped cause a major sell-off the week before.

Domestic stock mutual funds and exchange-traded funds (ETFs) posted \$18.2 billion in withdrawals, only marginally offset by \$648 million moving into equity funds focused abroad, according to data from the research service that covers the seven days through Oct. 17. Rising rates could draw money away from stocks and into bonds. It could also crimp the economic growth that has plumped corporate profits to record levels and enabled a near decade-long rally.

"There were people ducking for cover," said Tom Roseen, head of research services at Lipper. "This is fast money – people getting in and getting out." Also during the week, Japanese stock funds based in the United States but invested primarily in Tokyo pulled in \$1.2 billion, the most cash since 2013 and an endorsement of that market's chances to rally. Despite a strong start to earnings season and the hope of rising rates increasing bank profits from lending activity, fast-money investors pulled \$2.5 billion from financial sector funds, the most on record.

The following is a breakdown of the flows for the week, including mutual funds and ETFs: Sector Flow Chg % Assets Assets Count (\$blns) (\$blns) All Equity Funds -17.545 -0.24 7,212.618 12,217 Domestic Equities -18.193 -0.35 5,163.920 8,669 Non-Domestic Equities 0.648 0.03 2,048.698 3,548 All Taxable Bond Funds -1.870 -0.07 2,765.150 6,042 All Money Market Funds -14.981 -0.54 2,745.148 1,039 All Municipal Bond Funds -0.642 -0.16 413.294 1,430. (Reuters)

House committees to interview Rod Rosenstein behind closed doors

There was speculation weeks ago that Rosenstein would be fired or resign following a New York Times report that he had discussed secretly recording Trump last year.

WASHINGTON (TIP): The top lawmakers on two House committees will interview Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein next week about reports that he had discussed secretly recording President Donald Trump. The House Judiciary Committee says Rosenstein will sit for a transcribed interview Oct. 24 with the two Republican chairmen and top Democrats on the House Judiciary and Oversight and Government Reform committees.

Members of the conservative House Freedom Caucus had originally pushed for Rosenstein to appear, but they will be left out of the meeting. There was speculation weeks ago that Rosenstein would be fired or resign following a New York Times report that he had discussed secretly recording Trump last year. The report said he also discussed invoking constitutional provisions to remove Trump from office. (AP)

US asks for WTO panel over metals tariff retaliation

Despite striking a deal with Washington to overhaul the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Mexico and Canada remain subject to the metals tariffs.

WASHINGTON (TIP): The United States is requesting that a World Trade Organization dispute resolution panel gets involved in a clash over international retaliation over U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminium, according to a U.S. official familiar with the matter.

The requests, filed on Thursday, cover tariffs by China, the European Union, Canada and Mexico, which followed the United States imposing a 25 percent duty on steel imports and a 10 percent tariff on aluminium imports, which it justified on national security grounds.

Canada, Mexico and China had also planned to ask for a WTO panel examining those tariffs, according to another government official familiar with the matter. Earlier on Thursday, Norway said that it, the EU and other countries would seek the WTO dispute group's help.

China has filed a request with the WTO to establish an expert group to determine the legality of the tariffs, its commerce ministry said late on Thursday. In a statement posted on its website, the ministry said the U.S. decision to adjust the tariffs was an act of protectionism that seriously undermined multinational trade rules.

It said consultations with the United States under the WTO dispute settlement mechanism had failed to resolve China's concerns, prompting it to ask for the expert group to be established.

Officials representing the other countries' trade delegations could not immediately be reached after normal business hours. The WTO did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The dispute marks a new dimension to the ongoing skirmish between the United States and a number of its trading partners as well as the WTO itself, where it has blocked appointments of new judges. The WTO is presiding over a record number of disputes, many of them triggered by Trump's tariffs on steel and aluminium and his trade war with China. Norway earlier said initial consultations with the United States had not led to an agreeable solution, and therefore the Nordic country had joined others in asking the WTO to set up the panel to obtain an independent assessment of the matter.

"We believe that additional U.S. duty on steel and aluminium is contrary to WTO rules," Norwegian Foreign Minister Ine Eriksen



Soereide said in a statement.

"Therefore, together with the EU and several others, we asked today the WTO to establish a dispute resolution panel on the U.S. additional duty," she said.

In Brussels, meanwhile, the EU, Norway and Switzerland sought Asian support for free trade, the Iran nuclear deal and fighting global warming at a regional summit that included China, Japan and Russia as a counterbalance to a more protectionist United States.

U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross told CNBC on Wednesday that trade negotiations with China appear to have taken a brief pause, and he tamped down expectations that the countries would make substantial progress toward an agreement at an upcoming G20 meeting.

Despite striking a deal with Washington to overhaul the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Mexico and Canada remain subject to the metals tariffs. On Tuesday, EU trade chief Cecilia Malmstrom held talks with Ross in Brussels on improving trade relations, though Washington accused the bloc of moving too slowly in negotiations. (Reuters)

US says it could remove India from currency monitoring list

WASHINGTON (TIP): The US could remove India from its currency monitoring list of major trading partners, the Treasury Department has said, citing certain developments and steps being taken by New Delhi which address some of its major concerns.

India for the first time was placed by the US in its currency monitoring list of countries with potentially questionable foreign exchange policies in April along with five other countries – China, Germany, Japan, South Korea and Switzerland.

The Department of Treasury maintained the same monitoring list in its latest report released on Wednesday but said if India continues with the same practices as in the last six months, it would be removed from its next bi-annual report.

"India's circumstances have shifted markedly, as the central bank's net sales of foreign exchange over the first six months of 2018 led net purchases over the four quarters through June 2018 to fall to USD 4 billion, or 0.2 per cent of the GDP," the Treasury said in its latest semi-annual Report on Macroeconomic and Foreign Exchange Policies of Major Trading Partners of the US.

This represented a notable change from 2017, when purchases over the first three quarters of the year pushed net purchases of foreign exchange above two per cent of the GDP, it said. Recent sales have come amidst a turnaround in foreign portfolio flows, as foreign investors pulled portfolio capital out of

India (and many other emerging markets) over the first half of the year, it said.

The rupee depreciated by around seven per cent against the dollar and by more than four per cent on a real effective basis in the first half of 2018, the report said. India has a significant bilateral goods trade surplus with the US, totalling USD 23 billion over the four quarters through June 2018, but India's current account is in deficit at 1.9 per cent of the GDP.

"As a result, India now only meets one of the three criteria from the 2015 Act. If this remains the case at the time of its next report, Treasury would remove India from the monitoring list," the Treasury said.

Observing that India's current account deficit widened in the four quarters through June 2018 to 1.9 per cent of the GDP, following several years of narrowing from its 2012 peak, the Treasury said the current account deficit has been driven by a large and persistent goods trade deficit, which has in turn resulted from substantial gold and petroleum imports.

The goods trade deficit has widened out in the first half to 6.4 per cent of the GDP as oil prices have risen. The IMF projects the current account deficit to be around 2.5 per cent of the GDP over the medium term as domestic demand strengthens further and favourable growth prospects support investment.

India's goods trade surplus with the US was USD 23 billion for the four quarters through June 2018, it said, adding that India also had a small surplus in services trade with the US of USD 4 billion over the same period.

"India's exports to the US are concentrated in sectors that reflect India's global specialisation (notably pharmaceuticals and IT services), while US exports to India are dominated by key service trade categories, particularly travel and higher education," the report said.

The Treasury praised India for being "exemplary" in publishing its foreign exchange market intervention.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has noted that the value of the rupee is broadly market-determined, with intervention used only during "episodes of undue volatility," it said.

According to the authorities' data, India was generally a net purchaser of foreign exchange from late 2013 to the middle of 2017, as the RBI sought to gradually build a stronger external buffer in the aftermath of the May 2013 "taper tantrum".

Purchases accelerated in the first half of 2017 amidst strong portfolio inflows to India (and many other emerging markets); as a result, cumulative net purchases of foreign exchange exceeded two per cent of the GDP over 2017, it said.

Noting that foreign exchange purchases generally declined in the second half of 2017, and the RBI shifted to selling foreign exchange in the first half of 2018, the Treasury said net purchases of foreign exchange over the past four quarters through June totalled USD 4 billion (0.2 per cent of the GDP), including activity in the forward market. (Press Trust of India)

Donald Trump: A President who believes he is entitled to his own facts

Over the course of 21 months, President Donald Trump has loudly and repeatedly refused to accept a number of seemingly agreed-upon facts, while insisting on the veracity of a variety of demonstrably false claims that happen to suit his political needs.

WASHINGTON (TIP): He accepts less-than-credible denials from autocratic heads of state about nefarious acts. He disputes the existence of man-made climate change and insists that photographic evidence of the crowd at his inauguration is fake, part of a media plot to harm him.

Over the course of 21 months, President Donald Trump has loudly and repeatedly refused to accept a number of seemingly agreed-upon facts, while insisting on the veracity of a variety of demonstrably false claims that happen to suit his political needs. In the process, he has untethered the White House from the burden of objective proof, creating a rich trove for professional fact-checkers, and raising questions about the basis for many of his decisions.

"If there's no truth, how do we discuss and make decisions that are rooted in fact?" said Rob Stutzman, a Republican operative based in California. "It's been abandoned. And it's something that the Republican base certainly isn't going to revolt on him on. But it is a huge fundamental problem of how to govern when there are no facts."

Michael V. Hayden, a former CIA director who served under Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama, said Trump could be coaxed into believing objective reality, but that it "is not the instinctive departure point for what Donald Trump does."

"It's something else — it's feeling, emotion, preference, loyalty, convenience of the moment," Hayden said. He quoted a former speechwriter for Bush, Michael Gerson, about Trump: "He lives in the eternal now — no history, no consequences."

Trump's refusal to accept some established facts is hardly new. From his belief in the guilt of five young men of color in connection with a savage attack on a white woman in Central Park in the 1980s, to his conviction that Obama was born in Kenya, he has carried on what amount to personal crusades in the face of established facts for much of his career. The most noticeable new variation of that tendency that Trump has adopted as president is his penchant for giving the benefit of the doubt to authoritarian leaders with whom he has tried to develop personal or political relationships. That was most recently on display this week, when he said that King Salman of Saudi Arabia had assured him the royal family had no role in the disappearance of dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The king, he noted, had



given a "very strong" denial.

"Here we go again with, you know, you're guilty until proven innocent," Trump told The Associated Press on Tuesday. "I don't like that. We just went through that with Justice Kavanaugh, and he was innocent all the way as far as I'm concerned."

By Thursday, as the weight of the evidence of Saudi government complicity became hard to disagree with, Trump said he believed Khashoggi was dead, and there could be "severe" consequences for Saudi Arabia.

Still, the initial remarks echoed comments he made last summer about Russian President Vladimir Putin, who he said had been "extremely strong and powerful in his denial" that Russia had interfered with the 2016 election.

And they were similar to what the president has said about his faith in the widely doubted commitment to denuclearization by the North Korean dictator, Kim Jong Un. "He wrote me beautiful letters," he said at a rally in Wheeling, West Virginia, "and they're great letters. We fell in love."

For the president, each of those leaders looms large in his thinking and his plans, and their past behavior does not seem to matter.

"He's got a personal relationship," Hayden said, "and he's built it himself, with three heads of state who have murdered somebody within another person's country within the last year."

Aides to Trump insisted his reaction to the disappearance of Khashoggi and the mounting evidence that he was killed by a Saudi hit squad had been repeatedly

mischaracterized. They pointed out that early on he had said he wanted an investigation.

Trump has appeared to grow noticeably more comfortable in the role of president, according to advisers, and that comfort level has reinforced his confidence in his own instincts, including what he regards as facts. Trump often points to a key moment — his election in 2016, which defied the polls — as proof that agreed-upon data can be wrong.

His long career in the New York real estate world convinced Trump that all people are prone to shading their views according to their own self-interest. Objectivity is not something he expects of people, and he long ago came to believe that "facts" are really arbitrary.

"There are no governing rules — one doesn't have to be governed by rules or facts," said David Axelrod, a former senior adviser to Obama, describing Trump's worldview. "Whatever it takes to get what you want or to get to where you want, no matter what you have to justify or what you have to ignore, is OK."

In his interview with CBS News' "60 Minutes" on Sunday night, Trump repeatedly painted climate science as a matter of political opinion. Scientists who have documented the man-made impact on climate change "have a very big political agenda," Trump said, offering no evidence.

Even DNA evidence does not sway Trump from his beliefs. He maintained that the five young men imprisoned for the Central Park crime were still guilty even after they were exonerated by DNA evidence and a detailed

confession from a sixth man.

"They admitted they were guilty," Trump said in a statement after the men were cleared of the crime, pointing to their coerced confessions from decades ago.

Trump has also pushed a number of conspiracy theories over the years. As a citizen and a candidate, Trump repeatedly tweeted that there was a link between vaccines and autism, a claim scientists have rejected.

"I am being proven right about massive vaccinations — the doctors lied," Trump wrote in a 2014 tweet.

And long after Obama released his long-form birth certificate in 2011, Trump appeared on Fox News and suggested that the president might not be a citizen.

Trump's approach has profound consequences for the credibility of the presidency and the boundaries of acceptable political discourse. It also has serious ramifications for his advisers, as well as people who hear the president's words outside the United States. And, according to Hayden, it particularly affects the intelligence officials whose job it is to present Trump with the information he needs to make critical national security decisions.

"Intelligence is all about context, which is history and consequence," said Hayden, and intelligence officials are "trying to pull him into an agreed view of objective reality."

But in briefings and meetings, Trump has frequently chosen to adhere to his own beliefs on issues such as the Iran nuclear deal. He has declared that pact to be "a horrible one-sided deal that should have never, ever been made," based on his belief that Iran was not in compliance with it, despite evidence to the contrary.

For Trump, personal relationships are more important than institutional ones. That means he "gives weight to data based on who told him, not the evidentiary stack underneath it," Hayden said.

The result is that the Russian president or the North Korean leader can seem to have a greater impact with Trump than his own State Department or CIA. His willingness to repeat claims like the notion that Khashoggi was the victim of "rogue killers" is a function of that, Stutzman said.

"This rhetoric really matters," he said, "in that it belies how little he fundamentally understands the institutions of American democracy." (NYT)

Over 50,000 Indians took US citizenship in 2017

WASHINGTON (TIP): Over 50,000 Indians were granted the American citizenship in 2017, four thousand more than the previous year, according to the latest official report. The Department of Homeland Security in its latest annual immigration report said that in 2017, as many as 50,802 Indians took citizenship of the United States.

This is four thousand more than 2016's figure of 46,188 Indian naturalisations and eight thousand more than 42,213 Indian citizenship in 2015.

In all, 707,265 foreign nationals took the oath of American citizenship in 2017, as against 753,060 in 2016 and 730,259 in 2015

Mexico with 118,559 citizenships topped the list among all foreign nationals.

India was a distant second, followed by China (37,674); the Philippines (36,828); Dominican Republic (29,734); Cuba (25,961).

Figures indicated that more females (396,234) took American citizenship than male (310,987).

The report indicates that as many as 12,000 newly naturalised American citizens from India settled in California, followed by New Jersey (5,900), and Texas about 3,700.

More than 7,100 naturalised Americans lived in the regions of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.(PTI)

Man sentenced to nearly 25 years for arson of Texas mosque

AUSTIN (TEXAS) (TIP): A man convicted of a hate crime in setting fire to a mosque in Texas was sentenced to almost 25 years in prison on Wednesday U.S. authorities said, adding he acted with hatred and malice.

Marq Perez, 26, set fire to the Victoria Islamic Center, about 125 miles (200 km) southwest of Houston in 2017. The crime was seen by Islamic rights groups as part of a growing wave of bigotry toward Muslims in the United States. He was convicted in July for a hate crime in the burning of the Victoria Islamic Center on Jan. 28, 2017. He was also convicted of the use of fire to commit a federal felony and possessing an unregistered

destructive device for a separate but related incident, the U.S. Department of Justice said. At sentencing, Senior U.S. District Judge John Rainey said hate crimes were "a cancer to our society" and "this conduct would not be tolerated in our society," the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas said. He was sentenced to 24-1/2 years in prison.

During a week-long trial in a federal court in Texas, prosecutors called the crime "a simple, straightforward case of hate," the U.S. attorney's office said. Lawyers for Perez said he did not set the fire and was with his newly born son when the building caught fire, the San Antonio Express-News reported from the courtroom. (Reuters)

CENTRE SHOULD BRING ORDINANCE TO BUILD RAM MANDIR: MOHAN BHAGWAT



NAGPUR (TIP): The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Thursday asked the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government to consider introducing legislation for the construction of a Ram Temple in Ayodhya, cautioning that it was "in nobody's interest to test the patience of the society without any reason."

