

The INDIAN PANORAMA
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Special Edition
November 2, 2018

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Last date for submission: October 20, 2018
For any question, please call 646-247-9458

Senators spar over FBI Report on Supreme Court Nominee Brett Kavanaugh: Protests erupt

WASHINGTON (TIP): Democrats are angry over FBI "clean chit" to President Trump's nominee for Supreme Court Brett Kavanaugh. Protests have erupted in Washington against Brett Kavanaugh whose confirmation vote is soon to be taken up by the Senate. Republican Senators appear confident that Kavanaugh will win confirmation.

The FBI report, sent by the White House to the Senate Judiciary Committee in the middle of the night, was denounced by Democrats as a whitewash that was too narrow in scope and ignored critical witnesses. But Republicans moved forward with plans for a key procedural vote on Friday and a final vote on Saturday on confirming the conservative federal appeals judge chosen by Trump for a lifetime job on the nation's top court.

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Activists outside the Supreme Court to hold a vigil in opposition to top court nominee Brett Kavanaugh (inset) in Washington, October 4

South Carolina shooting leaves one officer dead: cop killing suspect is 74-year-old Vietnam veteran



FLORENCE, SC (TIP): A man shot seven police officers in South Carolina, killing one, in a standoff so dangerous that the police had to use a bullet-proof vehicle to rescue the wounded, authorities said.

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Chanda Kochhar quits ICICI Bank; Sandeep Bakhshi to be new MD



Chanda Kochhar ICICI Bank Managing Director and CEO, facing charges of nepotism and conflict of interest, quit the bank, October 4

ICICI Bank says probe to continue

NEW DELHI (TIP): Facing inquiry over charges of nepotism and conflict of interest, ICICI Bank Managing Director and CEO Chanda Kochhar today, October 4, quit the bank, six months before her current tenure was to end.

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India, Russia set to sign three major deals, ignoring U.S. threats

NEW DELHI (TIP): Russian President Vladimir Putin landed in Delhi on Thursday, October 4, for the annual India-Russia summit which could see the signing of military deals totaling close to \$10 billion; a 24-hour visit that could have lasting implications for the India-U.S. relationship as well.

On Friday, India and Russia are expected to conclude three major military deals: for five S-400 missile systems estimated to cost about ₹39,000 crore (more than \$5 billion), four stealth frigates and a deal for Ak-103 assault rifles to be manufactured in India. The U.S. has warned that the deals could attract sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries

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Russian President Vladimir Putin being received at IGI Airport by India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, October 4.

Photo / Courtesy PTI



One dead, two arrested after shooting behind Fort Worth shopping center



FORTWORTH, TX (TIP): Fort Worth police arrested two shooting suspects after they ran and attempted to hide inside Hulen Mall.

The shooting happened behind a shopping center at Hulen Street and South Drive, but the two were captured inside of the mall midday Thursday, October 4, after witnesses saw them and called police.

The two men were found in the bathroom of a clothing store near the food court and were trying to disguise themselves by changing clothes, police said. The men didn't resist and were arrested. One of them had a handgun.

Police say the person the suspects shot at died at the hospital. Witnesses saw him stumble and collapse near the intersection of Hulen and South.

People who tried to help him at the scene saw at least one gunshot wound on his neck. "He had been shot in the neck and bleeding from his neck so bad it covered his whole abdomen," said witness Chris Lawson. "Plain white t-shirt covered in blood, everybody ran over to help him." Police are investigating witness reports that the victim may have been shot twice.

Crime scene investigators could be seen Thursday afternoon looking over a car not far from where the victim was found. Detectives are examining how the car is connected to the shooting. The names of the two people arrested have not been released. (Source: FOX 4)

Mahatma Gandhi Memorial of North Texas celebrates Gandhi's 149th birthday

IRVING, TX (TIP): On October 1, the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial of North Texas (MGMNT) celebrated Gandhi's 149th birthday at the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Plaza in Irving, Texas, during which many participated in the "Gandhi Peace Walk," wearing white t-shirts and caps. According to a press release, Wipro CEO Abidali Neemuchwala along with his wife Hassena, were the Guests of Honor at the celebration while Irving City Council Member Allen Meagher and Texas State Representative Matt Rinaldi were Special Guests.

While MGMNT Secretary Rao Kalvala welcomed the gathering, MGMNT Treasurer B.N introduced all of the board members of IANT, IAFC, MGMNT and the guests.



Mahatma Gandhi Memorial of North Texas celebrates Mahatma Gandhi's 149th birthday
Photo / Courtesy: MGMNT

MGMNT Co-Chair Kamal Kaushal said that Gandhi's deeds will last for generations to come as he sacrificed his life for a valuable cause, which is why we are still celebrating him today.

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Indian American named IMF Economic Counselor and Director of Research

CAMBRIDGE, MA (TIP): Indian American Gita Gopinath has been named by The International Monetary Fund as its Economic Counselor and Director of Research Department.

"Gita is one of the world's outstanding economists, with impeccable academic credentials, a proven track record of intellectual leadership, and extensive international experience," IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde said in a statement on Monday, October 1. "All this makes her exceptionally well-placed to lead our Research Department at this important juncture. I am delighted to name such a talented figure as our Chief Economist."

Gopinath, the John Zwaanstra Professor of International Studies and of Economics at Harvard University, will succeed the retiring Maurice Obstfeld.

A specialist in international macroeconomics and finance, she becomes the second Indian American to hold the position. Raghuram Rajan, a former Chief Economic Adviser to India's Finance Ministry and a professor at the University of Chicago Booth



Gita Gopinath, the John Zwaanstra Professor of International Studies and of Economics at Harvard University has been named Economic Counselor and Director of Research Department of IMF

School, served as the IMF Economic Counselor and Director of Research from 2003 to 2006.

Gopinath, who grew up in Mysore, Karnataka, currently also serves as an adviser to the Chief Minister of the Indian state of Kerala.

She did her undergraduate degree in economics from Lady Shri Ram College,

University of Delhi, and a master's from the Delhi School of Economics. She came to the United States to enroll for a master's at the University of Washington. In 2001, she earned her PhD in economics from Princeton University in the fields of international macroeconomics and trade. Her advisers included former Fed chief Ben Bernanke, Harvard economist Ken Rogoff, and Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, now a professor at UC Berkeley.

After her PhD, Gopinath worked as an assistant professor at the University of Chicago for four years before joining Harvard in 2005 in the same position. Five years later, she would become a tenured professor. Currently, she is one of the only three women to have tenure at the economics department at Harvard. She is also the first India-born woman to get tenure at the department.

Gopinath, now a US citizen, is married to Iqbal Singh Dhaliwal, who heads the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. They have a 14-year-old son, Rohil.

Indian-American Rita Baranwal to head US nuclear energy division

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump has nominated prominent Indian-American nuclear expert Rita Baranwal to head the nuclear energy division at the department of energy.

If approved by the Senate, Baranwal will be an assistant secretary of energy, responsible for nuclear technology research and the development and management of the department's nuclear technology infrastructure, the White House said in a statement. Baranwal currently serves as the Director of the Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) initiative.

Previously, she served as Director of Technology Development & Application at Westinghouse and was a manager in Materials Technology at Bechtel Bettis, where she led research and development in nuclear fuel materials for US naval reactors. Baranwal earned her BA in Materials Science and Engineering from MIT and PhD from the University of Michigan. Last week, Trump had signed into law the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act which will speed up the development of advanced reactors in the United States. The law eliminates some of the financial and technological barriers standing in the way of nuclear innovation. In a recent presentation, Baranwal said that US nuclear industry is equipped to lead the world in deployment of innovative nuclear technologies to supply urgently needed abundant clean energy both domestically and globally. (Source: PTI)



President Trump has nominated Indian-American Rita Baranwal to head US nuclear energy division

Indian- Origin Indra Nooyi Steps Down as PepsiCo CEO; Says "Lots Still Left in Me"

NEW YORK (TIP): Indian- origin PepsiCo's Indra Nooyi, who steps down as its chief executive officer, October 1, after 12 years at the helm of the global beverage giant, said a "lot of fuel" is still left in her "tank" and she looks forward to doing something different with her life.

Chennai-born Ms Nooyi was named Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PepsiCo in 2006.

In her remarks during PepsiCo's Third Quarter 2018 Earnings Conference Call, Ms Nooyi said, "You know 12 years is a long time as a CEO, and even though I have a lot of fuel still left in my tank, I wanted to do something different with my life. Spend more time with my family and give the next generation in PepsiCo a chance to lead this great company."

Ms Nooyi, working with the global company since the last 24 years, said she was blessed to have had the opportunity to lead PepsiCo and "work with such incredible people including our outstanding board, executives and other associates, our customers and other partners, our shareholders and all our other stakeholders."

Ms Nooyi, who will hand over the reins of the company to veteran Ramon Laguarta at a time when the beverage maker navigates a shrinking global soda market, will remain chairman of the board until early 2019 to ensure a smooth transition.

PepsiCo's board of directors in August announced that they unanimously elected Mr Laguarta, 54, to succeed Indra Nooyi, 62, as CEO. Mr Laguarta was also elected to the company's Board of Directors, effective from today.

One of the most powerful and influential business leaders in the world, Ms Nooyi was regularly featured on power lists compiled by Forbes and Fortune magazines. She was also among the few female executives to lead global corporate giants. Just under five per cent of Fortune 500 companies have a female



Chennai-born Ms Nooyi who was named Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of PepsiCo in 2006, stepped down from her position October 1

CEO at present.

Ms Nooyi, a mother of two daughters, has been very vocal about the challenges women faced in trying to find a balance in managing their home and work. She once said at an Aspen Ideas Festival in Colorado in 2014 that women "cannot have it all."

In a parting letter she wrote before stepping down as CEO, Ms Nooyi shared some reflections on what she has learnt during her tenure and the lessons that have guided her throughout my career.

"Think hard about time," she said. "We have so little of it on this earth. Make the most of your days and make space for the loved ones who matter most. Take it from me. I've been blessed with an amazing career, but if I'm being honest, there have been moments I wish I'd spent more time with my children and family. So, I encourage you: be mindful of your choices on the road ahead," she said.

Ms Nooyi further wrote that serving as PepsiCo's CEO has been the honor of a lifetime.

"Now it's on to the next adventure-for us all. Thinking about my life beyond PepsiCo, I'm reminded of the words of the great Sufi mystic Rumi: Goodbyes

are only for those who love with their eyes. Because for those who love with heart and soul, there is no such thing as separation."

Ms Nooyi said throughout her tenure, PepsiCo has strived to achieve a difficult balance between attending to short term pressures while managing for the long-term.

She noted that PepsiCo has made positive contributions to communities around the globe in which it operates through its support of access to clean drinking water, human rights, nutrition, agricultural programs and many more initiatives.

She said in the midst of managing the business for the long-term, PepsiCo also delivered a strong and consistent financial performance specifically during the period between 2006 and 2017.

Net revenue grew more than 80 per cent and the company added a new billion-dollar brand almost every other year. "We return \$79 billion to shareholders through dividends and share repurchases. Our market capitalization increased by \$68 billion. Dividends per share nearly tripled from \$1.16 to \$3.17, and we generated total shareholder return of 162 per cent," she said.

The quarterly earnings report on Ms Nooyi's final day on the job beat analyst estimates: revenue rose 1.5 per cent to \$16.5 billion while earnings totaled \$1.59 a share.

Ms Nooyi described her successor Mr Laguarta as a terrific executive with a long and proven track record of growing businesses. She said he has a "deep understanding of the changing preferences of consumers and other critical trends unfolding around the world, and he has demonstrated that he knows how to navigate them successfully."

She also expressed confidence Mr Laguarta will lead PepsiCo to "new and greater heights in the years to come."

Indian-Origin Billionaire's California Private Beach Plea Rejected



Supreme Court upheld the Coastal Act's protection of the public's rights to access the California coast, and rejected Silicon Valley billionaire Vinod Khosla's petition for a private beach

SANTA CRUZ, CA (TIP): An Indian- origin Billionaire's petition has been rejected he US Supreme Court for seeking to keep surfers and other beachgoers from crossing his land to get to a popular northern California beach. Silicon Valley billionaire Vinod Khosla, a co-founder of Sun Microsystems, bought the 53-acre (21.4 hectare) property in the 2008 for \$32.5 million dollars. Since then he has waged an unrelenting legal battle with regulators intent on enforcing state law that guarantees public access to California's 1,200-mile (2,000) kilometer Pacific coastline. His property adjoins Martin's Beach at Half Moon Bay, just south of San Francisco and long a haven for surfers and strollers.

Rebuffed several times by lower courts, Khosla finally turned to the Supreme Court, but on Monday, October 1, it declined to hear the case, closing off what is normally an avenue of last resort. It was a victory for surfing associations and others who feared that a Supreme Court ruling in the case might favor rich landowners. Some landowners have gone so far as to put up gates, security guards and no trespassing signs to keep people from crossing their properties. "The courts at every level, including now the US Supreme Court, has upheld the Coastal Act's protection of the public's rights to access the California coast," said Lisa Haage, chief of enforcement of the California Coastal Commission. "This case reaffirms that you cannot make a unilateral decision to shut down a beach that has provided generations of families with memories," she said. Khosla's lawyers insist their case was not about public access to the coastline but protection of property rights.

"No owner of private business should be forced to obtain a permit from the government before deciding who it wants to invite onto its property," Dori Yolb Kilmer, Khosla's attorney said.

Health for all - a near possibility

1,350 medical packages, 23 specialties and an insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh will benefit 10.74 crore underprivileged families. Is Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY the healthcare scheme that India has been waiting for?



By Aditi Tandon

Much is at stake for the BJP-led NDA government as it keeps a close watch on the progress of Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojna (PMJAY), the world's largest health-protection scheme rolled out nationally last Sunday. Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Jharkhand's Ranchi on the eve of 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the scheme aims to finance hospitalization of 10.74 crore underprivileged families (50 crore people) to the extent of Rs 5 lakh annually.

These families are the ones defined as "poor and vulnerable" in the Rural Development Ministry's Socio-Economic Caste Census, published in 2011 and updated in 2015. To this extent, PMJAY is an entitlement-based plan that won't invite enrolments and will have a pre-determined set of beneficiaries. The scale of the plan is massive as it seeks to cover 40 per cent of the national population promising them cashless, paperless and portable access to hospitalization through a network of empaneled government and private hospitals.

The hospitals are not allowed to charge patients for any procedure. The arrangement is simple - the Centre and states (in the ratio of 60:40) will reimburse hospitals the cost incurred on treating beneficiaries. Exactly 1,350 medical packages across 23 specialties (oncology, ophthalmology, urology, general surgery and orthopedics included) have been identified and their package rates fixed. Hospitals are bound by these rates and are allowed to raise claims based on the packages the government has decided in consultation with various stakeholders.

Execution and results

Within a week of its launch, PMJAY has started to deliver. As of September 28, 18,258 beneficiaries have sought hospitalization under the plan and healthcare providers have submitted 13,108 claims to state governments for reimbursement. The maximum claims came from Gujarat (5,777), followed by Tamil Nadu (3,837), Chhattisgarh (2,193) and West Bengal (1,198).

The Tribune has learnt that these claims involve procedures that cost hospitals Rs 25.22 crore with ophthalmology emerging the top sought specialty at 731 claims. As the scheme progresses, timely settlement of hospital claims will be its top challenge, lest hospitals quit for want of money. However, Dinesh Arora, Deputy CEO of Ayushman Bharat, the banner body for PMJAY, says the government has created systems for timely settlement of hospital claims.

State health societies have been mandated to clear claims within 15 days unless a fraud is suspected, in which case the deadline is one month. "If the claims are not settled within 15 days, the state will invite weekly penalty amounting to one per cent of the cost involved in the claim the hospital has submitted," Arora says.

Out of 30 states that have signed MoUs with the Centre to run PMJAY, only seven have opted for insurance model, while the rest have decided to run the scheme through state health societies. The trust model is that of CGHS. Identification of beneficiaries and stabilization of IT platforms, developed to run the plan, pose equally pressing challenges to



A plan in place: The PMJAY, an ambitious healthcare scheme, aims to prevent 70 million Indians from slipping below the poverty line annually due to catastrophic health expenses.
Photo / Courtesy PTI

PMJAY managers. Every beneficiary must have, what the Centre calls, a "golden card" to avail of cashless services. In the first five days of the scheme rollout, the government has issued golden cards to 33,529 persons. PMJAY is meant only for hospitalizations. It does not cover the cost of OPD care.

Who is a golden card holder?

Ayushman Bharat CEO Indu Bhushan explains, "A golden card holder is the beneficiary whose data points - QR code and identification - have been matched with PMJAY's IT systems and one who is ready to avail free services at the hospital. In the first stage of plan's rollout, 10 crore beneficiary families under the SECC through village-level drives have been identified. Then, we sent each family a letter bearing their QR code. In the third stage, beneficiaries will get golden cards once they reach the hospital for care, approach the Aarogya Mitra stationed at each hospital, match their QR codes with identification cards to authenticate themselves with the name registered in the software. Once that is done, the beneficiary gets the golden card and is ready to avail of the service."

But what if a patient's access to treatment is delayed on account of the above-mentioned authentication procedures? Ayushman Bharat managers say that won't happen. Emergency protocols under the PMJAY say the empaneled hospitals are dutybound to treat emergency patients without waiting for authentications.

Check for flaws

As many as 97 fraud alerts have been installed in the PMJAY software, including "indiscriminate procedures" or "unexplained patient visits to a certain facility". Dinesh Arora explains, "We will have cause for suspicion if a patient visits a certain hospital

repeatedly when there is another hospital close to his residence. In this case, middlemen might be herding patients to a given facility for some illegal benefits. It would also be unnatural for one hospital to submit a large number of claims."

Hospitals perpetrating frauds will meet with severe penalties, including de-empanelment and blacklisting, besides financial fines that go up to 16 times the cost of procedures for which they submitted inflated or false claims. That said, the stabilization of PMJAY softwares remains a cause of concern for the Centre. The reason government launched a pilot in 22 states to test these softwares before the September 23 launch. It was to prevent the GST-type glitches.

The Centre is now training Aarogya Mitras to be stationed at every hospital empaneled under the PMJAY to help beneficiaries access care through IT systems. So far, 14,000 Aarogya Mitras have been trained in these softwares. More are under training.

So far, 27,000 hospitals have already applied for empanelment under the scheme and 13,273 have met the criteria. Of these, 7,097 are private and the rest are government hospitals. Medanta, Gurugram and Apollo, Tamil Nadu are among private facilities empaneled with the PMJAY.

