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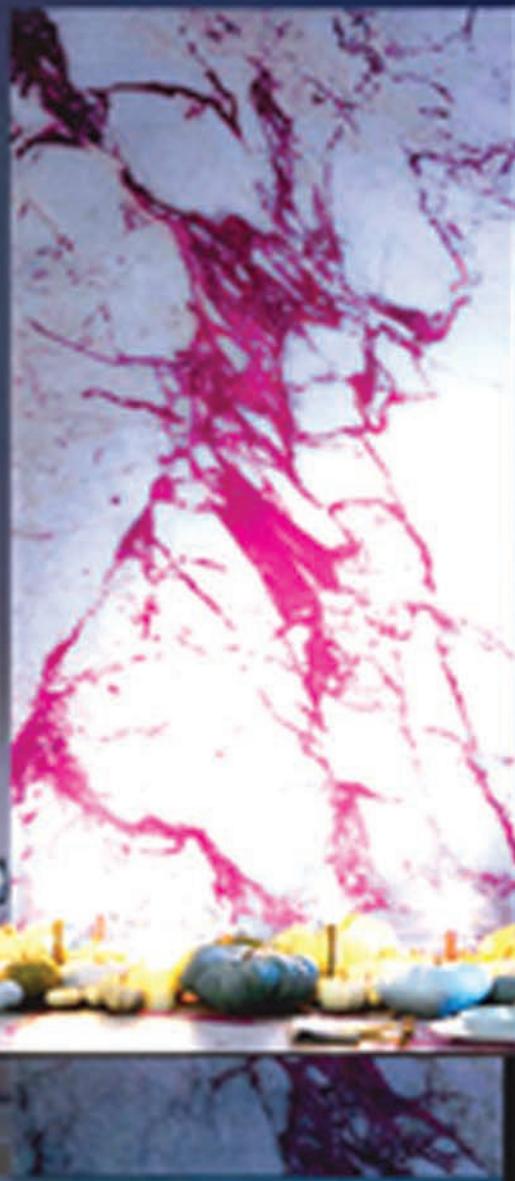
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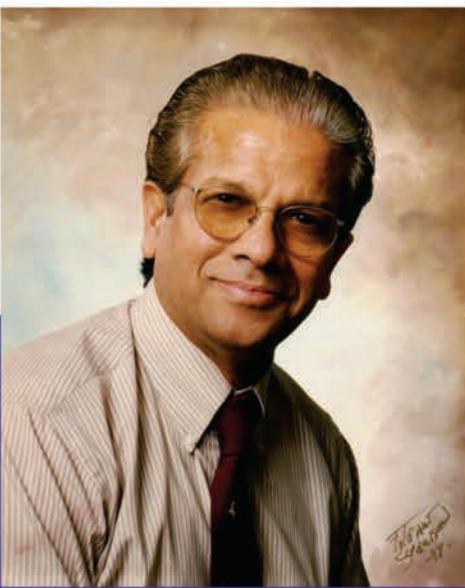


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US to allow 8 countries to continue buying Iran oil after sanctions on Nov 5: Pompeo
India may be one of the countries to get exemption



The exemptions will be announced, Monday, November 5, said Mike Pompeo

We Wish
Readers A

HAPPY DIWALI

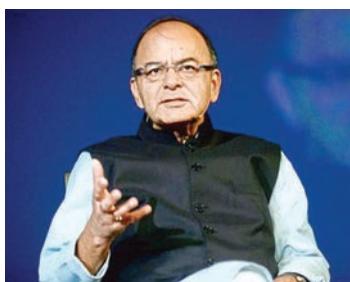
US to allow 8 countries to continue buying Iran oil after sanctions on Nov 5: Pompeo

India may be one of the countries to get exemption

WASHINGTON (TIP): The US has agreed to temporarily allow eight countries to continue buying Iranian oil after it re-imposes crippling sanctions on Tehran on November 5, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Friday, citing "significant reductions" in imports of oil from the Persian Gulf nation.

contd on Page 48

India to be among 3 largest economies in coming years: Jaitley



Jaitley was speaking at an event called "Support and Outreach Initiative for the MSME sector" on Friday, November 2.

PIB file photo

NEW DELHI (TIP): Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said on Friday, November 2, India would become the world's fifth largest economy in 2019 and among the top three in the coming years. Speaking at the 'Support and Outreach Initiative for the MSME sector' event here, the minister said since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government took over about

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EASHINGTON (TIP): At a "Make America Great Again" political rally in Iowa President Trump said: "It could happen. Could happen. And you know what you do. My whole life, you know what I say? 'Don't worry about it, I'll just figure it out.' Does that make sense? I'll figure it out."

It was an uncharacteristic lack of confidence from the usually bombastic leader, but experts have predicted Democrats could win the 24 seats it needs to gain control of the lower house of Congress for the first time since 2010.

The polling data shows, however, the Senate will still likely be controlled by conservatives.

contd on Page 48

Donald Trump has said Republicans could lose control of the US House as the 2018 midterm elections are just four days away.



Heather Nauert is Trump's top choice to succeed Nikki Haley as UN ambassador



"She's excellent. She's been with us a long time. She's been a supporter for a long time", President said of Heather

US makes it tougher for companies to employ fresh foreign workers under H-1B

Indian companies are the hardest hit

WASHINGTON (TIP): The Trump administration has introduced a new set of stringent provisions to the H-1B labor application process under which the US employers must disclose the total number of foreigners already employed by them, making it tougher to sponsor fresh foreign workers.

The H-1B visa, popular among Indian IT professionals, is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. The new information required by



The new set of stringent provisions to the H-1B labor application process under which the US employers must disclose the total number of foreigners already employed by them, makes it tougher to sponsor fresh foreign workers. (Image only for representation)

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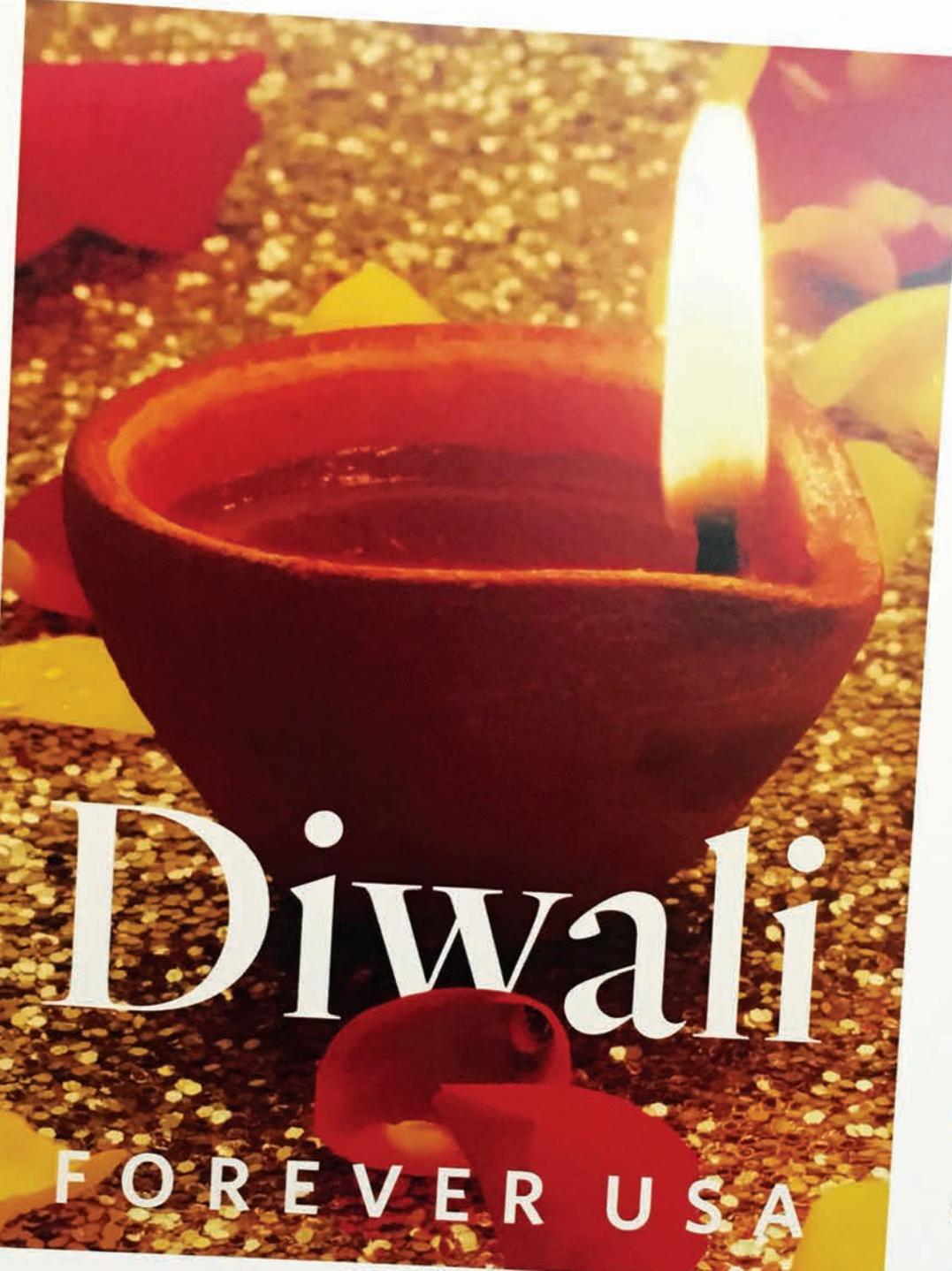
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Ranju Batra
Chair



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The Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation Annual Fundraising Gala draws hundreds

Over \$175,000 raised at the gala for treatment of cancer for patients in India



The gathering was addressed by Sam Pitroda, Priya Dutt, and Congressman Tom Suozzi

Photos / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

UNIONDALE, NY (TIP): The Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation (NDMF), hosted close to 400 people at the Marriott, Long Island for their 37th annual gala. The Gatsby themed gala was a prestigious event attended by community members, of Long Island, NY and New Jersey.

The foundation honored some pivotal members of the community and their philanthropic endeavors. The honorees include Dr. Urmilesh Arya, a pediatrician and fellow of the American College of Pediatrics; Dr. Manjeet Baines, a highly regarded Thoracic Surgeon from MSK, and Professor of Surgery at Cornell University Medical College; Dr. Himanshu Pandya, president elect of AAPIQLI, and a medical director of a nursing home in Queens, Long Island; Mr Kanak Golia, President and CEO of Perfume Center of America; Mr Sher Singh Madra, former president of NDMF and the owner and operator of BKM International Inc; and Mr. George Tsunis, Chairman of Board at NUMC and Chairman and CEO of Chartwell Hotels, LLC.

The foundation also recognized the late Dr Shakir Mukhi, a former founding member of the Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation. The Keynote speakers for the evening included Dr. Digpal Dharkar of the Indore Cancer Foundation and Hospital, and the highly respected telecom inventor, Mr. Sam Pitroda. Both speakers delivered touching and informative speeches which moved the attending guests.