Bhagwat's comments drew flak from critics of the RSS who linked the timing to key state elections at the year-end leading up to the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

The demand for the legislation, earlier made by RSS affiliate Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), is in contrast to the Sangh's earlier stance of waiting for a Supreme Court decision on the issue. The top court is expected to start hearing the main Ayodhya title suit from October 29, after it declined to refer to a larger bench the "questionable observation" in its 1994 verdict that a "mosque is not an essential part of the practice of Islam".

"This matter of national interest is being obstructed by some fundamentalist elements and forces that play communal politics for selfish gains. Despite such machinations, the decision regarding ownership of the land should be expedited, and the government should clear the path for construction of the grand temple through appropriate and requisite law," Bhagwat said, delivering the annual Vijaydashami speech in Nagpur. RSS is the ideological fount of the ruling BJP.

Bhagwat minced no words in blaming political parties for politicising the Ram Temple's construction on the disputed site in Ayodhya where the Babri Masjid once stood, and which Hindu organisations say marks the birthplace of Lord Ram. If it weren't for political machinations, the temple would have been constructed a long time ago, he said.

"The place of Janmabhoomi is yet to be allocated for the construction of the temple although all kinds of evidence have affirmed that there was a temple at that place. There is an obvious game plan of a few elements to stall the judgment by presenting various newer interventions in the judicial process," he said.

7,500 INDIANS WHO OWN PRIME HOMES IN DUBAI UNDER I-T SCANNER

MUMBAI (TIP): The Income Tax (IT) department has launched an investigation against at least 7,500 Indians who have bought high-end properties in Dubai in the last few years, according to The Indian Express. The Intelligence and Criminal Investigation (I&CI) wing of the tax department has obtained data of Indian nationals who have invested in real estate in Dubai and is probing the source of funds of such investments abroad. Sources said the tax authority is also investigating if these real estate assets acquired by Indians have been declared to the tax agency.

In the first three months of 2018, at least 1,387 Indian nationals have invested AED 3 billion through 1,550 real estate transactions in Dubai, according to the Dubai Land Development. In 2017 alone, Indian investors invested AED 15.6 billion in Dubai. As per the Dubai Land Development statistics, in five years between 2013 and 2017, Indian nationals have bought properties worth AED 83.65 billion in Dubai.

Under Indian laws, it is not illegal for Indians to own property in Dubai. According to the Foreign Exchange Management Act of 1999, resident and non-resident Indians are allowed to own immovable properties abroad. Under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) liberalised remittance route, a resident individual can invest up to \$250,000 a year in properties and securities abroad.

Under fire for pardoning Dera Sacha Sauda chief, Akal Takht jathedar quits post

AMRITSAR (TIP): Giani Gurbachan Singh on October 18 night resigned as Jathedar of Akal Takht, the highest temporal seat of Sikhs, citing ill health as reason.

He forwarded his resignation letter to the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee President Gobind Singh Langowal and the executive members of the SGPC, the release issued to the media said.

"Because of age-related health issues, it has become tough for him to serve this spiritual and pious seat, the release said

"In the light of my ill health, I am unable to serve this religious position and request the SGPC president and SGPC executive to appoint some appropriate personality in my place while reliving me from this pious seat, the release quoted him as saying.

Singh had created a controversy by pardoning Dera Sacha Sauda sect head Gurmit Ram Rahim Singh in September 2015 in a blasphemy case. However, he had to revoke the pardon after facing backlash from the Sikh community.

On the pardoning issue, he said, "The decision to extend pardon to him (Dera head) during his tenure was objected to but later on pardon was withdrawn with the consent of five Sikh head priests. Sikh community also expressed deep anguish over the pardon extended to him.

He also cited couplets from Guru Granth Sahib and said, "to err ishuman.



As per Gurbani, to err is human. The decision on dera chief drew objections, but respecting the sentiments of the Panth, the decision was revoked. While performing sewa on this position, I might have committed mistakes, for which I seek apology from the Panth.

Giani Gurbachan Singh

After the Justice Ranjit Singh Commission report on sacrilege incidents was tabled in Punjab Vidhan Sabha, his act of pardoning Ram Rahim again gained limelight. The report had pointed towards alleged role of Badals in getting pardon for the Dera chief.

Besides several Sikh organisations, senior Akali leader Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa had also demanded removal of Giani Gurbachan Singh from the post of Akal Takht Jathedar.

In the face of massive Sikh backlash, the clergy was forced to retract the pardon which is still widely believed to be orchestrated by SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal as part of secret deal with the Dera which commands a sizeable votebank in Malwa region of Punjab.

The pardon was followed by a series of

incidents of sacrilege of Guru Granth Sahib in parts of Punjab and police firing that killed two Sikh protesters, stoking the Sikh anger against then ruling Akali Dal.

Jathedar's resignation is seen as a part of Akalis' carefully-crafted damage control strategy to blunt a fresh surge in the anti-Badals mood ignited by the Justice Ranjit Singh panel report that indicted both former CM Parkash Singh Badal and Sukhbir for sacrilege incidents and excessive use of police force. SAD has also been rattled by an overwhelming response to the radical Sikh leaders-led Bargari Morcha that is demanding action against those responsible for sacrilege and police firing. SGPC spokesperson Diljit Singh Bedi, however, said they have not received the resignation letter.

Sabarimala row: Kerala remains tense; foreign woman scribe forced to turn back

KERALA (TIP): Tension prevailed on Thursday a day after the opening of the short five-day pilgrimage season as the state observed a shutdown against the alleged police attack on protesters even as a senior member of the Sabarimala priest's family urged women of the hitherto barred age group to respect tradition and not visit the Lord Ayyappa temple.

While on Wednesday a couple of women devotees were prevented from undertaking the trek to the hill temple and some women journalists were stopped from proceeding with their coverage amidst violence by activists of Hindu groups affiliated to the BJP and RSS, no women devotee of the ages that have been allowed darshan by the Supreme Court turned up on the day.

On Thursday morning, Suhasini Raj, who works as the India reporter for The New York Times, along with her colleague, a foreign national, managed to go past the Pamba gateway but was stopped midway by angry devotees who erected a human wall before her.

"I had reached half way and then the protests grew stronger. I was hit by a stone and then we decided to return. The police had provided us all the security," said Raj, who had earlier pointed out that she came to do her job to speak to devotees.

Pathanamthitta District Collector P.B. Nooh told the media on Thursday afternoon that Section 144 was in force and would be there till Friday midnight. Police would provide security to



any woman who wished to go and pray, he said.

Of the 30 protesters, who were arrested on Wednesday, 20 were produced before the Magistrate Court in Ranni near here. They were remanded to two weeks judicial custody. The arrested activists included a member of the Tantri family, Rahul Eashwar.

No threat of discontinuation of mobile numbers issued using Aadhaar, says govt

NEW DELHI (TIP): The government on Thursday said there is no threat of discontinuation of mobile numbers issued using Aadhaar, following the Supreme Court ruling that barred use of the national biometric ID by private companies.

Debunking reports that over 50 crore, or half of the mobile SIMs in the country, faced deactivation, the Department of Telecommunication and the 12-digit unique identity number-issuing authority UIDAI in a joint statement said, mobile phone users at their choice can seek a change of their Aadhaar-based authentication done in the past with alternate proof of identity without any disconnection of the number.

An alternate form for buying new SIMs through a mobile app that will time capture photograph of the persons along with ID proof such as Aadhaar card, voter ID or passport is in the works.

"The Supreme Court in its judgement in Aadhaar case has nowhere directed that the mobile number which has been issued through Aadhaar e-KYC has to be disconnected," it said.

Terming the report as "completely untrue and imaginary", the government said there is no reason for panic or fear at all.

"People should not believe in such rumours," it said.

The Supreme Court has also not asked for deletion of the electronic-Know Your Customer (a means of establishing the identity of the person) data of telecom customers after six months, the statement said.

"What the apex court has asked that UIDAI should not keep authentication log for more than six months. The



restriction of not keeping authentication log beyond six months is on the UIDAI and not on the telecom companies. Therefore, there is no need for telecom companies or AUAs/JUAs to delete authentication logs at their end," it added.

AUA is Authentication User Agency (AUA) and KUA is KYC User Agency (KUA).

DoT-UIDAI said telecom companies are required to keep authentication logs at their end as per Aadhaar regulations to resolve any consumer grievances.

"In the light of the SC verdict if anybody wishes to get his/her Aadhaar eKYC replaced by the fresh KYC, he/she may request the service provider for delinking of his/her Aadhaar by submitting fresh identification documentation, it said.

The Supreme Court, it said, has prohibited the issue of new SIM cards

through Aadhaar eKYC authentication process due to lack of a law.

"There is no direction to deactivate the old mobile phones," the statement added.

The telecom department and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) are in the process to bring out a completely hassle-free and digital process for issuing new SIM cards through a mobile app, which will be fully compliant of the Supreme Court judgement in Aadhaar case.

"In the proposed process, live photograph of the person with latitude, longitude, and time stamp will be captured. The photo of ID such as Aadhaar card, voter ID, etc., will be captured. The SIM card agent will be authenticated through OTP and SIM card will be issued. This process will be completely hassle-free and digital," the statement said. *Source: PTI*

OM PRAKASH CHAUTALA SUSPENDS GRANDSONS DUSHYANT, DIGVIJAY



Dushyant Chautala



Digvijay Singh Chautala

CHANDIGARH (TIP): Amid deepening rift between the Chautala family, INLD chief and former Haryana CM Om Prakash Chautala has suspended party MP Dushyant Chautala and his younger brother, Digvijay Singh Chautala, from the primary membership of the party. Both brothers were suspended and issued a showcause notice on October 11, but the party made the decision public on Thursday after a meeting of its executive committee in Gurgaon. While Dushyant Chautala had replied seeking more time to prove his innocence, Digvijay maintains that he has not received a copy of the notice yet. The October 11 letter had also warned of initiation of disciplinary proceedings in case of an unsatisfactory reply.

On Thursday, during the meeting, the matter of accusations of indiscipline against Dushyant and Digvijay, president of now dissolved Indian National Students Organisation (INSO), was referred to the party's disciplinary committee. The committee has been asked to submit its report by October 25 and till then both brothers will remain suspended from INLD's primary membership. The brothers were charged with creating a ruckus during the 105th birthday celebrations of Chaudhary Devi Lal in Gohana (Sonapat) on October 7 and "encouraging forces to disrupt the biggest ever rally held in Haryana".

The meeting was chaired by Om Prakash Chautala, the national president of INLD, during which he emphasised on the importance of discipline in the party, and repeatedly warned that anyone found violating discipline will be strictly dealt with irrespective of their position and status.

"The INLD has earned the reputation of being a disciplined party and therefore, the unruly scenes witnessed during that rally have been found very disturbing to the party leaders and workers," Om Prakash Chautala had said.

Dushyant did not comment on the matter Thursday, while Digvijay reiterated that he had not received any notice.

Congress veteran ND Tiwari dies at 93 in Delhi

NEW DELHI (TIP): Congress veteran Narayan Dutt Tiwari, who served in various positions at the centre and in states and was even a strong contender for prime ministership in 1991, died on his birthday at a private hospital in Delhi on Thursday after prolonged illness, doctors said.

Tiwari, who was undergoing treatment at Max Super Speciality Hospital, breathed his last at 2.50pm after he suffered a heart attack, hours after he turned 93, they said.

He was admitted to the hospital in September last year after suffering a brain stroke. A team of doctors had been monitoring his condition.

In a statement, Max Healthcare said, "Tiwari was admitted at Max hospital, Saket for several months and was undergoing treatment for complications related to a brain stroke. He breathed his last at 2.50pm today." Tiwari, who was considered close to Indira Gandhi, had served as a Union minister in several Congress-led governments. He had the unique distinction of having served as the chief minister of two states, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, where his native place is located.

After Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, Tiwari lost the bid to become the prime minister to P.V. Narasimha Rao when he was defeated in Nainital seat in the 1991 Lok Sabha elections. He formed Congress (T), the breakaway faction of the Congress, along with veteran Congress leader Arjun Singh in 1995 during the tenure of Rao.

However, he later merged his party with the Congress when Sonia Gandhi took charge of the party. He was a three-time



chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. He was also the Uttarakhand chief minister from 2002-2007.

From 2007 until 2009, he served as the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, but was forced to resign following a sex scandal. His son, Rohit Shekhar Tiwari, had joined the BJP in January last year ahead of Assembly elections in Uttarakhand.

Tiwari was born on 18 October 1925 in Nainital and held a law degree from Allahabad University.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and leaders of various

parties expressed grief over his demise.

"Saddened by the passing away of Shri N.D. Tiwari Ji. A towering leader; he was known for his administrative skills. He will be remembered for his efforts towards industrial growth & working for the progress of UP & Uttarakhand, a state he steered in its initial days," the prime minister tweeted.

Former prime minister Manmohan Singh also condoled the demise of Tiwari, describing him as a great leader and an efficient minister.

"His services to the nation as chief ministers of two states, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, Union minister of external affairs and finance minister and as governor of the state of Andhra Pradesh will always be remembered for a long time to come," he said in a letter to Tiwari's wife Ujjwala.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat and his Uttar Pradesh counterpart Yogi Adityanath conveyed their condolences.

Rawat said Tiwari's death was a "personal loss".

"The void left in Indian politics by his departure, will be very difficult to fill," he said, adding, Tiwari had served as country's finance minister and foreign minister too.

"Uttarakhand will never forget his contributions," Rawat tweeted. Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala also condoled the death of the party veteran.

"My deepest condolences on the passing away of veteran Congress leader, Former Union Minister, Former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand, Shri N D Tiwari ji," he tweeted. *Source: PTI*


**GUEST
COMMENT**

The silence has shattered: brisk action has to power the MeToo movement

After some dissimulation, a reluctant MJ Akbar has, at last, shown inexpedient wisdom in bowing out of his office. The development is a minor, nonetheless significant, triumph for the MeToo movement that has caught the imagination of traumatized women professionals. It is not about retribution, or an example being made of one or two degenerates, be that as it may, wholly satisfying. The movement has an expansive purpose - unqualified safety of a woman at her workplace. If the pressure eases in the middle of the road, the 'uprising' will have been in vain.

It was in 1997 that the Vishakha Guidelines were introduced to handle harassment cases and became the foundation of the Sexual Harassment of Woman at Workplace Act passed in 2013. The Act mandates an employer to set up a 10-member complaints committee, and the government committees at the district level, to investigate such complaints. These may, however, be non-existent in most establishments. It is time to clean up the Augean stables and ensure that workplaces are compliant with the law.

The onus is on the employer to provide a safe environment. The implications of indulging in such acts, and what comprises sexual misconduct, must be taken up at awareness programs to sensitize employees. A list of committee members and their phone numbers must be displayed conspicuously. Action should be swift and non-partisan. There is no need for more laws and endless committees. A robust redress system will see it through. Stripping a woman of dignity, terrorizing her to either succumb or quit, sometimes at the great cost of pushing her back into the cocoon of society's making, is inadmissible. Any complaint that goes unaddressed propagates predatory behavior and emboldens the perpetrator. Power or position cannot be allowed to be used for personal gratification, be it sexual in nature, or aggrandizement. It is encouraging that women are shedding the tatters of self-inflicted shame to find their voice. The golden in silence does not always shine through. As fellow travelers and comrades, let us spur them on their tedious journey.

(Tribune, India)



By Flavia Agnes

So, finally it has happened. The Minister of State for External Affairs, MJ Akbar, had to step down from his official position. Whether it was his decision or whether he was pressured by the party bosses to do so, we will never know. Whatever may be the reason, it is a welcome move.

It is a moment of triumph not only for the 20 senior journalists who came out strongly against him in a joint statement and to those who graphically described the extent of their abuse which they suffered as his subordinates, but a landmark victory for the women's movement in India.

The message has gone out loud and clear. A Union Minister cannot hold office when such allegations of sexual misconduct are piled up against him. This is a message that has gone out globally.

It was a litmus test for the government which has been flaunting its pro-women programs, such as "beti bachao, beti padhao" and "ujwala", and the more recent ordinance criminalizing triple talaq, to save the "poor Muslim women".

The government took its own time. There was no statement from women like Sushma Swaraj under whose ministry MJ Akbar worked. The Prime Minister and the party bosses kept mum and even allowed him to remain in office until he filed a case of criminal defamation against the first person who had accused him, using his political clout in an uneven court battle. As an anchor in a TV talk show commented, 97 lawyers against one individual. But as Priya Ramani, against whom the case is filed, said, 'truth is the defense'.

This will open up the doors for more women to come out against their bosses and seniors at the workplace and hopefully will lead to a healthier workplace environment ensuring dignity of women.

The lesson learnt is that women have to stake a claim. They will not be given their rights on a platter. They have to snatch them from a patently patriarchal system of corporate governance. But it is possible to dent this structure; it is possible to bring in fresh air. It is possible to bring in gender equality and protect women's dignity at the workplace.