The idea behind the ambitious plan is to prevent 70 million Indians from slipping below the poverty line annually due to catastrophic health expenses.

At stake is the health of an entire nation

WHY PMJAY: The latest National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) found 85.9 per cent rural households and 82 per cent of urban households had no access to healthcare insurance/assurance. Catastrophic healthcare-related expenditure pushed families into debt, with more than 24 per cent

households in rural India and 18 per cent population in urban areas meeting healthcare expenses through some form of borrowing.

ABSTAINING STATES: Delhi, Punjab, Telangana, Odisha, Kerala.

TO KNOW MORE: Visit the website mera.pmjay.gov.in or call 14555 or 1800111565

Package rate includes: Room, bed charges, nursing care, diagnostics, procedure cost and physician fee, consultation and diagnostics pre-hospitalization, two-week medicine, stitch removal, follow-up consultancy for two weeks post-discharge

THE PROCEDURES COVERED: One beneficiary family (average size five members) can avail of cashless hospitalization up to Rs 5 lakh annually for any of the 1,350 medical packages covered under 23 specialties.

BREAKUP OF PACKAGES - General surgery (253 packages covered), orthopedics (101), cardiology (38), cardiovascular surgery (21), ophthalmology (42), ENT (94), urology (161), obstetrics and gynecology (73), pediatric medicine (100), neonatal care 911, pediatric surgery (35), pediatric cancers 912, medical packages (69), neurosurgery (82), intervention neuro-radiology (12), oncology (112), mental health disorders (17) and emergency packages (4)

WHO endorses PMJAY

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus recently called PMJAY a "turning point" and a "bold, ambitious and courageous move". He said, "As a nation, India has changed the way it plans things. India has decided to stretch itself to a breaking point to succeed in the health sector and that's what I call a plan. I have always felt that the best way to plan is to target blanket coverage rather than piecemeal coverage. A plan that's easy to achieve is not a plan."

(Source: Tribune)

China "Wants A Different American President," Says US Vice President

Donald Trump "will not back down" to the challenge, Mike Pence said. He added that China "wants a different American president" and that the nation "is meddling in America's democracy" ahead of the midterm elections

WASHINGTON (TIP): Vice President Mike Pence on Thursday issued a broad indictment of the methods behind China's rise to becoming a major economic power, asserting in a sharply critical speech that Beijing has sought to undermine U.S. interests across the globe - and to undermine President Donald Trump in the midterm elections.

Speaking at the conservative Hudson Institute, Pence accused China of using trade, diplomatic overtures and military expansion to spread its influence, and he called on American business leaders, academic scholars and journalists to counter Beijing's campaign.

Trump "will not back down" to the challenge, Pence said. He added that China "wants a different American president" and that the nation "is meddling in America's democracy" ahead of the midterm elections, an accusation that echoed a view the president first raised at the United Nations last week. Pence also cast China as a greater threat to election security than Russia, whose interference in the 2016 election is the subject of a special counsel investigation Trump routinely calls a "witch hunt."

"As a senior career member of our intelligence community told me just this week, what the Russians are doing pales in comparison to what China is doing across this country," Pence said. "And the American people deserve to know it."

The speech marked another escalation in rising tensions between Washington and Beijing amid a deepening trade war and new military hostilities. Top White House aides have said the administration is developing new policies to mark a turn in the bilateral relationship away from cooperation in many



Image credit: Bloomberg photo by Andrew Harrer

areas and toward outright competition.

Hours after Pence spoke, China rejected the allegations of election interference as "completely ridiculous." "We have no interest in interfering in the internal affairs and elections of the United States," foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said. "The international community sees very clearly, in fact, which country is the one that invades the sovereignty of other countries, interferes in other countries' internal affairs, and damages the interests of other countries."

Hua echoed the view that the United States was seeking to contain China's rise. "No one can obstruct the Chinese people from unswervingly following the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics and realizing even greater achievements," she said.

Trump has continued to offer personal praise for Chinese President Xi Jinping, as he continues to try to enlist Beijing's support in his administration's efforts to pressure North Korea into relinquishing its nuclear weapons. Using the vice president to deliver the address could help the president maintain a good working relationship with Xi, although Trump acknowledged last week that the Chinese leader may no longer consider them friends.

But Pence's remarks offered the clearest declaration that the White House is moving forward with a harder-edge strategy, which analysts in Beijing view as aimed at containing China's rise. The vice president emphasized that China's economy has worsened in recent months, attributing some

of the declines to the Trump administration's tariffs on more than \$250 billion in Chinese goods. "We don't want China's markets to suffer. In fact, we want them to thrive," Pence said. "But the United States wants Beijing to pursue trade policies that are free, fair and reciprocal. And we will continue to stand and demand that they do."

In a wide-ranging interview on NPR on Thursday morning, Chinese Ambassador Cui Tiankai suggested the Trump administration has not shown good faith in negotiating with Beijing over trade.

"The U.S. position keeps changing all the time, so we don't know exactly what the U.S. would want as priorities," he said. "And number two, I think there's been some attempt on the U.S. side to force something like the U.S. will get 100 percent, and China will get zero. I don't think this is fair."

The animosity between the world's two largest economic powers has raised concerns about whether the clash could play out dangerously in the coming months. This week, a Chinese warship conducted a risky maneuver and sailed within 45 yards of a U.S. Navy destroyer in the contested South China Sea, where China has sought to establish maritime dominance in the crucial shipping corridor.

"We will not be intimidated, and we will not stand down," Pence said, referring to the incident. At a U.N. conference last week, Trump accused Beijing of trying to influence the midterm elections in retaliation for the trade war. The president did not offer evidence of such actions by Beijing, although administration officials told reporters that they viewed several Chinese actions as tantamount to interference. (NDTV)

U.S. indicts seven Russian intel agents in hacking conspiracy

'Westinghouse, chemical weapons watchdog OPCW and FIFA were targeted'

WASHINGTON (TIP): The U.S. Justice Department on Thursday, October 4, indicted seven agents of Russia's GRU military intelligence agency as part of a joint crackdown with allies Britain and the Netherlands on a series of major hacking plots attributed to Moscow.

The U.S. indictments were announced as Dutch security services said they had thwarted a Russian attack on the global chemical weapons watchdog, the OPCW, and after Britain blamed the GRU for plots that notably targeted the U.S. Democratic Party and world sport's anti-doping authority

John Demers, U.S. Assistant Attorney General for National Security, confirmed that known attack targets included the OPCW, sports bodies including FIFA and the World Anti-doping Agency (WADA), as well as U.S. nuclear energy company Westinghouse.

"Nations like Russia and others that engage in malicious and norm-shattering cyber and influence activities should understand the continuing and steadfast resolve of the United States and its allies to prevent, disrupt and deter such unaccountable conduct," Mr. Demers told a news conference.

"The defendants in this case should know that justice is very patient, its reach is long, and its memory is even longer," he said.

The indictments include charges of money laundering, using virtual currencies like bitcoin, wire fraud and identify theft.

Mr. Demers said the operations "involved sophisticated, persistent and unauthorized access into the victims' computer networks for the purpose of stealing private or otherwise sensitive information."

While the latest case did not arise from Robert Mueller's probe into Russian election meddling, it overlaps with it - including the identity of the individuals charged, Mr. Demers said. In July, Mr. Mueller indicted 12 GRU officers, accusing them of interfering in the U.S. polls in 2016.

Canada confirmed on Thursday it believes itself to have been targeted by Russian cyber attacks, citing breaches at its center for ethics in sports and at the Montreal-based WADA.

Cyber aggressor

"The government of Canada assesses with high confidence that the Russian military's intelligence arm, the GRU, was responsible"

for these cyber attacks, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Britain's National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) termed Russia's GRU a pernicious cyber aggressor.

GRU, Britain said, was almost certainly behind the BadRabbit and World Anti-Doping Agency attacks of 2017, the hack of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) in 2016 and the theft of emails from a U.K.-based TV station in 2015.

"The GRUs actions are reckless and indiscriminate: they try to undermine and interfere in elections in other countries," said British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt.

Though less well known than the Soviet Union's once mighty KGB, Russia's military intelligence service played a major role in some of the biggest events of the past century, from the Cuban missile crisis to the annexation of Crimea.

Though commonly known by the acronym GRU, which stands for the Main Intelligence Directorate, its name was formally changed in 2010 to the Main Directorate of the General Staff (or just GU). Its old acronym - GRU - is still more widely used.

Tariff policies have badly hurt China, says US President Donald Trump

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump has said that his policy of imposing hefty tariffs on additional USD 250 billion worth of imports from China has hurt Beijing "very badly" and the Communist nation is eager to talk and make a deal. Trump on Monday threatened to impose new tariffs on additional USD 267 billion worth of imports from China and asserted that there will be no deal with Beijing unless it changes its unfair trade practices.

"China's been hurt very badly over the last number of months. Their markets are down 30 per cent. And our markets are up 55 per cent since I became president," Trump told his cheering supporters in Mississippi on Tuesday. "I hope we can make a deal with China, but honestly, who knows? But we're very happy where we are. Very, very happy," he said. The US does not seem to be in a hurry to have a trade deal with China, he indicated, adding that the European Union was eager to enter into a trade deal with the US. Trump said China had been draining the US. "They're taking our money. They're rebuilding themselves. They're building a jet a day. They're building many, many bridges the size and bigger than, like, the George Washington Bridge," he said. "What are we doing? We're bigger than the George Washington Bridge. (timesnownews)

'FROG'S CRY': CONG ON RSS' REMARK ON RAM TEMPLE

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Congress compared RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's statement on early construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya with noise made by frogs during rains and accused the RSS-BJP of sending Lord Ram to "exile" after every elections.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the BJP and RSS were like "Kalyug's Kaikeyi" who remember Lord Ram four months before every election and then send him to exile after it.

"During the season of rains and elections, a number of frogs make noise and every noise does not become a reality. Lord Ram is everywhere and in the country," Surjewala told reporters. "At one time in Satyug, Kaikeyi had got Lord Ram banished to a 14-year exile. In today's Kalyug, 'Kaikeyi BJP and RSS' have sent Lord Ram to exile of 30 years.

"After every election, they send Lord Ram to exile and remember him four months before every election. What is the character of BJP and RSS? Ram in their speech and Nathuram in their thought. This is the truth of the BJP," he said. Surjewala said the Congress believes that the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue is pending before the Supreme Court and whatever verdict comes all sides should abide by it and the government should implement it.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has said even opposition parties cannot openly oppose a Ram temple in Ayodhya as the deity is revered by the country's majority.

Delhi HC acquits ex-TV anchor Suhaib Ilyasi in wife's murder case

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Delhi High court on Friday acquitted former television producer and anchor Suhaib Ilyasi for killing his first wife, Anju, 18 years ago.

Ilyasi was convicted by a trial court on December 20, 2017, and sentenced him to life term for stabbing his wife to death, saying he "committed murder and gave it a colour of suicide".

It had also imposed a fine of Rs two lakh on him and directed that Rs 10 lakh be paid as compensation to Anju's parents.

Ilyasi was earlier charged with milder provisions, including 304 B (dowry death) of the Indian Penal Code.

Anju's mother Rukma Singh and sister Rashmi Singh had moved the Delhi High Court which in August 2014 ruled that the former TV producer would be tried under Section 302 of the IPC for the offence of murder.

Anju was rushed to a hospital on January 11, 2000, with stab wounds from her East Delhi residence. She was declared dead on arrival at the hospital.

Ilyasi, who shot into limelight after hosting TV crime show India's Most Wanted, was arrested on March 28, 2000. Charges were framed against him in the case after his sister-in-law and mother-in-law alleged that he used to torture his wife for dowry. He was granted bail later.



Govt blinks, reduces excise duty on petrol, diesel by Rs 2.5 per litre

NEW DELHI (TIP): A day before the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy review, the centre on October 4 effected a Rs 2.50 per litre cut in prices of petrol and diesel in an effort to ease inflationary pressure and boost consumer confidence.

Many Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled states also cut value-added tax (VAT) on fuel by an equivalent amount at the centre's request.

Finance minister Arun Jaitley said that out of the Rs 2.50 cut, the centre will reduce excise duty by Rs 1.50 per litre, while state-run fuel retailers will take a hit of Rs 1 for every litre sold.

With the US sanctions on Iran round the corner and continued pressure on the rupee, the reprieve for consumers might be short-lived, analysts said.

This has also raised questions about the government's commitment to keep fuel prices outside its control. "The



decision seems to be driven by the government's worry about the political fallout of high oil prices, though the economics of it is not quite appealing," said former chief statistician of India Pronab Sen.

Fiscal challenge

Jaitley said he was confident of meeting the fiscal deficit target of 3.3% of GDP this year despite the centre's revenue declining by ₹10,500 crore in the

second half (October-March) of the current fiscal because of the excise duty cut on fuel. "The significant increase in tax revenues gives us the comfort with respect to fiscal deficit," Jaitley said.

Net direct tax collections in the six months ended September are at 38.6% of the budgeted estimates of ₹11.5 trillion for 2018-19, reflecting the challenge for the central government to stick to its fiscal deficit targets at a time that goods and services tax (GST) revenues are also lagging behind targets.

In the six months ended 30 September, monthly GST collections averaged Rs 96,283 crore, a shortfall of Rs 3,700 crore, given the Rs 1 trillion monthly target. The government hopes the festival season will improve demand and boost revenue collection in the second half of the fiscal. However, it still expects GST collections to miss the full-year target.

Source: Livemint

After Mayawati says no to Congress, political scene hots up in UP

LUCKNOW (TIP): A day after BSP chief Mayawati ruled out any truck with the Congress in poll-bound states, leaving a question mark on a larger coalition against the BJP, former Samajwadi Party leader Amar Singh on Thursday suggested Shivpal Yadav's Samajwadi Secular Morcha should consider allying with Mayawati.

"Mayawati is open to electoral ties with small players so Shivpal Singh Yadav should try," tweeted Amar, who had earlier said he wanted Shivpal to join the BJP. The Shivpal camp is silent on Amar's suggestion but the Samajwadi Party leaders say it was merely an attempt to derail the SP-BSP coalition.

The tweet by Amar, who has only recently become the national convener of the Rashtriya Yuva Hindu Vahini, followed after UP deputy chief minister Keshav Prasad Maurya ruled out any pre-poll truck with Shivpal Yadav's

Morcha, an outfit he floated after falling out with his nephew and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav.

Maurya had suggested that Shivpal should consider merging his morcha into the BJP instead.

The BJP isn't complaining as in Shivpal as well as Bhim Army leader Chandrashekhar they see an opportunity to cut into the OBC and Dalit votes.

Shivpal supporters deny that he is planning to play the role of a spoil sport, weaning away a chunk of SP's OBC votes to harm the anti-BJP alliance.

"It is not worth taking notice what Amar Singh says. All that we can say is that the SP-BSP alliance is firmly on track and together we would defeat the BJP in 2019 LS polls," said SP's Abdul Hafeez Gandhi.

To counter BJP's OBC outreach, the SP has launched its own OBC connect

campaigns while the BSP has decided to strengthen its 'bhai chara' committees across the state, although the Bhim Army may pose some discomfort to the BSP.

The BJP, which has just finished holding OBC meets in the state capital, plans to organise district level OBC meets now. It has also decided to appoint at least two Dalits in all its booth level committees and would hold a massive Dalit meet.

In a subtle shift of strategy, the party, which usually relied on non-Jatav Dalits and non-Yadav OBCs, is aggressively wooing the Jatavs and the Yadavs too. While Jatavs are known to be loyalists of BSP chief Mayawati, who herself hails from the same Dalit sub caste, Yadavs are known to be staunch supporters of the SP, a party founded by Mulayam Singh Yadav.

Source: HT

SAWAN KIRPAL RUHANI ASHRAM ORGANIZES 33RD FREE EYE CATARACT CAMP

NEW DELHI (TIP): Cataracts are a common cause of a decrease in vision. People may experience blurry vision, and trouble carrying out their normal daily activities. Normally, the lens of the eye is clear. A cataract causes the lens to become cloudy, which eventually affects our vision. Unfortunately there are millions of people who are blind due to cataracts. Luckily a non-invasive surgery is available to help people regain their vision.

The 33rd eye cataract camp organized by Sawan Kirpal Ruhani Mission (SKRM), Delhi, as part of the Global Conference on Mysticism was held from September 13 to 20, 2018. The silver jubilee conference was presided over by Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj, whose life has been one continuous thread of service to humanity. He is the inspiration behind the vision of the eye camp. His vision of extending a helping hand to those in need is an integral tenet of SKRM.

Free eye cataract surgeries during the eye camp were provided to patients who were otherwise not able to afford the expenses of such an operation. As many as 2,795 patients attending the eye camp were first screened by a medical team. 1,127 selected patients, based on medical eligibility, were then allocated surgery dates. Patients were transported to ICARE hospital, Noida, where they underwent cataract surgery, and



received premier new lenses. They were given eye drops for several weeks following the operation. ICARE is a leading eye hospital in India and keeps pace with advanced technology available worldwide, including using the state-of-the-art Alcon Infiniti Vision System, for eye surgery.

The experts included eye surgeons from the United States who volunteered their high quality technical skills and time to conduct the surgeries. The United States clinical team



worked in collaboration with doctors at ICARE hospital. The eye camps are conducted twice a year by SKRM, in February and September. More than twelve thousand individuals have benefited from free cataract surgeries since the inception of SKRM's eye camp in February 2002. The patients appreciated the kind voluntary service, rendered free of charge. The procedure helped to improve their vision and quality of life.

Congress seeks CAG audit in Rafale jets deal

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Congress on Thursday approached the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) for the second time in two weeks and informed him that fresh revelations in connection with the purchase of the 36-Rafale deal in India and France have exposed a "deep-rooted sinister conspiracy" and a "clear cut case" of loss to public exchequer. It reiterated its demand that the CAG conduct a forensic audit to bring out the truth.

The Congress drew CAG Rajiv Mehrishi's attention to former French president Francois Hollande's statement that the Indian government had proposed the name of Anil Ambani's Reliance Defence as the offset partner for the deal and that the Joint Secretary & Acquisition Manager in the Ministry of Defence, who had been part of the Contract Negotiations



Committee, had raised questions about the deal's benchmark price and recorded objections a month before the deal was inked.

The delegation, led by party veterans Ahmed Patel and Anand Sharma, also referred to former Hindustan

Aeronautics Ltd chief T Suvarna Raju's remarks that HAL and Dassault Aviation, the makers of Rafale, had signed the mutual Workshare Agreement and that the PSU was ready to guarantee delivery of 108 aircraft as per the agreed price on schedule.