Sunil and Nargis Dutt's daughter, Priya Dutt, a former Member of Parliament, also made a very heartwarming speech about the foundation's ability to uphold her mother's vision. Priya said, her mother Nargis Dutt died of cancer in 1981 while at a hospital in the US. While undergoing treatment at MSK in New York, Priya says, "my mother used to tell my father, Sunil Dutt, "Since you have money you have taken me to US for treatment, but what about poor people in India who suffer from the deadly disease?" Hence, the Nargis Dutt Foundation was formed for taking care of poor patients of cancer.

The highlight of the evening was a Gatsby inspired fashion show presented by Rana Noman Haq. The luxury fashion designer flew in from Lahore to be part of this notable event. Some of the key guests of the evening included: Mr. Thomas Suozzi - member of the House of Representatives and former Nassau County Executive - who presented Mr. Andy Mansukhani a citation honoring NDMF. Mr. Curtis - founder of the Guardian Angles and Chairman of the NYS Reform party and his wife Mrs. Nancy Sliwa - who is currently running for NYS Attorney General, and Megan Ryan - Executive Vice President and General Counsel at NUMC.

About Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation

Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation was established in 1981 in memory of Nargis Dutt, a famous Bollywood movie star of India. She gave numerous memorable performances in movies including Mother India, which was nominated for an Oscar in 1957. She was a very caring human being whose dream was to see that the best available medical care could also be provided to underprivileged and needy people.

While undergoing specialized medical treatment in New York for cancer, Mrs. Dutt articulated her dream and



Tom Suozzi presented a citation to NDMF President Andy Mansukhani
Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia



Priya Dutt honored the family of late Shakir Mukhi, one of the founders of the Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation
Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

repeatedly expressed her regret that the medical care that she was able to receive was unavailable in her Motherland. Her deep concern for the sick and disabled led her to set definite goals towards making improved medical services available to the poorest in India.

She already had considerable work to her credit in rehabilitation, and education of handicapped children in India. Unfortunately, she did not live long enough to see the evolution of her dream.

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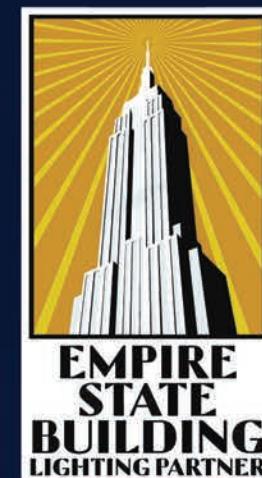


A group of honorees

Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia



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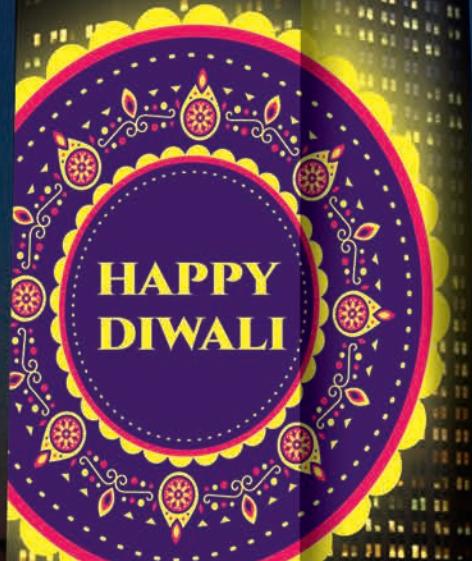
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Jay Sean
Singer & Songwriter
Guest of Honor



Nina Davuluri
Miss America 2014
Guest of Honor



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Lahore Fashion designer Rana Noman Haq presenting his Signature collection during 37 the Nargis Dutt memorial Foundation Gala Dinner in NY on 28th oct 2018
Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia



Sam Pitroda, Priya Dutt and Nargis Dutt Board Members at the press conference
Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

Well - known Community Leader and Philanthropist Peter Bheddah honored with Bharat Samman Award in London



Peter Bheddah receiving Bharat Samman Award from Chairman Lord Diljit Rana at House of Lords in London, October 26, 2018

Indian Origin (PIOs), living in India or abroad, achievements in their respective fields, and their contribution to the socio-economic development of India as well as their country of residence.

The award is conferred by the NRI Institute, a non-profit NGO that is a registered body of PIOs connecting the Indian Diaspora since 1989 as a platform to honour exceptional individuals and organizations for their global achievements, and to encourage overseas Indians to be a part of the socio-economic development of India. The recipients of The Bharat Samman Award demonstrate an understanding of a community's needs through exemplary selfless voluntary service.

LONDON (TIP): New York based well-known community leader and philanthropist Peter Bheddah received the prestigious Bharat Samman Award at the 30th annual NRI Pravasi Divas on October 26 for being a successful businessman turned outstanding humanitarian helping the needy in India and the United States. The award was conferred upon Mr. Bheddah in the presence of Lord Swaraj Paul, Lord Billimoria, Commissioner of Canada to India Mr. Patel, and many other dignitaries at the House of Lords in London, United Kingdom.

The Bharat Samman Award is bestowed upon a group of select People of for their outstanding

contd from Page 6

The Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation Annual Fundraising Gala draws hundreds

After her demise, her husband Sunil Dutt, who recently passed away, established. The Nargis Dutt Memorial Foundation through various chapters in USA, UK, Canada, Germany and Holland to keep Nargis's dream alive.

For more information, please visit
<http://www.nargisduttny.org>
(Press Release by Rohini Singh)

India under attack, says Sam Pitroda

NEW YORK (TIP): The Modi government's actions are constantly undermining democratic institutions, and the very idea of India is under attack," said Dr. Sam Pitroda, the Chairman of the Overseas Congress Department of AICC.

He was addressing a leadership conference of Overseas Congress leaders held in New Hyde Park, New York. "Congress party always stood for inclusiveness, and bottom-up

development and people of India aspire for a country they could live in peace and harmony" Pitroda added.

He told the gathering that the NRIs have always played a significant role not only in liberating the country from the colonialists but also contributing to its development by bringing together every segment of the society.

He cautioned that this is not the time to relax and a critical election is only a few months away. He urged everyone to help develop IOC as a powerful voice representing the NRIs in defense of freedom, democracy, and equal justice. He asked the gathering to reach out to the community and bring them in as members to strengthen the organization by enrolling new members.

Dr. Sam Pitroda thanked the members and said he was impressed by how much they were au courant with the political situation in India. Delegate after delegate recounted to him a litany of failures and disappointments of the present government and narrated how badly the people were affected by the Modi policies and practices. In many instances, they said, the administration was falling apart, and the prevalence of joblessness and lack of proper healthcare or educational support was seriously affecting the people. Several shared what efforts they had themselves embarked upon to boost voter growth

Dr. Pitroda said that Rahul Gandhi was making strong and astounding progress in reaching out and establishing a dialogue with the disgruntled people and advised them to translate these sentiments into vote strength and bring about the change that the people desperately are demanding.

In opening remarks Harbachan Singh Secretary-General of the Organization praised the great interest that the delegates had generated and urged that this interest be turned into action items immediately. He added that the Congress wave was powerful in India and was gaining a stunning momentum progressively.

Mohinder Singh Gilzian, President of Indian Overseas Congress, USA who was instrumental in organizing the event, said IOC should be strengthened and requested members to follow the advice of Pitroda and join this endeavor in creating an active IOC in the future.

Ravi Chopra hosted the get-together at his residence and in his capacity as the Chairman of the Finance Committee urged the gathering to be generous in their giving to strengthen the organization as it requires resources to meet the ongoing demand. Vice Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress George Abraham thanked the delegates for their continuing efforts.

Phuman Singh and Tejinder Singh Gill, Senior Vice-Presidents, Gurmit Singh Mullanpur, Chairman, Campaign Committee and President of Punjab Chapter, Charan Singh, President, Haryana Chapter, Dr. Dayan Naik, President, Karnataka Chapter, Shalu Chopra, Chairperson, Women's Forum, Rajinder Dichpally, General Secretary, Sawaran Singh, former President of Haryana Chapter, Chandu Patel, Ram Gadula, Leela Maret, Jayesh Patel, Harkesh Thakur, Sonia Sodhi, R. Jayachandran and others participated in the deliberations. (Press Release)



Sam Pitroda with INC Members in New York

SALDEF Hosts Historic Panel on the topic of Religion in the National Discourse

WASHINGTON (TIP): On Monday October 29th, 2018, SALDEF organized a panel discussion on Religion in the National Discourse at the Newseum. Days before the midterm election and after one of the deadliest attacks on a religious center, the diverse panel explored some of the hardest issues related to Religion in the National Discourse. One theme throughout the talk focused on the idea that, "government has to have a very good reason to interfere with religion". This theme was discussed through topics such as the Masterpiece Cakeshop case, the Travel Ban and the allowance of religious symbols in public space. The panelists also talked about the installation of a new justice to the Supreme Court would potentially change the country and explore the role of community building through religious networks to make change.

SALDEF Board Chair Kavneet Singh, moderated the panel and noted that, a 2007 First Amendment Center poll revealed that 65 percent of Americans believe the founders intended the United States "to be a Judeo-Christian nation"; over half of us think that this intention is actually spelled out somewhere in the Constitution.

After the great success of this forum SALDEF is pleased to announce a regular forum series that will debate the topics of the day. The purpose of the series will be to bring together diverse opinions on



The diverse panel explored some of the hardest issues related to Religion in the National Discourse, moderated by SALDEF Board Chair Kavneet Singh

topics and allow for constructive discourse between opposing narratives to hopefully create new perspectives find cooperative ways forward. To find out more about upcoming panels or to sponsor a panel email media@saldef.org.

(Based on a press release)

Diwali celebrations with diya lights at the New York Empire State Building, Nov 7



NEW YORK (TIP): In a historic development, the Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) will celebrate Diwali with diya lights at the iconic Empire State Building in Manhattan, on Wednesday November 7th, 2018.

The event is being organized by FIA in cooperation with Empire State Realty Trust. This will be the first time that Diwali celebration up in the sky will be witnessed by thousands of people including tourists from all over the world.

The organizers, in a press release said, " We would like to gratefully record here that Empire State Realty Trust and FIA together have already illuminated Empire State Building in each August symbolizing celebration of India's Independence Day for almost over two decades by selecting vibrant tri-colors on India's flag - Orange, White and Green. This incredible illumination has won the hearts of growing Indian American community as well as global tourists.

"These repeated gestures by ESRT indeed helps in spreading ancient Indian Philosophy Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (The world is one family) and also demonstrates a great harmony in spirit and deeds between the people of world's largest and oldest democracies in this Nov. 7th Diwali Illumination ceremony. Jay Sean the young popular Indian singer and Miss America 2014 Nina Devuluri with glorify it by their presence and performance besides other invited guests."

(Press Release)

Indian-Origin Couple Falls to Death at US Park

NEW YORK (TIP): An Indian-origin couple died after falling 800 feet in an area with steep terrain in California's Yosemite National Park. They were apparently taking a selfie before the tragedy occurred, a media report said.

Vishnu Viswanath, 29, and Meenakshi Moorthy, 30 fell to their deaths from Taft Point in the national park in California. They were identified on Monday, October 29, as the married couple from India living in the United States.

A report cited Mr Viswanath's brother Jishnu Viswanath as saying that they were apparently taking a selfie. The popular viewpoint in the California park does not have a railing to protect visitors from the ledge.