Yes, they were strong women. Yes, they occupy influential positions today. Yes, a poor woman working as a contract labor will not be in a similar position to resist the even more blatant sexual overtures from her supervisor. Yes, it is possible for women to file such cases and tarnish the image of their bosses without due process. Yes, even accepting all the limitations, we need to rejoice this moment.

The 1997 Vishakha guidelines issued by Justice JS Verma were historical but its

AS I SEE IT

Taking 'MeToo' Past the Confines of Social Media

"Why now? At that time, there were no internal complaints committees and the idea of approaching the police was scary. Does this mean that the incidents did not occur? The lesson learnt is that women have to stake a claim. They will not be given their rights on a platter. They have to snatch them from a patently patriarchal system of corporate governance."



impact was marginal on corporates. Even within government offices most women did not register complaints as the complaints committees were non-functional, or it was very easy to gang up against the employee when a senior boss was involved. The private corporates did not bother to set up complaints committees.

Then in 2013 we got the Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act. Even this did not have the desired impact. But now hopefully these committees will begin to function. They will invite an external member, an NGO person or an expert on the issue, to be part of this committee. And if there are lapses, the #MeToo movement will still be around to expose the lapses. These are the concrete gains of this campaign.

The storm, which started with Tanushree Dutta's allegations against Nana Patekar three weeks ago has turned into an avalanche. While denting the patriarchal base of our industries, institutions and public offices, it has spilled into the legal and political domains. We cannot predict what the legal battle will entail and how long it will go on from one court to the other. All eyes will be on the court and many legal issues will have to be gone into.

It was obvious that the #MeToo movement could not stay confined within the comfort zone of social media, of 'naming and shaming' with first person narratives of violations. However, we cannot undermine it as it was a bold step, as a woman who exposes her violator with the intimate details of the abuse which may involve naming body parts and graphically describing the type and extent of abuse in the social media, have more to lose than the person named. The courage of their convictions led many to lend their voice to the steadily galvanizing movement which created ripples in the placid waters of several of our institutions, and touched even the NGO sector.

There are signs that some changes will be brought about within the film industry. The big banners are in the process of hurriedly

setting up internal complaints committees (ICC) (which they should have done a long time ago). Many women directors have come out with a statement that they will not work with actors who have been accused of sexual misconduct. The comedy group AIB has decided to de-list every video featuring a former member, Utsav Chakraborty, who is accused of sexual harassment by several women. Some Bollywood projects such as "Housefull 4" and "Mogul" are facing an uncertain future with their stars making a public statement that they will not work with those accused of sexual harassment.

Media houses were the worst hit and heads began to roll. After women complained against the Resident Editor of the Times of India in Hyderabad, K.R. Sreenivas and the Hindustan Times journalist Prashant Jha, they had to step down. While some rubbished the allegations, Chetan Bhagat and Rajat Kapoor issued an apology.

Why did they not complain earlier? Why are they coming out now two or three decades later? The answer is simple. As one journalist succinctly stated, "At that time, in early nineties when many of these incidents had taken place, awareness about sexual harassment was lacking. There were no internal complaints committees. The idea of approaching the police was scary. We did not even have the backing of our families. Does this mean that the incidents did not occur?"

The naming and shaming device is a result of the failure of our criminal justice system to redress their grievances. The women will be asked for proof. But as the law on sexual harassment at the workplace stipulates clearly, it is not the acts of the abuser but the perception of the violated that is relevant. And it is here the graphic details contained in the personal narratives posted in the social media will come to their aid.

(The author is a women's rights lawyer and pioneer of the women's movement in India focused on issues of gender and law reforms)

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Pakistan's Nuclear Arsenal more worrisome than North Korea's



By Ven Parameswaran



9/11 happened because Pakistan supported the Taliban and the Al Qaeda. We discovered that Pakistan was the epicenter of global terrorism. Almost all terrorists emanated from Pakistan and committed terrorism in the U.S.A. and Europe. President George W Bush sent his Secretary of State, Gen. Collin Powell to Pakistan, with whom the USA had a Mutual Security Pact from 1954. Powell met Gen. Musharraf of Pakistan and made a deal. Pakistan agreed to cooperate fully with the USA and provide all help in finding Osama bin Laden and other leaders of Al Qaeda."



Pakistan is more dangerous than North Korea as it does not have a centralized control on its nuclear weapons, making them vulnerable to theft and sale.

President Obama had intelligence that Pakistan was hiding and protecting Osama Bin Laden in one of military cantonments. In 2011, that is 10 years after 9/11, the U.S. secretly got rid of Osama Bin Laden. The Pakistani doctor who confirmed the identity of Osama Bin Laden has been held in jail by Pakistan. Thus, Pakistan betrayed its ally, the U.S.A. For ten years, Pakistan was trying to use Osama bin Laden's leadership to stage terrorism in India. The mutual trust between the USA and Pakistan was broken. However, President Obama chose not to punish Pakistan.

WAKE UP CALL BY PRESIDENT TRUMP

President Trump is the first U.S. President to challenge Pakistan. He wrote in his tweet: "The U.S. has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies, deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools." President Trump withdrew military aid and gave an ultimatum to Pakistan to stop supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan and to dismantle all terror organizations and terrorist sanctuaries in Pakistan.

PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY IN SHAMBLES WITH NO FOREIGN EXCHANGE

Mr. Imran Khan, the new Prime Minister of Pakistan has been elected with the tacit support and help of Pakistan's military. For his survival his first loyalty is to the military. Pakistan is negotiating with the I.M.F. for a \$12 billion loan. The U.S. has leverage in the IMF being the largest investor. The IMF cannot approve the loan without consent from the USA. Pakistan has been devoting its scarce resources to keep on producing nuclear bombs.

PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE VULNERABLE TO THEFT AND SALE

Pakistan is more dangerous than North Korea as it does not have a centralized control on its nuclear weapons, making them vulnerable to theft and sale, former Senator Larry Pressler warned, describing both the nations as rogue states. He feared that Pakistan's nuclear weapons might be used against the US, warning of the possibility of someone buying these nuclear weapons from generals. "The weapons could be transported to the US fairly simply. Just as 9/11 was a very simple operation run by 20 or 30 people," he said. "The Pakistani nuclear bombs are not controlled. They are subject to sale or stealing and they could be easily gotten out of Pakistan to just about anywhere in the world," he said speaking at an event sponsored by The Hudson Institute, a top American think-tank. The former top American Senator, however, said he does not think that Pakistan's nuclear weapons are going to be used against India. I do not agree. The Senator said "I think what North Korea needs is just a lot of attention and hand-holding. Pakistan is a different thing because you don't really have one person in-charge. I think Pakistan is more dangerous to the US," he reiterated in response to a question.

"We should declare Pakistan a terrorist state. We should put certain sanctions on Pakistan," he said.

PAKISTAN'S GROWING ARSENAL WITHOUT CENTRAL CIVILIAN CONTROL IS THREAT TO GLOBAL SECURITY



Why does Pakistan need to keep on increasing the number of bombs? There are thousands of nuclear weapons in the world today. According to the latest count from the Federation of American Scientists, the 5 original nuclear powers have a combined 15,465 nuclear weapons between them, most of which are divided amongst the US and Russia. Yet, the fastest growing arsenal in the world is not included in this number. While Pakistan has a range of 100-120 nuclear weapons in its possession—a figure that pales in comparison to the US or Russia—Islamabad has devoted a tremendous amount of its military budget to growing its arsenal and producing the associated delivery systems that are needed to launch them.

More alarming than Pakistan's current stockpile is the projected growth of its arsenal over the next decade. In a wide ranging report for the Council on Foreign Relations, professor Gregory D Koblentz of George Mason University assessed that Pakistan had enough highly enriched uranium to increase its stockpile to 200 nuclear weapons by 2020 if fully utilized. Percentage wise, this would mean that Pakistan could have as many nuclear weapons as the U.K. by 2020. Moreover, Pakistan falls outside the purview of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

To guarantee the ability to rapidly expand their stockpile, the Pakistani military is investing in reprocessing plutonium in addition to enriching uranium. In January 2015, the Institute for Science and International Security reported that the Pakistanis opened up their fourth plutonium facility at Khushab, which provides Islamabad with an additional channel to construct nuclear bomb material in a relatively short period of time. "Its expansion appears to be part of an effort to increase the production of weapons-grade plutonium," the ISIS report (Pakistan's intelligence agency) reads: "Allowing Pakistan to build a larger number of miniaturized plutonium-based nuclear weapons that can complement its existing highly enriched uranium nuclear weapons."

PAKISTANI NUKES A MAJOR U.S. INTELLIGENCE PRIORITY

To say that the U.S. Intelligence community is closely monitoring the development of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program would be an understatement. The U.S. government is doing more than just monitoring: they are

actively preparing for a terrible catastrophe and engaging Pakistani officials in the hopes that they will stop pouring resources into the expansion of their program. The last thing Washington wants or needs is a nuclear crisis flashpoint in a dangerous and unpredictable region filled with an alphabet soup of Islamist terrorist groups. The US government under both George W Bush and Barack Obama has been trying to prevent such a crisis scenario from occurring.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Despite all the attempts from the nuclear nonproliferation community, Pakistan will continue to develop and strengthen its nuclear deterrent as long as the high brass in the Pakistani military continues to have an India-centric mindset in its defense policy. India and Pakistan have fought three wars since independence in 1947, and in each case, the Pakistanis were either the losers or forced into a stalemate before acceding to a ceasefire (1971 breakaway of East Pakistan was an especially embarrassing defeat for the Pakistanis). Islamabad has not forgotten these cases ever since. And for the Pakistanis, the lessons of these past conflicts are all the same: we cannot repeat history.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S NEW WORLD ORDER: INDIA AND THE USA HAVE SIGNED A DEAL THAT MAKES THEM CLOSEST ALLIES ON A PAR WITH THE NATO MEMBERS

The US and the IMF have told Pakistan that it cannot use IMF loan to repay China or divert the resources to increasing its nuclear arsenal. President Trump, unlike George W Bush or Obama, is challenging Pakistan to behave. In effect, Trump is saying that he will not tolerate Pakistan to betray again. Trump is also anxious to withdraw from Afghanistan and he knows Pakistan is the bottleneck. Based on his tough negotiations and policies towards his close allies, be it Canada or Western Europe, Trump means business. Therefore, it is to be hoped that the U.S. will not allow Pakistan to mess up with international security. I think President Trump is giving clear messages to Pakistan's new Prime Minister and its military/ISIS leaders.

(Scarsdale, New York based Ven Parameswaran is Chairman, Asian American Republican Committee founded in 1988)

Vladimir Putin says can't justify spoiling Saudi ties over Khashoggi affair

SOCHI (RUSSIA) (TIP): President Vladimir Putin said on Thursday that Russia did not have enough information about the unexplained disappearance of a Saudi journalist to justify spoiling ties with Riyadh.

Turkey says Jamal Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist who was critical of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, was killed by Saudi agents in Riyadh's diplomatic mission in Istanbul on October 2 and his body cut up. Saudi Arabia denies the allegation.

Putin told a discussion forum in the Black Sea resort of Sochi that Moscow did not really know what had happened in the case, that it was a pity that the journalist had gone missing, and that Russia would wait for details. (Reuters)

Pope Francis indicates willingness to visit North Korea

VATICAN CITY (TIP): South Korea's president has met with Pope Francis in a private audience, and his office says that the pontiff indicated his willingness to visit North Korea.

The South Korean presidential office said in a statement Thursday that President Moon Jae-in "conveyed North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's desire for a papal visit to North Korea". A formal invitation directly from North Korea will follow.

The office said Francis said that "if the invitation comes, I will surely respond to it, and I can possibly go".

Kim initially indicated his desire for a papal visit during a Korean summit last month. If it materialises, such a visit would be the first by a pope to North Korea. (AP)

Britain official pulls out of Saudi conference

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox is the latest high-level Western official to drop out of attending next week's summit in Riyadh over concerns about the missing Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

ISTANBUL (TIP): Britain's trade minister has pulled out of a Saudi investment conference over the kingdom's involvement in the disappearance and alleged slaying of dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

International Trade Secretary Liam Fox is the latest high-level Western official to drop out of attending next week's summit in Riyadh. French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire and Dutch Finance Minister Wopke Hoekstra have also cancelled, along with several senior business executives.

Britain's Department for International Trade says Fox "has decided the time is not right for him to attend the Future Investment Initiative." Britain says it is "very concerned" about the disappearance of Khashoggi, who was last seen entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul earlier this month. (AP)

Can Theresa May be forced to hold a second Brexit referendum?

With the Theresa May government flailing to find a compromise it can sell both in Brussels and at home, talk of a second referendum has resurfaced as way to break the impasse.

LONDON (TIP): There are those in the Conservative Party so against Brexit that they are willing to gang up with the opposition to vote down Theresa May's Brexit deal in order to secure a second referendum.

How many are willing to see this scenario through is hard to quantify — there is yet no deal — but the fact that lawmakers are discussing it semi-openly is a sign of how worried the prime minister should be.

"The idea of making support for the prime minister's deal dependent on a people's vote is one of a number of ideas being discussed at the moment," opposition Labour lawmaker Ben Bradshaw said in an interview. "Support for a people's vote is rising particularly among undeclared Tories — even those with leave constituencies."

Two high-profile Tory lawmakers confirmed the plan to Bloomberg, but declined to talk publicly because of the sensitivity of the matter.

The stakes couldn't be higher for May. She has no majority in the House of Commons after gambling it away last year on an election bet to try and boost her numbers.

Her government insists rejection of her plan would mean the U.K. crashing out of the European Union next March without a deal. But there is push-back against that narrative.

Bradshaw said backing among Tory lawmakers is increasing because the deal May



secures is unlikely to be very good, meaning they will be able to justify supporting a fresh referendum even in areas that were strongly pro-Brexit during the original 2016 referendum.

This fledgling rebellion from Tory rebels raises a hair-raising nightmare for May's whip: those who oppose May's plans because they want to stay close to the EU voting alongside Brexit believers such as Boris Johnson who want a clean break.

With the government flailing to find a

compromise it can sell both in Brussels and at home, talk of a second referendum has resurfaced as way to break the impasse. The Labour Party continues to keep it open as option even as May continues to shoot it down almost daily.

The problem is that Tories are genuinely torn about it. Some worry a second vote would exacerbate the country's divisions and would be an admission by Parliament is broken. In short, they haven't made up their mind and might not until the last minute. (bloomberg)

In Turkey, commuters can top up subway cards by giving cans and bottles for recycling

ISTANBUL (TIP): Istanbul on Wednesday rolled out an alternative currency for commuters who need to top up their subway cards but are short of cash: recyclables.

The city is installing "reverse vending machines" at metro stations that allow passengers to add credit to their subway cards simply by inserting a plastic bottle or aluminium can into the machine.

Once a value has been assigned to the recyclables, the machine will crush, shred and sort the material.

The initiative aims to encourage recycling in the city of more than 15 million people, where recycling practices are scant or indifferent. But the alternative way of paying to travel is sure to be welcomed by commuters, as Turkey's currency has been hammered lately, falling to record lows against the dollar because of soaring inflation, economic mismanagement by the Turkish government and tensions with the United States.

This is how the vending machines would work: A 0.33-liter plastic bottle, for example, roughly equivalent to 11 ounces, would add 2 Turkish cents to a subway card, while a 0.5-liter bottle would add 3 cents and a 1.5-liter bottle would add 6 cents. (A subway journey costs 2.60 Turkish lira, about 40 U.S. cents; 100 Turkish cents, or kuruş, make up 1 Turkish

lira.)

A commuter would need around 28 1.5-liter bottles to buy a single-journey ticket. Aluminium cans are more valuable, returning 9 Turkish cents for a 0.5-liter can.

Istanbul's mayor, Mevlut Uysal, said the machines would track the number of bottles recycled by each passenger and reward those recycling the largest number of containers with free or discounted events such as theater tickets.

Turkey is Europe's third-largest producer of household and commercial waste, after Germany and France, and it is the worst in the region at recycling, according to a 2017 report by the consultancy group Expert Market, which is based in Britain.

"Most households do not automatically recycle because they are unaware of the benefits to the environment, and others are just lazy," Elif Cengiz, a manager for the waste management project, called Zero Waste, said in a phone interview Wednesday. "These new machines give people a direct incentive to recycle while educating them about the benefits of recycling."

Cengiz explained that the municipality had made waste management a priority in recent years because of rising concern over the damage that waste is causing to the environment.

The country's recycling drive has started to produce results, saving 30 million trees in 15 months since last June, said Mustafa Ozturk, the undersecretary for the Environment and Urban Planning Ministry.

More than half of all the plastic bottles in Turkey were recycled last year, according to the ministry, and more than 1.7 million tons of waste paper and cartons were recycled last year and in the first three months of 2018.

"This means we saved 24.6 million trees from being cut in 2017, and another 5.4 million in the first quarter of this year," Ozturk said in a statement. "The use of recycled material in production contributes to productivity and separate storage for paper waste also saves storage space and decreases waste collecting costs for local administrations."