Modi govt at war with Indians, imposing suffocating ideology: Rahul

NEW DELHI (TIP): In a blistering attack on the Narendra Modi government, Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Friday said it has gone into a war with its own people imposing a single suffocating ideology on 1.3 billion Indians.

Delivering the keynote address at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit 2018, here, Gandhi lashed out at the Bharatiya Janata Party regime saying it dislikes thinkers like journalist-activist Gauri Lankesh who was shot dead last year and others who are sacked merely for criticising the Prime Minister.

"What we see today in India is

defaming, a maligning of the Indian imagination. The Indian government has gone into war with its own people because it wants to impose one ideology on 1.3 billion of us.

"It wants to impose one singular suffocating memory on our 1.3 billion people," said Gandhi in his scathing criticism of the Modi rule.

"What is the nature of the war, farmers are committing suicide by the thousands. Economy is decimated, rupee is on its knees, petrol is at an all-time high, the stock market is imploded, 12 lakh crore in NPAs and the banking system is jammed shut. Unemployment is at a 20-year high.

"Unorganised sector has been decimated as a result of the demonetisation and extremely complex multilayered GST. Millions and millions of small and medium business have been wiped out. Public confidence is in tatters," he said castigating the government's policies.

He said peoples' aspiration was turning into anger -- Dalits and tribals agitating across the country and there are vicious attacks on the minorities.

"Our friends in the media are sacked because they criticised the Prime Minister, Gauri Lankesh is shot dead because of what she wrote.

Source: IANS

Seven Rohingya refugees deported to Myanmar after SC refuses to intervene

NEW DELHI (TIP): Seven Myanmar nationals, believed to be Rohingya Muslims, were handed over to their country Thursday via the Manipur border after the Supreme Court refused to stop the first such deportation from India.

While no Assam government official was willing to come on record to establish their ethnicity, a top official of a Silchar jail where they were in detention on charges of being illegal immigrants had told Hindustan Times that they were Rohingyas. A ministry of external affairs (MEA) statement, too, had said that the seven were from Rakhine state in Myanmar.

Since July 2012, the seven had been held at Silchar Central Jail, which also houses a detention camp, after they were arrested for violation of the Foreigners Act. After their three-month sentence ended, imprisonment was revised to detention.

The formal handover took place at Tamu Township in Moreh, about 110 km from Manipur's capital Imphal in the afternoon. On Wednesday, the seven had been ferried from Silchar to Imphal by Assam police in two vehicles, including a Thar Jeep and a Volvo bus. They were taken to Moreh on Thursday morning.

Source: HT



Two political workers shot dead two days ahead of local polls in Jammu and Kashmir

SRINAGAR (TIP): Militants on Friday shot dead two political workers and injured another by firing at them from a close range in Karfali Mohalla area of the city, two days ahead of polling for first phase of elections for urban local bodies in Kashmir.

The gunmen fired at the three persons at Karfali Mohalla, resulting in the death of two of them and injuries to another.

"Two people have been killed, they had some political background. We are ascertaining more details," said SSP, Srinagar, Imtiaz Ismail Parray.

The two succumbed to their injuries in a hospital.

OPENING OF KARTARPUR CORRIDOR LINKED WITH START OF TALKS: PAK

ISLAMABAD (TIP): The opening of the Kartarpur border crossing for Sikh pilgrims was linked with the start of dialogue between India and Pakistan, the Foreign Office said Thursday, asserting that dialogue is the only way forward to resolve issues and disputes between the two countries.

Foreign Office spokesperson Muhammad Faisal told reporters that Pakistan was pursuing the policy of peaceful neighbourhood.

Responding to a question about opening of the Kartarpur Corridor for Sikh pilgrims, Faisal said "nothing can happen if there are no talks between the two countries."

He, however, reiterated Pakistan's stance to hold talks with India to resolve all outstanding issues.

Kartarpur is situated in Narowal district of Pakistan's Punjab province, close to Indo-Pak border. It was established by the first Sikh Guru in 1522. The first Gurdwara, Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib, was built here, where Guru Nanak Dev is said to have died.

Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan is located across the river Ravi, about four kilometres from the Dera Baba Nanak shrine in Punjab's Gurdaspur district.

Indian cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu, who had attended Imran Khan's swearing in ceremony in Islamabad in August, has said that Pakistan Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa hinted at opening of the route to Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib on the occasion of the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev.

The 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev is being observed in November 2019.

The ties between the two countries had strained after the terror attacks by Pakistan-based groups in 2016 and India's surgical strikes inside Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.



Last month, India called off a meeting between the foreign ministers of the two countries in New York, citing the brutal killings of three policemen in Jammu and Kashmir and Islamabad releasing postage stamps "glorifying" Kashmiri militant Burhan Wani.

Talking about Kulbhushan Jadhav's trial at the Inter-national Court of Justice (ICJ), Faisal said that Pakistan was prepared to put forward its arguments forcefully when the hearings would be held next year.

The ICJ will hold public hearings in the Jadhav case from February 18 to 21 next year at The Hague.

Jadhav, 48, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017. India moved the ICJ in May the same year against the verdict. A 10-member bench of the ICJ on May 18, 2017 had restrained Pakistan from executing Jadhav till adjudication of the case.

On SAARC conference, Faisal said Pakistan held talks with all South Asian countries, on the sidelines of UN General

Assembly meeting in New York, and they all were very positive to come to Islamabad for the summit. However, he claimed that India is creating hurdles.

SAARC Summits are usually held biennially, hosted by a member state in alphabetical order. The last SAARC Summit in 2014 was held in Kathmandu.

The 2016 SAARC Summit was to be held in Islamabad but after a major terror attack on an Indian Army camp in Uri in Jammu and Kashmir on September 18 that year, India expressed its inability to participate in the summit due to "prevailing circumstances" and stepped up diplomatic pressure on Pakistan. The summit was called off after Bangladesh, Bhutan and Afghanistan also declined to participate.

Faisal also said that Pakistan was not oblivious of India's water projects on rivers flowing from Kashmir and would continue to raise at all forums the controversial projects like Kishanganga and Ratle.

He also took strong exception to the threat of "surgical strikes" by the Indian army chief who said time was ripe for such action.

Faisal said that "the head of a professional army should not make such controversial claims."

He also said Pakistan's relations with the US were moving in the positive direction and Foreign Minister Qureshi held important meetings on the sidelines of the UNGA.

He said Pakistan wanted peace in Afghanistan but bringing the Afghan Taliban to negotiating table was a shared responsibility of all countries.

Faisal said that Pakistan and China were fully cooperating on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to complete various projects.

Source: PTI


**GUEST
COMMENT**

The New Deals: U.S.- Mexico-Canada Pact

After more than a year of intense negotiation, the U.S., Canada and Mexico managed to arrive at a revised trade agreement on Sunday to replace the quarter-century-old North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Even though the deal does not do anything new to promote the cause of free trade among the North American nations, it achieves the objective of averting any significant damage to the international trade system. Sadly, this is the best anyone could possibly hope for in the midst of the global trade war that began this year. When it comes to the finer details, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) makes several changes to NAFTA, which U.S. President Donald Trump had promised to scrap. The most prominent changes are the tweaks to production quotas applied to Canada's dairy industry, which were intended to help protect it by restricting supply. Under the new deal, Canada will have to allow American dairy producers to compete against locals, a move that will favor Canadian consumers. The U.S. agreed to retain Chapter 19 and Chapter 20 dispute-settlement mechanisms as a compromise. This will help Canada and Mexico deal with protectionist duties imposed by the U.S., often under the influence of domestic business lobbies, against their exports.

Not all the amendments, however, are congenial to the prospects of free trade. Many are simply hard compromises that Canada and Mexico may have made just to defuse trade tensions with the U.S. And not unlike other free trade deals entered into by governments, the present one attempts to micromanage trade in a way that benefits specific interest groups at the cost of the overall economy. The new labor regulations and rules of origin will add to the cost of production of goods such as cars, thus making them uncompetitive in the global market. The USMCA mandates a minimum wage that is above the market wage on labor employed in Mexico, yet another move that will make North America a tough place to do business. Foreign investors may now have fewer protections from unfriendly local laws as the accord does away with resolutions through multilateral dispute panels for certain sectors. But it is its potential to end up as a double-edged sword for the U.S.'s major trading partners that Indian policymakers may find instructive. Announcing the USMCA, Mr. Trump signalled he would now extend his 'all or nothing' approach to resetting trade ties with the European Union, China, Japan and India. Terming India "the tariff king", he said it had sought to start negotiations immediately, a move he reckoned as a bow to the power of tariffs that a protectionist U.S. could wield. In dealing with an emboldened Trump administration, India's trade negotiators will now have their task cut out if they want to protect exporters' access to one of the country's largest markets for its services and merchandise.

(The Hindu)



By Ananya Vajpeyi

Truth, Satya, was the central axis of the Gandhian system of thought and practice. For Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, everything turned on Truth - satyagraha, swaraj, ahimsa, ashram, brahmacharya, yajna, charkha, khadi, and finally, moksha itself. In a fine introduction to a new critical edition of the Mahatma's An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth, Tridip Suhrud, closest to Gandhi among all contemporary scholars, lays out the intricate web of ideas arranged around the axial principle of Truth: "Truth is not merely that which we are expected to speak and follow. It is that which alone is, it is that of which all things are made, it is that which subsists by its own power, which alone is eternal."

In a recent interview, Mr. Suhrud points out that Indians today continue to have "the need that he should always be available to us. When there is a crisis in our collective life, we expect Gandhi to provide an answer." Both of Mr. Suhrud's insights - that Truth is the key to Gandhi's philosophy, and that we rely on Gandhi even decades after his death and long after his supposed lapse into political irrelevance - are essentially correct. I started making a note of the crises in Indian democracy and in global politics that sent one immediately to consult Gandhi.

TRUTH ALONE TRIUMPHS? The ongoing controversy in the United States about the proposed appointment of Federal Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court as the nominee of the Republican Party, even as he stands accused of sexually assaulting Christine Blasey Ford, in 1982, when they were both teenagers, hinges exactly on the truth of her testimony versus his defense. As became clear in the Senate hearings on September 27, the palpable veracity of Professor Ford's account over Judge Kavanaugh's denial would likely still not change the Republican Party's nomination of him (the outcome of the proceedings, including an FBI investigation, is pending as this article goes to press).

Effectively, the U.S. appears on the verge of replacing Truth with perjury as an acceptable value, even in the apex court of the criminal-justice system, shaking the very bedrock of American constitutionalism. When Truth is rendered negotiable and dispensable, the balance of justice - in this case, between genders and between political parties - is disastrously upset. The scales tip wildly without any kind of mechanism to orient men and women or Democrats and Republicans back into an equitable relationship with one another within a shared political context that ought to be egalitarian and fair.

Like other democratic institutions in the Donald Trump presidency, the U.S. Supreme Court seems poised on the verge of destruction. Arguably Americans, too, could have recourse to Gandhi, though perhaps not in the way that we in India might. Mr. Suhrud describes how Gandhi strained to hear the "small, still voice" within himself, the voice belonging to one he

AS I SEE IT

The voice that is great within us

The crises in Indian democracy and in global politics send one immediately to consult Gandhi.

“For Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, everything turned on Truth - satyagraha, swaraj, ahimsa, ashram, brahmacharya, yajna, charkha, khadi, and finally, moksha itself”.



Mahatma Gandhi's Salt Satyagraha, the Dandi March 12th March 1930

called "antaryami", "atma" or "God" - an inner prompt, the self as a guide and a compass - so that he could keep moving ever closer to Truth.

It was this voice that he followed, sometimes to the bafflement of others who could not hear it. This was the voice that made him undertake life-threatening fasts his health wouldn't permit; withdrew from active politics at the most crucial junctures of India's anti-colonial struggle; leave factual errors and narrative inconsistencies in texts he wrote after readers had pointed out obvious mistakes; and, most difficult to understand, embark on life-long ordeals of a sexual nature, involving not just his own celibacy and asceticism, but also that of his wife Kasturba, his fellow Ashramites, and his sons and their families.

Even close and loyal associates like Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel were often confounded by Gandhi's actions and decisions; more skeptical and antagonistic peers like M.A. Jinnah and B.R. Ambedkar couldn't make sense of his motivations at all. In his monumental new history, Gandhi: The Years that Changed the World, 1914-1948, Ramachandra Guha delves deep into these knotty episodes, where the voice of the Mahatma's interior conscience and the compulsions of nationalist politics pull in opposite directions, and no power on earth is able to steer Gandhi away from his self-charted path towards Truth. Mr. Guha calls Gandhi's move to have his young grand-niece Manu sleep next to him, as he travelled through ravaged Hindu and Muslim settlements in Bihar and Bengal during the height of communal violence on the eve of Partition, "the strangest experiment". No matter what the reactions of his colleagues, for Gandhi it was not strange, precisely because it was one of his 'experiments with truth' (in Gujarati, satya na prayogo).

HOME AND THE WORLD: Of late, many musicians in south India have faced vicious attacks from rightwing Hindutva groups for singing hymns and psalms, thereby allegedly hijacking "Hindu" Carnatic music for "Christian" evangelical aims. This despite the fact that the violin, central to the Carnatic system in modern times, is a European gift to Indian music, and both Christian and Muslim religious lyrics and poetry have been a constitutive part of the Carnatic repertoire throughout the 20th century, if not before.

Gandhi made great use of the Bible in his prayers, teachings, writings and Ashram liturgies. He was often accused of being a crypto-Christian. However, he flatly refused to give preference to the Vedas over the Bible. Mr. Suhrud quotes from Vol. 31 of the Collected Works: "He is no Sanatani Hindu who is narrow, bigoted and considers evil to be good if it has the sanction of antiquity and is to be found supported in any Sanskrit book."

Outside India but not far from it, Indologist David Shulman has been reporting consistently on the brutal violence of hardline Zionist settlers as well as the Israeli army against unarmed Arab shepherds and villagers in the Jordan Valley. Mr. Guha delves into Gandhi's difficult correspondence with philosopher Martin Buber and the intellectual J.L. Magnes in 1938-1939, just before the Kristallnacht. This appalled even sympathetic Jews like Buber and Magnes, who had admired and supported Gandhi at the time of the Salt March in 1930, before the Nazi takeover of Germany.

How could Gandhi oppose the Zionist project, with Jews being sent to death camps in Hitler's murderous regime? But now the tables are turned, and a rightwing Israeli state under Benjamin Netanyahu seems hell-bent on exterminating the Palestinians. Gandhi's counter-intuitive Truth informs the civil disobedience, passive resistance and non-violent protest of both Arab and Jewish activists who oppose the continuing occupation and takeover of dwindling and defenseless Palestinian territories by bellicose Israeli forces.

The multilingual translator, editor and interpreter Suhrud (who works in all three of Gandhi's languages, Gujarati, English and Hindustani, and has earlier produced a critical edition of Hind Swaraj), and the historian and biographer Guha (who has already written two other massive books in the past decade, about Gandhi in the first phase of his life, and about postcolonial India, "after Gandhi"), have together provided ample materials this year - leading up to the 150th anniversary of Gandhi's birth in October 1869, and the 70th anniversary of his assassination in January 1948 - that we can continue to consult Gandhi on all manner of issues that may trouble our individual or collective conscience. It might have been "small" and "still" in his own perception, but even today, Gandhi's is the voice that is great within us.

(The author is a Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi).

THE INDIAN PANORAMA

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Published by Prof. Indrajit Saluja

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IS DEMOCRACY DYING?

America's Slide Toward Autocracy

Democracy has taken a beating under President Trump. Will the midterms make a difference?



By David Frum



Restoring democracy will require more from each of us than the casting of a single election ballot. It will demand a sustained commitment to renew American institutions, reinvigorate common citizenship, and expand national prosperity. The road to autocracy is long—which means that we still have time to halt and turn back. It also means that the longer we wait, the farther we must travel to return home.



Twenty-one months into the Trump presidency, how far has the country rolled down the road to autocracy? It's been such a distracting drive—so many crazy moments! —who can keep an eye on the odometer?

Yet measuring the distance traveled is vital. As Abraham Lincoln superbly said in his "house divided" speech: "If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it."

Let's start with the good news: Against the Trump presidency, federal law enforcement has held firm. As of this writing, Special Counsel Robert Mueller's inquiry is proceeding despite the president's fulminations. The Department of Justice is ignoring the president's Twitter demands to prosecute his opponents. As far as we know, the IRS and other federal agencies are not harassing Trump critics. In July, a police department in Ohio retaliated against a Trump adversary, the porn actress known as Stormy Daniels, by arresting her on now-dismissed charges that she touched undercover officers while performing at a strip club. But evidence indicates that this was entirely a local initiative.

Trump sometimes wins in court, as he did on his Muslim ban. He loses more often, as he did on separating immigrant children from their parents at the southern border. Politically charged cases are advancing through the legal system in traditionally recognizable ways.

More generally, Trump has been noticeably constrained by his unpopularity. He inherited a strong and growing economy. Casualties from America's military actions have remained low. A more normal president, facing the same facts, might expect approval ratings like those of Bill Clinton during his second term: mid-50s or higher. Instead, Trump scrapes by in the low 40s.

In June, Gallup asked Americans to assess 13 aspects of Trump's personality. Only 43 percent of respondents thought he cared about people like them. Only 37 percent found him honest and trustworthy. Only 35 percent said they admired him. Clearly, his erratic and offensive behavior, his overt racial hostility, and his maltreatment of women have taken a toll.

The bulk of this magazine issue is given over to questions about liberal democracy's long-term viability. Around the world, democracy looks more fragile than it has since the Cold War. But if it survives for now in America, future historians may well conclude that it was saved by the president's Twitter compulsion. Had he preserved a dignified silence for a few consecutive months, he might have bled less support and inflicted more damage on U.S. institutions. Then again, a Donald Trump with impulse control would not be Donald Trump.

Trump has built the worst-functioning White House in living memory, and its self-inflicted errors have slowed him down almost as much as his personality has. He traveled to Saudi Arabia, but never visited forward-deployed U.S. troops in the region. Potentially positive moments, like North Korea's release of three detainees on May 10, 2018, are regularly squashed by stupidities, like the leak that day of a White House aide's denigration of John McCain ("It doesn't matter; he's dying anyway").