Park rangers recovered their bodies after people reported seeing an unattended camera on a tripod, Vishnu Viswanath's brother said.

He added that Ms Moorthy had set up the tripod by the ledge possibly to take a selfie. Rangers had arrived at the scene and "used high-powered binoculars to find them and used helicopters to airlift the bodies."

The couple, who through their social media posts chronicled their traveling adventures, also wrote a blog called 'Holidays and HappilyEverAfters'.

Just months before her tragic death, Ms Moorthy had warned in an Instagram post the dangers of taking photographs on the edge of cliffs and atop skyscrapers.

She posted a picture of herself at the Grand Canyon, saying in the caption that "A lot of us including yours truly is a fan of daredevil attempts of standing at the edge of cliffs. But



Vishnu Viswanath, 29, and Meenakshi Moorthy, 30 fell to their deaths from Taft Point in the national park in California

did you know that wind gusts can be fatal? Is our life worth one photo?"

Ms Moorthy appears in the selfie of another tourist couple at Taft Point, just minutes before she plummeted to her death.

After reports of the couple's death emerged and their identities were revealed, Sean Matteson said that Ms Moorthy appears in two of their selfie photos that they took at the popular tourist destination.

Mr Matteson said Meenakshi Moorthy's pink-haired visage appears in the corner of two photos he snapped of himself and his girlfriend Drea Rose Laguillo. He said the

woman made him a little nervous because he felt she was standing too close to the edge. But he said she appeared comfortable.

Park spokesman Jamie Richards was earlier quoted as saying that "We still do not know what caused them to fall. We're trying to understand what happened. We may never know, (but) from everything we see, this was a tragic fall."

Mr Richards said that so far 10 people have died in the park this year, and six of those park visitors fell to their deaths. In May, Asish Penugonda, a 29-year-old Indian national, fell to his death while ascending the park's famous

Half Dome trail.

"Yosemite is a wild and scenic place. If you are not paying attention to your footing, it is very easy to have a slip and fall," the park spokesperson said.

"Now, we don't know what happened in this case, but we urge hikers to stay on the trail."

Investigators were looking into how the couple fell or what had occurred when the accident happened at the famous spot which is a favorite place for tourists from around the world to take scenic and memorable photos.

The couple had been married since 2014 and both were software engineers. On the cover of Vishnu Viswanath's Facebook page is a picture of the two of them smiling on the edge of a cliff at the Grand Canyon.

In a Facebook post, College of Engineering, Chengannur said the two were its alumni and added that it deeply mourns their "accidental demise". The college said Vishnu Viswanath and Meenakshi Moorthy belonged to the BTech 2006-10 Computer Science and Engineering batch.

"Our hearts go to the friends and family members of this lovely couple. May their souls rest in peace," the college said.

Raj Katta, 24, of New York, said he got to know both of them while attending Bradley University, in Illinois. He said Mr Viswanath was a "thoughtful and amazing guy, very talented. They are a really happy couple. Very positive."

He described Ms Moorthy as extremely positive and enthusiastic. "She's one of those girls who wants to explore the world and discover a deeper meaning in life."


**GUEST
COMMENT**

A DIVISIVE STATUE OF UNITY

Giving Patel his due to appropriate him for political ends

Nearly seven decades after he passed away, the 'Iron Man' of India has received a tribute befitting his status as the unifier of India. The statue of unity is as imposing as the man who ignored advancing age to first battle the British and then set about the exhausting task of cajoling and persuading princely states to accede to the Union of India. A politician from the conservative streak, there was considerable ideological sparring with the progressive lot, right from 1936 when Nehru endorsed socialism as the guiding light of the yet-to-be-born free India.

Patel-Nehru ideological differences have always encouraged the Hindu right wing to appropriate selectively; opting to pick his post-Independence legacy while overlooking his enormous contribution to the freedom struggle. This spawned a partly-correct narrative about the neglect of Patel's legacy by the Nehru-Gandhi clan. Patel's children were given Congress tickets for both Houses of Parliament, but Indira Gandhi was not enamored of either the man or his kin. Narasimha Rao's conferment of Bharat Ratna was in fact an effort to draw a line with the Gandhi school of keeping his memory at a stand-off distance.

The Congress' reaction to the whittling of icons in its neglected gallery of greats is understandable. The other purpose behind the BJP's highly embellished commemoration of his memory is to show the Nehru-Gandhi as overtly occupied with the promotion of its clan to the studied exclusion of other freedom fighters-cum-nation builders. The BJP, however, may be disinclined to dive deep into Patel's thought process, for he was an unwavering follower of Gandhi, had no love lost for the RSS and was averse to Subhas Chandra Bose, another icon in the process of appropriation by the BJP. Patel's homily to the RSS would have particularly hurt: 'To say one thing and to do another is a game which will not do'. BJP's fragmented assimilation of Patel may or may not bring electoral dividends to the BJP, but a united India could not have done without both Nehru and Patel.

(Tribune, India)



By Vappala Balachandran

There was something totally inappropriate about the idea of elevating a modest man like Sardar Patel to a Colossus of Hellenistic times. The Rhodians who built the statue for Sun God Helios, used to fling into the sea four horses and a chariot "for his use" every year. Left to himself, it is doubtful whether Patel would ever have liked his grand statue against the protests of 22 villages when throughout his life he cared more for them than tall statues or glittering public rallies.

That leads to a conclusion that the idea was to appropriate Patel into the BJP- Narendra Modi pantheon which Rajmohan Gandhi, the celebrated biographer of Patel, had rejected in 2013. He said, "The country's first home minister would not have recognized Mr. Modi as his ideological heir and been very 'pained' with his behavior towards Muslims". He said that Patel was a great "team builder" and "other people were prominent in his daily life". On October 31, 2018, LK Advani who was the central figure during the foundation stone ceremony in 2013, was conspicuously absent.

That Patel and the BJP could not have coexisted will be evident if we read Patel's speech of February 27, 1947 on minority protection while accepting the chairmanship of the Advisory Committee to the Constituent Assembly on fundamental rights. His frank speech on August 11, 1947 at a public meeting why the Congress accepted Partition needs to be quoted verbatim: "I would make no efforts to explain away the responsibility of the Congress for dividing the country. We took these extreme steps after great deliberation. In spite of my previous strong opposition to Partition, I agreed to it because I felt convinced that in order to keep India united, it must be divided now."

PM Modi in his Op-Ed piece on October 31 had quoted VP Menon on how Patel led "from the front" the integration of 550 Indian States. May I point out that this was just one problem that the Congress leadership had faced during the process of independence. More serious was the pernicious plotting by some elements in the Viceroy's administration to leave India in tatters. This would be clear if we read VP Menon's another landmark book "The Transfer of Power in India" (1957) and Mountbatten's frank memoirs published in 1949 which has received scant attention in India.

Menon was associated with constitutional developments since 1917. From 1942 till August 1947, he was Constitutional Adviser to the Viceroy. Mountbatten, who took over as Viceroy on March 22, 1947, had frankly admitted that his predecessor, Lord Wavell, had made secret plans of quick British withdrawal from India in 1946 with the anticipated chaos following the rejection of the Cabinet Mission's plan "affecting the loyalty of the Indian Army". If that had happened, it would have left a serious

Menon had said that the Political Department, instead of following Viceroy's scheme of persuading the princes to accede, was secretly warning them of "the loss the rulers would suffer if they were to federate".



Patel: Not the only tall leader associated with the task of nation-building

administrative vacuum in India since the superstructure was still with British civil and military officers although the "Interim Government" (Governor-General's Executive Council) under Jawaharlal Nehru as Vice-President with Sardar Patel as Home Member had taken charge on September 2, 1946. The Constituent Assembly had first met from December 9, 1946.

During this period, Menon was the link between the Viceroy and Congress leadership, including Nehru and Patel, and at times even Gandhiji, and he kept them informed of some secret planning by a coterie of British officers in the Political Department.

The deliberate British mischief in our nation-building had started earlier. The 1935 Government of India Act on a "Federation" with three categories of constituents would have left the future Central government out of control of the Indian nation. While the British Indian provinces and Chief Commissioners' Provinces would accede to India, the 562 Princely States would be entitled to decide their own accession.

Menon had said that the Political Department, instead of following Viceroy's scheme of persuading the princes to accede, was secretly warning them of "the loss the rulers would suffer if they were to federate". He said that such scheming princes were rudely jolted when Nehru declared, while addressing the annual session of the All-India States People's Conference on April 18, 1947 that "any state which did not come into the Constituent assembly would be treated by the country as a hostile state".

The British tried to stifle the process of nation-building even later. Their declaration to the Cripps Mission in 1942 gave the right to even British provinces to accede or not accede to the Union or to form a separate Union or Unions. Menon said, "This was really the

death blow to Indian unity". This trend continued even during Mountbatten Viceroyship. Mountbatten records one such difficult meeting on June 13, 1947 to discuss the "paramountcy" after the transfer of power and its effect princely states: "Pandit Nehru also attacked Sir Conrad Corfield, the political adviser, to his face and said that he ought to be tried for misfeasance".

In June 1947, Patel asked Menon to take charge of the States Department. In fact, it was Mountbatten who had created the department. He says: "Mr. V.P. Menon, my Reforms Commissioner was, much to my delight, appointed Secretary". Pakistan's nominee Ikramullah was appointed as Joint Secretary. From then on till August 15, 1947, all negotiations with the princes were under the leadership of Mountbatten who says the idea of accession of Indian states on three subjects (Defence, External Affairs and Communications) was Menon's idea to get as many accessions as quickly before the transfer of power on August 15, 1947.

Our independence was won under the leadership of Gandhiji with all top leaders like Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, Rajendra Prasad, Jagjivan Ram and others assuming equally important roles. Our nation-building was done after August 15, 1947 with the participation of several non-Congress leaders like Dr Ambedkar, Dr SP Mukherjee, Dr John Mathai and others. They all had their differences but were united on the task of nation-building. It will be highly facile for a new BJP pantheon to claim in 2018 that only Sardar Patel was responsible for our nation-building.

(The author is Ex-Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat. He is author of 'A Life in Shadow: The Secret Story of ACN Nambiar')

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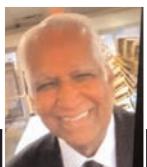
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Democrats most likely to wrest the House while Republicans retain the Senate



By Ven Parameswaran

It has been customary for the opponent of President's party to win in the midterm elections. As of today, almost all polls are predicting that the Democrats are favored to take back the House from the Republicans. It must be pointed out that nobody predicted in 2016 that the most popular candidate, Hillary Clinton would be defeated by a newcomer Donald Trump. All predictions by all pollsters, pundits and the mass media were 100% wrong. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that it is impossible to predict President Trump, who is the leader of the Republican Party. He is one of the most important factors for the midterm election. What he says and does have an impact, good or bad.