The first reverse vending machines were installed at the ITU-Ayazaga Station, and the municipality plans to install at least 100 more at 25 locations across the city, including at schools and universities, by the end of the year. Along with paying for subway rides, the cards can be used to ride the bus and tram, and even to gain access to public toilets.

"I sometimes use the recycling cans at school, but usually I forget and just put my bottles in a regular bin," said Meltem Ozil, a philosophy student who uses the ITU metro station to get to university. (NYT)

China: Woman kills self, children after husband fakes own death

The 34-year-old had planned to fake his own death to pay the medical bills of his 3-year-old epileptic daughter from the insurance money. He didn't inform his wife about the plan.

BEIJING (TIP): The suicide of a woman and her two children in the Hunan province in China after her husband allegedly faked his own death has led to questions on financial stress and life of women in the countryside. The woman, identified by her surname Dai, drowned herself and her two children after sharing her last letter on social media site WeChat, stating she wants to reunite with her husband she believed was dead.

The husband, identified by his surname, He, had allegedly faked his own death to receive insurance payout after his debts mounted. He surrendered to the police a day after bodies of his wife and children were discovered and has been detained on charges of insurance fraud and intentional damage to property, reported the BBC.

In September, He rented a car and faked a crash. The 34-year-old told authorities he had planned to fake his own death to pay the medical bills of his 3-year-old epileptic daughter from the insurance money. His wife was listed as the beneficiary of the insurance payout.

He, however, didn't inform his wife about the plan. On October 10, she drowned her children and herself. In her letter, Dai says she wants to leave alone but leaving her children orphans would mean they would be bullied like she was, The Guardian reported.



A report by The Telegraph reveals China is the only country in the world where the female suicide rate is higher than the male. The suicide rate is much more in rural China where young women are married off and made to adhere to familial norms and stay dependent to the men in the household.

The incident has also raised questions on financial pressures on the rural citizens of China. According to the BBC, the hashtag #ManFakesDeathLeadingtoWifesDeath has

been viewed almost 29 million times on microblogging site Weibo.

Quoting an editorial by Xiong Zhi, a columnist for the Guangming Daily, The Guardian said, "We can't measure this tragedy in simple terms of right and wrong – just like we can't say simply that Dai 'died for love'. It's a reminder that the protection of women's rights and status in China still has a long way to go."

(PTI)

After Canada legalises marijuana, pot industry eyes rest of the world

MONTREAL (TIP): Canada's decision to legalize marijuana could influence other countries as they mull whether to end their own bans on the drug.

Drug law reform advocates say the nation's status as a major economy and a good international partner lends additional weight to its decision. Legal sales began Wednesday as more than 110 legal pot shops opened across Canada.

Among the other nations considering legalization are Mexico, where the incoming president has expressed an interest in legalizing pot, and New Zealand, where the government has promised a referendum by 2020 on whether to regulate marijuana.

Uruguay is the only other country with legal sales. (AP)

Lawyers for Brazil's president Michel Temer ask top court to annul police graft accusations

Police have been investigating Temer for allegedly taking bribes in return for helping shape a decree regulating Brazil's ports, and in particular for extending concessions in the port of Santos to benefit companies of close associates.

BRASILIA (TIP): Lawyers for Brazil's President Michel Temer on Wednesday asked the country's top court to annul a federal police report that recommended he and his close associates be charged with graft and have their assets confiscated.

Police have been investigating Temer for allegedly taking bribes in return for helping shape a decree regulating Brazil's ports, and in particular for extending concessions in the port of Santos to benefit companies of close associates.

Temer, who took office in 2016 after former President Dilma Rousseff was impeached, has repeatedly said he is innocent. He has faced several graft allegations, but is immune from prosecution while in office, unless the Supreme Court decides to strip his immunity.

Temer's defense team argued that the federal police should not be able to charge Temer without the authorization of the Supreme Court or the public prosecutors office.

The federal police report, which was seen by Reuters on Tuesday, recommended that Temer, his daughter Maristela, his former adviser Rodrigo Rocha Loures and eight others face charges and have their assets confiscated for their role in allegedly laundering bribes through real estate transactions.

Carlos Marun, Brazil's minister of government, said on Wednesday that Temer was "outraged and shaken" by the police report. Supreme Court Justice Luis Roberto Barroso, who is overseeing the case, said on Tuesday he would wait to see the findings of Brazil's public prosecutors office before deciding on how to proceed. Temer's term ends on Jan. 1, and with it his immunity from prosecution. (Reuters)

Japan exports fall for first time since 2016 as trade war fears mount

TOKYO (TIP): Japan's exports fell in September for the first time since 2016 as shipments to the United States and China declined, likely impeding third-quarter economic growth and adding to concerns about the broadening impact of an escalating Sino-U.S. trade war. The data comes days after a Reuters poll showed a third of Japanese companies – not just exporters – have been affected by the trade conflict between the world's two biggest economies, and more than half worried about its fallout on their business.

Japanese policymakers also remain wary about the overall economic impact of the international trade frictions. A string of natural disasters that struck Japan has added to the strain on factories, disrupting output and physical distribution. The U.S.-Sino tariff row has yet to materially hurt trade activity, but a slowdown in external demand has bolstered views that Japan's economy, the world's third largest, likely slowed sharply in the July-September quarter.

"The economy probably grew only slightly in the third quarter, led by firm consumption and brisk capex.

External demand likely made no contribution," said Takeshi Minami, chief economist at Norinchukin Research Institute. "Assuming the U.S.-China trade frictions have widespread effects on global trade, Japan's exports will struggle to grow."

Minami said declines in shipments to the

United States and China – the two key export destinations for Japan – are a source of concern as each of them accounts for about 20 percent of Japanese exports, respectively. Ministry of Finance (MOF) data out on Thursday showed Japanese exports fell 1.2 percent in September from a year earlier, against a 1.9 percent increase expected by economists in a Reuters poll, and followed a 6.6 percent gain in August.

It was the first decline since November 2016. In volume terms, exports fell 4.8 percent in the year to September, the first drop in seven months. Japan's exports to the United States declined 0.2 percent in the year to September, dragged down by falling shipments of construction and mining machinery, auto parts and medicines.

U.S.-bound auto exports amounted to some 143,000 cars, down 7.0 percent year-on-year in a snapback from the previous year's brisk shipments, a sign that car sales have leveled off. Imports from the United States rose 3.1 percent in September, led by crude oil, liquefied petroleum gas, helping reduce Japan's trade surplus with the United States by 4.0 percent year-on-year to 590 billion yen (\$5.24 billion). The U.S. Trade Representative's office told Congress on Tuesday it would open trade talks with Japan, describing the country as an important yet underperforming market for U.S. exports.

TRUMP THREAT: Tokyo and Washington last month agreed to start trade talks in an

arrangement that, for now, avoids the worst-case scenario of an imminent 25 percent tariff on cars. Trump has made clear he is unhappy with Japan's \$69 billion trade surplus with the United States – nearly two-thirds of it from auto exports – and wants a two-way agreement to address it.

Tokyo pushed back on a straight bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that Washington had sought, fearing it could put Japan under pressure to open politically sensitive sectors such as agriculture. Thursday's trade data showed exports to China, Japan's biggest trading partner, fell 1.7 percent in the year to September, the first decline in seven months, dragged down by semiconductor production equipment.

Shipments to Asia, which account for more than half of Japan's overall exports, rose 0.9 percent. Overall imports rose 7.0 percent in the year to September, versus the median estimate for a 13.7 percent annual increase.

The trade balance was surplus of 139.6 billion yen, compared with the median estimate for a shortfall of 50.0 billion yen. "External demand has likely put a drag on Japan's economy," said Koya Miyamae, senior economist at SMBC Nikko Securities.

"Going forward, exports may recover from supply constraints, but effects from the slowdown in emerging markets, and the U.S.-China trade war remain a source of concern." (Reuters)



VIDYA BALAN SHARES FIRST LOOK AS BASAVATARAKAM

NTR biopic is gaining momentum with every passing day. Vidya Balan shared the first look of her character from the upcoming biopic where she will be seen as NTR's first wife, Basavatarakam. Vidya shared a picture as her Instagram story and wrote: "What do I see?"

In the picture, dressed in a traditional sari, Vidya is every bit a married woman. She wears flowers in her hair (done in a bun), sports a bindi and wears some gold jewellery. She has a stern expression on her face.

Vidya shared another picture from the shoot of the film, which is currently on in Hyderabad. This comes days after Rakul Preet, who will be essaying the role of late actor Sriveidi, shared a picture of herself as the late actor.

NTR biopic will see Nandamuri Balakrishna essay the role of his late father, while Rana Daggubati will play Chandra Babu Naidu, the current chief minister of Andhra Pradesh and the son-in-law of the late actor. Actor Nandamuri Kalyan Ram will be seen playing the role of his late father Nandamuri Harikrishna in the upcoming biopic. Balakrishna's look in the film was revealed on the eve of Independence Day by the makers, where he bore a close resemblance to his late father.

The film is being directed by Krish Jagarlamudi, who allegedly left Kangana Ranaut's Manikarnika mid way, to begin work on NTR. The expectations from the film are running high after the stupendous success of Savitri biopic Mahanati, starring Keerthy Suresh in the lead.

PRIYANKA, NICK JONAS PLANNING GRAND JODHPUR WEDDING IN NOVEMBER

Priyanka Chopra and her fiancé, actor and singer Nick Jonas, are planning a wedding sooner rather than later. According to a new report, the celebrity couple could get married in November in a lavish Jodhpur wedding.

"Nick and Priyanka were recently in India and had even gone to Jodhpur. That was when they decided the gorgeous Umaid Bhawan to be their dream wedding venue. They will have a limited guest list of 200 people with only their close friends and family in attendance," Filmfare quotes a source as saying.

The wedding will be preceded by a grand bridal shower, to be held in New York. "Since lot of Priyanka and Nick's Hollywood friends are settled in New York, PeeCee is quite excited to have her bridal shower there followed by a grand wedding in Jodhpur," the report continued.

Meanwhile, according to a People.com report, it is very likely that Priyanka and Nick tie the knot before Nick's brother, Joe and his fiancé, Sophie Turner. "Even though Joe's been engaged longer, it wouldn't be surprising if Nick got married first," the report quoted a source as saying.

Priyanka had hinted as much in an earlier interview to InStyle. "I'm writing a book, and planning a wedding," she said.

Nick and Priyanka's globe-trotting romance has been closely followed by the internet. They met at the 2017 Met Gala in New York, and remained in touch until rumours of them dating first emerged a few months ago. After being spotted with Nick at several outings, the couple visited India numerous times, culminating in an official 'roka' ceremony. They've kept their fans updated with pictures from Singapore, Mexico, London, Los Angeles



and other places around the world.

On being asked what it is about Priyanka that made him realise that she was the person for him, Nick recently told E! News: "So many things... I can go on and get all mushy but the thing that really

connected both of us is our love for family and faith and importance of being connected to those who are always going to be with you. And we found that in each other as well, which is a beautiful thing and I am excited to start our live together."

Great to see films on women sports stars, says Panga actor Richa Chadha

Actor Richa Chadha, who will essay a kabaddi player with Kangana Ranaut in Ashwini Iyer Tiwari's Panga, finds it great that a number of movies are being written about women sports stars. Richa has begun prepping for the movie, which will be one of the most physically challenging roles she has played in her Bollywood career. The film, also starring Pankaj Tripathi, will be about women kabaddi players and the trials they face.

"It's great to see such a great number of films like Panga being written on female sport athletes. It's important to have representation and such diversity being shown on-screen. To show such stories helps create awareness both for the amazing women we have in the

sports arena who are doing so well internationally and it also helps increase the popularity for the sport," Richa said in a statement.

"It's great to see filmmakers like Ashwini Iyer Tiwari who are etching such roles for women that shows them as a figure of strength and vigour," she added.

Omung Kumar's Mary Kom on boxer M.C. Mary Kom brought the spotlight on women sportspersons, and now films are being made on icons like Saina Nehwal and Sania Mirza.

Panga, according to its makers, is a story that reaffirms that a family who laughs, cries, dreams together and if they are by your side, nothing seems to be impossible to a willing heart.

Source: IANS





DEMI MOORE MAKES INSTAGRAM DEBUT

Actress Demi Moore has officially made her Instagram debut in the most stylish way possible. The actress, 55, shared the very-first video to her Instagram on Friday — just a few hours after making a surprise appearance at Princess Eugenie and Jack Brooksbank's wedding, reports people.com.

The star used her first ever post to thank her glam team and Stella McCartney for making her feel like royalty. "Stella, this is for you," Moore began the video, referencing the British designer of her maroon dress. "I'm just back from the wedding... I just have to say thank you so much. I felt so beautiful, so comfortable. I felt like a princess today. Thank you, thank you to your whole team. You guys were amazing."

Moore, who explained in the caption that her post was in "honor of my 3 beautiful daughters" who were "desperate for me to get into the InstaSwing", went on to show appreciation for the designers behind her matching shoes, fascinator, and silk clutch.

Since making her Instagram debut, Moore has accumulated more than 32,600 followers.

Her youngest daughter, Tallulah, 24, also gave her a warm welcome to the social media platform by resharing her video and expressing excitement that her "queen mother" finally gave in.



Claire Foy wanted to 'violently hurt' a man with #MeTooFraud placard

Claire Foy has admitted she wanted to 'violently hurt' a man with a #MeTooFraud placard during the Brett Kavanaugh hearings in Washington D.C. in a recent interview with The Hollywood Reporter.

During her time in the America's capital state, the Crown star, 34, revealed her heart 'breaks' over individuals who 'care so little' about others, amid the newly-appointed Supreme Court member's sexual misconduct allegations.

The British actress also touched on her role as Lisbeth Salander in forthcoming film The Girl in the Spider's Web, where she plays a computer hacker who survived severe emotional and sexual abuse.

Claire shared her thoughts on America's political climate, following the 53-year-old's confirmation into the Supreme Court last week.

The First Man star recalled a shocking incident with a Kavanaugh supporter: 'How dare you write #MeTooFraud on a placard? It just breaks my heart, how other human beings just care so little about people.'

Marriage to Tom Cruise was not power but protection: Nicole Kidman

Actor Nicole Kidman says marrying actor Tom Cruise protected her from being sexually harassed in Hollywood. She was just 22 when she wed Cruise. In an interview with New York magazine, Kidman, 51, has reflected back on that time, saying she now realises that her then-husband's superstar status protected her from the dark side of Hollywood, reports dailymail.co.uk.

The Oscar-winner says that being coupled with the actor gave her a special kind of "protection", discouraging men from sexually harassing her. "I got married very young, but it definitely wasn't power for me -- it was protection," Kidman explained.

"I married for love, but being married to an extremely powerful man kept me from being sexually harassed. I would work, but I was still very much cocooned." After the couple split,

Actor Nicole Kidman explained that being married to a superstar such as Tom Cruise kept her away from the dark side of Hollywood

attitudes towards Kidman changed, she said.

"When I came out of it at 32, 33, it's almost like I had to grow up." Kidman rarely talks about her relationship with Cruise, something she said was a deliberate choice made with her current husband Keith Urban in mind.

"I'm married now to the man who is my great love, and it almost feels disrespectful," she said. Kidman adopted two children with Cruise and had two more with second husband Urban. Source: IANS



Pakistan may not seek IMF bailout; seeking help from 'friendly countries': Imran Khan

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan may not have to approach the IMF for loans as it has received "positive" responses from some "friendly countries", Prime Minister Imran Khan has said, days after Islamabad formally approached the global lender for a bailout to tide over the economic crisis. Talking to a delegation of senior editors on Wednesday, Khan said his government was in touch with some "friendly countries" and has sought cooperation to address the mounting balance of payments deficit and dwindling foreign currency reserves.

Though he did not name any countries, Pakistani media has reported that the government was consulting allies like China and Saudi Arabia for financial help.

"Their response is positive. I am quite hopeful that we will not have to approach the International Monetary Fund for our economic needs," he was quoted as saying by The News.

Imran's comments follows some tough talking by IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde and the US on Pakistan's bailout plan, demanding absolute transparency on the country's debts, including those owned by China under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects.

Khan has vowed to steer Pakistan out of a looming balance-of-payments crisis, saying it needs USD 10 to 12 billion. (ET)

Indonesia drops disinfectant on quake-obliterated villages

JAKARTA (TIP): Indonesia's disaster agency says helicopters are dropping disinfectant on neighbourhoods in the earthquake and tsunami-stricken city of Palu to reduce disease risks from the thousands of victims believed buried in obliterated communities.

The agency said Thursday that 430 hectares (1.7 square miles) of land and nearly 3,500 homes succumbed to liquefaction when the September 28 earthquake turned the soft soil to mud. The Spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said in a statement the disinfectant is necessary because of the large number of victims not recovered by the search and rescue effort that ended on October 12.