Yet even as Trump ties his own shoelaces



SUBORDINATION OF STATE TO LEADER

together and lurches nose-first into the Rose Garden dirt, he has scored a dismaying sequence of successes in his war on U.S. institutions. In this, Trump is not acting alone. He is enabled by his party in Congress and its many supporters throughout the country. Republican leaders and donors have built a coping mechanism for the age of Trump, a mantra: "Ignore the weird stuff, focus on the policy." But the policy is increasingly driven by the weird stuff: tariffs, trade wars, quarrels with allies, suspicions of secret deals with the Russians. The weird stuff is the policy—and it is transforming the president's party in ways not easily or soon corrected. Maybe you don't care about the president's party. You should, because a liberal democracy cannot endure if only one of its two major parties remains committed to democratic values.

Here are the three areas of most imminent concern:

ETHICS

President Trump continues to defy long-standing ethical expectations of the American president. He has never released his tax returns, and he no longer even bothers to offer specious reasons, like a supposed audit. His aides shrug off the matter as something decided back in 2016.

Meanwhile, the president continues to collect payments from people with a vested interest in decisions made by his administration, from foreign governments looking to influence U.S. policy, and even from his own party. Those who seek the president's attention know to patronize his hotels and golf courses. Authoritarian China has fast-tracked trademark protections for his family's businesses. Trump's disdain for ethical niceties has infected his Cabinet and his senior staff. It's no longer much of a story when his commerce secretary is revealed to have filed false financial disclosures or when his top communications aide turns out to have worked to intimidate alleged sexual-harassment victims at Fox News. Or when his son-in-law is shown to have sought financing for business ventures from investors in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates at the same time that he was participating in the administration's discussion about which of those countries to back in a military confrontation. If one gauge of authoritarianism is the merger of state power with familial economic interests, the needle is approaching the red zone.

At a July 20, 2018, ceremony, CEOs gathered in the White House to offer personal job-creation pledges to the president. Watch the video if you have not already; the scene recalls a rajah accepting accolades from his submissive feudatories.

Perhaps the most defining characteristic of modern autocrats such as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Viktor Orbán, and Vladimir Putin is the way they seek to subsume the normal operations of government into their cult of personality. In a democracy, the chief executive is understood to be a public employee. In an autocracy, he presents himself as a public benefactor, even as he uses public power for personal ends.

Apparently to punish the Washington Post owner and Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos for his paper's reporting, Trump has pressed the Postal Service to raise Amazon's rates—thus warning other business leaders to be careful what they say. He has conscripted NFL team owners into his war against black football players who kneel during the national anthem to protest racism and police brutality.

Trump's tariffs personalize power too. They enable him to privilege some industries and hurt others. Some losers—farmers, say—may be compensated; others, such as aerospace manufacturers, will be disregarded. All economic sectors must absorb the new truth that executive action can send their profits soaring (in July, not long after Trump imposed new tariffs on steel and aluminum, America's largest steelmaker reported its highest second-quarter profits ever) or tumbling (shares of Molson Coors, which relies on cheap aluminum to make its beer cans, dropped 14 percent this spring after Trump's tariffs were announced).

When Trump refers to "my" generals or "my" intelligence agencies, he is teaching his supporters to rethink how the presidency should function. We are a long way from Ronald Reagan's remark that he and his wife were but "the latest tenants in the People's House."

ALTERNATIVE FACTS

Trump is hardly the first president to lie, even about grave matters. Yet none of his predecessors did anything quite like what he did in July: Travel to a U.S. Steel facility and brag that, thanks to his leadership, the company would open seven wholly new facilities. In reality, the company was reopening two blast furnaces at a single facility.

contd on Page 30

Educationist wins Rs 157-cr suit in Oz: Was sued for admitting students by unfair means



Amarjit Khela of Sajawalpur village in Nawanshahr district has won a major legal case in Australia

PERTH (TIP): A Punjabi-origin entrepreneur and educationist has won a major legal case in Australia that allows him to run his institution, Unique International College, besides making him eligible to receive a payment of 26 million Australian dollars (Rs 136.32 crore) which was withheld pending the court case.

He is also eligible to get legal costs of another AUD 4 million (Rs 20.97 crore) from the commonwealth of Australia.

The entrepreneur, Amarjit Khela, had won the case last week after a long battle in which he braved racism, defamation and several accusations, including that of unfair practices to attract students to his college. Khela has remained in news because of his phenomenal rise to become an educationist and an entrepreneur. He had gone to Australia as a student when he was 19.

He belongs to Sajawalpur village in Nawanshahr district. Ninder Ghugianvi, media and cultural coordinator, Punjab Kala Bhawan here, in a statement, hailed the court order as the victory of Punjabiyat. "Khela fought for the rights of Punjabis to grow in the foreign land. His book titled 'I don't lie' described his struggle in Australia," he said.

He worked in restaurants and did menial jobs and later became the first Punjabi to own a college in Sydney. His college ran into controversy when the Australian Consumer Commission and a watchdog agency accused him of malpractices, including giving free laptops and other gifts to students.

"My victory is the victory of truth and against racism and certain individuals who were against the rise of Punjabis or Indians in Australia," he told The Tribune over the phone.

As per the copy of the court orders, the Full Federal Court found that Unique International College did not engage in a system of unconscionable conduct in enrolling vulnerable students in diploma courses. Khela had lost the case in a lower court last year.

The case had hogged limelight as the Australian consumer watchdog claimed to recover \$140 million paid to the college under the Commonwealth funding scheme.

In political storm, Macron wraps himself in de Gaulle's constitution, style

Macron helicoptered into Colombey-Les-Deux-Eglises in eastern France, where de Gaulle had his country estate, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the constitution the former general drew up, creating a powerful role for the president.

FRANCE (TIP): French President Emmanuel Macron sought to wrap himself in the mantle of war hero Charles de Gaulle on Thursday after a spate of ministerial resignations dim an aura of invincibility that accompanied his first year in power.

Macron helicoptered into Colombey-Les-Deux-Eglises in eastern France, where de Gaulle had his country estate, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the constitution the former general drew up, creating a powerful role for the president.

Hailing the durability of France's presidential system before laying a wreath at de Gaulle's tomb, Macron said: "It allows me to avoid the tyranny of immediacy, which is an absurdity of our times, which means day-to-day vagaries should not decide a nation's course."

Macron has sought to paint himself as a leader in the mould of de Gaulle, a towering father-figure of modern-day France who made strong authority a totem of his presidency and had a deep sense of belief in his own destiny. In his official photograph, a copy of de Gaulle's war memoirs sit on Macron's desk.

But even de Gaulle, who frequently ranks in polls as one of France's greatest historical figures, lost the sheen of success as he sought to rebuild the French economy after World War Two and reform political institutions.

"De Gaulle could be imperious so long as he delivered positive results for France. Macron faces the same challenge as events crowd in on him," said Jonathan Fenby, author of "The General: Charles de Gaulle and the France He Saved".

IN THE GENERAL'S FOOTSTEPS

Sixty years ago, de Gaulle felt a duty to transform France as it grappled with a bloody



colonial war in Algeria and weak and unstable institutions. Macron too believes he must overhaul France to make its institutions more efficient, create growth and counter the rise of far-right populism.

"It was the spirit of 1958, it must be that of 2018, because today as then and today perhaps more than then, the people want to feel listened to by political elites constantly asked to prove themselves," Macron said in a speech on Thursday. Macron, 40, wants to revamp France's constitution to cut the number of lawmakers by a third and introduce an unaccustomed dose of proportional representation. Yet even as Macron sought to place himself in the General's footsteps, his so-called "day-to-day vagaries" were quick to catch up with him as he met mostly white-haired pensioners in Colombey-Les-Deux-Eglises. Some complained about the higher

levies Macron imposed on their pensions in order to lower those on workers. "Are you joking?" one said as he denied that pensions had been eroded.

With typical frankness, Macron said France would be a better place if people complained less. "The General's grandson earlier told me, 'We used to be able to speak freely. The one thing we weren't allowed to do was complain,'" he told the retirees.

Macron's frequent sharp tongue – he berated striking workers for "kicking up a bloody mess" and called critics of his labour law reforms "slackers" – has exposed him to accusations of being an arrogant and patronising president.

"I think the General had it right," Macron said. "You know, this country would be different if we were like that. We don't realise how immensely lucky we are."

In Israel, Angela Merkel Pledges Germany's Fight Against Anti-Semitism

JERUSALEM (TIP): Chancellor Angela Merkel spoke of Germany's "everlasting responsibility" to oppose anti-Semitism during a visit to Israel on Thursday as she and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu brushed past their differences and promoted cooperation between their nations.

The one-day visit by Merkel and members of her cabinet was part of German-Israeli government consultations held regularly, but came after Netanyahu's harsh criticism of European countries over their efforts to keep alive the Iran nuclear deal.

Germany and other European countries have also repeatedly hit out at Israeli settlement building in the occupied West Bank and warned over threats to remaining prospects for a two-state solution to the conflict with the Palestinians.

But both leaders seemed determined to have the visit run smoothly, greeting each other warmly after Merkel's arrival on Wednesday night and touring an innovation

exhibit together on Thursday.

Merkel began the day with a visit to Israel's Holocaust memorial high in the hills above Jerusalem.

After laying a wreath in the Yad Vashem memorial's solemn Hall of Remembrance, where an eternal flame burns, she spoke of Germany's responsibility as the perpetrator of the Holocaust. "From this comes the everlasting responsibility of Germany to remember this crime and to oppose anti-Semitism, xenophobia, hatred and violence," she said, reading out the message she wrote in the memorial's guest book.

Later after receiving an honorary doctorate from Israel's Haifa University, she answered questions from students and touched on the Iran nuclear deal. Netanyahu has urged European nations to follow the lead of US President Donald Trump and withdraw from the accord with his country's main enemy.

Germany, like other signatories to the deal, says it is preventing Iran from obtaining

nuclear weapons for now.

Merkel noted the Iranian presence in neighbouring Syria and how that has exacerbated the threat from Israel's enemy.

She said the nuclear deal would be discussed further with Netanyahu.

"On the principle that everything must be done to prevent nuclear armament, we absolutely agree," she said.

SHE'S LOST HOPE : Germany says the joint government meeting on Thursday afternoon will focus on economic ties, innovation and technology, while noting that the consultations have been in place for 10 years. Felix Klein, who heads the German government's fight against anti-Semitism, is part of the delegation. Fears over a resurgence in anti-Semitism in Germany are expected to be discussed. Merkel said ahead of the trip that there was "unfortunately a lot of anti-Semitism" in Germany, while also noting the two countries were linked by a "unique relationship". (NDTV)

UK minister: Russia cyberattacks actions of a 'pariah state'

Britain's National Cyber Security Center says four new attacks are associated with the GRU as well as earlier cyberattacks.

BRUSSELS (TIP): British Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson on Thursday branded a series of global cyber attacks blamed on Russia as the reckless actions of a "pariah state" and said that the UK and its NATO allies would uncover such activities in the future.

"Where Russia acts in an indiscriminate and reckless way, where they have done in terms of these cyber attacks, we will be exposing them," Williamson told reporters in Brussels at talks with US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis and their NATO counterparts.

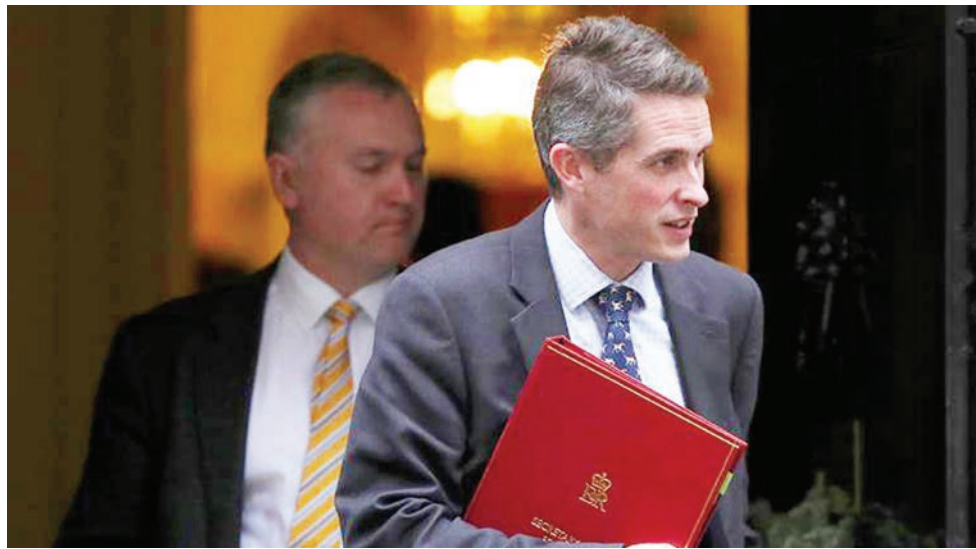
His remarks came after British and Australian officials said the Russian military intelligence unit GRU is behind a wave of global cyber attacks.

Britain's National Cyber Security Center says four new attacks are associated with the GRU as well as earlier cyber attacks.

It cites attacks on the World Anti-Doping agency, Ukrainian transport systems, the 2016 US presidential race and others as very likely the work of the GRU.

British officials have blamed the GRU for the March nerve agent attack on Russian ex-spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia in the English city of Salisbury. Russia denies any involvement.

The revelation comes as the US, Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands were due



Thursday to offer their offensive cyber-capabilities to the NATO military alliance for use in combating such attacks.

"We are not going to be backward leaning. We are going to actually make it clear that where Russia acts, we are going to be exposing that action," Williamson said.

"This is not the actions of a great power. This is the actions of a pariah state, and we will continue working with allies to isolate them; make them understand they cannot

continue to conduct themselves in such a way," he said.

Earlier, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Foreign Minister Marise Payne issued a joint statement that Australian intelligence agencies agreed that GRU "is responsible for this pattern of malicious cyber activity."

They said Australia wasn't significantly impacted, but the cyber attacks caused economic damage and disrupted civilian infrastructure in other places. (AP)

New Zealand to take down Captain Cook's statue after repeated vandalism

GISBORNE (TIP): A statue of Captain Cook, erected in 1769, in New Zealand's Gisborne will be removed and relocated following protests by the Maori community which says its ancestors arrived there long before the famous British explorer, reported The Guardian. The statue of Cook has been repeatedly vandalised with red paint smeared on its face and coat. Critics have described Cook, who landed in the area aboard HMS Endeavour in 1769, as a "murderer" and "crooked Cook".

Tensions are high in the city as the 250th anniversary of Cook's landing is only a year away. The Gisborne district council on Monday announced that the statue will be moved to the Tairāwhiti Museum. It also added that hill where the Cook's statue was erected, will now be adorned with "the tribal stories and cultural design elements can be shared from this significant location".

Discussions are also underway in the Gisborne region for Poverty Bay – so named by Cook in 1769 – to be replaced by its Maori name.

According to The Guardian, the Ngati Oneone tribe has also long opposed having the controversial statue of Cook placed on the sacred mountain of Titirangi. A local councillor also said that the removal of the statue would allow a more nuanced and "honest" story about New Zealand's history to emerge. (PTI)

ICJ orders US to lift some sanctions on Iran on humanitarian grounds

TEHRAN (TIP): In a moral victory to Iran, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Wednesday ordered the United States to halt its sanctions against Iran and ensure that they do not impact humanitarian aid or civil aviation safety.

Iran had lodged a complaint at the ICJ after the US had laid down sanctions against it on May 8, 2017, and had termed the US action as violative of the terms of a 1955 Treaty of Amity between the two countries. The treaty contains rules providing for freedom of trade and commerce between the US and Iran as well as payment and transfer of funds between them.

The court unanimously said that the US must remove trade sanctions on medicines and medical devices, foodstuffs and agricultural commodities, spare part and equipments necessary for the safety of civil aviation.

The US in August had offered assurance to the court that their sanctions would not affect the humanitarian grounds. But the Wednesday judgment declared the assurances "not adequate to address fully the humanitarian and safety concerns raised" by Iran.

"The court considers that the United States must, in line with its obligations under the 1955 treaty, remove by means of its choosing any impediment arising from the measures announced on 8 May 2018," Reuters quoted Presiding Judge Abdulqawi Yusuf, reading a summary of a ruling by the 15-member panel of justices. (PTI)

UK's May said to Plan Rushing Brexit Deal Through Parliament

BRUSSELS (TIP): Prime Minister Theresa May's officials are drawing up plans to rush her Brexit deal through Parliament in an attempt to head off a rebellion from her own party, according to people familiar with the matter.

May's team want the final withdrawal agreement ratified by lawmakers within two weeks of signing the terms of the divorce in Brussels. Under that timetable, members of Parliament would vote on whether to accept or reject the divorce treaty by the beginning of December, the people said. May's office declined to comment.

Fast-tracking the deal through the House of Commons is likely to prove contentious. It will open May up to accusations that she's denying lawmakers the chance to scrutinize the terms of Britain's exit from the EU, but the payoff for the government will be in limiting the opportunities for rebels to try to block the deal.

Ministers also believe that reaching a deal quickly will be vital to allow enough time in the parliamentary calendar to pass vital legislation before the UK leaves the bloc on March 29.

After months of lurching from one crisis to the next, May needs to seal the deal or risk getting ousted. But this latest move is a high-stakes gamble. With political opposition to her plan growing, she needs to

face down those who want a clean break as well as does who want a redo of the 2016 referendum.

Brexit — though presented as a binary choice between yes and no — has proven to be a very complex set of technical negotiations and it's cost no end of antagonism for May back at home amid a hemorrhage of resignations. Her non-existent majority in Parliament, combined with Brussels negotiators playing hardball, have upped the ante as the end nears.

May survived her Conservative Party's annual conference largely unscathed this week, despite a fresh assault on her proposed deal from Brexit-backing rivals such as Boris Johnson. Now senior officials and negotiators on both sides are embarking on an intense round of talks aimed at thrashing out the terms of the exit deal.

Summit Looms

May will meet European leaders at a dinner in Brussels on Oct 17, and is then expected to finalize her settlement with Brussels at a special gathering penciled-in for Nov 17. Ministers are aiming for a breakthrough on the biggest sticking point — the future of the Irish border — next week.

After the issue of how to avoid a hard border with Ireland is resolved, negotiators will focus on the future trade agreement

between the UK and the EU. A political declaration on those trade terms must be signed as part of the final deal, but it won't contain detailed legal text.

For May, the main risk is that her own party refuses to support her plans when lawmakers get the chance to the vote on whether to accept or reject the Brexit agreement. Euroskeptics say her blueprint is unacceptable because it ties the UK too closely to EU rules forever, and want a cleaner break with the bloc.