Usually the polls keep on tightening as the voting day approaches. It happens fast and more within a week before the election. In 2016, the polls were tightening and changing every day in favor of Trump in the battleground states of PA, WI, OH, MI, MN, IW. The media refused to take this into account and publicize. If the media is not honest,

4 days before the midterms, the veteran of US politics hazards a guess about the Nov 6 elections. Keenly aware of the "anything can happen" syndrome , he makes a prediction, albeit hesitatingly, that Democrats are likely to wrest the House while Republicans may continue to have a superiority in the Senate. Well, we will know the outcome in the next 4 days.- EDITOR

people suffer. There is a reason why President Trump calls it 'fake media'.

IMMIGRATION was an important factor for the 2016 Presidential election. President Trump capitalized on this issue. Because of his aggressive stand against illegal immigration and measures he is recommending to stop illegal immigration, polls show that more Independents and some Democrats are supporting President Trump.

President Trump's decision to use military to defend the open border is gaining support of the voters.

ECONOMY: We had 4.2% GDP growth in the 2nd quarter and 3.5% in the third quarter. We are enjoying the lowest unemployment of 3.7%. Unemployment amongst all the minorities, especially the Blacks is the lowest historically speaking. The wages and profits have been gaining. America first policy seems to be benefiting the USA in trade, jobs, manufacturing and even in foreign policy. President Trump's economy has 70% approval.

PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL: President Trump's approval is much higher than when he got elected. Now he has 47% approval,

much higher than that of Obama or Bush during the same time of their presidencies. This should reflect on the polls. 90% of the Republicans support Trump now. This is also much higher than the figure in 2016. The Republicans, some Democrats, and many Independents have also been positively impacted by Trump's appointment of two Supreme Court Judges.

The Whites are still the majority. Majority of the Whites support the GOP. Majority of women support the Republicans. Majority of college educated women support the Democrats. But there are more non-college educated voters than the college educated.

The new voters under 20 are likely to vote for the Democrats. Majority of the minority voters will be voting for the Democrats.

HEALTHCARE: The Democrats have made this an issue and it is helping them in the polls.

It is difficult to predict what happens between now and November 6. The dynamics of news cycles, President Trump's rallies, last minute surprises (domestic and international) all could contribute to tightening the polls till the last minute. If the



turn out is larger than normal for midterm elections, it should help the Democrats to easily gain 23 seats in the Congress and take back the House from the Republicans. The GOP is more likely to retain its majority in the U.S. Senate and may even add a seat or two.

(The author is Chairman, Asian American Republican Committee (founded 1988) is from Scarsdale, N.Y.)

President Trump's continuing gift to the world from Nikki Haley to maybe Heather Nauert



By Ravi Batra

America has enjoyed unprecedented success in reforming the United Nations thanks to President Trump. First, he selected Nikki Haley - a distinguished conservative governor who is a proud daughter of Indian-American Sikh parents. Nikki went on to be an exceptionally effective team player with Secretary Rex Tillerson and now Secretary Mike Pompeo and NSA Ambassador John Bolton. She has served America and President Trump without confusion, and enhanced America's respect globally worthy of being the preeminent super power that we are and the security-umbrella we provide nation-States.

Nikki's resignation, while a clear loss, was a difficult opportunity for President Trump to continue America's necessary leadership

in the geopolitical world that exists in the UN buildings in Manhattan. Just as the US Dollar is a reserve currency, the UN being in America adds American gravitas to geopolitics as humanity seeks to survive regional wars & destruction without end, while Mother Nature puts us all on notice of weaponized weather that knows no border, sovereignty or race.

Well, seems the world may get a second gift from President Trump by his appointment of the next US Ambassador to the UN: the nuance-rich Heather Nauert who has Olympic-level ability to safely dance in the minefield of geopolitics, more dangerous than land mines. The grand stilettos of Nikki Haley will be both honored and wore well if indeed Heather Nauert - already a trusted team player - becomes the latest protector of vital American interests, while spreading freedom and human rights to every dark corner of our globe. God bless Nikki, and Heather for agreeing to follow a giant - including, the United States continuing to support, by co-sponsorship at the UN, Diwali



Heather Nauert is likely to be appointed to succeed Nikki Haley as US Ambassador to the United Nations

Foundation USA's Power of One Awards celebrating victory of "Good over Evil" by now-former exceptional diplomats. Ranju Batra, chair of Diwali Foundation, joins me

in celebrating President Trump's wisdom in his appointments."

(Ravi Batra is a New York based attorney)

"Birth Citizenship is Embedded in Our Constitution": EDNY Federal District Judge Dr. William F. Kuntz II in 2011

BY RAVI BATRA

Ireach back to scholarly remarks made in 2011 by a real legal scholar - whose views have the power of law - now-EDNY Federal District Judge William Kuntz II. Then distinguished Attorney-Bill Kuntz, as Keynote speaker celebrating Black History Month convened by NYS Office of Court Administration - explains why Birth Citizenship is embedded in our Constitution, and free of low-wattage Presidential Executive

Action. We are a nation of laws, not men or women running for office and engaging in sexy mass electoral dating that is repugnant to our highest law: our Constitution.

"President Trump, who I voted for in 2016 as the American Dream had either died or become unrealizable for too many of my fellow Americans on the altar of "globalization," beyond Ricardo's Comparative Advantage principle in an analogue society that drives commerce, as digitalization has robbed jobs

and Ricardo of geographic distance, has recently confused the Midterm electioneering with his threat of ending Birth Citizenship by Executive Order. While we are a presidential system of government, as opposed to parliamentary, we are exceptional because of Separated Powers that are untouched and untrampled by presidential actions.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news.)



Sikh Americans Call for PM Modi's Help to Open Kartarpur Sahib Corridor in Pakistan



Sikh shrine in Kartarpur Sahib where the First Master of the Sikhs, Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji spent 18 years of his life

WASHINGTON (TIP): Sikh Americans sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's help in opening the Kartarpur Sahib corridor, which would give the community members unhindered access to the historic place in Pakistan where Guru Nanak Dev spent last 18 years of his life. Kartarpur is situated in Narowal district of Pakistan's Punjab province, close to India's border with the neighboring country.

A delegation of Sikhs from various parts of the US under the banner of California-based United Sikh Mission submitted a memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister at the Indian Embassy in Washington. The Punjab State Assembly has already passed twice a resolution in this regard, the memorandum noted.

"The distance from the border to Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib is three km into Pakistan," the memorandum suggested. "Pilgrims from India will be able to go to Gurdwara with an official Indian ID without having a visa from Pakistan or any other complicated formalities hurting the pilgrims that are not that technology savvy. Pilgrims must return to India the same day after attending the services," the memorandum said.

Several members of the Hindu community from in and around the Washington DC joined the Sikh delegation to the Indian Embassy to submit the memorandum.

NFIA to host 3-day conference in Virginia on November 16-18

WASHINGTON DC. (TIP): The National Federation of Indian American Associations (NFIA), an organization of several Indian American groups, will host a three-day conference in Tysons, Virginia, just outside of Washington, DC, from November 16 to 19.

A number of NFIA members from different parts of the country will discuss issues pertaining to Indian Americans at the event, the organization said in a press release.

WHAT: NFIA Convention

WHERE: Sheraton Tysons Hotel, Tysons, VA

WHEN: November 16-18, 2018

The theme of the conference will be "NFIA and Indian Americans: We're going places."

The event will include seminars, banquets, cultural programs and opportunities for delegates to network, the release said.

The convention will be held under the leadership of NFIA President Sudip Gorakshakar of Artesia, Calif., Convener Pooja Thomre and Secretary Lavanya Reddy.

The release four co-conveners that will oversee the event: Angela Anand from Virginia, YN. Gupta from Maryland, Pat Patnaik from California and Raj Razdan from Georgia.

Consul General of India, Toronto Keynotes Hindu Nationalist Event

Indian minorities warn: "Bhatia's presence at an RSS event inspires fear"

TORONTO (TIP): Some minorities of Indian origin are asking for Dinesh Bhatia, the Consul General of India's Toronto consulate, to resign after he appeared as the keynote speaker at an Oct. 19 event which was hosted by Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), the international wing of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the world's largest paramilitary.

"Thousands of Indians fled religious and ethnic persecution in India to find refuge in Canada," says Ram Mohan, an activist with Canadian Minorities of India (CMI). "Many refugees, including Christians, Dalits, Muslims, and Sikhs have endured persecution at the hands of the RSS. The moment Consul General Bhatia spoke on a stage featuring photographs of RSS leaders, he discarded his diplomatic credentials. Bhatia's presence at an RSS event inspires fear in the hearts of many Canadians from Indian minority communities. He must resign."

Bhatia was joined at the event by Ved Nanda, Sanghchalak (Leader) of HSS North America, and Saumitra Gokhale, International Coordinator of HSS. Garlanded photos on the stage included K.B. Hedgewar and M.S. Golwalkar. Hedgewar, who founded the RSS in 1925, said his intention was "to put in reality the words 'Hindustan of Hindus.'" He stated, "Hindustan is a country of Hindus. Like other nations of other people (e.g. Germany of Germans), this is a nation of Hindu people." Golwalkar, who was the RSS's longest-serving leader, stated, "We repeat: in Hindustan, the land of the Hindus, lives and should live the Hindu Nation."

"The RSS calls Indian Christians 'foreigners' and murders them," says Bill Rogers, a U.S.-based observer of international Christian persecution. "One horrible example is the 2008 Odisha Pogrom, where the government of Odisha is on record saying that it was the RSS and its affiliates who massacred dozens of Christians and made so many tens of thousands of refugees in their own country. A diplomat who claims to represent a secular country has no business going anywhere near an RSS event."

The RSS is the parent of a family of organizations known as the Sangh Parivar. According to the U.S. Commission on



India's Consul General in Toronto, Dinesh Bhatia, with Ved Nanda and Saumitra Gokhale, alongside pictures of RSS leaders Hedgewar and Golwalkar

International Religious Freedom, "Sangh Parivar entities aggressively press for governmental policies to promote their Hindu nationalist agenda and adhere in varying degrees to an ideology of Hindutva, which holds non-Hindus as foreign to India." In June 2018, the CIA labeled the RSS as a nationalist organization and its affiliate, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), as a religious militant organization.

"The RSS, VHP, and HSS are supremacists groups which spread hatred against non-Hindu Indians," explains Pieter Friedrich, an analyst of South Asian affairs. "The RSS and VHP are implicated in pogroms against Indian minorities, assassinations of journalists, and terrorist acts. They share ideological affinity with white nationalists. White nationalists want a whites-only nation while the RSS wants a Hindus-only nation. Both are anti-Semitic. Both glorify Aryanism. Both lynch minorities. Horrifying events like the Tree of Life Synagogue massacre in Pittsburgh are regularly replicated in India by Hindu nationalists who invade churches, mosques, and gurdwaras."

Friedrich notes, "The goals of the RSS are very clearly indicated in the writings of Golwalkar and of Savarkar - the originator of the term Hindutva. Both suggested that Indian minorities should be treated the same way as Nazi Germany treated the Jews." He identifies a selection of quotes from both

figures taken from the 1920s to 1960s.

"We are Indians because we are Hindus and vice versa," wrote Savarkar. He said that, "India must be a Hindu land, reserved for the Hindus." Asserting that "so far as the Moslem minority is concerned... we must watch it in all its actions with the greatest distrust possible," he concluded, "If we Hindus in India grow stronger, in time these Muslims... will have to play the part of German-Jews."