Officials say the destroyed Palu neighborhoods of Balaroa and Petobo, and Jono Oge in neighboring Sigi district, cannot be redeveloped. Balaroa and Petobo will be turned into green spaces with monuments to those who perished. (AP)

President Abdulla Yameen says preparing to step down with no regrets on any decisions

MALE (TIP): The president of the Maldives, Abdulla Yameen, said on Wednesday he had no complaints or reservations about any of his decisions while in office, and that he was preparing to step down, despite having challenged his election defeat in court. In a surprise result, Yameen lost his re-election bid last month and initially conceded defeat. Last week, however, his lawyers went to the Supreme Court, saying his supporters had complained about rigging of votes and fraudulent ballot papers. (Reuters).

China trying to use Tibetan Buddhism to promote Belt and Road Initiative, say experts

In a new initiative, China held a two-day symposium in northwest China's Qinghai Province on Tuesday to discuss how Buddhism could better serve BRI and resist separatism, state-run Global Times reported.

BEIJING / TIBET (TIP): China is trying to use the Tibetan Buddhism as a soft power tool to further its ambitious multi-billion dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the region as it developed Tibet to become Beijing's gateway for trade to South Asia through Nepal, according to experts.

China is vigorously pursuing the BRI, a pet initiative of President Xi Jinping, which offered billions of dollars of loans for infrastructure projects to different countries as it looks to expand global influence.

The BRI, however, evoked negative reactions in India as the controversial multi-billion dollars China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) remained its flagship project. India has protested to China over the CPEC as it is being laid through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

In a new initiative, China held a two-day symposium in northwest China's Qinghai Province on Tuesday to discuss how Buddhism could better serve BRI and resist separatism, state-run Global Times reported.

Tibetan monks and scholars took part in the event, the report said.

Tibetan Buddhism in which the Dalai Lama plays a pivotal role has following in different countries besides India. It has strong following in countries like Nepal and Mongolia.

Elaborating on the symposium, Qin Yongzhang, a research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), told the Global Times that Tibetan Buddhism can serve as a bridge between the BRI countries to better communicate with each other, since the religious and cultural beliefs are similar in Central and South Asia.

One immediate challenge of promoting the BRI through Tibetan Buddhism comes from India, which has been holding back for geopolitical reasons, Qin said.



The Dalai Lama has established a separatist base in India, and has been advocating the "traditional culture" as leverage to expand his influence, Qin added.

China in recent years has developed infrastructure in Tibet with rail, road and air connectivity. It is now in the process of establishing a rail link to Nepal with plans to connect to India.

The CASS and the state-run China Tibetology Research Centre attach strategic importance to the project to promote China's BRI through Tibetan Buddhism, Qin said.

Soft power like religion, if used properly, will convert to hard power, Xiong Kunxin, an ethnic studies professor at Tibet University in Lhasa, told the daily.

During this year's International Buddhist Conference, Yin Shun, the deputy head of China's Buddhist Association, noted that the construction of the China-proposed BRI has injected new energy into China-Nepal ties, the report said.

China also built a relationship with Mongolia through Tibetan Buddhism, Qin said, noting that Mongolia has sent monks to study at the Lama Temple and High-level Tibetan Buddhism College of China, both located in Beijing.

Buddhism has a significant role in curbing separatism, religious extremism and terrorism while implementing the BRI because it pursues harmony and opposes violence, Xiong said.

The Tibet Autonomous Region will benefit from the BRI, which will stabilize the region and boost its economy by developing border trade and cultural tourism, wrote Zhao Kejin, deputy director of Tsinghua University's Institute of International Studies in an article published on ifeng.com.

Tibet has more than 1,700 Tibetan Buddhist temples, 46,000 monks and nuns, Zhou Wei, chief of the China Tibetology Research Centre's Institute for Religious Studies, had said. (PTI)

Afghanistan: Taliban targets NATO convoy, two civilians dead

The attack on the NATO convoy came at the end of a particularly violent day across Afghanistan as tensions are rising ahead of the country's parliamentary elections on Saturday.

KABUL (TIP): A Taliban suicide bomber slammed into a North Atlantic Treaty Organization convoy near the Afghan capital, killing two civilians and injuring five Czech troops, Afghan officials and the Czech military said Thursday. The attack, which took place late Wednesday in the district of Bagram in Parwan province, also wounded three Afghan civilians, said Wahida Shakar, spokeswoman for the provincial governor.

Bagram is about 40 kilometers (24 miles) from Kabul and is also the home of a

sprawling US military base. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack.

Of the five Czech soldiers, one was seriously injured when their vehicle overturned following the explosion.

The soldier underwent surgery and the Czech military said he was not in life-threatening condition. Earlier, NATO spokeswoman Sgt 1st Class Debra Richardson had said three alliance service members were hurt in the bombing but didn't provide more details. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said an insurgent suicide bomber rammed his car into the NATO convoy.

The attack on the NATO convoy came at the end of a particularly violent day across Afghanistan as tensions are rising ahead of the country's parliamentary elections on Saturday. A Taliban bombing in southern Helmand province killed a candidate running in the elections.

The Taliban also attacked checkpoints in the northern Baghlan province, killing six policemen and wounding two others in a four-hour battle. Also, in eastern Maidan Wardak province, a suicide car bomber targeted a military vehicle, killing two Afghan army troops. The Taliban have threatened the polls and warned teachers and students not to participate in the vote and not to allow schools to be used as polling centers.

The insurgents said in a statement Wednesday that they will target Saturday's elections, which they view as illegitimate, but that they do not want to harm civilians.

In recent months, Afghan troops have come under near-daily attacks. NATO troops, which handed over security to Afghan forces at the end of 2014, mostly train and assist with air power. So far this year, eight US soldiers and three other NATO service members have died in Afghanistan. (AP)

PANCH PRAYAG: THE FIVE CONFLUENCES OF SPIRITUALITY

Uttarakhand, the Land of Gods, is counted among the popular travel destinations by pilgrims because of its religious significance. With snow covered mountains, high mountain ranges, thick forests, lush greenery and holy shrines, the place is like a heaven on earth that attracts travelers and pilgrims from around the world. Every year thousands of pilgrims travel to this beautiful and holy place to offer prayers to their Lord and get some fresh healthy air and peace of mind. There are numerous sacred yatras that you can undertake in Uttarakhand. Panch Prayag yatra is one such journey that provides the peace and support you may be seeking for your soul, mind and body.

An Overview

Panch Prayag are five confluences, which are regarded as major centers for pilgrims where they can perform their purification ceremony and offer prayers. The five holy places of Panch Prayag include:

DEVPRAYAG : where river Alaknanda meets river Bhagirathi

RUDRAPRAYAG : where river Alaknanda meets river Mandakini

KARNAPRAYAG : where river Alaknanda meets river Pinder

NANDPRAYAG : where river Alaknanda meets river Nandakini

VISHNUPRAYAG : where river Alaknanda meets river Dhauliganga

A yatra to Panch Prayag will take you to five divine places that stand for holy rituals and worship. The place is regarded as the essence of everlasting piety.

Hindu Mythology

The Alaknanda river flowing along the four confluences of Panch Prayag – Vishnuprayag, Nandprayag, Karnaprayag, Rudraprayag – finally meet the Bhagirathi river at Devprayag, the fifth Prayag, to form the Ganga, the holy river of India that has brought salvation to this land.

According to Hindu legends, earth was unable to bear the force of the Ganga when it started descending to earth. To control its force, Ganga was divided into 12 channels. At Devprayag, Alaknanda meet Bhagirathi to form the Ganga, higher up from Devprayag, four other meeting form the sacred Panch prayag that pilgrims visit for prayers, bath, purification and worship. Panch Prayag of Garhwal is the second most important prayag out of 14 prayags in India.

Panch Prayagis famous for its religious significance. So, let's take a look on all the pious destinations of the Panch Prayag in detail.

Devprayag

Out of the five confluences, Devprayag is believed to be the most pious. It is the point where the Bhagirathi that rises at Gaumukh and the Alaknanda, which originate from from the Satopanth glaciers located on the eastern side of Chaukh-amba Peak, merge to form the Ganga. Devprayag forms the birth place of river Ganga.

How to reach?

The place is located on NH 58, Delhi-Badrinath high-way. It is approximately 69 km from the north-east of Rishikesh via Shivpuri and Kandi. You can either take a bus from the Chandrabhaga Depot which will charge Rs 80 for 3 hrs journey or a taxi from Rishikesh which will cost Rs 1,100 but take less time. Buses from the depot are available between 5



am and 4 pm only.

Things to do

You can take a bath in the sangam and get rid of sins committed in your previous, perform shraadh ceremony or holy rituals.

Worship in the Ganga Temple that stands at the sangam. Witness the beautiful Raghunath Temple. It is said that here Lord Ram and Laksman in the Treta-yuga performed a yagna seeking forgiveness for killing Ravana, who was a Brahmin by caste. The main temple of Raghunath ji is surrounded by four small temples on each side – Annapurna Devi, Narsingh, Hanuman and Shri Garur Mahadev.

Near the Ram Temple lies the Chandeshwar Mahadev Temple. It is believed to be one of the ancient and holiest temples in the vicinity.

You can visit the two libraries situated at this place where you can find out many old, rare handwritten manuscripts in Hindi and Garhwali.

Rudraprayag

The bright green Mandakini, which flows from Kedar-nath, blend with the white Alaknanda, which flows from Badri-nath, and make the sangam at Rudraprayag. It offers attention-grabbing views of flowing waters in the lap of nature.

How to reach?

Located 140 kms from Rishikesh, you can take a taxi or bus to reach Rudraprayag via Devprayag and Srinagar.

Things to do

You can take a dip in the sangam at Rudraprayag and attend Sangam aarti which take place at 6 in the evening daily. Witness a black rock well known as Narad Shila, where Narad Muni meditated for years to learn how to play the veena. Visit the Gangeshwar Mahadev or Rudranath Temple that stands magnificently

under the shade of a peepal tree.

See the Chamunda Devi Temple, one of the holiest temples of the goddess Chamunda.

Visit the beautiful Koteswar Mahadev Temple that lies to the north of Rudraprayag and 7 km ahead on the road going to Pokhri. On the way, you can also witness some small temples dedicated to Mahadev, Durga and Hanuman.

Karnaprayag

Karnaprayag is situated at the meeting point of river Pindar that flows from the Pindari Glacier and the river Alaknanda forming a broad sangam. It is believed that here the son of Lord Surya and Kunti, Karana meditated to be granted with the unassailable kundal, tuneer and kavach that made him unbeatable.

How to reach?

Located 170 kms from Rishikesh via Rudraprayag and Srinagar, Karnaprayag lies on NH 58 that connects Delhi with Badrinath and Mana Pass. From Rishikesh, you can take a private taxi or bus to reach there.

Things to do

You can visit the ancient Uma Temple. According to a Hindu legend, Uma, the daughter of King Himalaya practiced strict austerities to get Lord Shiva. You will pass through many small temples lining the ghats from the Uma temple. You can also visit the Karna Temple as well as shrines dedicated to Lord Ram, Sita, Lakshman and Shiva which are located next to the shrines of Karna.

Nandprayag

Nandprayag holds the bank of green Nandakini River which flows from a glacier close to Nanda Devi and Alaknanda. The two rivers meet and flow together from here. According to legends, this prayag was known as Kanvasu earlier, after Maharishi Kanva. It was named Nandprayag after King Nand performed a Maha Yagna.

How to reach?

Nandprayag is located 191kms from Rishikesh. You can use a Volvo bus or taxi to reach here from Rishikesh.

Things to do

There is no surviving temple on the ghats of Nandprayag as the solitary temple devoted to Nanda Devi got washed away in a flood. However, there are shrines of Chandika Devi, Gangeshwar Mahadev and Gopalji which are worth visiting.

Vishnuprayag

At Vishnuprayag, the impulsive Vishnu Ganga known as Alaknanda blend with the river Dhauliganga that flows from the Niti Valley. It is the fifth and final prayag out of five prayags of Garhwal.

How to reach?

Vishnuprayag is 272 km from Rishikesh. Both buses and taxies are available from Rishikesh to reach Vishnuprayag.

Things to do

Reaching the ghats through a narrow twisted path is fine, but taking a dip in ghats is a little difficult because of the strong currents. You can visit the small ancient temple devoted to Lord Vishnu. The Legend state that the godly mendicant Narad had meditated and got the blessings of Lord Vishnu here.

BANANA PEELS HELP GETTING RID OF ACNE AND WRINKLES

Natural ingredients are ruling the beauty world right now. These are inexpensive, chemical-free and light on the skin. What those store-bought products can't do, these natural ingredients can do, without damaging the skin cells. One such ingredient is the banana peel.

It is the most neglected item in your house and is often regarded as worthless. With the use of banana peel, you can say goodbye to acne and wrinkles without spending oodles.

How does it work?

Banana peel is high in lutein, an antioxidant and carotenoid vitamin related to Vitamin A. Lutein helps in protecting the skin against the damage done by the sun. Banana peel is high in esterified fatty acids, which are hard to find otherwise and constitute as one of the basic ingredients in many patent lotions.

With the use of banana peel, you can achieve an acne and wrinkle free skin. It has vitamins A, B, C, E, potassium, zinc, iron, and manganese that can reduce even the old acne marks. It hydrates your skin from the inside out and gives it a softer look. If you too want a naturally clear and younger looking skin, this is how you can get it.

How to use?

Incorporating banana peel in your daily beauty regime is very easy. Just follow the given steps for a beautiful looking skin:

- First, prepare your skin. Use a mild cleanser to get rid of oil and dirt on the skin. Don't scrub or be harsh on your skin, especially if you have acne.



- Take a ripe banana and cut its peel into chunks and rub the inner part directly on the skin for 10 to 15 minutes in a circular motion.
- Keep a check if the peel is turning black from the inside.
- If that is the case, it means that the peel needs to be replaced now.
- Don't wash your face instantly.
- Let your skin absorb all the moisture for at least 4-5 hours. (You can do this before going to sleep so that it stays on your face overnight)
- Then rinse off with cold water.
- You can use banana peel daily for better results.

Other benefits

Banana peel is rich in various

minerals and vitamins which make it a perfect ingredient for resolving other skin related troubles as well. Here are some other benefits that you can reap from banana peel:

- It can be used to get rid of warts. Just tape the banana peel on the skin and leave it overnight. With continuous use, your warts will vanish.
- Because of high sugar content, it can help you with hemorrhoids.
- As it is high in natural moisture, it can treat eczema and psoriasis as well.
- You can use banana peel to correct cracked heels as well.
- Banana peel is rich in potassium and is anti-inflammatory in nature. It can be used to treat the skin irritated by the sun.



SHAPE EYEBROWS ACCORDING TO FACE

No matter whether your eyes are big or small, and you have a long nose or a short one, the most defining feature of your face remains your eyebrows. It is the most powerful asset too. Just with an arch, you can show how happy or agitated you are with someone.

When eyebrows are plucked according to the shape of the face, they bring out the best of your personality. You can give more definition to your face or create balance among your features with the help of your eyebrows. Here is how you can do it right:

Oval face

RECOGNITION: If your forehead tends to be broader than your chin area, you have an oval face. Such women have a higher temple and the face gracefully tapers down to a narrow chin. Prominent cheekbones are another plus point for such women. These women need to make sure that their eyebrows are thick enough to balance their bold features. With a higher temple, you need heavy brows.

PREFERRED SHAPE: Thick and angled brows

AVOID: Thin eyebrows

Round face

RECOGNITION: If your temple region and chin area have almost the same width, you have a round face. This is also known as the baby face as this face type doesn't age at all. The widest area of the face is near the cheeks. Since this face type needs definition, arched eyebrows do blend well with it.

PREFERRED SHAPE: High-arched eyebrow

AVOID: Round shape

Heart-shaped face

RECOGNITION: A heart-shaped face is a bit like an oval-shaped face. The only difference is that the chin region is sharper. Barbie dolls have this face type. A heart-shaped face has pointy edges and needs something to mellow the whole look. This face requires well-groomed brows which are soft enough to balance the face.

PREFERRED SHAPE: Low-arched eyebrows

AVOID: High-arched eyebrows

Diamond-shaped face

RECOGNITION: This is a rare face type. The temple is higher, but the forehead is narrow. Both the chin and the jawline are angular. The face is widest near the temple region and the jawline, like a diamond. The face is highly angular. Softer brows are best suited for this face type.

PREFERRED SHAPE: Round and balanced eyebrows

AVOID: Arched and thicker eyebrows

Square face

RECOGNITION: Women under this category have a symmetrical face where the width of the forehead, jawline and the cheekbones are the same. As the name suggests, these women have a well-defined square jaw which is their most prominent feature. Since the lower part of their face is angular, they need sharp eyebrows to create balance on their face.