Jacob Rees-Mogg, who leads the Tories' pro-Brexit European Research Group, claims to command the support of 80 lawmakers who would oppose May's plans. Other euroskeptics put the number nearer 45. A revolt of just seven Tories would, in theory, be enough to defeat May in the House of Commons.

Chief Whip Julian Smith has spent the last month talking to lawmakers from all parties to determine how much ground the government must give in order to secure a majority for its Brexit plans. According to people familiar with the matter, Smith is looking to secure a large majority for May's plans because the Brexit deal is so crucial to the national interest.

That would mean convincing a rump of Labour's caucus to back her deal, for fear the UK will head toward a no-deal Brexit. (bloomberg)



KANGANA SHIMMIES WITH HER MANIKARNIKA GIRLS TO CELEBRATE TEASER LAUNCH

Kangana Ranaut is one happy woman after the launch of her upcoming film, *Manikarnika*'s teaser on Tuesday. The actor looked joyful as she posed for pictures with her film's team and even cut a celebratory cake.

Kangana's official Instagram account shared a Boomerang video on Tuesday of her shimmying with Ankita Lokhande, Unnatii Davara, Mishti Chakravarty and Priya Gamre in full costume. Kangana is seen with a torch in her hand and dressed in a white and golden saree while the other actors from the film are also seen in pretty sarees.

The post suggests that the women celebrated the teaser launch on the sets of the film in Mumbai. "#Manikarnika girls at ND studio today. Celebrating the response to the #manikarnikateaser," it read.

Manikarnika is directed by Krish Jagarlamudi and film's team is currently busy with a big chunk of reshoots under Kangana's direction. The film landed itself into a controversy after actor Sonu Sood walked out of the film when Kangana took over as the director for the reshoots. She accused him of sexism, saying that he doesn't want to work with a female director while Sonu said that he left the film as he didn't wish to work under 'two directors'.

TANUSHREE DUTTA GETS LEGAL NOTICES FROM NANA PATEKAR, VIVEK AGNIHOTRI

Tanushree Dutta has received two legal notices from Nana Patekar and filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri respectively, reports news agency ANI. The 34-year-old actress has accused Nana Patekar of harassing and threatening her on a film set a decade ago. Nana Patekar, currently filming *Housefull 4* with Akshay Kumar in Jaisalmer, had sent the legal notice to Tanushree Dutta last week.

He has also denied the charges against him and demanded an apology from her. While last week, Tanushree Dutta revealed that the director (Vivek Agnihotri) of her 2005 film *Chocolate* allegedly told her to 'take her clothes off and dance' off camera. "I have been slapped with two legal notices. One from Nana Patekar and another from Vivek Agnihotri. Both their teams are on a smear campaign against me by constructing outright lies and misinformation on social media platforms and other public platforms," Tanushree Dutta said in a statement, ANI reports.

"This is the price you pay for speaking out against harassment, humiliation, and injustice in India," she added.

Tanushree Dutta has also alleged that she has been getting violent threats from the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and that two people recently tried to barge inside her home. The Raj Thackeray-led MNS is the same political outfit allegedly involved in vandalising Tanushree Dutta's van and car when she had opted out of the 2008 film (*Horn 'Ok' Pleasss*) in question.

"Violent threats are being issued against me by the MNS. Today, while I was at home and the police personnel posted outside my home were on a lunch break two unnamed suspicious individuals tried getting into our home uninvited but were stopped just in time by security personnel. I'm being



threatened to be dragged to the court and legal system of India as we all know can keep a woman and her supporters as well as media silent on the pretext of 'matter sub judice'," Tanushree Dutta said, ANI reports.

On Wednesday, MNS also handed over a letter to the makers of the reality show *Bigg Boss 12* on their set in Lonavla, threatening violence if Tanushree Dutta participates. *Bigg Boss 12* is hosted by Salman Khan,

who, when asked about the Tanushree Dutta and Nana Patekar controversy, had said, "I'm not aware of this, my dear. Let me know and understand what is happening..."

Meanwhile, the Aashiq Banaya Aapne actress added, "Court cases can run for decades without a hope for a conclusion. In the end, an empty shell remains with broken hopes. A life wasted, defeated- this is the age-old saga of survivors in our nation."

Priyanka Chopra, actor-singer-filmmaker, is now a start-up investor too

Actor Priyanka Chopra is excited to embark on a new "chapter" as an investor in tech start-up Holberton School, a coding education company, as well as in dating and social media app Bumble. This is also an effort on her part to help change the tech industry's gender disparity.

"A new chapter for me! I am so excited to partner with Bumble and Holberton School as an investor. I'm honoured to join two companies that strive to expand gender diversity in the tech space, and make a social impact for the greater good... let's do this," Priyanka tweeted on Thursday.

It is her first project as a start-up investor, and Priyanka recently toured the San Francisco home of her new portfolio company -- the school which uses projects and group learning instead of more traditional courses, to teach software development, according to *The New York Times*.

The actress' investment in Holberton is part of an \$8.2 million round of funding for Holberton that closed in April. She will join the company's board of advisers, and will emphasise support for Holberton's mission to

educate people from underprivileged backgrounds.

Her investments will skew heavily toward companies with an element of social impact, and companies founded by women. "I don't want to just be one of those people who's like, 'Yeah, I want to be on the tech bandwagon -- how are they making so much money?' It's not about that," said Priyanka, who is engaged to American singer Nick Jonas, has been squeezing in meetings with start-up founders and lined up future investments in between her hectic schedules.

"Geeks are taking over the world. If they haven't already," said the *Quantico* star, who has joined the bandwagon of celebrities like Ashton Kutcher, Leonardo DiCaprio, who have invested in tech start-ups too. Priyanka said she did not yet know how many deals she would do or how much money she would invest, but she does plan on building a portfolio.

Her second investment is in Bumble, a dating and social media app founded by Whitney Wolfe Herd. She plans to help promote Bumble's launch in India in the coming months.

Source: IANS





JENNIFER ANISTON SAYS WOMEN IN HOLLYWOOD HAVE 'TREATED HER WORSE' THAN MEN

Jennifer Aniston said she has been “treated worse” by some women than men in Hollywood, when asked about the #Me Too movement against sexual harassment and assault.

The actress argued that men needed to be involved more in the debates that arose last October, after a series of sexual misconduct allegations were made against powerful men in Hollywood and a number of other industries.

“I’ve definitely had some sloppy moves made on me by other actors and I handled it by walking away,” she said in an interview for the September issue of *InStyle*.

“I’ve never had anyone in a position of power make me feel uncomfortable and leverage that over me. In my personal experience, I’ve been treated worse verbally and energetically by some women in this industry.”

Nevertheless, the *Friends* actress argued that the #MeToo movement is “long overdue.”

“But we also need to be better at listening to one another—that includes men. They need to be part of this conversation,” the 49-year-old said in the interview with Molly McNearney, who is married to Jimmy Kimmel and is a friend of Aniston’s.

NICOLE KIDMAN TO RECEIVE HOLLYWOOD FILM AWARD



Nicole Kidman, a multi-award-winning actress known for her fearlessness and intelligence, will receive the “Hollywood Career Achievement Award” at the 22nd Annual “Hollywood Film Awards.” Her selection for this award is a tribute to the versatility of her performances over the years, with characters as diverse and extraordinary as an aspiring television personality with a dark motive in Gus Van Zant’s *To Die For* to the iconic and complicated Virginia Woolf in *The Hours*; from a wife who, with her husband, embarks on an odyssey of sexual and moral discovery in Kubrick’s *Eyes Wide Shut* to Satine, the singing and dancing courtesan in Baz Luhrmann’s *Moulin Rouge!*; and from the unguarded adoptive mother of an orphan boy longing to help others in need in Garth Davis’ *Lion* to a woman on the run who pays a huge price to be hidden in Lars von Triers’ controversial and thrilling *Dogville*.

With three films coming out before the end of this year, Kidman has already received praise for her transformative performance in Karyn Kusama’s *Destroyer* and in Joel Edgerton’s *Boy Erased*.

In addition to her chameleonic performances, Kidman is also being recognized for her career-long support of independent filmmakers, particularly women. Through her production company, Blossom Films, she has taken this to a new level. Among the many projects she has produced, last year’s *Big Little Lies* was a phenomenon that entered not only the cultural, but the social zeitgeist.

The “Hollywood Film Awards,” honoring the most acclaimed films and actors while previewing highly anticipated films and talent for the upcoming year, also acknowledges artists in the categories of Cinematography, Visual Effects, Film Composing, Costume Design, Editing, Production Design, Sound and Makeup & Hairstyling. In its 22-year history, more than 320 of the world’s biggest stars and filmmakers have been highlighted at the “Hollywood Film Awards” and more than 130 of the honorees have gone on to garner Oscar nominations and/or wins.

Kate Hudson gives birth, welcomes first daughter with Danny Fujikawa

Kate Hudson and her boyfriend, Danny Fujikawa, welcomed daughter Rani Rose Hudson-Fujikawa on Wednesday. Hudson and Fujikawa shared the happy news on Instagram, where they explained the inspiration behind the newborn’s name. “We have decided to name our daughter Rani (pronounced Ronnie), after her grandfather, Ron Fujikawa,” Hudson explains. “Ron was the most special man who we all miss dearly. To name her after him is an honor.”

She added, “Everyone is doing well and happy as can be. Our family thanks you for all the love and blessings that have been sent our way and we send ours right back.” In April, the pair happily announced they were having a daughter by sharing a video of the baby’s gender reveal. At the time, Kate told her followers all about the “most sick first trimester” she endured and how difficult it was to keep her pregnancy a secret, but said, “my kids, Danny, myself and the entire family are crazy excited!”

After revealing the exciting news, the actress returned to social media to share many pics of her

growing baby bump.

The new addition to the family comes over a year after the two started dating, despite being friends for well over a decade. They were introduced to one another by Kate’s best friends Sara Foster and Erin Foster, who happen to be Danny’s step-sisters. “The first time I met Danny I was 23 and enormously pregnant with Ryder,” the actress reminisced on their anniversary last year.

She continued, “A year ago today Danny took me on a hike and what I thought was just a hike with a family friend turned very quickly into an unexpected first date. No moves were made on this first date. In fact, it took months for him to make a first move! And as a kiss on this bridge would have been nice, the kiss a year later was so much sweeter.”

“So on our 15th year of knowing each other we were able to open our hearts to each other to feel so much pure love and it’s been truly incredible,” she gushed.

The couple’s daughter joins Ryder Robinson, 14, and Bingham Bellamy, 6, who came from Hudson’s previous relationships.



Indian-Origin Man in Singapore Faces Jail for Trying to Extort from Bank



Nagarajan Balajee faces a jail term of between two and five years and caning under a charge of "attempting to commit extortion," as reported by local media.

SINGAPORE (TIP): Indian-origin man, who tried to extort half-a-million Singapore dollars from Standard Chartered Bank in Singapore, was charged in court. Nagarajan Balajee faces a jail term of between two and five years and caning under a charge of "attempting to commit extortion," as reported by local media.

According to court documents, 35-year-old Balajee had allegedly threatened to publish a defamatory libel concerning Aalishaan Zaidi, 47, the global head of digital banking at Standard Chartered Bank, unless he paid SGD 500,000.

Mr. Zaidi was one of a few bank employees who received the threatening e-mails sent anonymously. He made the police report on the bank's behalf.

Balajee was arrested on September 30 along Kovan Road in suburban Singapore. Several laptops and mobile phones were seized from him in connection with the case, the police said.

The bank had made a police report about how it had been threatened with a leakage of confidential information.

Balajee is believed to have used multiple fictitious e-mail accounts to deliver the threats to the bank anonymously, according to media reports.

Preliminary investigations by the police also found that he might have used overseas registered mobile lines and virtual private network (VPN) services to mask his identity, to evade detection. VPNs allow unauthorized content from overseas to be accessed by users. Balajee is currently out on SGD 20,000 bail and will be back in court on October 30.

Singapore elite backs push to overturn country's anti-gay laws

PULAU UJONG. (TIP): Senior members of Singapore's business, political and legal elite have backed fresh attempts to overturn the colonial-era section of the country's penal code that criminalizes gay sex.

Leading the push are former ambassador to the U.S. Tommy Koh, former attorney general Walter Woon, Banyan Tree Holdings Ltd. founder and executive chairman Ho Kwon Ping, National University of Singapore board chairman Hsieh Fu Hua, and Shangri-La Hotel Ltd executive chairman Kay Kuok.

"377A is a bad and unjust law," said Koh of the law introduced to Singapore by the British in 1938. "In my view it is also a violation of our constitution."

Home to an estimated 37,400 international companies and ranked fourth behind Hong Kong on a list of the world's most competitive financial centers, repealing section 377A would put Singapore on a more level playing field in the race for global talent. It could also boost the city-state's \$324 billion economy. (Bloomberg)

Pentagon asks Pakistan to use influence over Taliban, stop cross border movement

Votel acknowledged that Pakistan has conducted operations in their country to root out terrorist organisations 'in certain areas'.

WASHINGTON / ISLAMABAD (TIP): A top American general has asked Islamabad to use its influence over Taliban to bring them to the negotiations table and stop cross-border movement of their leaders, a day after Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi left US after holding meetings with top Trump Administration officials.

"As we often talk with the military leadership in Pakistan, we need them to continue to stay engaged in this. We need them to help lower the violence in Afghanistan," US Central Command Commander General Joseph Votel told reporters during a Pentagon news conference. Pakistan, he said, need to do that by making absolutely sure there are instructions, direction, other things coming from Taliban leadership, which remains in Pakistan, to their fighters on the ground.

"They need to ensure that they continue to ensure there can be no movement back and forth and that fighters can't come back into Pakistan to get aid or medical care or other things with that. They have to help us lower the violence in Afghanistan," Votel said.

"And they need to use their influence with the Taliban to force the Taliban leadership to come to the table. And they can do this, they can put pressure on them to do this," Votel said when asked about Qureshi's remarks a day earlier in which he claimed that Pakistan



has taken appropriate measures against terrorist groups.

"Those are the two things that we have continued to emphasize with Pakistan that they need to do. So I do acknowledge that they have done a lot in their own country, but there is more to do and it is those specific areas right there where we are seeking their closest assistance," Votel said.

On Tuesday, Qureshi met the Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the National Security Advisor John Bolton. Wrapping up his 10-day US trip, Qureshi in his remarks at the US

Institute of Peace had challenged that US military and members of Congress to come into Pakistan, and travel anywhere inside the country and see for themselves that there are no safe havens any longer.

There is no doubt, Votel acknowledged that Pakistan has conducted operations in their country to root out terrorist organisations "in certain areas," particularly areas up along the border with Afghanistan. "But we do assess there still is presence in Pakistan and we need them to continue to do that," the general said. (PTI)

Sri Lanka President Sirisena orders release of all Tamil civilian lands by December 31

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has ordered the release of all the Tamil civilian lands held by the state in the country's Northern and Eastern provinces by December 31, the President's office said Thursday.

Sri Lanka witnessed three-decades-long civil war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) during which the military occupied civilian lands in the northern and eastern provinces for military purposes.

Since the end of the armed conflict in May 2009, a considerable part of private lands were released to the original owners.

It was not clear if the latest release instructions came from Sirisena in response to representations made by the main Tamil party, Tamil National Alliance (TNA), in late August.

The TNA had told Sirisena that even 9 years after the conclusion of the civil war both agricultural and residential lands continued to be in possession of the armed forces.

Pointing to the lands in Keppapilavu in the Mullaitivu district, the TNA said that 75 acres of private land owned and possessed by local people for generations and centuries was held by the Army.

Sirisena told them then that more than 85 per cent of the lands held by the military belonging to civilians had been released.

However, the TNA urged that in order to achieve reconciliation and national integration all land belonging to the people which are now in the possession of the armed forces should be released without any further delay.

Earlier this year, the Sri Lankan Government was set to return over 800 acres of military-occupied land to its original Tamil owners in the Eastern Province as part of the reconciliation process.

The decision was taken after the Resettlement Committee had received the Cabinet approval to return 818 acres of land in the Sampur area back to its original owners, the Sri Lankan government's official news portal reported.

Similarly in 2017, the Sri Lankan military had said that it ended its control over a major fishing harbour it had occupied in 1990 in the former war zone of Jaffna.

According to UN estimates, up to 40,000 Tamil civilians were killed by security forces during former president Rajapaksa's regime that brought an end to the nearly three decades-long war in the country with the defeat of the LTTE in 2009. (PTI)



Former Malaysian PM Najib Razak's wife charged with money laundering

KUALA LUMPUR (TIP): The wife of former Malaysian prime minister Najib Razak was charged with 17 offences on Thursday, including money laundering, as anti-graft agents investigate billions of dollars missing from state coffers. The charges against Rosmah Mansor were read out by prosecutors at a Kuala Lumpur court, after she spent a night in detention following her arrest by anti-graft investigators on Wednesday. Rosmah pleaded not guilty to all charges. Najib, who lost office in May, faces 32 charges from money laundering to abuse of power and criminal breach of trust over billions of dollars that went missing from 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB). He has denied any wrongdoing.

It was not clear if the charges against Rosmah relate to 1MDB, but Rosmah's arrest came after three rounds of questioning by anti-graft agents over 1MDB, from which U.S. authorities say over \$4.5 billion was misappropriated. Last Wednesday, Rosmah was questioned for nearly 13 hours.

Rosmah, who arrived in court flanked by dozens of armed police officers, smiling, waving and blowing kisses at the media, was charged with activities using illegal proceeds and failing to declare income tax, both covered under the anti-money laundering law. Prosecutor Gopal Sri Ram said these were non-bailable offences and that she had approached a witness to ask them to give a statement in her favour. "The principle therefore is they would not be granted (bail) where there is a real danger of witnesses being tampered with," Gopal Sri Ram told the court. (Reuters)

ODISHA: THE LAND OF EXQUISITE TEMPLES AND MONUMENTS

There are some places in the India that are special, and Odisha (Orissa) tourism is definitely one of them. Filled with exquisite temples and extraordinary monuments, home to many thousands of prolific artists and craftsmen; and possessing beaches, wildlife sanctuaries, and natural landscape of often-enchanting beauty, Odisha (Orissa) tourism is a unique and fascinating land that is, nevertheless, still largely undiscovered by tourists.