"Conversion of Hindus into other religions is nothing but making them succumb to divided loyalty in place of having undivided and absolute loyalty to the nation," wrote Golwalkar. He demanded, "Muslims and Christians here should give up their present foreign mental complexion and merge in the common stream of our national life." Claiming that "the first Semitic religion was Judaism - an intolerant faith," Golwalkar declared,

"To keep up the purity of the race and its culture, Germany shocked the world by her purging the country of the Semitic races - the Jews. Race pride at its highest has been manifested here. Germany has also shown how well-nigh impossible it is for races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindustan to learn and profit by."

Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news

Multi-faith service held in Nevada to express solidarity with Pittsburgh & Jewish community

NEVADA (TIP): A multi-faith service to express "Solidarity with Pittsburgh and the Jewish Community" was held at Temple Emanu-El, Nevada's oldest Jewish congregation, in Reno, on October 30 evening.

Few hundred religious-community-civic leaders and others from northern Nevada attended the service. It included various prayers, remarks, candle-lighting, etc.

Distinguished Hindu statesman Rajan Zed, who is President of Universal Society of Hinduism, and who spoke on the occasion; recited Gayatri Mantra, considered the most sacred mantra in Hinduism, in Sanskrit and most of those gathered recited after him.

(Press Release)



Multi Ethnic Advisory Task Force Hosts 8th Annual Congressional award function

CHICAGO, IL (TIP): "On behalf of Multi Ethnic Advisory Task Force (MEATF), I like to express my appreciation and thank so many people who worked so hard to make our 8th Annual Congressional Awards Gala a grand success. U.S. Congressman Danny K. Davis's 7th Congressional District-Illinois's Multi Ethnic Advisory Task Force hosted the Eighth Annual Awards Gala on Sunday October 28, 2018 at 5 pm at Meadows's Club, Rolling Meadows, Illinois. The Annual Awards Gala attracts Elected Officials, Community Leaders, Educators, Hospital CEOs, Professionals, Businessmen and Businesswoman from all walks of life from 24 different ethnic communities. 425 prominent citizens were in attendance at the Congressional Gala.

Since last Eight Years with blessings form the Honorable Congressman Danny K Davis and under the leadership of Dr. Vijay Prabhakar who founded this Organization.

One of the highlights of this year's Gala included the recognition of the Consul Generals of 6 countries at Chicago, "A Congressional Salute to Consulate Generals" "including the Consulate Generals of India, Japan, Turkey, China, Indonesia and Ukraine. Colorful dances from various countries and Singing made the event electrifying, exuberant and lively. Audience was really appreciating every item presented.

Attendance of our vibrant Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi from 8th Congressional District of IL made event more pleasant and successful.

One of the prominent political from India, a first female BJP Tamilnadu President, Dr. Tamilisai Soundarajan specially took her time out of her busy schedule to receive the "International Rising Star" Award.

My special thanks to Congressman, Danny Davis, His lovely wife Ms. Vera Davis, Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, our visionary leader Dr. Vijay Prabhakar, Gala Czar Dr. Zenobia Sowell, Program Chair, Clearance Beals, Banquet Chair, Vijender Doma, Communication Chair Nagendran Sripada, Mrs. Chand Nasim, Banquet co-chair; Our TV anchors Saurin Thakkar and Shirley Kalvakota, and all other MEATF team members who work so hard.

I like to extend my Congratulation to all Awardees and Award Presenters to name few, Well -known Kennedy Family, Dr. Wasiullah



Congressman Danny Davis, Ms. Vera Davis, Dr. Vijay Prabhakar and Kishor Mehta with Awardees



BJP Tamilnadu's first female President, Dr. Tamilisai Soundarajan receiving the "International Rising Star" Award

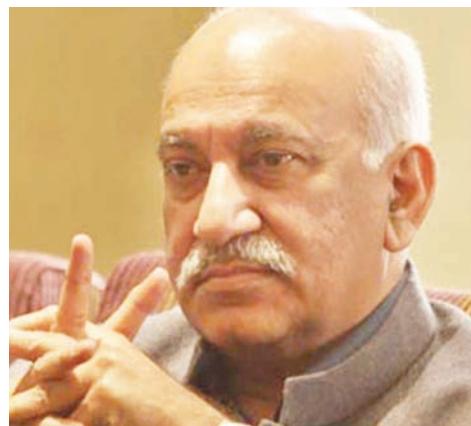
Khan, Chancellor of East-West University, Martino Wim Tangkar; Mr. Moti Agarwal, Sunil Shah, Hema Shastri, Dr. Xingwu Wang, Vishal Chhabria, Jayanta Mukharjee, Metin Serbest, Dr. Srinivas Reddy. Presenters: Gerard and Hadiya Moorer, State Rep. Melissa Conyears Ervin, Alderman Jason Ervin, Dr. Barakat, Santosh Kumar, Dr. Clyde Rivers, Kevin Bailey, Shree

Guruswamy and many more ...

Music Moghul award was given to Mr. Dexter Dale by the first lady, a famous Singer of Chicago Padma Mehta. Her two-line rendition of Bollywood romantic Song was well appreciated by the audience.

(Photographs and Press release / Asian Media USA)

US-BASED JOURNALIST ACCUSES MJ AKBAR OF RAPE, HE SAYS 'CONSENSUAL'



MJ Akbar, a minister in Narendra Modi's cabinet resigned a few days ago when he was accused of sexual harassment by a woman in India, has been accused of rape by a Washington based journalist. Akbar, however, says it was consensual sex

WASHINGTON (TIP): Pallavi Gogoi, a US-based editor, has accused MJ Akbar of raping her while working under the "brilliant journalist" in India, an allegation denied by the former Union minister who called it a "consensual relationship".

Gogoi, the chief business editor of National Public Radio (NPR), a Washington-based American media organization, has detailed the "most painful memories" of her life in the Post article.

She said that Akbar, the editor-in-chief of the Asian Age newspaper at that time, was a "brilliant journalist but used his position to prey" on her.

"What I am about to share are the most painful memories of my life. I have shelved them away for 23 years," she said, detailing how Akbar physically and mentally harassed her for years while working at the Asian Age

newspaper from New Delhi to Mumbai to Jaipur to London.

Gogoi said she was 22 when she joined the Asian Age. She was star-struck working under Akbar. She was mesmerized by his use of language, his turns of phrase and took all the verbal abuse.

At 23, Gogoi became the editor of the op-ed page which was a big responsibility at a young age, she said. "But I would soon pay a very big price for doing a job I loved."

"It must have been late spring or summer of 1994, and I had gone into his office - his door was often closed. I went to show him the op-ed page I had created... He applauded my effort and suddenly lunged to kiss me. I reeled. I emerged from the office, red-faced, confused, ashamed, destroyed," she alleged.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Book on Sikh community of Peshawar published

WASHINGTON / PESHAWAR(TIP): A research-based book exploring the economic, political and social status of the Sikh population in the provincial capital, Peshawar, has been published.

The author Naheed Hussain is an assistant professor at the Government Frontier College for Women in Peshawar. Hailing from the Qandeel village in the Swat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, she has done her Master of Philosophy (M Phil) from the Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar. The book is based on the research she had undertaken for her MPhil thesis.

The 200-page publication, "A journey into the life world of the Sikh community in Peshawar" has been published by the Iqbal International Institute for Research and Dialogue (IRD), which is a constituent unit of the International Islamic University in Islamabad.

The book is divided into five parts, shedding light on various aspects of the life of the Sikh community, which is estimated to be 8,000 forming 650 families.

The author has dedicated the book to her parents, Syed Sardar Hussain and Bibi Khana, late brother Syed Naveed Hussain and grandfather Syed Mian Gul Farosh. She has acknowledged the IRD Executive Director Dr Husnul Amin, Pakistan Study Centre, University of Peshawar; Director; Prof Dr Fakhrul Islam, other academicians and members of the Sikh community for the help they extended to her while doing research for her book.

The first chapter of the book gives the historical account of the Sikhs in Peshawar. The Sikhs captured Peshawar in 1818, annexed it in 1834 AD and ruled it till the British wrested it from them in 1849.

This portion of the book explains how the Sikhs gained political power and expanded the boundaries of the Lahore Darbar from Kashmir up to the Khyber Pass.

It mentions the Tehreek-e-Mujahideen launched by Syed Ahmad Shaheed (November 29, 1787 - May 6, 1831) that fought the Sikh Raj. The chapter has details on the fall of Peshawar to the Sikh Army and the subsequent rule by Governor Hari Singh Nalwa and later General Paolo Crescenzo Martino Avitabile.

The second part is about the Sikh rituals and festivals. These are Nam Karan (naming of the child at birth), Amrit Sanskar (passing through the process of initiation after embracing the Sikh faith and wearing of five articles of faith called Rehat or 5 Ks. These are Kesh (uncut hair), Kanga (wooden comb), Karha (steel bracelet), Kachha (underwear or shorts) and Kirpan (sword), engagement, marriage (Anand Kartaj), death/funeral (Antam Sanskar), and festivals such as Vaisakhi.

The third section of the book focuses on the economic status of the Sikh community in Peshawar by presenting data. The author concludes that the Sikh community has stable economic status as 84.4 percent are doing business. The fourth chapter focuses on the political status of Sikhs in Peshawar. The statistical analysis says 76.8 percent Sikhs in Peshawar are aware of their rights, 81.6 percent have information about their representatives and 80.6 percent are registered voters.

The fifth chapter relates to the social status of the community. The author says there is harmony among the Sikh and other communities living in Peshawar including Muslims, Hindus and Christians. She writes that Sikhs take part in functions of other communities and their gesture is reciprocated. She adds that they enjoy a high level of freedom of worship and feel no discrimination at workplaces, health and education sectors.

The book has 41 colorful pictures. These include the historic Gurdwara Bhai Joga Singh Sahib in Peshawar's Dabgari locality. This well-maintained Sikh temple is known for interior beauty and was declared part of the heritage a decade ago.

KASHMIR BJP LEADER, BROTHER SHOT DEAD BY SUSPECTED MILITANTS IN J&K'S KISHTWAR

JAMMU (TIP): Jammu and Kashmir BJP state secretary Anil Parihar and his brother were shot dead by suspected militants in Kishtwar town of Jammu region on November 1, police said.

The killings, coming ahead of the panchayat elections starting November 17, triggered angry protests in the town. While authorities imposed curfew, army was also called out to maintain order, reported PTI news agency.

According to a police officer, Parihar, 53, and his brother Ajit were returning home after closing their stationery shop late evening when two unidentified gunmen came and shot them at point-blank range. "... it appeared they had been keeping a watch on the daily routine of the BJP leader and his brother," said the officer.

The brothers were rushed to Kishtwar district hospital where doctors declared them dead.

Parihar had been associated with the BJP for over three decades, save a brief stint in the Panthers Party. Before becoming the BJP's state secretary, he had been the state president of its youth wing, the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha.

His younger brother Ajit was an employee of the state forest corporation and also looked after the shop.

As the news of the killings spread, protests erupted in the town. A mob stoned the police station and allegedly assaulted the station house officer. There were also reports said that even senior superintendent of police Rajinder Gupta faced resistance from protesters as he rushed to the spot.