PREFERRED SHAPE: Thin and medium-arched eyebrows

AVOID: Round and thick eyebrows

FOOD CORNER

MILD CHICKEN CURRY

Ingredients

- 1½ tsp coconut oil (we used Fushi) or sunflower oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 fat garlic cloves, crushed
- 1cm fresh ginger, grated or finely chopped
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp yellow mustard seed
- 1 tsp garam masala
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 x 500g pack chicken pieces (thighs and drumsticks), or thighs
- 1 chicken stock cube
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 250g Greek yogurt, at room temperature
- 2 tbsp sultana handful chopped coriander, to serve (optional)

Method

- Heat the oil in a heavy-based pan. Fry the onions gently for 5 - 10 mins until soft. Add the garlic, ginger, coriander, mustard seeds, garam masala and cumin and cook for 1 - 2 min allowing the aromas to release.



- Add the chicken and cook for 10 mins over a gentle heat, flipping occasionally and making sure the spices don't catch. Pour in around 300 ml boiling water until almost covering. Stir in the stock cube and cinnamon stick. Simmer for around 45 mins - 1 hour with the lid off so there is a small amount of thickened sauce at the bottom of the pan. Remove the cinnamon stick.

- Stir in the yogurt and sultanas, heat through gently and serve. Scatter with coriander, if using.

EXERCISE IS GOOD FOR THE BRAIN, MAKES IT PERFORM AT ITS BEST

A new study has found how cognitive performance can improve during aerobic exercise. During the study, conducted at the University of Munich, electroencephalography readings were taken as 24 participants performed a visual working memory task while at rest and during the exercise involving different postures: seated on or pedalling a stationary bicycle, as well as standing or walking on a treadmill.

"Our findings hold implications not only for the field of cognitive psychology, wherein our knowledge has been primarily derived from seated, resting participants, but also for our understanding of cognitive performance at large. Although modern society has evolved to become more and more sedentary, our brains may nevertheless perform best while our bodies are active," said lead author Thomas Tollner.

The investigators found that both aerobic exercise and upright posture improved visual working memory compared with passive and seated conditions. Their analyses also suggest where the neural origins of these observed effects take place.

Source: PTI



Vitamins may boost longevity, prevent diseases: Study

A key class of vitamins and minerals may help promote longevity and stave off chronic disorders such as heart disease, cancer and neurodegenerative diseases, scientists say.

Healthy ageing can be extended by ingesting optimal levels of 30 known vitamins and essential minerals, according to the study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

These, along with 11 additional substances not currently classified as vitamins, should be recognised as essential "longevity vitamins" because of their potential to extend a healthy life, researchers said.

Most vitamins and minerals are required by dozens of hundreds of different enzymes within our cells, said researchers at Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI) in the US.

This means that the same nutrients we need to maintain our day-to-day health -- such as vitamin D, omega-3 fatty acids, and magnesium -- are also critical components of enzymes required for our bodies' long-term maintenance, in roles such as DNA repair, cardiovascular health and prevention of oxidative damage.

When the body is faced with shortages of key nutrients, it must "ration" them, enabling enzymes critical to our immediate survival and reproductive capacity to keep functioning at the expense of longer-term physiological needs.

"The prevention of the degenerative diseases of ageing is a different science than curing disease: it will involve expertise in metabolism, nutrition, biochemistry and genetic regulatory elements and polymorphisms," said Bruce Ames from CHORI.

In several recent publications, his team has found evidence that such trade-offs can be seen in people with chronic, low-level deficiencies in vitamin K and the element selenium, which are key components of 16 and 25 different enzymes.

Published studies from the Ames lab suggest that, when forced to ration scarce vitamin K for its critical role in blood clotting, the body produces fewer enzymes required for keeping arteries clear, which has been linked to higher rates of mortality from cardiovascular disease.

Source: PTI

AI measures breast density as accurately as experienced mammographers

A newly developed artificial intelligence (AI) algorithm measures breast density as accurately as an experienced mammographer, according to a study.

Breast density can mask cancers on mammography and is an independent risk factor for the disease, according to the study published in the journal Radiology.

Despite its importance, breast density assessment is an imperfect science, and research has shown much discrepancy among radiologists in making density determinations.

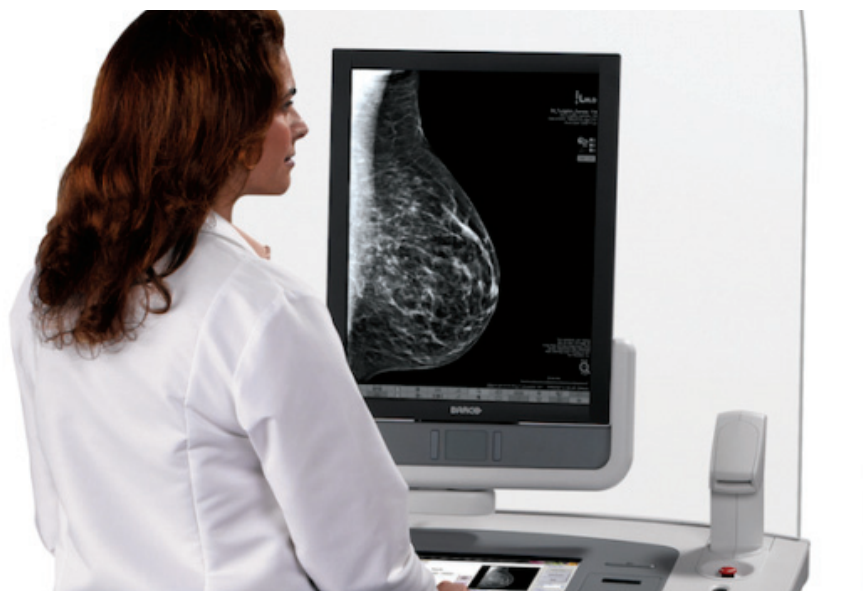
"We are dependent on human qualitative assessment of breast density, and that approach has significant flaws. We need a more accurate tool," said Constance D Lehman from Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in the US.

The researchers used tens of thousands of high-quality digital mammograms, an X-ray picture of the breast, to train and test the algorithm before implementing it in routine clinical practice.

Eight radiologists then reviewed 10,763 mammograms that the model had determined were either dense or non-dense tissue.

The interpreting radiologist accepted the algorithm's assessment in 10,149 of the mammograms, or 94 per cent.

Lehman noted that the 94 per cent agreement rate between the radiologists



and the algorithm does not necessarily mean the machine was wrong in six per cent of the cases.

Reader variability could affect the disagreement because radiologists visually assess breast density, which is subjective and qualitative.

"The deep learning algorithm processes all our screening mammograms and provides density, which is either accepted or rejected by the radiologists," Lehman said.

"The results show that the algorithm worked remarkably well. But what's more important is that it is being used every day to measure breast density in

mammograms at a major hospital," said Regina Barzilay, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the US.

The system has been in continuous operation at MGH since January and has processed approximately 16,000 images, Barzilay said.

Lehman attributed the successful clinical implementation of the AI model to two components: the availability of high-quality, annotated data evaluated by expert radiologists, and the collaborative efforts of experienced, accomplished medical and computer science professionals. Source: PTI

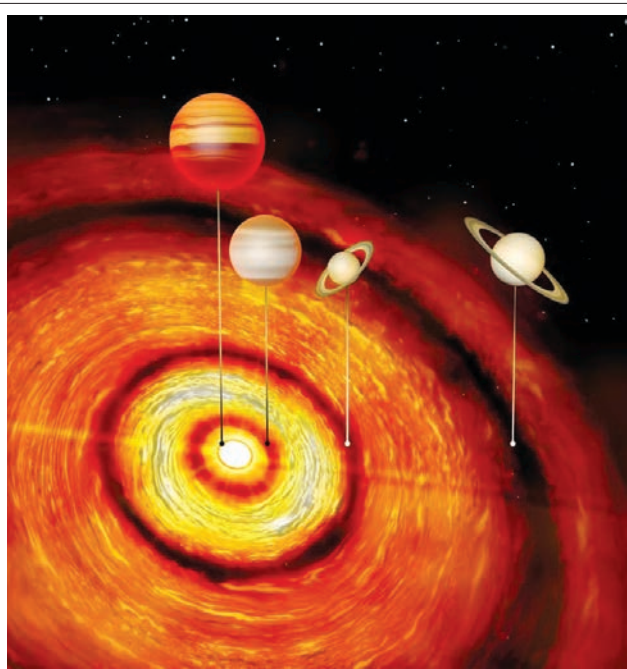
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FOUR GIANT PLANETS AROUND YOUNG STAR DISCOVERED

Scientists have identified a young star with four Jupiter and Saturn-sized planets orbiting it, the first time that so many massive worlds have been detected in such a system.

The star, CI Tau, is located about 500 light years away in a highly-productive stellar 'nursery' region of the galaxy, said researchers from the University of Cambridge in the UK.

The system has also set a new record for the most extreme range of orbits yet observed, according to the study published in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.

The outermost planet is more than a thousand times further from the star than the innermost one, which raises interesting questions about how such a system might have formed, researchers said.

The star is just two million years old — a 'toddler' in astronomical terms — and is surrounded by a huge disc of dust and ice, they said.

This disc, known as a protoplanetary disc, is where the planets, moons, asteroids and other astronomical objects in stellar systems form.

The star was already known to be remarkable because it contains the first so-called hot Jupiter — a massive planet orbiting very close to its parent star — to have been discovered around such a young star.

A team of researchers has used the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA) to search for planetary 'siblings' to this infant hot Jupiter.

Their image revealed three distinct gaps in the disc, which, according to their theoretical modelling, were most likely caused by three additional gas giant planets also orbiting the young star.

The four planets differ greatly in their orbits: the closest (the hot Jupiter) is within the equivalent of the orbit of Mercury, while the farthest orbits at a distance more than three times greater than that of Neptune.

The two outer planets are about the mass of Saturn, while the two inner planets are respectively around one and 10 times the mass of Jupiter.

Around one per cent of stars host hot Jupiters, but most of the known hot Jupiters are hundreds of times older than CI Tau.

"It is currently impossible to say whether the extreme planetary architecture seen in CI Tau is common in hot Jupiter systems because the way that these sibling planets were detected — through their effect on the protoplanetary disc — would not work in older systems which no longer have a protoplanetary disc," said Cathie Clarke, a professor at University of Cambridge.

According to the researchers, it is also unclear whether the sibling planets played a role in driving the innermost planet into its ultra-close orbit, and whether this is a mechanism that works in making hot Jupiters in general.

"Planet formation models tend to focus on being able to make the types of planets that have been observed already, so new discoveries don't necessarily fit the models," said Clarke.

"Saturn mass planets are supposed to form by first accumulating a solid core and then pulling in a layer of gas on top, but these processes are supposed to be very slow at large distances from the star. Most models will struggle to make planets of this mass at this distance," he said.

The task ahead will be to study this puzzling system at multiple wavelengths to get more clues about the properties of the disc and its planets.

Source: PTI

Chatbots will get their own social network next year

Communications solution provider Avaya Holdings Corp is planning to roll out a social networking platform for chatbots next year which will enable bots to engage with each other and find answers to customers' questions that they have not been trained to answer.

The company has already applied for the technology patent and is expecting to release it for commercial use by the first quarter of the next year, Ahmed Helmy, Avaya's Solutions Architects Director for the Asia-Pacific (APAC) and Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) regions, told IANS.

The US-based business communications leader showcased the platform at the Gitex Technology Week being held here in Dubai from October 14 to 18.

Drawing parallels from traditional social media, the technology provides a structured platform for bots to engage each other in a secure and controlled manner with the intent of extending the expertise and effectiveness of each individual chatbot.

Helmy said the biggest challenge for chatbots to service customer needs was to answer questions that don't fall entirely in their domain.

While acknowledging the growing customer acceptance, a key shortcoming of enterprise chatbots is that they are domain-specific and can respond only to a relatively narrow set of dialogues.

APPLE IPHONE TO SOON DECODE BINGE EATING DISORDER



A team of researchers in the US is set to use Apple iPhone and Watch to track binge eating disorder among people.

According to University of North Carolina's Center of Excellence for Eating Disorders, if you are 18, have an iPhone (model 5 or newer), and have a current or lifetime experience with binge eating disorder (BED) or bulimia nervosa (BN), you can participate in the study titled "Binge Eating Genetics Initiative" (BEGIN).

"The goal of the BEGIN study is to better understand the genetic factors that may be associated with binge-eating disorder and bulimia nervosa in order to develop better treatments for the millions of people who suffer from these illnesses," the university said on its website.

The researchers will use the Recovery Record app on iPhone to record the participants' mood, food and goals for 30 days.

They will ask the participants to provide a sample of their saliva and bodily bacteria.

"Once you enroll in the BEGIN study using your iPhone, we will send you a 'BEGIN box' via FedEx that will include everything that you need to participate in the study," the university said.

According to a report in CNBC on Monday, the university hopes to recruit 1,000 participants.

Each participant will be given a free Watch from Apple and researchers will monitor their heart rate using the device's sensor over the course of a month to see if there are spikes before binge eating episodes, said the report.

Apple Watch Series 4 will soon enable US customers to take an electrocardiogram (ECG) reading right from the wrist using the new ECG app, which takes advantage of the electrodes built into the Digital Crown and new electrical heart rate sensor in the back crystal.

With the app, users touch the Digital Crown and after 30 seconds, receive a heart rhythm classification.

It can classify if the heart is beating in a normal pattern or whether there are signs of Atrial Fibrillation (AFib), a heart condition that could lead to major health complications.

All recordings, their associated classifications and any noted symptoms are stored in the Health app in a PDF that can be shared with physicians.

Source: IANS

Google Pixel apps to have external microphones

Ahead of its Pixel 3 launch on Thursday, Google has confirmed that the Pixel camera app is coming with an external microphone support.

"At the same time as 'Pixel 3' launch (October 18), we will introduce support for Android-compatible plugged-in external microphones in the default camera app for all Pixels," a Pixel employee said on an old post on Google product.

This update incorporating the external microphone support on older Pixel phones should become available at the same time as the retail launch of "Pixel 3", *The Verge* reported on Sunday.

Some third-party Android camera apps like "Open Camera" have already allowed external microphones to

record audio while creators and users recorded video using a Pixel device.

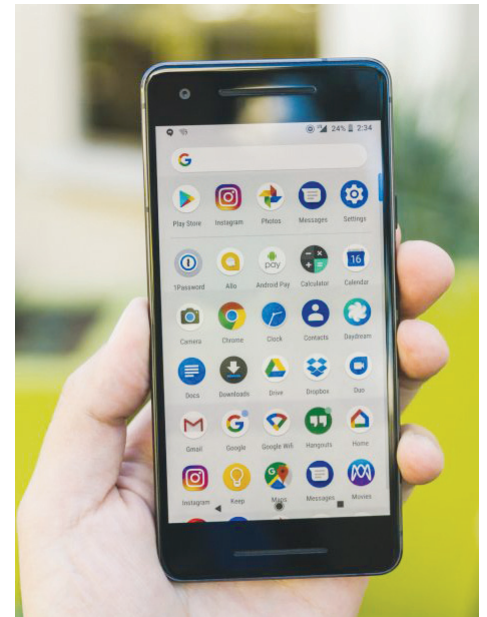
Apart from rolling out the external microphone support to the Pixel phones, the older models are also set to gain many new camera software features.

The search-engine giant officially took the veils off "Pixel 3" alongside a bigger "Pixel 3 XL" smartphone on October 9.

"Pixel 3" comes with a 5.5-inch OLED display, 2915mAh battery and 8MP+8MP front-facing cameras.

The "Pixel 3" smartphone will cost Rs 71,000 for the 64GB variant in India and up to Rs 80,000 for the 128GB storage variant, whereas "Pixel 3 XL" will be available at Rs 83,000 for the 64GB variant and up to Rs 92,000 for the 128GB model.

Source: IANS



China-US surplus hits record, adding fuel to trade war between countries

BEIJING (TIP): China's trade surplus with the United States ballooned to a record \$34.1 billion in September, despite a raft of US tariffs, official data showed Friday, adding fuel to the fire of a worsening trade war.

Relations between the world's two largest economies have soured sharply this year, with US President Donald Trump vowing on Thursday to inflict economic pain on China if it does not blink.

China's exports to the US rose to \$46.7 billion while imports slumped to \$12.6 billion, according to China's customs administration.

The world's top two economies imposed new tariffs on a massive amount of each other's goods mid-September, with the US targeting \$200 billion in Chinese imports and Beijing firing back at \$60 billion worth of US goods.

"China-US trade friction has caused trouble and pounded our foreign trade development," customs spokesman Li Kuiwen told reporters Friday.

China's overall trade—what it buys and sells with all countries including the US—logged a \$31.7 billion surplus, as exports rose faster than imports.

Exports jumped 14.5 per cent for September on-year, beating forecasts from analysts polled by Bloomberg News, while imports rose 14.3 per cent on-year.

While the data showed China's trade remained strong for the month, analysts forecast the trade war will start to hurt in coming months.