Tourism in Orissa (Odisha) India is a veritable museum of India's sculptural and artistic heritage and has long been famous to scholars and connoisseurs for the magnificent Sun Temple at Konark (The legendary 'Black Pagoda' of European mariners), for the majestic temple of Lord Jagannath at Puri (renowned for the spectacular Rath Yatra chariot festival), and for the glorious temples of Bhubaneswar. The small but ever-growing number of sophisticated tourists who do manage to find their way to Orissa (Odisha) tourism are generally prepared with some knowledge of these temples, Puri tourism, of the delicate Orissan ikat textiles which have been become famous throughout the world, and, perhaps, of the beaches at Puri and Gopalpur on sea.

Puri

Rest, Relax and Recall stand totally redefined on the seat of Lord Jagannath- Puri India. Known for its Historic antiquities, Religious sanctuaries, Architectural Grandeur, Seascape beauty, moderate climate and spiritual significance, this coastal district of Odisha (Orissa) attracts a number of visitors every year. Puri tourism has always been popular among traveler enthusiast due to the existence of many amazing Tourist Places in Puri including the Jagannath Temple Puri, Odisha (Orissa).

With a rich historic heritage dating back to 3rd century BC, this temple town welcomes both the pilgrims and fun seekers with open arms, offering its splendid beaches to the latter. Having one of the largest briny water lakes in India namely the Chilika Lake, the city offers an ideal resort to migratory birds.

Better known as the earthly abode of Lord Vishnu or Jagannath, Puri has a rich cultural heritage presenting a unique blend of claims of time and eternity with a power answerable only to wisdom. Considered to be utterly pious by the Hindus, Puri is one of the four sacred dharmas representing a rare spark of immortality owned against the powers of negation, through a spirit of universality, adaptability by the Oriya people.

The city is also possesses a very significant monastery in the form of Gobardhan matha established by Adi Shankaracharya on his visit to Puri. Other religious heads and dignitaries like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Rai Ramananda, Jayadeva, Gorakhanath- the father of Nath cult of religious iconoclasm and Saint Totapuri- a vedant teacher of Ramakrishna have also visited Puri leaving indelible imprints of their philosophies on the cultural curtain of the city.

In addition to its undaunted spiritual significance, it is the quintessential characteristic of its culture and philosophy that has helped Puri to be transformed from Pan-Indian to Pan-Continental. This is further made clear by the celebration of 'The Car-Festival of Lord Jagannath' and 'Puri Beach Festival' with an equivalent gusto thus presenting a fine blend of spiritual and



sensory pleasures.

Recognition of the Rath Yatra at a global level, acceptance of Odissi as a classical dance form, Orissan School of architecture

referred to as poetry frozen in stone and 'the Mahaprasad brotherhood' have no doubt helped a lot to fetch Puri, the status of an internationally known city.

Konark

Located on the sea-shore at a distance of 33 kms from Puri and about 64 kms from Bhubaneswar, Konark India is also known as Konaditya. The name Konark has been derived from the words Kona and Arka, Kona meaning corner and Arka meaning the sun. Konark Travel & Tourism provides complete guidance about tourist attractions of Konark.

Konark is one of the most famous tourist destinations in India from the spiritual standpoint and boasts of one of the best known architectural specimens. Konark is known for Sun temple which was dedicated to the Sun God by Samba, Lord Krishna's son who was cured of leprosy by the god. The temple has been designed in the form of a chariot, pulled by 7 horses carrying the Sun god. This chariot stands on 24 wheels, each wheel having a diameter of about 10 meter. Attached with a set of spokes, the wheels have excellent carvings. The main attraction of this temple is the idol of Jagmohana that showcases the brilliance of the contemporary architects of those days. Built in the year 1278 by Ganga King Narasimha Deva, the temple is referred as the Black Pagoda.

Another temple resembling the Sun temple is Melakkadambur Shiva temple. This temple too is in the form of a chariot and is one of the oldest temples of Konark. Built during the period 1075-1120 by Kulottunga Chola I, this temple is believed to have set the pace for other chariot temples in India.

The tourists coming to Konark also visit the Chandrabhaga Beach, one of the most exotic beaches in Odisha (Orissa) offering a picturesque view. Surrounded by palm and casuarinas, the beach is at a short distance from the sun temple. The Archaeological Site Museum, another site of tourist interest is an exceptional collection of the various pieces of loose sculptors from the remnants of the Sun temple complex.

The Konark city is also known world over for its fairs and festivals. The Konark Dance Festival held here comes as a true rejuvenator of the ancient classical dance forms like Odissi, Bharatnatyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi and the local Chhau dance. Another festivity observed with a great fanfare at Konark is the Magha Saptami Mela held on the banks of Chandrabhaga River. Millions of devotees gather here to take a holy dip in this river on the occasion as this dip is believed to be a sure cure for all illnesses.

Bhubaneswar

The history of the city stretches back over 2000 years. The area first appears as the ancient capital of Kalinga. Bhubaneswar India, the 'city of temples', named after Tribhuvaneshwar, 'Lord of Three Worlds', still preserves over 500 of India's finest temples, around which the religious life of the city revolves.

Mythological references and the epigraphic sources describe the area as Ekamra Kshetra and Saiva Pitha. In 1936, the Odisha (Orissa) became a separate province with Cuttack as its Capital, which was eventually changed to Bhubaneswar in 1956.

Together with Puri and Konark, Bhubaneswar forms the 'golden triangle'-one of the most visited destinations in East India, for its proud possession of magnificent sculpture and majestic architectural heritage.

WOMEN ARE BORN TO DATE FUNNY MEN

Scientists found that women's brains show greater activity than men's in reward-related regions in response to humour.

The finding is consistent with the idea that women have evolved to appreciate humour, whereas men have evolved to produce humour.

According to this view, women use a man's ability to make them laugh as a way to judge his genetic fitness as a suitable partner and potential father.

The new study, by Stanford University School of Medicine, involved scanning the brains of 22 girls and boys aged from six to 13 as they viewed funny videos, such as people falling over and animals performing tricks.

For comparison, the children also watched 'positive' clips, featuring dancers and snowboarders, and neutral clips, featuring nature videos and children riding bikes.

In addition to MRI scanning of their brains, the children were also asked how much they enjoyed the clips and how funny they found them.

During funny clips, girls brains showed more heightened activity than the boys' in a range of areas including the midbrain and amygdala.

This indicates that girls experienced stronger mirth and positive feelings, the researchers, whose findings are published in the journal Social Neuroscience, said.

"Our data for the first time disclose that sex differences in humour appreciation already exist in young children," they wrote.

They added their findings suggest selecting a mate by responding to humour is more effective in women "because the female brain, and particularly the reward circuit, is biologically better prepared to respond accordingly".

The study, which the authors said was the first to examine gender-related brain differences in response to humour in



children, suggests that such differences have evolved rather than being learnt.

Let's Get Physical

When you laugh, your body has a physical reaction. The muscles in your face and body stretch, your pulse and blood pressure rise initially but then drop below normal, allowing blood vessels to expand more and flow more easily.

Because your blood vessels are dilated from laughing, the flow of oxygen to the organs is more efficient during laughter.

Think about how you gasp for air sometimes when laughing hard. This causes you to inhale more oxygen while laughing. Your breathing becomes faster,

and this sends more oxygen to your tissues.

The brain is also affected. Laughing produces beta-endorphins, a neurotransmitter produced in the pituitary gland that suppresses pain.

In terms of processing humor, the left side of the brain is responsible for understanding the words and structure of a joke while the right side, particularly the frontal lobe, processes emotions and is triggered when you come across something funny.

When something funny is recognized, the motor region of the brain produces the physical reaction of laughing and the sound that comes along with it.



NATURAL INGREDIENTS TO REMOVE SKIN TAN

Tomato

Tomato works extremely well as a tan removal agent. It not only removes tan and dead skin but also consists of properties that bring back the glow in the skin. Tomato also acts as a natural sunscreen, prevents sunburn, repairs skin damage and helps in reducing the ageing process. It has been an age old remedy to treat skin ailments especially when one has pale skin that lacks luster. It is available easily in the market and the best way to use is to take out its pulp and apply it on the face like a mask. One could also use the skin of tomato and simply apply it on the skin and then wipe it off using a tissue, cotton or water. Tomato has mineral complexes that reveal fresh and sparkling skin along with great complexion even after the skin has been damaged by sun and pollutants.

Yoghurt

Another dead skin removal ingredient which is very effective and natural is yoghurt or curd. Curd mixed with wheat flour can be applied on the face, hands and feet and then rinsed off once it dries up. Curd and flour when combined act as a scrub and remove dead skin and tan easily. Regular use of this mixture will ensure clear, soft and supple skin.

Lemon



Lemon contains Vitamin C in abundance, which is a great tan removal agent. One can simply slice a lemon, rub it on the skin and wipe it off once it settles on the skin. The citric acid present in lemon helps not only in the removal of tan but also in the removal of acne and lightening of the marks. One can also apply a mixture of lemon and curd for severe tan.

Turmeric

Turmeric is an integral part of Indian cuisine. It contains more than 300 antioxidants that are beneficial for overall health of an individual. It also helps fight acne, skin tanning, pigmentation, etc. One could simply mix turmeric in water and apply it gently on the skin and then rinse. Regular use of this mixture will make the skin healthier and bring back the glow.

Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera, these days has emerged as an elixir for every ailment. However, it has been available all this while in our gardens, parks and neighbourhoods. Aloe vera is a one stop remedy for almost all skin and hair ailments. It is a great cooling agent. One can take aloe vera pulp and apply it raw on the skin to get rid of tan, sun burn, etc. It helps in not only reducing the effect of tan but also soothes burns and acne.

FOOD CORNER

FIERY CHICKEN

Ingredients

- 1 lb Chicken
- 1/2 cup yogurt
- A pinch of ajinomoto
- 2-3 tsp soya sauce
- 3-4 tbsp corn flour
- 2-3 green chillies
- 1 tsp ginger-garlic paste
- Salt to taste
- Red food coloring
- oil for deep frying



Method

- Mix the chicken pieces with yogurt, salt and cook the chicken until the pieces are tender and all the water evaporates. Keep the chicken pieces aside.
- Mix ajinomoto, soya sauce, corn flour, ginger-garlic paste, red coloring and salt in a vessel and marinate the cooked chicken pieces in it. Marinate for 4-5 hours.
- Deep fry the chicken pieces in oil and drain.
- Also deep fry the sliced green chillies and decorate on the top of the chicken pieces.

CHEESE-GARLIC PITA WEDGES

Ingredients

- 1 whole wheat pita bread or 1 pizza base
- 6 tbsp melted butter
- 2 flakes of garlic - crushed (1/2 tsp)
- 3 tbsp chopped fresh basil or 1 tsp oregano
- 1/2 cup grated mozzarella or pizza cheese
- A pinch of salt & pepper



Method

- Slit pita bread/pizza base horizontally from the centre to get 2 thin rounds.
- Cut each pita bread/pizza base round equally into 8 wedges (triangular pieces). This way you have 16 pieces in all. Combine butter, garlic, basil, salt and pepper, brush over inner/cut side of bread wedges, then sprinkle with mozzarella cheese.
- Place in single layer on oven trays.
- Bake in a hot oven for 5-6 minutes at 200°C or until crisp.

STRESS REDUCES FERTILITY IN WOMEN

Experiencing high levels of stress can reduce fertility and lower odds of conception for women, a study has found. The researchers used data from the Pregnancy Study Online (PRESTO), an ongoing preconception cohort of North American pregnancy planners that follows couples for 12 months or until pregnancy, whichever comes first.

For the new study, the researchers followed 4,769 women and 1,272 men who did not have a history of infertility and had not been trying to conceive for more than six menstrual cycles.

"Although this study does not definitely prove that stress causes infertility, it does provide evidence supporting the integration of mental health care in preconception guidance and care," said Amelia Wesselink, a doctoral student at Boston University in the US.

The researchers measured perceived stress using the 10-item version of the perceived stress scale (PSS), which is designed to assess how unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overwhelming an individual finds their life circumstances.

The items referred to the past month, with five response choices ranging from 0 (never) to 4 (very often), up to a total of 40, with a higher total score indicating a higher level of perceived stress.

Both partners completed the PSS at baseline, and women also completed the PSS at each bi-monthly PRESTO follow-up.

The baseline questionnaires also included a range of demographic and behavioral factors, including race/ethnicity, household income, diet, sleep, and frequency of intercourse.

On average, baseline PSS scores were about one point higher among women than men, and the average follow-up PSS scores among women remained fairly constant over the 12 months that they participated in the study.



The researchers found women with PSS scores of at least 25 were 13 percent less likely to conceive than women with PSS scores under 10.

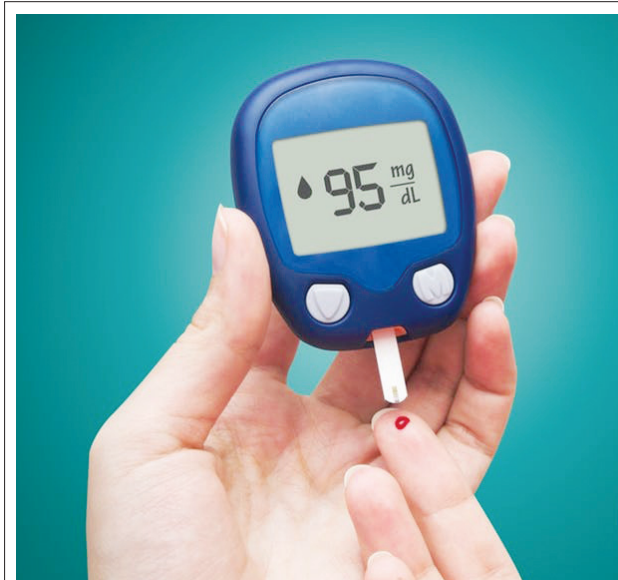
This association was stronger among women who had been trying to conceive for no more than two menstrual cycles before joining PRESTO than among women who had been trying for three or more cycles before enrolling.

The association was also stronger

among women under 35 years old.

The researchers found that, if the link between higher levels of stress and lower odds of conception is a causal association, a small proportion of that association could be due to decreased intercourse frequency and increased menstrual cycle irregularity.

They did not find an association between men's PSS score and the likelihood of conceiving. *Source: PTI*



Diabetes may increase cancer risk

Diabetes can increase the risk of developing a number of cancers, and may reduce the chances of survival in cancer patients, a study has found. Researchers from the Swedish National Diabetes Register (NDR) compared over 450,000 people with type 2 diabetes with more than 2 million matched controls over an average of 7 years.

For the most common cancers, individuals with diabetes face a 20 per cent greater risk of developing colorectal cancer and a five per cent higher risk of breast cancer compared with their diabetes-free counterparts.

People with diabetes already diagnosed with cancer also fare worse, with a 25 per cent and 29 per cent higher chance of dying following a breast and prostate cancer diagnosis respectively than their peers without diabetes.

More than 415 million people are living with diabetes worldwide — equivalent to 1 in 11 of the adult population — and this figure is expected to rise to 642 million by 2040.

Previous research has suggested a link between type 2 diabetes and an increased risk of cancer.

However, the relationship between diabetes and cancer remains poorly understood due to limitations of previous studies.

To provide more evidence, researchers examined the incidence of a number of cancers and post-cancer mortality in 457,473 individuals with type 2 diabetes from the NDR between 1998 and 2014, compared to 2,287,365 controls from the general population over an average of 7 years follow up.

A total of 227,505 people developed cancer over the follow-up period. Diabetes was associated with 11 out of the 12 specific types of cancer investigated in the study.

Scientists found that people with diabetes were 231 per cent more likely to be diagnosed with liver cancer than those without a history of diabetes over the study period.

Diabetes was also clearly linked with higher risk of cancers of the liver, pancreas (119 per cent), uterus (78 per cent), penis (56 per cent), kidney (45 per cent), gallbladder and bile ducts (32 per cent), stomach (21 per cent), and bladder (20 per cent).

There was evidence that those with diabetes were at a reduced risk of prostate cancer (18 per cent) compared to their peers without diabetes.

The absolute 5-year risk of developing cancer for the cancer sites highlighted in the study ranged from 0.02 per cent for penis cancer to 1.45 per cent for prostate cancer for people with diabetes. *Source: PTI*

Processed meat consumption can increase risk of breast cancer

Consumption of processed meat is associated with an increased risk of breast cancer, according to a meta-analysis. Comparing the highest to the lowest category in the 15 studies included in the analysis, processed meat consumption was associated with a 9% higher breast cancer risk. Investigators did not observe a significant association between red (unprocessed) meat intake and risk of breast cancer.

Lead author Dr Maryam Farvid of the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health said, "Previous works linked increased risk of some types of cancer to higher processed meat intake, and this recent meta-analysis suggests that processed meat consumption may also increase breast cancer risk. Therefore, cutting down processed meat seems beneficial for the prevention of breast cancer."

The study appears in the International Journal of Cancer.

Source: ANI



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APPLE'S NEXT TO BRING OVER 70 NEW EMOJIS

Apple has added 70 new emojis to the developer and public beta previews of iOS 12.1 to make them available as part of the upcoming software updates for iOS, macOS and watchOS.

The new emojis include characters for moon cake, red gift envelope, nazar amulet, softball, luggage, compass, a hiking boot to accompany the existing climbing emoji, llama, mosquito, swan, raccoon and cupcake among others.

"New emoji characters are created based on the approved characters in Unicode 11.0 and Apple is working with the Unicode Consortium to add more disability-themed emoji to the keyboard for Unicode 12.0, slated for release in 2019," the company wrote in a blog-post late on Tuesday.

Thousands of emoji are currently available on iOS, watchOS and macOS, including emotive smiley faces, gender-neutral characters, various clothing options, food types, animals, mythical creatures and more.

The new characters would also include emojis with red hair, grey hair, curly hair, a new emoji for bald people, more emotive smiley faces and emojis representing animals, sports and food.

Source: IANS



Microsoft will end support for Skype Classic in November

Microsoft has decided to put an end to "Skype 7.0 - Classic" version in November and will focus on improving "Skype 8" with better features based on user feedbacks.

"Support for 'Skype versions 7', and below will end on November 1, 2018 on desktop devices and November 15, 2018 on mobile and tablet devices," the company wrote in a blog post late on Thursday.

The company would, however, allow users to use the older versions, while giving them time to shift to newer Skype updates. "We're continuing to work on your most requested features. Recently we launched call recording and have started to roll out the ability to search within a conversation. You'll soon be able to add phone numbers to existing contacts, have more control over your availability status, and more," the post added.

Amazon, Snapchat team up to offer image-based shopping

Snapchat is teaming up with Amazon.com Inc. to let users of its social-media app buy products based on what they see through their smartphone's camera lenses. Snapchat's mobile app opens up to a camera, which people can use to send disappearing images and videos to their friends. Now, users will be able to point the Snapchat camera at a product they see in the real world to scan its image or barcode. If Amazon recognises the item, it will present a link to purchase it on the retail giant's app or website, parent company Snap Inc. said Monday in a blog post.