Kishtwar deputy commissioner Angrez Singh Rana imposed curfew in the town as a precautionary measure after incidents of violence and vandalism were reported.

Bharatiya Janata Party leaders condemned the killings. "The cowards attacked them in the dark from point-blank range. We strongly condemn this dastardly attack. The terrorists involved in it will not be spared. In this hour of grief, the entire BJP and the countrymen stand by their families," said state party chief Ravinder Raina.

SC allows five more papers for NRC claim, last date extended

NEW DELHI (TIP): Overruling objections raised by Assam NRC coordinator Prateek Hajela, the Supreme Court on Thursday said those left out of the draft National Register of Citizens in the state could turn to five additional documents — besides the ten permitted earlier — subject to "rigorous verification" to make fresh claims for inclusion in the register. The court extended the last date for filing claims from November 26 to December 15.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and Justice R F Nariman allowed claimants to also rely on the 1951 NRC; electoral roll upto March 24, 1971; Citizenship Certificate and Refugee Registration Certificate; certified copies of the pre-1971 electoral roll, particularly those issued from Tripura; and, ration card to prove their legacy.

Earlier, the Centre had opposed exclusion of these five documents as proof of legacy.

The bench said that the mere possibility that fake documents may be filed cannot be a ground to deny them altogether. "Merely because there are chances of it being fake or fake ones being submitted in large numbers is no ground to shut it out totally," CJI Gogoi said, referring to doubts raised over the Refugee Registration Certificate.

"We have analysed it carefully. We don't think you are right," Justice Nariman told Hajela. "Better to exclude eligible persons than include ineligible is your approach," the CJI said.

The solution, the bench said, was "rigorous verification" as suggested by Hajela. It "allowed" Hajela "through his team" to carry out "a vigorous process of verification to ensure that only eligible persons are included in the NRC".

After the last date for filing claims runs out on December 15, authorities will issue notices to those concerned — this will go on till January 15, 2019. After that, the process of verification of the claims will start from April 1.



Anil Parihar

Statue of Unity: PM inaugurates world's tallest statue

Around 3,000 workers and 250 engineers worked together to create this statue

KEVADIYA (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 31 inaugurated an imposing 182-metre statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel here and said the world's tallest monument will serve as a reminder about his courage to thwart conspiracy to disintegrate India.

He used the occasion to slam those criticising the decision to build the monument, questioning whether any crime had been committed by constructing such memorials for national heroes like Patel.

The giant monument, named as the 'Statue of Unity' and built on an islet Sadhu Bet near Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat's Narmada district, is twice the height of the Statue of Liberty in the US and taller than the 153-metre Spring Temple Buddha in China.

The monument was conceptualised by Modi during his tenure as Gujarat Chief Minister and he had laid the foundation stone for it in 2013.

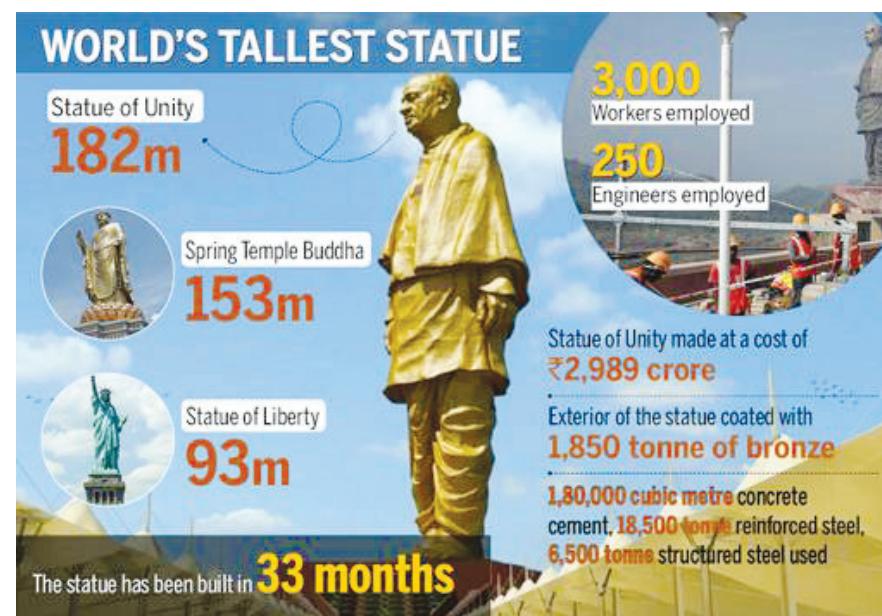
Patel, the first Home Minister of Independent India, is credited with merging 550 princely states into the Union of India. He had used force to annex princely states of Junagadh ruled by Nawab and Hyderabad ruled by nizam, both of whom had wished not to merge their states with the India union.

Wednesday's ceremony, which coincided with the 143rd birth anniversary of Patel, also known as the 'Iron man of India', was attended by Gujarat Governor O P Kohli, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani and BJP chief Amit Shah besides a number of other leaders hailing from Gujarat.

The function was marked by a flypast by Air Force planes and helicopters and a cultural show.

Built at a cost of Rs 2,989 crore, the height of the statue is 182 metres, including the base of 25 metres.

"The world's tallest statue would remind the entire world, the future



generations about the courage, capabilities and resolution of the person

who did this holy work of thwarting the conspiracy to disintegrate Mother India into pieces," the prime minister said addressing a gathering after inaugurating the monument.

"The statue will remind those who question India's existence, that this nation was, is and will remain eternal," Modi said.

The statue is conceived as a naturalistic depiction of Sardar Patel in characteristic garb in a walking pose and it rises out of a star-shaped, geometric base that covers the entire Sadhu Hill.

"This (statue) is a source of unity...With this sentiment we should march...And march with a dream to make the country 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (One India, Superior India)," he added.

Modi said his government has taken up the cause of bringing to life the history and contributions of great

personalities.

"During the last four years, our government has set up many memorials of our national heroes, including this sky-high statue of Sardar Patel, his museum in Delhi, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar's Panch Tirth and a memorial dedicated to son of Gujarat's soil, Shyamji Krishna Varma," he said.

He then listed various other upcoming memorials and initiatives, such as Chhatrapati Shivaji's statue in Mumbai and a museum dedicated to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

"But, to my surprise, some people of this country are seeing our movement through the political glasses. We are criticized for praising the contributions of national heroes like Sardar Patel. We are made to feel as if we have committed a serious crime," he said.

He then posed a question to the audience, "You tell me, is it a crime to remember our national heroes?"

To this, the audience replied in the negative.

Modi and Abe agree to boost ties as Tokyo pledges huge new yen loans for India

TOKYO (TIP): Visiting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held an official meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on Monday in Tokyo, agreeing to further strengthen economic and security ties as Tokyo pledged to extend new yen loans for seven projects totaling ¥316.45 billion.

The loans include ¥150 billion for a high-speed shinkansen system being constructed between Mumbai and Ahmedabad in western India and ¥40.1 billion in road construction to ease traffic jams in southern India's Chennai.

The 500-km railway project will reduce the traveling time between the two cities to two hours from seven hours and is "a symbol" of a new bilateral relationship, according to Japan's Foreign Ministry.

Modi endorsed Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," which calls for rule-based order, territorial integrity and rights to free flight and sea navigation in the India-Pacific region. "Our mutual visits for annual summit meetings has been a driving force for elevating the Japan-India relationship to higher ground," Abe said at the outset of Monday's meeting at the Prime Minister's Office.

"A strong India is good for Japan, and a strong Japan is good for India. ... This relationship of Japan and India is blessed with the largest potential for development for any bilateral relationship anywhere in the world," Abe added.

By advocating the Indo-Pacific strategy, Japan also has



pledged to help countries in the region build up high-quality infrastructure to promote regional economic prosperity.

The concept is often seen as part of Japan's effort to keep in check China's growing economic and military power in the region, although Tokyo officially denies this.

Abe, who returned from Beijing on Saturday, has recently succeeded in significantly improving Japan's ties with Beijing by meeting his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping there.

Still, Abe has continued to pursue his apparent favored policy of strengthening Japan's ties with India as a counterweight to China's growing power in the region.

On mission opposition unity, Naidu meets Rahul Gandhi

Andhra Pradesh chief minister Chandrababu Naidu addressed a press conference with opposition leaders Sharad Pawar and Farooq Abdullah, alleging a “danger to democracy,” and urging parties to strengthen a united opposition to take on the BJP

NEW DELHI (TIP): Andhra Pradesh chief minister and TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu is meeting Congress president Rahul Gandhi as part of the effort to unite opposition parties against the BJP for 2019. Naidu, who addressed a joint press conference with opposition leaders Sharad Pawar and Farooq Abdullah minutes earlier, said democracy was in danger and political parties needed to come together.

“We decided to meet in Delhi to chalk out a plan to protect the future of the nation,” Naidu said after meeting NCP’s Sharad Pawar and National Conference’s Farooq Abdullah.

This is Naidu’s second visit to the national capital in less than a week. He was in Delhi at the weekend and met other opposition leaders like Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal of the Aam Aadmi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati and several others. He had also met former union minister Yashwant Sinha.

Naidu briefed reporters in his state last night on his scheduled meeting with Rahul Gandhi, saying he was trying to bring like-minded opposition parties together to form an alliance as an alternative to the BJP.

Naidu had exited the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance in March this year over Andhra Pradesh not being granted special status. On Wednesday, he accused of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of betraying the people of Andhra Pradesh by “going back on the promise



Andhra Pradesh chief minister Chandrababu Naidu with Congress president Rahul Gandhi in New Delhi on Thursday. This is Naidu’s first meeting with Gandhi, though the two had shared stage earlier.

to undo injustice done to them with the bifurcation of the state.”

He also alleged that the BJP’s policies pose a threat to democracy in the country. “I have taken the responsibility to save the country from this threat. It is the duty of all to save the country,” he said.

Naidu claimed that he was twice offered the post of prime minister, but he had refused. Now, he said, the time had come for the TDP to again play a key role in national politics.

Today’s is the Andhra Chief Minister’s first meeting with the Congress president, though the two had shared stage at the swearing-in

ceremony of Karnataka chief minister HD Kumaraswamy in May this year.

Later today, Naidu is also expected to meet leaders of Left parties.

Naidu’s party and the Congress have already allied in Andhra Pradesh neighbour Telangana, where assembly elections will be held early next month. The Congress is expected to contest 90 out of the state’s 119 assembly seats, with the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) and the Communist Party of India (CPI) likely to contest the remaining 29 seats as they take on the Telangana Rashtra Samiti.

Andhra Pradesh votes for a new assembly in 2020.

Mulayam Singh Yadav’s daughter-in-law Aparna pitches for building Ram Temple

NEW DELHI (TIP): Amidst the chorus for construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav’s daughter-in-law Aparna Yadav has said that it should be built. She, however, said that she has full faith in the judiciary. “A Ram temple should be built. I have full faith in process of the respected court,” Aparna told media persons.



Aparna said that if the Supreme Court has ruled that it would hear the case in January then everyone should wait for the final verdict. “My opinion is that Ram Temple should be constructed in Ayodhya,” Aparna was quoted as saying by ANI. This came after the Supreme Court on October 29 has adjourned an urgent hearing on the Ayodhya land dispute case and said an appropriate bench will decide in January when to hear the politically sensitive case.