"The big picture is the Chinese exports have so far held up well in the face of escalating trade tensions and cooling global growth, most likely thanks to the competitiveness boost provided by a weaker renminbi (yuan)," said Julian



Shipping containers being unloaded at the Port of Long Beach, California.

Evans-Pritchard, China economist at Capital Economics.

"With global growth likely to cool further in the coming quarters and US tariffs set to become more punishing, the recent resilience of exports is unlikely to be sustained," he said.

Trump accused China of thinking Americans are "stupid" and boasted that his tariffs had already "had a big impact" on China's stumbling economy in a Thursday interview on Fox News.

"I have a lot more to do if I want to do it. I don't want to do it but they have to come to the table," he warned.

The yuan has fallen for weeks against the US dollar, dropping nine per cent in the past six months, which mitigates the rise in the price of Chinese goods caused by punitive US tariffs.

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, in comments published in the

Financial Times this week warned China against engaging in competitive currency devaluations.

China has steadfastly denied that it has manipulated the yuan to cope with the tariffs. The US dollar has strengthened against a range of currencies this year as American interest rates have risen.

China's stock market has plunged this year but the trade war has also started to erode Trump's oft-touted US stock gains, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average down more than five per cent for the week.

The International Monetary Fund this week cited the trade war as it lowered its 2019 growth forecast for China, which is set to see its slowest expansion since 1990. The IMF also lowered estimates for the United States and the global economy as a whole. *Source: AFP*

RIL Q2 NET PROFIT ZOOMS 17.4% TO RS 9,516 CRORE



NEW DELHI (TIP): Reliance Industries (RIL) today reported its highest ever quarterly net profit in July-September as record earnings from petrochemical business and bumper earnings from retail business and telecom arm made up for a decline in refinery margins.

The oil-to-telecom conglomerate also announced the acquisition of majority stakes in Den Networks Ltd and Hathway Cable and Datacom Ltd for Rs 5,230 crore to bring under its fold 27,000 local cable operators who would help strengthen its rollout of fibre-based broadband service to households for offering ultra high definition entertainment on large screen TVs.

Its consolidated net profit of Rs 9,516 crore, or Rs 16.1 per share, in the second quarter of current fiscal, was 17.4% higher than Rs 8,109 crore, or Rs 13.7 a share, in the same period of the previous financial year, the company said. Revenue jumped 54.5% to Rs 1,56,291 crore.

Its retail business, which comprises 9,146 stores across 5,800-plus towns and cities, saw pre-tax business profit jump 213% to Rs 1,392 crore on the back of more than doubling of revenue to Rs 32,436 crore.

Reliance Jio, the group's telecom arm, posted a standalone net profit of Rs 681 crore, which was 11.3% more than the previous quarter as subscriber base swelled to 252.3 million. It had a pre-tax loss of Rs 271 crore in the second quarter of 2017-18. *Source: PTI*

ELON MUSK TO BUY \$20 MILLION IN TESLA STOCK



Tesla Inc Chief Executive Officer Elon Musk will purchase company stock worth \$20 million in the next open trading session, the electric carmaker said in a filing on Wednesday.

Tesla and Musk have each agreed to pay \$20 million under a settlement with the US Securities and Exchange

Commission of a fraud lawsuit relating to tweets by Musk in August. Tesla said the purchase was 'separate and apart from the settlement' between Musk, Tesla and the SEC and did not respond to Reuters requests for more information on the reasons for the purchase. Shares of the company rose 2 percent in early trading. The government lawsuit threatened Tesla and Musk with a long fight that could have undermined its operations and ability to raise capital.

However, Musk settled with SEC and agreed to step aside as Tesla's chairman for three years, heading off the threat that he would be forced out of company management completely. *Source: Reuters*

PNB FRAUD: ED ATTACHES ASSETS WORTH RS 218 CRORE

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday seized assets worth over Rs 218 crore, including diamonds and flats abroad, in the nearly Rs 13,000-crore loan fraud case probe, the agency said. It said three provisional orders under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act were issued by the central investigative agency's zonal office in Mumbai for attachment of the properties. The beneficiaries of these assets put under attachment, it said, are absconding Mehul Choksi, Mihir Bhansali, a close aide and US-based executive of Nirav Modi, and a company named A P Gems and Jewellery Park linked to Choksi. *Source: PTI*

Oil prices rise on signs Iranian oil exports are falling further in October

SEOUL (TIP): Oil prices rose on Tuesday on signs Iranian oil exports this month have fallen from September ahead of US sanctions against Tehran that are set to start in November.

International benchmark Brent crude for December delivery rose 27 cents, or 0.33 percent, to \$81.05 per barrel by 0325 GMT.

US West Texas Intermediate crude for November delivery was up 12 cents at \$71.90 a barrel.

Iran has exported 1.33 million barrels per day (bpd) to countries including India, China and Turkey in the first two weeks of October, according to Refinitiv Eikon data. That was down from 1.6 million bpd in September, the data showed.

The October exports are a sharp drop from the 2.5 million bpd exported in April before US President Donald Trump withdrew from a multi-lateral nuclear deal with Iran in May and ordered the re-imposition of economic sanctions on the country, the third-largest producer among the members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

The sanctions on Iran's petroleum sector will go into effect on Nov. 4.

"Uncertainties will remain until Nov. 4 when it would be clear whether the United States would want to cut Iran oil exports to zero or grant waivers," said Vincent Hwang, commodity analyst at NH Investment & Securities in Seoul.

"Brent prices are likely stay in the range of \$80 a barrel or slightly higher, while WTI prices are likely to be \$70-\$75 a barrel," Hwang added.

Crude prices have also been supported by geopolitical tensions caused by the disappearance of a Saudi Arabian journalist in Turkey. Turkish official have alleged Saudi



Iran has exported 1.33 million barrels per day in the first two weeks of October, according to Refinitiv Eikon data, down from 1.6 million bpd in September.

Arabian intelligence officers killed the journalist Jamal Khashoggi on Oct. 2 at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

US President Donald Trump threatened "severe punishment" for the kingdom if the journalist is found to have been killed. Trump dispatched Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to Saudi Arabia to meet with the country's leader King Salman. Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil exporter, has denied the allegation. Saudi Arabian officials said it would retaliate against any actions taken over the Khashoggi case.

With the world's only sizable spare oil output capacity, Saudi Arabia is expected to export more to offset the loss of Iranian oil supply from the sanctions. *Source: Reuters*

contd from Page 1

Journalist Jamal Khashoggi most likely dead: Trump

"I think we'll be making a statement, a very strong statement," Trump said. "But we're waiting for the results of about - there are three different investigations, and we should be able to get to the bottom fairly soon."

Khashoggi, who most recently wrote for The Washington Post, was often critical of the Saudi government in his reporting. He disappeared after entering the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul on October 2, and Turkish officials have accused the Saudis of brutally killing Khashoggi there.

The Saudis have so far denied any involvement in Khashoggi's disappearance. But more than two weeks later, the Saudi government has still not provided any evidence that the journalist safely departed the consulate.

Trump has largely stood by the Saudis over the past week as they've issued a series of denials.

The president at one point suggested that "rogue killers" could be responsible but provided no evidence to back up that assertion.

Trump also said on Tuesday that the criticism against the Saudi Kingdom amid the Khashoggi investigation was another instance of "guilty until proven innocent."

Meanwhile, Trump has touted the strategic alliance between the US and Saudi Arabia, boasting about billions of dollars in planned arms sales to the Saudis. He said last week that it would be a "tough pill to swallow" to cease the sales over Khashoggi, contending that such a move would hurt the US economy.

Two weeks after he disappeared, The Washington Post has published what it said appears to be Jamal Khashoggi's final column, in which the missing Saudi journalist writes of the importance of a free press in the Arab world.

Such a forum is currently lacking, says Khashoggi, a Post contributor and US resident who disappeared entering Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul on October 2.

"The Arab world is facing its own version of an Iron Curtain, imposed not by external actors but through domestic forces vying for power," he writes.

"The Arab world needs a modern version of the old transnational media so citizens can be informed about global events. More important, we need to provide a platform for Arab voices," Khashoggi writes.

"Through the creation of an independent international forum, isolated from the influence of nationalist governments spreading hate through propaganda, ordinary people in the Arab world would be able to address the structural problems their societies face."

The ultimate fate of Khashoggi - whose writings have been critical of powerful Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman - is still unknown, but leaks by anonymous Turkish officials have painted a picture of him allegedly meeting a grisly demise in the consulate at the hands of Saudi agents. In the introduction to Khashoggi's column - the Post's Global Opinions editor Karen Attiah said the newspaper held off on publishing it in the hopes that he would return. - AFP

A man who previously travelled with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's entourage to the US entered the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul just before Jamal Khashoggi vanished there

Images published on Thursday by a pro-govt Turkish newspaper shows the man also later outside the Saudi consul general's home, checking out of a Turkish hotel with a large suitcase

Britain, France, the US and the Netherlands have decided not to attend an investment summit in Riyadh as international pressure on Saudi Arabia over the disappearance of journalist Jamal Khashoggi grows

Terming the issue "very serious", these countries said "the full truth of this affair be known and those responsible for the journalist's disappearance must be held to account"

A Turkish daily reported on Thursday, October 18, that one of the suspects involved in the case was killed in a "suspicious car accident" in Riyadh even as investigators in Ankara expanded their probe to two wooded areas outside Istanbul

Mashal Saad al-Bostani, 31, a lieutenant of the Saudi Royal Air Force, was among the 15 suspects who left Turkey on October 2 after going to Saudi Arabia's Istanbul consulate

Trump administration to propose major changes in H-1B visas by January 2019

Such a move, which is part of the Unified Fall Agenda of the Trump administration will have a detrimental impact on the functioning of Indian IT companies in the US and also small

and medium-sized contractual companies in the IT sector, which are mostly owned by Indian Americans.

On Wednesday, October 17, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) plans to come out with its new proposal by January 2019.

It will "propose to revise the definition of specialty occupation" to increase focus on obtaining the best and the brightest foreign nationals via the H-1B program.

It will also "revise the definition" of employment and employer-employee relationship to "better protect" US workers and wages, DHS said. In addition, DHS will propose additional requirements designed to ensure employers pay appropriate wages to H-1B visa holders, the administration said.

The DHS reiterated that it is proposing to remove from its regulations certain H-4 spouses of H-1B non-immigrants as a class of aliens eligible for employment authorization.

The DHS said it is also finalizing its interim regulation governing petitions filed on behalf of alien workers subject to the annual numerical limitations applicable to the H-1B non-immigrant classification.

This rule precludes an individual from filing duplicate petitions on behalf of the same alien temporary worker. This rule also makes accommodations for petitioners to create a more efficient filing process for H-1B petitions subject to the annual numerical limitation.

Observing that the demand for H-1B visas has often exceeded the numerical limitation, DHS said it is proposing to establish an electronic registration program for such applications. This will allow USCIS to more efficiently manage the intake and lottery process for these H-1B petitions, it said. (Source: The Pioneer)

Union Minister Piyush Goyal to Receive University of Pennsylvania's Top Prize in Energy Policy

his leadership in fostering conditions for policy innovation that support a just and efficient transition to sustainable energy. The award also recognizes Mr. Goyal's contributions to reforming India's power sector, expanding renewable energy and fast tracking electrification of 18,000 remote villages in India.

While at Penn, Mr. Goyal will also have a recorded podcast conversation with Energy Policy Now host Andy Stone, meet with Penn students with interests in energy and India, and be a featured guest on the radio talk show Knowledge@Wharton.

On October 20, 2018, Mr. Goyal will interact with members of Indian Diaspora at 05:30 pm at TV Asia Auditorium, 76 National Rd, Edison, NJ 08817. On October 22, 2018, he will speak on growth and economic reforms in India at Columbia University, Room 1501, 420 West 118th Street, New York, NY 10027.

(Based on a Press Release)

#MeToo Storm: Union Minister M.J. Akbar Resigns a Day before Hearing in Defamation Case against Scribe

hearing on Thursday in the Patiala House court here.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi accepted Akbar's resignation after which it was sent to President Ram Nath Kovind. Later, the President also accepted his resignation from the council of ministers.

Though the pressure was high, both on him and the government, from women groups and also saffron ideologues, sources said the final decision was taken after "carefully testing the waters" and when it eventually became clear that his presence was causing "irreparable harm" to the reputation of the BJP, in the country as well as abroad.

Akbar has threatened "appropriate legal action" against those who levelled "wild and baseless allegations" against him, but that did not stop survivors to come out in public about their horror tales. Quite clearly, he was asked to put in his papers by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after it became clear that it was neither morally nor politically tenable for him to continue in the high post, especially given his profile.

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PM Modi, as they say, is also quite particular about perceptions about him in foreign countries.

As clamor for action against Akbar from his former women colleagues grew, there were worries in the BJP about the allegations damaging the party's "pro-women" image ahead of elections to five states. While the BJP and government functionaries maintained a stoic silence, it was perhaps the first time in his tenure that PM Modi faced the piquant Catch-22 situation when either way it would have been detrimental for the image of his government.

However, his presence in the government had become far too "embarrassing for PM Modi" though he continues to be a Rajya Sabha member and also a member of the BJP.

For the BJP, holding on to Akbar would have served no purpose given his lack of mass-based appeal. Holding on to him would have come at a cost, the price of which it may have had to pay with a dent in its "pro-women" image in the run-up to the 2019 Lok Sabha in urban pockets. It can now take a moral high ground, safely.

In a statement, Akbar said, "Since I have decided to seek justice in a court of law in my personal capacity, I deem it appropriate to step down from office and challenge false accusations levied against me, also in a personal capacity. I have, therefore, tendered my resignation from the office of Minister of State for External Affairs. I am deeply grateful to the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and to the External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj for the opportunity they gave me to serve my country."

The Rashtrapati Bhawan said later on Wednesday that President Ramnath Kovind had accepted Akbar's resignation.

"The President of India, as advised by the Prime Minister, has accepted the resignation of Shri M. J. Akbar from the Union Council of Ministers, with immediate effect, under clause (2) of Article 75 of the Constitution., a communiqué from the President's office said.

PM to Akbar's resignation, Priya Ramani said, "As women we feel vindicated."

"I look forward to the day when I will also get justice in court," she tweeted.

As women we feel vindicated by MJ Akbar's resignation.

However, this raises questions as to why PM Modi did not intervene earlier? Why was Akbar allowed to complete his overseas trip to Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea last week instead of being recalled as the #MeToo storm hit? And why did the government wait it out for Akbar to threaten accusers with legal action and sue Priya Ramani in court?

It is learnt that what also made the government jittery was the fact that despite the legal case against Priya Ramani, another woman journalist Tushita Patil penned an article alleging sexual abuse against Akbar dating back to 1992-1993 when she was a rookie reporter and he a prominent journalist and editor.

Some 20 women also in a statement joined hands with Ramani and asked the court to hear them out in the defamation case while two former male colleagues and journalists also came out in support of the reported #MeToo victims. (Source: Tribune, India)

Ms Bhuvana Rao succeeds Mrs. Vandana Sharma as Air India Regional Manager-Americas

Ms Bhuvana Rao, an MBA from University Business School, Chandigarh is a seasoned Aviation professional with over 30 years of experience in various areas of Commercial Aviation. She had 2 overseas assignments, heading Air India operations in France and in Abu Dhabi. In her last assignment she was in charge of Sales & Marketing for Western Region in Mumbai.

VIJAYADASHAMI: THE TRIUMPH OF GOOD OVER EVIL

Vijayadashami is celebrated as victory of Lord Rama over Demon Ravana and also triumph of Goddess Durga over the buffalo Demon Mahishasura. Vijayadashami is also known as Dussehra or Dasara. In Nepal Dasara is celebrated as Dashain.

It is an important Hindu festival celebrated in a variety of ways in India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, "Dussehra" is derived from Sanskrit; Dasha-hara is a form of Dashanan ravan ("Ravana's defeat").

"Vijayadashami" is derived from the Sanskrit vijaya-dashami (victory on the dashami: the tenth day of the Hindu month). Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is celebrated twenty days after Vijayadashami.

Significance

Vijayadashami is celebrated on the tenth day of brighter fortnight the month of Ashwin according to the Hindu calendar, corresponding to September or October of the Gregorian calendar. The first nine days are celebrated as Navratri, culminating on the tenth day as Dussehra.

Since the harvest season begins in India and Nepal at this time, the Durga is invoked by religious rituals to begin the harvest season and renew the fertility of the soil. Many Hindus observe the festival with social gatherings and food offerings to the gods at home and in temples throughout India and Nepal.

Victory of Ram over Ravan

On this day Ram (the seventh avatar of Vishnu) killed Ravan, who had abducted Ram's wife Sita to his kingdom Lanka. Ram, his brother Lakshman, their disciple Hanuman and an army fought a battle to rescue Sita. The story is recorded in the Hindu epic, the Ramayan.