The shopping tool, which is only available to a small set of users in the U.S. for now, could eventually present another source of revenue for the troubled social-media company. The Los Angeles-based company, which went public at \$17 a share last year, has posted disappointing revenue growth and user additions in some recent quarters. The company declined to comment on its financial relationship with Amazon.

TWO-LEGGED ROBOT MASTERS HUMAN BALANCING ACT

Scientists have designed a robot that can balance itself on two legs just like humans, paving the way for machines that could successfully navigate through crowded spaces.

When walking in a crowded place, humans typically are not thinking about how we avoid bumping into one another.

We are built to use a gamut of complex skill sets required to execute these types of seemingly simple motions.

By translating a key human physical dynamic skill — maintaining whole-body balance — into a mathematical equation, a team from University of Texas at Austin in the US was able to use the numerical formula to programme their robot Mercury, which was built and tested over the course of six years.

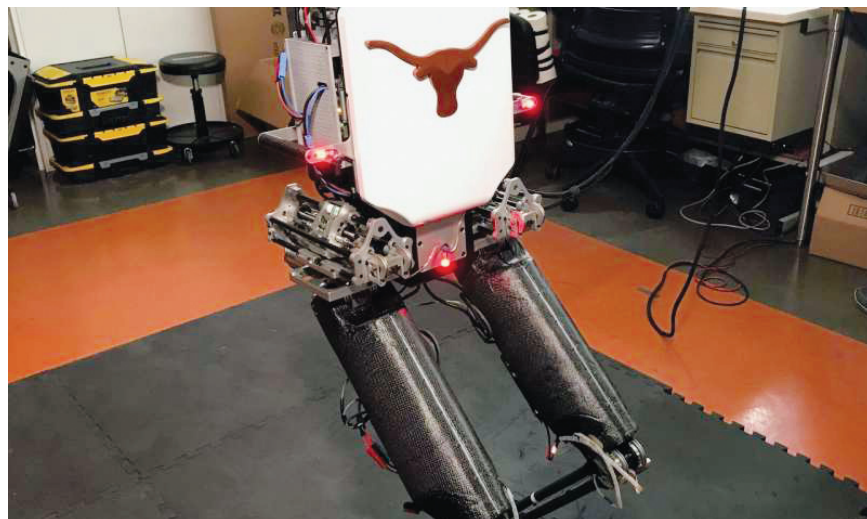
They calculated the margin of error necessary for the average person to lose one's balance and fall when walking to be a simple figure — two centimetres.

"Essentially, we have developed a technique to teach autonomous robots how to maintain balance even when they are hit unexpectedly, or a force is applied without warning," said Luis Sentis, an associate professor at University of Texas at Austin.

"This is a particularly valuable skill we as humans frequently use when navigating through large crowds," said Sentis.

The technique has been successful in dynamically balancing both bipeds without ankle control and full humanoid robots, he said.

Dynamic human-body-like movement is far harder to achieve for a robot



Robotics experts at the Cockrell School of Engineering develop a mathematical equation to achieve human-like balance in biped robot, 'Mercury'.
Credit: Cockrell School of Engineering, The University of Texas at Austin

without ankle control than for one equipped with actuated, or jointed, feet.

Researchers used an efficient whole-body controller developed by integrating contact-consistent rotators (or torques) that can effectively send and receive data to inform the robot as to the best possible move to make next in response to a collision.

They also applied a mathematical technique — often used in 3D animation to achieve realistic-looking movements from animated characters — known as inverse kinematics, along with low-level motor position controllers.

Mercury may have been tailored to the specific needs of its creators, but the

fundamental equations underpinning this technique in our understanding of human locomotion are, in theory, universally applicable to any comparable embodied artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics research.

"We choose to mimic human movement and physical form in our lab because I believe AI designed to be similar to humans gives the technology greater familiarity," Sentis said.

"This, in turn, will make us more comfortable with robotic behaviour, and the more we can relate, the easier it will be to recognise just how much potential AI has to enhance our lives," he said.

Source: PTI

Microsoft's new Surface products include 1st-ever headphones

Refreshing its Surface laptop line-up, Microsoft has announced four new products — Surface Pro 6, Surface Studio 2, Surface Laptop 2 and first-ever Surface Headphones — along with new innovations in Windows and Office 365.

At an event in New York on Tuesday, Microsoft also announced that the Windows 10 October 2018 update has arrived for its users.

Surface Pro 6 would start from \$899 and Surface Laptop 2 would begin from \$999. The devices — available for pre-order — would be available in the US from October 16.

Surface Headphones at \$349 would be available later in 2018 while Surface Studio 2 would be available, starting at \$3,499.

Surface Headphones has 13 levels of ambient noise control. There are two beam-forming microphones on each ear cup — eight microphones in total — helping the user focus on the sounds he or she wants to capture.

"You can easily adjust volume and noise cancellation levels with new, intuitive on-ear dials. While Surface Headphones are optimised for Surface devices, they will pair with any Bluetooth-enabled device," Microsoft said in a statement.

Surface Pro 6 is equipped with latest eighth generation Intel Quad Core processor.

The device is 67 percent faster than the fifth generation Surface Pro and has been redesigned to pack in more power but still keeps the portability, versatility and all-day battery.

"The Surface Pro 6 features the 'PixelSense



Touch Display' which helps create the best work with Office 365 on Windows and features like intelligent inking," said the company.

Surface Studio 2 is built for creators who need vibrancy, high-graphics performance and fast processing, delivering next-generation Pascal graphics and 50 percent faster GPU.

The new Surface Studio is 38 percent brighter, with 22 percent more contrast.

Surface Laptop 2 is 85 percent faster than the original Surface Laptop and is powered by the new Quad Core eighth generation Intel processor.

The Surface Laptop 2 offers a premium design, PixelSense Touch Display, and best-in-class keyboard and trackpad, without sacrificing the 14.5 hours of battery life.

Source: IANS

Toyota agrees to add Android Auto in its cars

Toyota Motor Corp. agreed to add Android Auto to its vehicles, according to a person familiar with the matter, ending years of resistance to the Google infotainment software due to safety and security concerns.

For the first time, Toyota will allow Android Auto devices to connect directly to its cars, after announcing compatibility with Apple Inc.'s CarPlay in January. Previously both platforms could only connect with Toyota vehicles using SmartDeviceLink, a telematics system developed by Ford Motor Co. that controls how Android Auto and CarPlay look on the dash and limits their access to car data. The addition of Android Auto may attract customers who had stayed away from Toyota vehicles because of the lack of connectivity. More than 80 percent of smartphones use the software from Alphabet Inc.'s Google, with the rest using Apple's iOS system, according to data compiled by Bloomberg Intelligence.

IL&FS takeover done, govt focus now on financials

MUMBAI (TIP): The potential for systemic disruption and an incipient financial sector meltdown has forced the government to seize control of Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) and its units by superseding the current board.

The move sends multiple signals. One, with the government now in control, it is a clear reassurance to lenders that their outstanding loans to IL&FS will be repaid. Two, it will go some way in quelling rumours that debt mutual funds had started facing redemption pressures from jittery investors. Three, it effectively stops the spread of systemic instability in an interconnected financial system, especially as panic had started spreading across the financial, money and capital markets. Finally, there is clarity on the way forward: finalization of a restructuring plan, identification and valuation of assets, sale of the assets and repayment of outstanding loans.

The government's drastic step, the second time in 10 years (the last time was Satyam Computer Services in 2009), was prompted by rumours and an edgy financial system. A shaky financial system in an election year is a recipe for disaster.

The government superseded the



IL&FS board under section 241(2) of the New Companies Act, 2013. This section enables supersession of a company's board to prevent it from further mismanagement in order to protect public interest. The ministry of corporate affairs moved the Mumbai bench of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on Monday under the same section for overhauling the board and replacing it with its nominees.

The tribunal, presided over by M.K. Shrawat and Ravi Kumar Duraisamy, approved the names of six directors, including Uday Kotak, managing director of Kotak Mahindra Bank; G.N.

Bajpai, former chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India; G.C. Chaturvedi, chairman of ICICI Bank Ltd; former bureaucrats Vineet Nayyar (also a former vice chairman of Tech Mahindra); Malini Shankar and Nand Kishore. The government also committed to arrange adequate liquidity for IL&FS to obviate future defaults and ensure smooth implementation of infrastructure projects.

The government said in its release that the supersession of the IL&FS board and its replacement by a new board are the necessary first steps towards restoring the confidence of the financial market.

RBI eases overseas borrowings norms for oil companies as rupee free fall continues

MUMBAI (TIP): The RBI announced the "liberalisation" of the External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) policy in a bid to improve dollar supply. The move comes against the backdrop of the rupee's incessant slide against the dollar. The local currency dived to a fresh low of 73.77 today, and with Brent at a four-year high, whispers about an encore of the 2013 taper tantrum are getting louder.

Under the RBI's new norms, state-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) will now be allowed to raise \$10 billion from the overseas market to meet their working capital needs. The earlier individual limit of \$750 million or equivalent and mandatory hedging requirements as per the ECB framework have been waived.

The apex bank further stated that the OMCs can raise the ECBs from all recognised lenders under the automatic route for 3-5 years. In other words, the process can start immediately without waiting for permissions and/or clearances.

However, the latest move falls short of the market expectation that the central bank would sell dollars directly to oil companies, and will not result in an immediate inflow of dollars, The Times of India reports. It will nonetheless help preserve the RBI's reserves and bring in more forex when oil companies start borrowing.

The dollar has nearly gained Rs 10 over the rupee this year; the highest since the Rs 15 appreciation following the taper tantrums - a term coined to describe market volatility following the US Fed's announcement in 2013 that it



would reduce its bond-buying programme. A spike in Treasury yields following upbeat US data and the hawkish stance of the US Federal Reserve have further strengthened the dollar. Much will now depend on the outcome of the ongoing Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC) meet. The pundits are all predicting a 25 basis points hike in the repo rate - the third this year - to be announced tomorrow, in part due to the weak rupee.

"With the rupee's slide, there would be the impact of imported inflation," Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at Care Rating, told the daily, adding that the RBI might ease liquidity by releasing some of the bank deposits that are

currently impounded with it through its cash reserve ratio (CRR) prescription.

Significantly, while the newly-allowed unhedged borrowing will reduce the cost of funds for OMCs if the rupee remains steady, those opting for unhedged borrowings could see repayments surge if the rupee continues to slide.

According to foreign exchange dealers, plugging the incessant demand for dollars by oil companies is key to stabilizing the rupee. Some importers hold back if there are signs that the rupee might stabilize. The demand from oil companies, however, is constant. That's because India is not only the world's third largest oil consumer, but also heavily dependent on oil imports.

MUKESH AMBANI EMERGES RICHEST INDIAN FOR 11TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR: FORBES

NEW DELHI (TIP):

Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani has emerged as the richest Indian for the 11th consecutive year with a net worth of USD 47.3 billion, according to Forbes magazine.

Ambani is also the year's biggest gainer, adding USD 9.3 billion to his wealth amid the continuing success of his Reliance Jio broadband telco service.



As per the 'Forbes India Rich List 2018', Wipro chairman Azim Premji has retained the second spot, adding USD 2 billion to his wealth at USD 21 billion; while ArcelorMittal chairman and CEO Lakshmi Mittal moved a place ahead to the third slot with a net worth of USD 18.3 billion, increasing his wealth by USD 1.8 billion.

Mittal is followed by the Hinduja brothers with a net worth of USD 18 billion and Pallonji Mistry with USD 15.7 billion.

Other business magnates making the top 10 list are Shiv Nadar (USD 14.6 billion), Godrej family (USD 14 billion), Dilip Shanghvi (USD 12.6 billion), Kumar Birla (USD 12.5 billion) and Gautam Adani (USD 11.9 billion).

"In a challenging year, which saw the rupee taking a tumble, the country's 100 richest collectively managed to hold their own. Moreover, new billionaires continue to be minted, which indicates that India's entrepreneurial energy is upbeat as ever," said Naazneen Karmali, India Editor of Forbes Asia.

Biotechnology pioneer Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has emerged as the biggest percentage gainer of the year. One of only four women on the list, her net worth rose 66.7 per cent to USD 3.6 billion. In terms of net worth, she stood at 39th spot.

Source: PTI

Storm brewing for Indian stocks: Bank of America Merrill Lynch

Indian stocks have given up most of their gains for the year, but there may be more pain ahead. That's the view of Bank of America Merrill Lynch, whose 32,000 year-end target for the S&P BSE Sensex Index implies another 11 percent plunge from Wednesday's close. That would put the gauge 2.5 percent away from a bear market - a 20 percent slide from its August 28 record.

Uncertainties related to oil prices and next year's federal elections may "keep domestic sentiment and equity flows in check," Bank of America Merrill Lynch strategists Sanjay Mookim and Nafeesa Gupta wrote in a report Wednesday, maintaining a cautious stance on Indian equities.

The nation's stock market has lost almost \$300 billion of value since August, with concerns over defaults at private lenders adding to those over the impact of rising crude prices and a weakening rupee. It's now worth only \$1.97 trillion, falling below the \$2 trillion for the first time since August 2017.

Source: Bloomberg

Ramon Laguarta succeeds Indra Nooyi as PepsiCo CEO

NEW YORK (TIP): Ramon Laguarta assumed the role of chief executive officer of global beverage giant PepsiCo on Wednesday, succeeding India-born Indra Nooyi who had helmed the American company for 12 years, breaking the corporate glass ceiling and leading Pepsi through changing consumer preference for healthier snacks and drinks.

Nooyi stepped down after 24 years with the company, the last 12 as CEO. She will remain chairman until early 2019 to ensure a smooth and seamless transition. PepsiCo's Board of Directors had in August announced that they unanimously elected Laguarta, 54, to succeed Nooyi, 62, as CEO. Laguarta was also elected to the company's Board of Directors, effective October 3.

In her concluding remarks during PepsiCo's Third Quarter 2018 Earnings Conference Call on Tuesday, Nooyi said she has been blessed to have had the opportunity to lead PepsiCo and "work with such incredible people including our outstanding board, executives and other associates, our customers and other partners, our shareholders and all our other stakeholders".



Protesters in Washington on October 4.

Screen shot /NBC News

contd from page 1

Senators spar over FBI Report on Brett Kavanaugh: Protests erupt against Kavanaugh

The FBI report represented the latest twist in a pitched political battle over Kavanaugh, and comments by two crucial Republican senators - Jeff Flake and Susan Collins - indicated it may have allayed concerns they had about the judge. Flake was instrumental in getting Trump to order the FBI investigation last Friday.

Republicans control the Senate by a razor-thin margin, meaning the votes of those two could be crucial in securing Kavanaugh's

confirmation. Collins said the investigation appeared to be thorough, while Flake said he saw no additional corroborating information against Kavanaugh, although he was "still reading" it.

A previously undecided Democratic Senator, Heidi Heitkamp, said she would vote against Kavanaugh, citing "concerns about his past conduct" and questions about his "temperament, honesty and impartiality" after his defiant testimony a week ago to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Heitkamp's decision left Senator Joe Manchin as the only undecided Democrat. Most Democrats opposed Trump's nomination of Kavanaugh from the outset.

Meanwhile, Kavanaugh, in a column for the Wall Street Journal Judge Brett Kavanaugh has admitted to saying some things he should not have during a Senate hearing last week, a tacit acknowledgement of the questions being

raised about his conduct and emotions as he seeks confirmation to the Supreme Court.

"I was very emotional last Thursday, more so than I have ever been. I might have been too emotional at times," Kavanaugh wrote. "I know that my tone was sharp, and I said a few things I should not have said."

Kavanaugh also said in the column that he would be an independent and nonpartisan judge.

More than 2,400 law professors from across the political spectrum signed a letter this week arguing that the lack of "judicial temperament" that Kavanaugh displayed would be disqualifying for any court, let alone the highest in the land. A former Supreme Court justice, John Paul Stevens, has also weighed in, calling Kavanaugh's hearing performance disqualifying during an event Thursday, according to the Palm Beach Post.

Thousands assembled today, October 4, to protest Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh by marching on the Senate Office Building where his confirmation vote will take place. Among the masses a few celebrities have been spotted speaking out against the judge, with Amy Schumer and Emily Ratajkowski ending up detained by law enforcement.

India, Russia set to sign three major deals, ignoring U.S. threats

Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) law that restricts defense purchases from Russia, Iran and North Korea.

India has been in negotiations with the U.S. administration for a "sanctions waiver", but American officials have given no clear signal they will provide one. Last month, President Donald Trump's administration imposed sanctions on China as it started taking delivery of Su-35 fighter jets and S-400 systems.

The breadth of agreements, including the S-400 deal, during Mr. Putin's visit is seen as a reiteration of India's desire for "strategic autonomy" that was highlighted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a speech this year. It comes a month after the inaugural 2+2 dialogue with the U.S., in which India signed the third foundational agreement - Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) - in addition to announcing several measures to operationalize the Major Defense Partner status, indicative of the difficult balance India hopes to maintain amid deepening U.S.-Russia tensions.

On Wednesday Air Chief Marshal B.S. Dhanoa said that once the Defence Ministry signs the contract, deliveries of the S-400 systems would begin in 24 months. In October 2016, the two countries concluded Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGA) for S-400 systems and four stealth frigates after which the negotiations began to conclude a commercial contract.

Mr. Putin and Mr. Modi will meet on Friday for a "working breakfast" followed by delegation-level talks. They are expected to witness the signing of at least 23 agreements, an official said, including Memoranda of Understanding for investment deals, a major agreement on space cooperation where Russia will assist India with its 'Gaganyaan' program to put a human in space, an MoU for Road Transport and the Road Industry, as well as one for cooperation on Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

Officials say that nuclear power cooperation, one of the cornerstones of India-Russia ties, will be discussed, but the announcement of new sites for the next phase of Kudankulam reactors is yet to be finalized due to "land acquisition issues."

Both leaders will also meet with young Indian and Russian student "geniuses" who have excelled in studies, as part of an educational exchange program.

Officials said a discussion on the way forward in Afghanistan, including Moscow's push for talks with the Taliban is likely to come up for discussions as well. Mr. Putin and Mr. Modi will address a business summit in the capital before the Russian President departs on Friday evening. (Source: PTI)

South Carolina shooting leaves one officer dead: cop killing suspect is 74-year-old Vietnam veteran

The man also held children hostage for two hours in his Florence home on Wednesday afternoon, but they were released safely as the suspect was taken into custody, Florence County Sheriff Maj. Mike Nunn said.