Aparna, who is backing ‘chacha’ Shivpal Singh’s Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party Lohia (PSPL), asserted that she is not with the BJP, but “with Lord Ram.” Aparna contested the 2017 assembly polls as an SP candidate and lost. Aparna also said she would be contesting the 2019 elections from the PSPL but her father-in-law’s blessings are with her, according to PTI. Aparna is married to Mulayam Singh’s son Prateek.

Punjab Police bust a terrorist module

PATIALA (TIP): Cracking down on the violence, arson and terror allegedly unleashed by the Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) under the guise of Referendum 2020, the Punjab Police on Thursday busted a Pakistan-sponsored terrorist module, Khalistan Gadar Force, with the arrest of one Shabnamdeep Singh from Patiala.

The police claimed that Shabnamdeep Singh alias Maninder Lahoria was asked by his Pakistan-based handlers to target police posts and crowded places during the upcoming festival season. They added that a pistol, a hand grenade, a motorcycle and letter pads in the name of ‘Khalistan Gadar Force’, and other terrorist outfits were seized from his possession.

The state DGP Suresh Arora said that Shabnamdeep’s arrest has exposed the nexus between Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence spy agency and Gurpatwant Singh Pannu’s fringe outfit Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) as one of his handlers had identified himself as an SFJ operative.

Arora said that Shabnamdeep hails from Daftari Wala Burar village in Patiala district and was out on bail in a case registered in Rajasthan. Shabnamdeep was operating a Facebook account under a pseudonym ‘Lahoria Jatt Gill’, and the account had a profile picture of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the DGP said. A preliminary investigation has revealed that Shabnamdeep was contacted by Javed Khan Wazir, a suspected Pakistani intelligence officer, in July 2018, and was introduced to a Pakistani Sikh, the DGP said, adding that Shabnamdeep was then introduced to Nihal Singh, who identified himself to him as an SFJ operative. Nihal and Wazir communicated regularly with Singh and used to incite him to indulge in arson, he said adding that they asked him to record his acts of arson and share with them the videos with details of news reports about the incidents.

HC SEEKS DELHI GOVT’S RESPONSE ON JOBS TO KIN OF ANTI-SIKH RIOTS VICTIMS

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Delhi high court Monday sought the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government’s response to a public interest litigation (PIL) alleging non-compliance of a 2006 circular of the Centre directing that the children or other family members of those killed in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots be provided jobs on compassionate grounds.

A bench of chief justice Rajendra Menon and justice VK Rao asked the AAP government in the national capital to submit a report indicating the status of the applications for employment it had received since the circular was issued.

The order came on a PIL filed by the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC), claiming that despite the passage of 12 years since the circular, not a single applicant was provided employment by the Delhi government.

The bench listed the matter for further hearing on February 4.

The DSGMC, represented by senior advocate APS Ahluwalia and advocate Harpreet Singh Hora, has contended in its plea that non-implementation of the scheme has led to “undue injustice and discrimination” being caused to the families of the anti-Sikh riot victims.

Centre’s standing counsel Anurag Ahluwalia, appearing for the ministry of home affairs, said according to the circular, the onus was on the Delhi government to provide employment to the family members of the riot victims.

The petition claims that as per official records, 2,733 people had died in the riots and after the 2006 circular, 1,115 job applications were received by the Delhi government, which to date has allegedly not employed even one family member of a riot victim.

Source: PTI

Explore if Bhagat Singh can be declared martyr: CIC to govt

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Central Information Commission (CIC) has recommended to the Home Ministry that it should explore whether the status of martyr can be accorded to Bhagat Singh.



It has also said in case it cannot be done, the government must give a detailed explanation for that.

Information Commissioner Sridhar Acharyulu said government facilitates freedom fighters and gives pension but revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh are not even given the status of a martyr leave aside any financial support to their families.

The matter pertained to an RTI applicant who had sought to know from the government whether it gave him the status of Shaheed and if not, what must have been the legal limitations.

Bhagat Singh and his revolutionary comrades Rajguru and Sukhdev were hanged by the British on March 23, 1931 in the Lahore Conspiracy case.

The applicant sought information from the Rashtrapati Bhavan which forwarded his request to the Home Ministry which in turn sent it to National Archives for response.

Not getting any satisfactory response, the applicant approached the Commission seeking directions for disclosure of information.

“A demand to declare Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev as martyrs is made every year during their birth and death anniversaries. Punjab government had declared Sarabjit Singh as a ‘national martyr’, who died in Kot Lakhpat jail, but Bhagat Singh and others were ignored,” Acharyulu pointed out.

He said newspapers had reported on May 20 that the Punjab and Haryana High Court held that status of martyr could not be conferred on these three martyrs because there was no statutory basis.

Acharyulu also pointed out that the Punjab government claimed that no official recognition could be given to anybody as a “martyr” as Article 18 of the Constitution does not permit conferring of any title by the state.

He underlined that top level political personalities are generally given Bharat Ratna, martyrs of war and heroic personalities in army get Vir Chakra awards, meritorious persons from different civilian services get recognised with Padma awards.

Source: PTI

Effects provoked by marijuana don't justify absolute ban on consumption: Mexico Supreme Court

MEXICO CITY (TIP): Mexico's Supreme Court issued two more rulings Wednesday ordering that complainants in individual cases be allowed to use marijuana for recreational purposes, establishing a precedent that a blanket prohibition on pot is unconstitutional.

The court found that adults have a fundamental right to personal development which lets them decide their recreational activities without interference from the state.

"That right is not absolute, and the consumption of certain substances may be regulated, but the effects provoked by marijuana do not justify an absolute prohibition of its consumption," the ruling said.

The high court ordered the Federal Commission for the Protection against Sanitary Risk to authorize the complainants to consume marijuana, though not to commercialize it or use other drugs.

The two decisions followed three similar ones between 2015 and 2017, and under Mexican law five decisions on a related issue set a standard that applies more broadly.

"With the existence of five precedents in the same vein on the subject, the judgment will be mandatory for all courts in the country," the high tribunal concluded.

The rulings technically do not legalize recreational use, however. They establish that courts must allow it, but it is still up to each individual to press his or her case in the judicial system.

Mexico saw something similar happen in recent years with five Supreme Court rulings establishing a broader precedent allowing same-sex couples to wed, though same-sex marriage has yet to become the law of the land nationwide.

Mexico United Against Crime, a group that opposes prohibitionist drug policies, said Wednesday's rulings "open the door to regulation of cannabis" and confirm that "Mexico must move toward the regulation of drugs to improve conditions of justice and peace in the country." (AP)

Jamal Khashoggi was strangled, dismembered after he entered Saudi Consulate: Prosecutor

ISTANBUL (TIP): Istanbul's chief prosecutor's office said on Wednesday journalist Jamal Khashoggi was suffocated as soon as he entered Saudi Arabia's consulate in a planned killing four weeks ago, and his body was then dismembered and disposed of.

In a statement issued after two days of talks with Saudi Arabia's public prosecutor Saud al-Mojeb, it also said no concrete results were reached in those meetings. Khashoggi's death has escalated into a crisis for Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, which at first denied any knowledge of or role in his disappearance on October 2.

Mojeb later said Khashoggi's killing was premeditated and Riyadh said 18 suspects had been arrested. But Turkey, which released a stream of evidence undermining Riyadh's early denials, has demanded more details including the whereabouts of Khashoggi's body and who ordered his killing. (Reuters)

'It's become part of life': Rights group says sexual abuse of women rife in North Korea

The #MeToo movement has pushed for an end to sexual abuses around the world, but HRW executive director Kenneth Roth said there appears to be little progress in North Korea

SEOUL (TIP): Sexual abuse by officials in positions of authority in North Korea appears to be "endemic", a watchdog group reported on Thursday, as activists complain the isolated country's rights record is being ignored amid an international push to improve relations. Investigators with U.S.-based Human Rights Watch (HRW) interviewed more than 60 North Koreans who had left the country and described unwanted sexual contact and violence as "so common that it has come to be accepted as part of ordinary life".

Gathering information in North Korea is notoriously difficult, and HRW acknowledged its survey was too limited to provide a generalised sample. But the testimonies of those involved paint a picture of sexual abuse – including rape – that is so widespread that many of the women interviewed did not always understand that coercive sex should not be an almost every day occurrence, said one investigator who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the work.

The #MeToo movement has pushed for an end to sexual abuses around the world, but HRW executive director Kenneth Roth said there appears to be little progress in North Korea, despite economic reforms and a stated intention to modernise the country under leader Kim Jong Un's authoritarian government. "This is not a regime-threatening issue," Roth told Reuters. "So that is why it is particularly appalling that the government is not doing anything to prevent sexual abuse by officials."

Those interviewed described sexual abuse



and rape by police, prison guards, and even officials who oversee some of the growing private markets in the country who exact bribes in the form of sexual favours. "Ironically, many of the women who are at the centre of the economic opening that Kim says he cares about are the most at risk," Roth said.

A report on sexual violence in North Korea released in March by the Korea Future Initiative also found that "a thinly disguised misogyny pervades all that the government touches, allowing perpetrators to find shelter in its institutions and society's patriarchal conventions". The North Korean Permanent Mission at the United Nations did not respond to requests for comment, but state media has released a steady flow of commentaries this

year, warning that taking issue with human rights could undermine the detente.

As Seoul and Washington focus on diplomatic outreach to North Korea, however, human rights and North Korean defector groups in South Korea have said they are struggling to raise money, cutting jobs and programmes, and facing pressure to avoid criticism of Pyongyang. U.N. investigators have reported the use of political prison camps, starvation and executions in North Korea, saying security chiefs and possibly even Kim Jong Un himself should face international justice. Between 80,000 and 120,000 people are held in political prison camps, the U.N.'s top North Korea rights official reported last year. (Reuters)

UK, EU agree tentative Brexit deal on financial services: report

LONDON (TIP): British Prime Minister Theresa May has struck a tentative deal with the European Union that would give UK financial services companies continued access to European markets after Brexit, the Times reported on Thursday. British and European negotiators have reached tentative agreement on all aspects of a future partnership on services, as well as the exchange of data, the British newspaper reported, citing government sources.

The services deal would give UK companies access to European markets as long as British financial regulation remained broadly aligned with the EU's, the Times reported.

The British pound jumped as much as 0.5 percent against the dollar following the report.

Global banks operating in the UK have had to reorganise their operations around Britain's departure from the European Union, due to take place in March next year. Many have set up new European hubs and begun to move operations, senior executives and staff to ensure they can continue to serve their continental clients if Britain leaves the bloc without a deal.



According to the Times' report, EU will accept that the UK has "equivalent" regulations to Brussels, and UK financial services companies will be allowed to operate as they now do in Europe.

EU officials have said that the EU's financial market access system, known as "equivalence," under which Brussels grants access to foreign banks and insurers if their home rules converge with the bloc's, is probably Britain's best bet.

"Equivalence" has so far had limited application, because, for one, under existing

rules market access can be withdrawn unilaterally with only a month's notice, the Times said.