On the day of Ashvin Shukla Dashami, Ram defeated Ravana and rescued Sita. Based on inferences from Valmiki's Ramyan, Kalidas's Raghuvasa, Tulsidas' Ramcharitmanas and Keshavdas' Ramchandrika, Ram, Sita and Lakshman returned to Ayodhya on the 30th day of Ashwin (19-20 days after Vijayadashami). To celebrate Ram's return, in the evening the city's residents lit millions of earthen lamps (deepak); the day is celebrated in India as Deepawali.

Observers recite Sundar Kaand (the fifth book of the Ramayan) for five days. Yajnas are thought to keep the household clean and healthy. Some perform yajnas and Sandhyavandanam three times a day to keep the heart, brain and digestion balanced in the absence of adequate winter sunlight.

Durga's victory over Mahishasur

Some of the demigods (asurs) were powerful and ambitious, and tried to defeat the devs and capture heaven. One asur, Mahishasur, grew powerful and wreaked havoc on earth. Under his leadership, the asurs defeated the devs. The devs combined into Shakti (a mass of incandescent energy) to kill Mahishasur.

A bolt of lightning emerged from the mouths of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and a young, beautiful female virgin with ten hands appeared. The gods gave her their weapons, and Shakti coalesced to form the goddess Durga. On a lion who assisted her, Durga fought Mahishasur for nine days and



nights; on the tenth day, Mahishasur was killed. Durga, as Shiv's consort, represents two forms of female energy: mild and protective, and fierce and destructive.

Durga's homecoming

Daksha (Brahma's son) and his wife, Prasuti, had a daughter named Sati. As a child, Sati worshiped Shiva as her would-be husband. Shiva, pleased with her worship, married her. Although Daksha opposed the marriage, he could not prevent it. He arranged a yajna, to which everyone but Shiva was not invited. Sati, ashamed of her father's behavior, killed herself. Shiva, anguished when he discovered this, lifted Sati's body on his shoulders and began dancing; the world was on the verge of destruction.

Pandav exile

In the age of Dvapara Yug, the pandavs (the five sons of Pandu [Sanskrit: ??????] with his wife, Kunti) lost to the Kaurav in a dice game and were exiled in the forest for twelve years. The brothers hid their weapons in a hole in a Shami tree before they entered the kingdom of Virat to complete their final year of exile. After that year, on Vijayadashmi they recovered the weapons, declared their true identities and defeated Kauravas, who had attacked King Virat to steal his cattle. Since that day, Shami trees and weapons have been worshiped and the exchange of Shami leaves on Vijayadashmi has been a symbol of good will.

Kautsa's gift

Kautsa, the young son of a Brahmin named Devdatt, lived in Paithan. After completing his education with Rishi Varatantu, he insisted that his guru accept a present. The guru said, "Kautsa, to give dakshina in return for learning wisdom is not appropriate. Graduation of the disciple makes the guru happy, and that is the real Guru Dakshina."

Kautsa was not satisfied, since he still felt it his duty to give his guru something. The guru said, "All right, if you insist on giving

me dakshina, then give me 140 million gold coins—10 million for each of the 14 sciences I have taught you."

Kautsa went to King Raghu, an ancestor of Rama who was known for his generosity. However, at that time he had spent all his money on the Brahmins. Raghu asked Kautsa to return in three days, and left to get gold coins from Indra. Indra summoned Kuber, the god of wealth. Indra told Kuber, "Make gold coins rain on the Shanu and Aapati trees around Raghuraja's city of Ayodhya."

The rain of gold coins began. King Raghu gave the coins to Kautsa, who offered them to Varatantu Rishi. Since the guru had requested only 140 million, he returned the rest to Kautsa. Kautsa, considering honour more valuable than wealth, asked the king to take the remaining gold coins. The king refused, since kings do not take back a daan (gift).

Kautsa distributed the gold coins to the people of Ayodhya. To commemorate this, leaves are plucked from the Aapati tree and given as gifts.

Celebrations

In Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand and

western Bihar, it is tradition to plant barley in earthen pots on the first day of Navratri. On the day of Dussehra, the nine-day-old sprouts (called noratras or nortas) are used for luck; men place them in their caps or behind their ears.

In most of northern India and some parts of Maharashtra, Dasha-Hara is celebrated in honour of Rama. Plays based on the Ramayana (Ramlila) are performed at outdoor fairs, and large parades with effigies of Ravana (a king of ancient Sri Lanka), Kumbhakarna and Meghanada are held. The effigies are burnt on bonfires in the evening. After Dasara, the hot summer ends (especially in North India) and the onset of cold weather is believed to encourage infections. The burning of the effigies, filled with firecrackers containing phosphorus, supposedly purifies the atmosphere.

In the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, Dasara begins with the performance of a Ramlila based on theatrical traditions begun by Uday Shankar during his stay in Almora and elaborated by Mohan Upreti and Brijendra Lal Sah. Known as the Almora or Kumaon style, the Ramlila was recognised by UNESCO in its 2008 report as a representative Indian style.

Kullu Dussehra, celebrated in the Kullu valley of Himachal Pradesh, begins on the tenth day of the rising moon and continues for seven days. Its history dates back to the 17th century, when King Jagat Singh installed an idol of Raghunath on his throne as a gesture of penance. After this, Raghunath was declared the ruling deity of the valley.

Mysore Dussehra as is the Nadahabba (state-festival) of the state of Karnataka in India. It is also called Navaratri (Nava-ratri = nine-nights) and is a 10-day festival with the last day being Vijayadashami, the most auspicious day of Dasara. Dasara usually falls in the month of September or October. According to a legend, Vijayadashami denotes the victory of truth over evil and was the day when the Hindu Goddess Chamundeshwari killed the demon Mahishasura. Mahishasura is the demon whose slaying by the Goddess gave the name Mysore. The city of Mysore has a long tradition of celebrating the Dasara festival with utter grandeur and pomp to mark this day and the festivities there are an elaborate affair, attracting a large audience including foreigners. The Dasara festival completed 400th anniversary in year 2010.

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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?"

"Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one."

India vs West Indies: Virat Kohli, MS Dhoni all set to create records, join elite list

NEW DELHI (TIP): Indian captain Virat Kohli is back at the helm for the ODI team. After the break he received in Asia Cup, he will now lead India as the hosts take on the West Indies.

It will be business as usual for the Indian captain, for when he walks out to bat, he will be on the cusp of breaking several records. He now needs 187 runs away from becoming leading run-scorer among Indians vs West Indies in ODIs. Currently, Sachin Tendulkar holds the record with 1573 runs.

Kohli also needs 221 runs to complete 10000 ODI runs. If he does breach the number, he will join Sachin Tendulkar (18426 runs), Sourav Ganguly (11363 runs), Rahul Dravid (10889 runs) and MS Dhoni (10123 runs) among the Indians.

Former captain MS Dhoni is also very close to scoring 10,000 runs for India in ODI cricket. He requires 51 runs to complete 10,000 runs in ODIs for India.

He also needs 101 runs more to complete 1,000 runs vs West Indies ODIs. This will make West Indies the 5th team against whom Dhoni will be completing 1,000 runs after Sri Lanka, England, Australia and Pakistan.

Opener Rohit Sharma is also only 170 runs away from completing 1,000 ODI runs against West Indies.

Numbers reveal India's biggest strength in ODI cricket

After a convincing performance in the Test series, the Indian team enter the ODI leg as overwhelming favourites. West Indies, who were shoddy to say the least against the red ball, have a better



team which could pose a threat to the visitors, but considering the depth and options available for Kohli, India look the better team.

The biggest strength of this team has been the stellar performances of the top order. The top three have not only taken control of proceedings every time they take strike but have also batted deep into the innings to get the job done.

The top order has accumulated 6939 runs, most by any team since 2017. This amounts to 64.15% of total number of runs scored by Indian batsmen, which is the highest by any team since 2017.

As far as the strike rate is concerned, they are second to only England, another team which has redefined the way white-ball cricket has been played.

India also boast of the best average per wicket in the top order - 62.51, which is significantly higher than all the other teams.

Such has been the dominance of the top three, that they have smacked more than 800 boundaries in the aforementioned period, which amounts to 8.45 balls/boundaries. Only England have a better balls/boundary average of 7.97. *Source: HT*

DENMARK OPEN: SAINA NEHWAL, SAMEER VERMA ENTER QUARTERFINALS

ODENSE (TIP): Indian badminton ace Saina Nehwal defeated world number two Akane Yamaguchi of Japan for the first time in four years to enter the women's singles quarterfinals of the Denmark Open here on Thursday.

Later in the day, more good news was in store of India as Sameer Verma held his nerve to beat Asian Games champion Jonathan Christie to reach the men's singles quarterfinals. The ninth-ranked Indian let go of three match points in the deciding game before pulling off a 23-21, 6-21, 22-20 win over the world number 12 from Indonesia. Nehwal, however, won her second round match rather convincingly. The Olympic bronze-medallist, who has dropped to 27 in the latest world rankings, registered an easy 21-15, 21-17 win over second-seeded Yamaguchi.

The 28-year-old Indian will now take on world number three and another Japanese, Nozomi Okuhara, in the quarterfinals on Friday. This was Nehwal's second career win over Yamaguchi, who has won six times in the head-to-head encounters between the two. Nehwal's first win against Yamaguchi came in 2014 during the China Open.

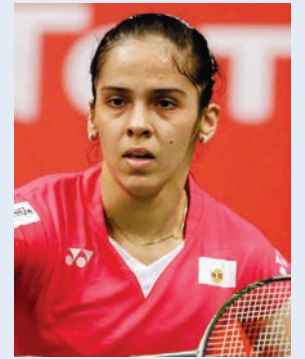
Since then, Yamaguchi has enjoyed upper hand against the Indian. The earlier two meetings this year - Uber Cup in May and Malaysia Open in June - also went in Yamaguchi's favour.

Nehwal trailed 0-4 initially but she made a fine comeback to level the scores at 10-10. But from there, Nehwal showed tremendous resolve and reeled off five straight points to take a 15-10 lead and then widened it to 19-12.

Yamaguchi recovered a bit but Nehwal grabbed five game points at 20-15 and then easily pocketed the first game.

In the second game, it was Nehwal's turn to take the lead initially as she zoomed to 7-2 but Yamaguchi caught her up at 11-11. After that, it was a close tussle between the two as they were locked at 17-17.

At that stage, Nehwal cinched four points on the trot to win the second game and clinch the match. It was a good day for India in the women's doubles as well with Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy upsetting seventh seeds from South Korea, Lee Ho See and Shin Seung Chan, 18-21, 22-20, 21-18 to enter the quarterfinals.



Asian Champions Trophy: Indian Men's Hockey Team beat hosts Oman 11-0

MUSCAT (TIP): Defending champions and favourites India started their 2018 Asian Champions Trophy hockey campaign with a crushing win over Oman at the Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Muscat on October 18.

Young striker Dilpreet Singh scored a hat-trick while Harmanpreet Singh scored twice in India's 11-0 rout of the hosts Oman.

India opened the scoring through Lalit Upadhyay's goal in open play in the 17th minute. Three more goals followed in the second quarter as Harmanpreet Singh (22nd minute) sounded the board with a low drag-flick, followed by Nilakanta Sharma (23rd minute) flicking in during a goalmouth scrimmage and Mandeep Singh (30th minute) capitalising on a pass from the right flank.

In the second half, India displayed phenomenal phases of hockey as Dilpreet scored three goals (41st, 55th and 57th minute) and was adjudged man of the match, while Gurjant Singh (37th minute), Akashdeep Singh (27th minute), Varun Kumar (49th minute) and Harmanpreet (53rd minute) made entries on the score-sheet.

Player	Goals	Minutes
LALIT	1	17'
HARMANPREET	2	22', 53'
NILAKANTA	1	23'
MANDEEP	1	29'
GURJANT	1	37'
DILPREET	3	41', 51', 57'

INDIA 11 - 0 OMAN

Dilpreet credited his goals to the support of his teammates. "It was not just an individual effort. My teammates created the openings for me to score the goals," he said.

"We are happy to start in this manner, but tougher competition is ahead of us," said Harendra. "I am not happy at the manner in which we played the first quarter. We have a lot of work to do," Indian coach Harendra Singh said.

Oman team's coach Tahir Zaman said he expected India to go all out, but was upset at the errors by his defenders. "We gave away four or five goals that should not have been there," said Zaman, a former Pakistan captain.

"We were playing against Asia's highest-ranked team. Our target was to sustain and absorb the pressure that was expected from India," said Zaman.

"Despite the highly skilled opponents, our team did well to create some scoring opportunities in the first quarter," he said. "We need to learn from the mistakes and stay competitive in the tournament," Zaman said.

India play the next match of the Asian Champions Trophy against Pakistan on Saturday.



Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE OCTOBER 22 - OCTOBER 28, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says there will be a lot of chipping, chopping, pruning, adjustments, readjustments, fine-tuning, tweaking and so on as the period begins. Mid-period, your road map is well defined. You roll up your sleeves and hit the shop floor. You chart out your priorities one by one and address them without undue emotion. As the period ends, there is fire in your belly. There are achievement and success. You win kudos and applause. There is rapid business expansion.

Taurus:

You are in the hopeless coils of amour. Those in committed relationships take bonding to new heights. Family life unfolds many pleasures. Singles play the field. You want to give back to society. You could volunteer in old-age homes and work for the less fortunate. There is a new intensity pushing you. As the period ends, there is stability and you get down to hard work. Your sights are clear. Nothing can faze you. In simple words, this is favorable time.

Gemini:

You could find new love and possibly new work avenues. You are possessed with tremendous intellectual and mental energy. You are also blessed with stamina and determination. You are also blessed with stamina and determination. Your ambitions are aroused. There are strong ego drives and passions. Mid period sees international travel and your work could be highly appreciated. As the period ends, there are mood swings and hallucinations. You may also have to grapple with some old health issue.

Cancer:

You are pumped with new energy and raring to go. You introspect and look to change the little details of your life that don't work anymore. You have the energy, the wisdom and the foresight, and there could be giant strides at the workplace. As the period ends, you aim at heaving your life from its present mode to one of some consequence. You want to revamp your life. There are maudlin moments and stormy personal relationships. You ideate big time and also execute your plans.

Leo:

You make significant headway in all your dealings. Passions and ego drives run high, and close relationships will be at the receiving end of your fireworks. Old, long-buried tensions may surface. You are energetic, decisive, hasty, restless, impatient and belligerent. Teamwork suffers, and you alienate associates. You are inspired and your creativity is in full bloom. Relations with women, regardless of your gender, will be unusually powerful.

Virgo:

You are in the throes of communication. New acquaintances blow new winds. This is not a time for concerted work as you take in all the influences like a hungry receptacle. There are several urgent domestic calls to attend to. You fly high. No stone is left unturned as you go about making miracles happen. This is a stimulating period. You feel alive and awake. Family life is even-paced.

Libra:

This can be powerfully creative phase. You assert yourself with confidence and are able to market yourself well. A piece of art you have authored wins critical approval. What's more, it can be minted at the box office. This is a lucky time for important business transactions. You are busy with fiscal instruments and take risks. Your heart also goes out to less-advantaged sections of society and you earmark plans for philanthropy.

Scorpio:

This is a great time. Play your cards right and mint the moment. The energies are powerful. This can be a magical time for those in the media. Even those in prosaic and mundane number-crunching persuasions do exceedingly well. New vistas open and you move from strength to strength. This is a purple patch. Your script is profound, effective and long-lasting. You are heeding the call of a different drummer. There could be international travel and fame. You could chair global meets.

Sagittarius:

The family is content and humming away like a pampered kitten. Your world is basking in contentment. Existence is smiling on you. This is great time for media folk. Your life is moonlight and roses. It could also be a time of indulgences. You are filled with compassion and empathy. You are receptive to the moods, feelings, opinions and actions of others. You bond with family, friends, loved ones and colleagues like never before.

Capricorn:

This is a period of beauty and bounty. Children bring joy and there could be an addition to the family. There are new collaborations, ventures, research, new discoveries and vistas. You send the right messages to the universe and a whole new world opens up. You sign new deals and surge forward. Success crowns your ventures and love lights a candle within you. You revel in all types of commercial transactions. There are surreptitious moves and secret liaisons.

Aquarius:

You prospect all forms of healing, psychology, astrology, sociology and the esoteric sciences. There are maudlin moments and flashbacks. You are eager to grow as a person of some consequence and you put your heart and soul into the endeavor. You win peer approval as you think out of the box and pioneer new solutions. As the period ends, there are heightened passions and ego drives, confusion, restlessness, ambiguity and uncertainty.

Pisces:

You look to forge ahead in life but are fully aware of the limitations imposed by circumstances. There are compromises to be made and games to be played. But you are canny enough to seize every opening and checkmate the opposition. This is a good time to resolve personal relationships if they have been floundering. You are in the mood for solutions; you don't want altercations or acrimony. You feel rejuvenated, relaxed, refreshed, recharged and reborn.



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