The South Carolina man who is accused of shooting seven law enforcement officers, killing one of them, has been identified as 74-year-old Fred Hopkins, who was being held by authorities Thursday, October 4 evening but not charged.

Hopkins, who lived at the site of the shootings, was in custody and being hospitalized for a head injury, according to TV station WMBF. Florence County Deputy Chief Glenn Kirby said law enforcement officers have not spoken with Hopkins because of "multiple health issues," the TV station reported.

According to South Carolina Judicial Department records, Hopkins is a lawyer who was disbarred, the Greenville News reported. He wrongfully collected \$18,000 in "attorney's fees" and was disbarred in 1984.

Court records show in 2014, Hopkins was charged with public disorderly conduct, according to the Associated Press. Records also show that he had criminal charges brought against him in 2015 for not paying a court-ordered fine. A jury found him guilty of not paying a fine in 2017, records also show. Divorce records show Fred Hopkins served in the Vietnam War. He was injured in his time overseas and received military disability, according to court filings.

Hopkins described himself on Facebook as "a competitive marksman," reported the Associated Press, and he shared photos of himself with a M-14 rifle at a firing range "set up exactly like one I used in Vietnam in 69-70."

Florence Police Officer Terrence Carraway was among the seven law enforcement officers shot. Carraway died from his injuries. He was a retired technical sergeant with the 315th Airlift Wing based in North Charleston.

Chanda Kochhar quits ICICI Bank; Sandeep Bakhshi to be new MD

Kochhar, 57, has also resigned from all subsidiaries of the bank, including ICICI Securities where she had sought reappointment as the chairperson.

The board elevated Chief Operating Officer (COO) Sandeep Bakhshi as the new MD and CEO for five years.

The bank said the external inquiry instituted by the board against Kochhar in May would continue and the benefits to her would be subject to its outcome.

Following the board's decision to institute an inquiry by retired Supreme Court Judge BN Srikrishna, Kochhar had gone on leave in May. There are allegations of involvement of Kochhar and her family members in a loan provided to Videocon group on a quid pro quo basis. Kochhar's current five-year tenure as CEO was to end on March 31, 2019. - PTI

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SHARAD NAVRATRI: NINE DIVINE NIGHTS

Sharad Navratri 2018 is starting from 10th October and preparations have already begun. Here's everything you need to know about this year's Navratri dates, each day's significance and what to eat and avoid during the nine days

Sharad Navratri 2018 is just around the corner and preparations to celebrate the grandeur and power of the Hindu divine feminine Goddess Durga are in full swing. This year, the festival of Sharad or Maha Navratri dates are October 10, 2018 to October 18, 2018. The festival is celebrated in different ways in different parts of the Indian subcontinent. This is the second of the two most important Navratris of the year. Also known as the Sharad Navratri, it lasts for nine nights and 10 days. It is a post-monsoon autumn festival. According to the Hindu calendar, the festival falls in the month of Ashvin, which, according to Gregorian or Victorian calendar, coincides with the months of September or October. The themes of victory of good over evil are common in the folklores and stories attached to the festival of Sharad Navratri. Different parts of India may have different versions of the mythological tales related to Navratri.

Sharad Navratri is the most widely celebrated of the total four Navratris (two festive Navratris and two gupt or secret Navratris) celebrated by Hindus annually. The two festive Navratris- Vasant Navratri and the Sharad Navratri- are indelible parts of the Indian culture. The word Navratri literally translates to 'nine nights' in Sanskrit, named after the holy period. Sharad Navratri is followed by the festival of Dussehra or Vijaydashmi and the festival of lights Diwali or Deepawali.

Significance of Sharad Navratri

Sharad Navratri marks the end of monsoon and is observed during the lunar month of Ashvin. In some parts of India, it is celebrated after the autumn harvest and in some others, during the harvest. The festival celebrated the victory of Goddess Durga against the demon Mahishasura. Each day of the festival has its own significance. The festival is solely dedicated to the celebration of the all-powerful Goddess and her nine female avatars.

Day-wise significance of Sharad Navratri

Day 1; October 10: The first day of Navratri 2018 is called Pratipada and is dedicated to Shailaputri or daughter of the mountain. The holy colour of this day is red, and it depicts action and vigour.

Day 2; October 11: The second day or Dwitiya celebrates power of Brahmacharini, which is the unmarried avatar of Goddess Parvati. The holy colour of the day is royal blue, which represents calmness.

Day 3; October 12: Chandraghanta is the avatar of Goddess Parvati celebrated on the third day of the Sharad Navratri. It is named so after the half-moon she adorned her forehead with, after she married Lord Shiva. The colour of the day is yellow.

Day 4; October 13: Chaturthi or the fourth day of Sharad Navratri celebrates Goddess Kushmunda, who represents generous endowment of vegetation on Earth. The holy colour of the day is green.

Day 5; October 14: Goddess Skandmata is worshipped on day 5 or Panchami. The holy colour of the day is grey.

Day 6; October 15: This is the day of



Goddess Katyayani- the warrior Goddess with four hands. The holy colour of the day is orange.

Day 7; October 16: Saptami or seventh day of Navratri is the day of Goddess Kalaratri- the most ferocious form of Goddess Durga. The colour of the day is white.

Day 8; October 17: Ashtami is a special day in the nine-day period, when nine pre-pubescent girls are invited to Hindu households and fed a special prasada. The Goddess Mahagauri reigns supreme on this day and the holy colour of the day is sky blue.

Day 9; October 18: The last day or Navami of Sharad Navratri celebrates the Goddess Siddhidaatri, commonly known as Saraswati. The name Siddhidaatri literally means the giver of siddhi or enlightenment. The colour of the day is pink.

Special Fasting Foods

Navratri celebrations vary from state to state. A number of Hindu families fast for varying periods during Navratri. During the

fasting periods, only certain foods are allowed and a number of foods and spices are banned from consumption. Typically, fasting devotees give up consumption of grains for most part of the day, partaking in a specially prepared fasting meal only once a day. The rest of the day, they eat only fruits and special vrat snacks, prepared from sendha namak or rock salt. Only some food grains, vegetables and spices are allowed during the Navratri fasting period. These include grains like buckwheat and water chestnut flour and certain tubers like potato and sweet potato. Desserts made from sabudana or sago and fox nuts or makhanas are common preparations during Navratri fasts.

Other commonly prepared fasting dishes include sabudana vada or sabudana tikki, kuttu or buckwheat flour pooris, potato curry, sweet potato halwa, etc. While the consumption of sugar is allowed, consumption of table salt is banned during Navratris.

Why Worship the Mother Goddess?

We think this energy is only a form of the Divine Mother, who is the mother of all, and all of us are her children. "Why mother; why not father?", you may ask. Let me just say that we believe that God's glory, his cosmic energy, his greatness and supremacy can best be depicted as the motherhood aspect of God. Just as a child finds all these qualities in his or her mother, similarly, all of us look upon God as mother. In fact, Hinduism is the only religion in the world, which gives so much importance to the mother aspect of God because we believe that mother is the creative aspect of the absolute.

Nine Nights & Days

Navratri is divided into sets of three days to adore different aspects of the supreme goddess. On the first three days, the Mother is invoked as powerful force called Durga in order to destroy all our impurities, vices and defects. The next three days, the Mother is adored as a giver of spiritual wealth, Lakshmi, who is considered to have the power of bestowing on her devotees the inexhaustible wealth. The final set of three days is spent in worshipping the mother as the goddess of wisdom, Saraswati. In order to have all-round success in life, we need the blessings of all three aspects of the divine mother; hence, the worship for nine nights.

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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."

Prithvi Shaw becomes youngest Indian to hit Test century on debut



Prithvi Shaw scored 134 off 154 balls on his Test debut.

RAJKOT (TIP): Teenager Prithvi Shaw became the youngest Indian to make a century on his Test debut on day one of the first Test against West Indies in Rajkot.

Shaw, 18, reached his hundred off just 99 balls to surpass the record of Abbas Ali Baig.

The opener is also the fourth youngest player of all time to hit a debut ton and the second youngest Indian to make a Test century after Sachin Tendulkar.

He eventually fell for 134, including 19 fours, as India closed on 364-4.

He says he was nervous before the start of play but nothing about him on Thursday gave any sign of that. Prithvi Shaw, all of 18 years and 329 days, making his Test debut for India against the West Indies in Rajkot, ran on to the field in the morning with the energy and hunger that only a teenager can have at the start of his career. It was there on show in Karachi in 1989—when Sachin Tendulkar, then just 16, faced up to the finest pace attack in the world.

But you need more than that to do well in international Tests. Especially if you are an opening batsman making your debut, albeit against a set of bowlers who aren't exactly as fearsome as Wasim Akram, Imran Khan and Waqar Younis, the trio Tendulkar faced. But on an opening morning, with five catchers behind the wicket waiting for you to make a mistake, Shaw only needed to err once. That he didn't signs him off as a special talent.

Shannon Gabriel delivered the ball on the fifth stump line, in the corridor of uncertainty, trying to exploit any movement the pitch might offer. The ball swung away and Shaw let it go, his eyes on the ball all the while. In the commentary box, that eternal purist, Sanjay Manjrekar, applauded the effort: "First ball of Test cricket Prithvi Shaw plays the most important shot in Test cricket. The leave alone."

KOHLI HITS 24TH TEST CENTURY

Captain Kraigg Brathwaite brings himself into the attack to bowl some part-time spin. The Indians are able to collect four easy runs from the over as the runs continue to flow at a good rate.

In the next over, Kohli flicks Bishoo off his pads through fine leg for a four to bring up his 24th Test century from 184 balls, to continue his golden run with the bat. This could rank as one of Kohli's easiest century, he has hardly broken a sweat so far!

This is Kohli's fourth hundred in 2018, 17th as the captain and 24th overall. He is fourth in the list of most Test centuries for India as he goes past Virender Sehwag, who had made 23 hundreds.

He then punched the second ball between point and cover, standing tall despite his 5ft-and-a-few-inches frame, for his first runs, making it evident why he has been tipped for a bright future. For the next four-odd hours, Shaw cut and punched with authority, flicked with ease and drove with confidence. And around the first-hour mark, post lunch, Shaw became the youngest Indian to hit a century on debut and the fourth youngest ever in the world.

"Lovely to see such an attacking knock in your first innings, @prithvishaw! Continue batting fearlessly," tweeted Tendulkar.

What made the knock special was Shaw's aggressive intent. He scored the



century at less than a run a ball, wasn't afraid to play his shots and hardly made a mistake.

"Such a beautiful moment for young @PrithviShaw. Almost a child. Bats like he knows no fear. No inhibitions. This is a different generation!" tweeted Harsha Bhogle.

People who have known Shaw over the years saw it coming. Around this time last year, Shaw was preparing for the U19 World Cup. He led India to victory in that tournament. He then made his Ranji Trophy debut against Tamil Nadu in Rajkot and scored a century in the second innings to help Mumbai book a ticket to the final. For now, he seems to have booked himself a ticket to Australia.

Embattled Ronaldo to miss Portugal internationals: Coach

LISBON (TIP): Cristiano Ronaldo has been left out of Portugal's next four internationals, national coach Fernando Santos said Thursday, days after rape allegations against the Juventus star resurfaced.

Santos told a press conference that he and the president of the Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) Fernando Gomes talked to Ronaldo and "we agreed that the player was not available for this or the next call up".

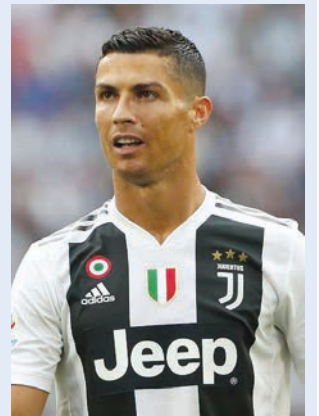
"I will not reveal the details of the conversation we three had," said Santos when pressed by reporters.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner missed the two internationals Portugal played in September.

At the time, Santos suggested that the 33-year-old's absence was temporary and intended to help the star attacker adapt after his move from Real Madrid to Juventus.

"This is not what I am saying now," Santos said on Thursday when asked if the explanation was the same.

The omission comes as Ronaldo, one of the world's most successful and highly-paid sportsmen, faces down allegations of rape. Last month, an American woman, Kathryn Mayorga, accused Ronaldo in a 32-page complaint filed with a district court in Nevada, of raping her on June 13, 2009. Asked about the allegations, Santos defended the player. "I know Cristiano Ronaldo very well and I fully believe his word when he says he would never commit a crime like this."



U-19 Asia Cup: India beat Bangladesh to enter final

DHAKA (TIP): Mohit Jangra and Siddharth Desai grabbed three wickets apiece as India eked out a narrow two-run win over Bangladesh to enter the final of the Under-19 Asia Cup here on Thursday.

Opting to bat in, India were all out for 172 in 49.3 overs with Yashasvi Jaiswal top-scoring with a 69-ball 37 while Sameer Choudhary and Anuj Rawat contributed 36 and 35 respectively.

The Indians were able to defend the small total, thanks to a disciplined bowling show led by pacer Jangra and left-arm spinner Desai, who shared six wickets between them. Bangladesh were all out for 170 in 46.2 overs.

The duo ripped through through the Bangladesh batting by claiming five out of their top six batsmen. Bangladesh were reduced to 65 for five by the 20th over but a 74-run partnership between Shamim Hossain (59) and wicket-keeper Akbar Ali (45) took them nearer to a memorable victory.

Bangladesh reached 139 for six and needed 34 runs from 14.5 overs for a win. With Hossain at the crease, they were in a great chance to win the match. But the Indian bowlers gave nothing away and did not allow Bangladesh batsmen score easy runs.

In the end, the efforts of the Indian bowlers paid off as Bangladesh kept on losing wickets. Hossain was the eighth batsman was out in the 43rd over and they were all out in the 47th over.

Earlier, India did not have the best of starts in their innings and had a batting slump in the middle overs with three wickets falling in quick succession. They had two good partnerships -- one of 66 for the second wicket between Jaiswal and Rawat and another of 59 between Ayush Badoni (28) and Choudhary.

Source: PTI





Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE OCTOBER 8 - OCTOBER 14, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says your mind is razor-sharp. Your exchanges with others are quick and to the point. You know what they want from you intuitively and you know you can deliver. You are alert and savvy. This is a favorable period for all kinds of commercial transactions. You are shrewd and cunning and strike the best possible deal. You could even be ruthless and run the risk of being unethical too. You sight money and short cuts to get where you want.

Taurus:

You could be firefighting all period depending, of course, on your personal chart. There is some tension between your personal needs and your professional duties, and you are pulled in several directions. Sometimes you may even feel that the foundations you had built are breaking. You may get emotional over it and downsize all rationale. On the flip side, you could seize this period and channelize the inherent tension into one of achievement.

Gemini:

'Life is involvement. Where there is no involvement, there is no life,' says Sadhguru, today's popular mystic. There are expenses along with windfall deals. This is a lucky period and you get what you want. There could be international travel, rewards and awards, accolades and applause, money and honey. You are the toast of your peer group. You have the Midas touch. Nothing goes wrong in your life. In fact, everything falls in place according to plan. Life is smiling at you and inviting you for the first dance.

Cancer:

You are canny enough to sight success and what needs to be done to achieve it. You roll up your sleeves and get down to the hard slog. You resemble Chris Gayle in his many blitzkriegs in the IPL. You bat on the front foot, and like him, send the best bowlers packing. You simply cannot go wrong. The cards are in your favor. You are the favorite child of the gods. Ganesha is happy for you.

Leo:

There is stability, continued success and big money. You live and love large. You don't believe in half measures. There are expenses, but you consider them business investments. Your love life is flamboyant. You wear it on your sleeve and boast about your conquests. Those with steady partners bond ethereally. You meet with people from all over the world, and new vistas open.

Virgo:

You have struck a purple patch. You are the lion in Serengeti with scores of lionesses to do your bidding. It is an easy life. Fortune smiles on you. You realize this and are generous to a fault. Your philanthropic instincts are aroused and you help out in old-age homes and with the less fortunate. You could take to activism and win laurels for your efforts. Your ego rides high and you perceive any affront as a challenge to your authority.

Libra:

You take step back and examine your goals and expectations from life. You look at what has worked for you and what needs to be ejected from your life. You separate the grain from the chaff and decide on what to nurture and what to drop. You do a SWOT analysis. You engage with friends, family, loved ones and the larger society. You get the views of others to reach on objective conclusion. You try your best to keep subjectivities, prejudices and preconceptions out of the reckoning. You want to evolve and grow, and you are prepared to do all that it takes.

Scorpio:

Your money mind is everywhere, even in the remotest swathes of the Sahara. You are moving in several different directions all at once like a giant eel setting out from a meal. Unless you harness the mind and give it direction, nothing of consequences will be achieved. But inaction is also a kind of action. Watch our mind and you know where you are headed. 'The pessimist sees difficult in every opportunity. You live them all one by one. Ganesha holds your hand.

Sagittarius:

You are in communication mode using every bit of technology to advantage. You want to reach out to the world at large and this is exactly what you do. 'the ones that will create the new culture that is needed are those that are not afraid to be insecure,' said Pema Chodron, the monk. You get out of your comfort zone and traverse uninhabited trails. You listen to your inner drummer and break all the rules. There are maudlin moments, and you feel insecure.

Capricorn:

There is more stability in this phase and you indulge in different kinds of activities. You assert yourself without offending others. You call a spade a spade, but you are also politically very correct. You are direct, even brutally honest, without being abrasive. There is balance between your need to be an individual and your need to relate to the world at large. You are charming, friendly and agreeable. You still manage to do your thing, but no one takes offence.

Aquarius:

This is the period when you make new discoveries, encounter new people and open new windows to your world. You are filled with energy, gusto and zeal and want to explore life. But, at the same time, you could be too rigid, and that can break the momentum of your plans and actions. But this is also a period of many revelations and startling new ideas. Life opens up in several new dimensions. There is fun and entertainment and bizarre expressions of your individuality.

Pisces:

You are basking in the arms of amour. Your desires are aroused and you play the field. Those in committed relationships take ecstasy to new heights. There are fun times and parties as you meet up with old friends and lovers. This is a gregarious influence and you just love being the center of attention. You love the spotlight and it loves you too. This is a good time too for artistic activities as creativity bursts through your pores. Children bring joy, but it is tinged with sadness, as they may be fleeing the coop.



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