Under the new deal, "equivalence" will be extended and will fall under the governance of the wider trade treaty, allowing the EU and the UK to change or set new financial regulations after consulting each other beforehand, the Times said.

May's principal Europe adviser, Oliver Robbins, is continuing the negotiations in Brussels, according to the report.

With five months to secure a deal before Britain is due to leave the EU, business leaders are demanding certainty over the kind of trade terms the divorce will deliver.

UK's Financial Conduct Authority wants Britain to stay closely aligned with the EU, but without Britain's having to copy all the bloc's rules, the acting director of strategy at the FCA, Richard Monks, has said.

Britain on Wednesday said there was no set date for Brexit talks to finish, backtracking from a letter by Brexit minister Dominic Raab that suggested a deal on the terms of its departure from the European Union could be finalised by Nov. 21. (Reuters)

China says Xi-Trump phone call 'extremely positive'

The two leaders agreed to "strengthen economic exchanges," said a ministry spokesman, Lu Kang.

BEIJING (TIP): Chinese President Xi Jinping had an "extremely positive" phone conversation with US President Donald Trump about trade and other issues, the foreign ministry said Friday.

The two leaders agreed to "strengthen economic exchanges," said a ministry spokesman, Lu Kang. He gave no indication whether they made progress on settling an escalating tariff war over Beijing's technology policy.

Trump said earlier on Twitter that he and Xi had a "very good" conversation.

"I agree, this phone conversation was an extremely positive phone conversation," Lu said at a regular briefing.

Trump has imposed penalty tariffs of up to 25 per cent on \$250 billion of Chinese goods in a dispute over Beijing's plans for state-led development of technology industries. Washington, Europe and other trading partners say those violate China's market-opening obligations and some American officials worry they might erode US industrial leadership. Trump said he and Xi plan to meet



during a gathering of the Group of 20 major economies this month in Argentina.

"Both leaders attach great importance to China-US ties and economic ties," Lu said. "President Xi Jinping also stressed that

China-U.S. trade has long been serving as ballast and a stabilizer for China-US relations." The two leaders agreed the trade dispute "should be handled properly through substantial consultation," Lu said. (AP)

China engaging in behaviour that is troubling Japan, India and others: Bolton

China is engaged in hotly contested territorial disputes in both the South China Sea and the East China Sea. Beijing has built up and militarised many of the islands and reefs it controls in the region.

BEIJING (TIP): China is engaging in a behaviour that is troubling a lot of nations in the region, including India and Japan, especially through its belligerent policies on the South China sea, US National Security Advisor John Bolton has said.

China is engaged in hotly contested territorial disputes in both the South China Sea and the East China Sea.

Beijing has built up and militarised many of the islands and reefs it controls in the region.

China claims sovereignty over all of South China Sea. Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei and Taiwan have counter claims. Both areas are stated to be rich in minerals, oil and other natural resources and are also vital to global trade.

"China's current policies, like in the South China Sea, are nearly belligerent in many respects. It is also engaging in a behaviour that is troubling to Japan, Taiwan, India and the Central Asian Republics," Bolton said in response to a question at the Alexander Hamilton Society on Wednesday.

Bolton said that the arguments for China joining the World Trade Organisation was that it would become a more market-oriented rules-based society.

Instead, for 20 years, China has continued to steal American technology, discriminated against foreign trade investment, and against internal economic systems.

Bolton said that China can no longer get away with this.

For all the other disagreements that the US has with European countries on economic issues, they feel the same pain from Chinese



behaviour on Intellectual Property and technology transfer, he said.

The recent policy of the Trump administration to act against China has taken the Chinese by surprise and hoped that this will cause changes in their behaviour, he said.

Bolton, who was in Russia recently, held talks with the Russian leadership and urged them to talk to China.

Even though Russia and China as of now appear to be friendly, the interests of the two countries do not match, he said.

While Russia is an exporter of hydrocarbons, China is a major importer. Russia sells advanced weapons systems and China buys them, he said.

He said that the Chinese are doing to the Russians the same thing they do to many American products and businesses, which is stealing their intellectual property, copying it and duplicating it.

And soon the Chinese will sell the same items for less than what the Russians sell to the world, he said. (PTI)

South Korea's Jeju Air eyes \$5.7 billion jet purchase deal: Sources

HONG KONG (TIP): South Korea's biggest low-cost carrier, Jeju Air, is in talks with Airbus and Boeing to buy 50 narrowbody jets as it expands a network that includes one of the world's busiest routes, sources close to the matter said.

The potential purchase, worth around \$5.7 billion at list prices, offers Europe's Airbus a chance to trigger the defection of a Boeing customer in a key market but Boeing is seen as the front-runner to win the order and retain the 737 operator's business, the sources said.

Airbus and Boeing declined to comment. An official with Jeju Air said the company was reviewing prices for aircraft.

Jeju Air, South Korea's biggest low-cost carrier by market share, operates 58 routes with 38 Boeing 737-800 planes.

Those include what in 2017 represented the world's busiest single route, linking the capital Seoul to the popular resort island of Jeju, according to air travel data firm OAG.

South Korea's six no-frills carriers saw the number of passengers using international routes quadruple to 20.3 million in 2017 from 4.9 million in 2013, according to South Korea's transport ministry.

Airbus and Boeing are competing fiercely for new orders as an extended airliner industry boom shows signs of faltering. Both planemakers are sold out for several years.

"Jeju Air cannot confirm such a statement on the company's potential plane order, but we have requested both Airbus and Boeing for estimates for plane purchases to internally review prices," an official from Jeju Air told Reuters. (Reuters)

Russia-Ukraine ties sour further as Moscow imposes economic sanctions

MOSCOW (TIP): The bitter relations between Moscow and Kiev continued their downward spiral on Thursday, as the Russian government imposed economic sanctions against a broad cross-section of Ukraine's political and business elite.

The Russian prime minister, Dmitry A. Medvedev, issued a decree freezing the assets of 68 businesses and 322 individuals, with the list reading like a who's who of the Ukrainian government. The decree specified that those sanctioned would not be able to repatriate any financial holdings in Russia to Ukraine.

The decree said the step was being taken now to "counter Ukraine's unfriendly activities toward Russian citizens and entities," a reference to similar sanctions Kiev imposed on Russians earlier this summer. With economic and political relations between the countries crumbling, the impact of the sanctions was likely to be muted, analysts said. In an echo of the Nixon-era "enemies list," the Ukrainians singled out, especially those running in next year's elections, generally boasted about being sanctioned. President Petro O. Poroshenko, a chocolate tycoon, was not on the list, but his son Oleksiy was, along with: the interior minister, Arsen Avakov; the chief of the security services, Vasyl Hrytsak; presidential contender and former prime minister, Yulia Tymoshenko; and oligarch Viktor Pinchuk.

Ties between Russia and Ukraine have frayed badly since Russia's 2014 invasion and annexation of Crimea and its support for an anti-government uprising in the east.

(PTI)

'Don't confront state': Pak PM Imran Khan warns hardliners protesting SC verdict acquitting Asia Bibi

Many parts of Karachi were paralysed due to the protests and most of the main roads were shut down by the protesters who were burning tyres and pelting stones at vehicles.

ISLAMABAD (TIP): As violent protests spread in Pakistan against the acquittal of a Christian woman, Asia Bibi, by the Supreme Court, Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday appealed to the people to maintain calm and warned hardliners not to confront the State. Bibi was sentenced to death in 2010 after being found guilty of insulting Islam. Her death sentence was maintained by the Lahore High Court in 2014. The Supreme Court, however, on Wednesday freed her, sparking angry protests and death threats from an ultra-religious party.

Taking a tough stand, Khan warned hardliners not to "confront the State" and refrain from vandalism, while addressing the nation through a video message. I ask these elements (protestors) to avoid confronting the State. But if they opted to do so, the State will fulfil its responsibilities," Khan said.

"We will protect life and property of people...We will not let them (protestors) involve in vandalism or close down the roads," said Khan. He was referring to protesters blocking a highway linking the capital Islamabad with garrison city of Rawalpindi. Many parts of Karachi were paralysed due to the protests and most of the main roads were shut down by the protesters who were burning tyres and pelting stones at vehicles.

The prime minister also held a meeting



with Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and discussed the security situation in the country. Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry tweeted that Khan and Bajwa "discussed overall situation and important affairs during the meeting." Gen Bajwa was also targeted by a protest leader who in a video message asked senior army officers to rebel against the army chief.

Khan appealed to the public to remain calm and refrain from joining those trying to create

law and order problem in the name of Islam. The prime minister said that he was forced to give the address after the reaction by protestors against the verdict and the kind of language they were using against State institutions. Khan also played a video clip of a leader of protestors on social media in which he said that the judges who gave the verdict were liable to murder.

"How a State can function in such circumstances...Those involved in this are not

doing any service to Islam. They are in fact enemies of Islam," Khan said. Referring to the protestors who have disrupted routine life across the country, he said: "If the Supreme Court does not issue a verdict according to their wishes, will they come out on the roads?" Khan also said Pakistan was created in the name of Islam and no law can be made against the teachings of Islam.

Defending the Supreme Court verdict, Khan said it was issued in the light of the Constitution of the country which is also based on Islam. He said the government was working hard to improve the economy and the protestors were creating hurdles to get political mileage out of the verdict. "We are already facing such tough economic hurdles. We have yet to take a day off... we are struggling continuously to uplift the people [and] to improve the conditions of the underprivileged," he said. "The people are to bear the brunt of this. The labours who are reliant on daily wages... how will they survive?" he asked.

Bibi was the first woman who was given death sentence under the blasphemy laws. According to officials, Bibi might be flown out of Pakistan due to the threat to her life. It is not clear where she will go as several countries, including Canada, have offered asylum to her. (PTI)

Helicopter crash kills 25 in Farah, seven killed in suicide attack outside Pul-e-Charkhi prison

KABUL (TIP): An Afghan official says an army helicopter carrying senior officials has crashed in bad weather in the western Farah province, killing all 25 on board. Naser Mehdi, a spokesman for the provincial governor, says the helicopter crashed around 9:10 am (0440 GMT), shortly after taking off from the mountainous Anar Dara district heading toward nearby Herat province.

He says the passengers included the deputy corps commander of Afghanistan's western zone and the head of the Farah provincial council. 8:30 am. An Interior Ministry official says a suicide bomber has struck outside the country's largest prison on the eastern edge of the capital Kabul, killing seven people, including prison workers and security personnel.

Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish says the attacker early Wednesday targeted a bus carrying prison workers. The sprawling Pul-e-Charkhi prison houses hundreds of inmates, including scores of Taliban.

According to Abadullah Karimi, a prison official, the attack occurred near the prison gate where a number of visitors were waiting to pass a rigorous security check before entering. No one has taken immediate responsibility for the attack.

Country stable, says Maithripala Sirisena's office as hundreds rally against ex-PM's sacking

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka's escalating political crisis seems to have no quick answers as the camp of new Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa continues negotiations to garner support of more MPs after Friday's swearing-in ceremony. On Tuesday, hundreds of people supporting ousted prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe took to the streets in Colombo demanding that Parliament must convene immediately.

The public protest, the first such organised public gathering after Wickremesinghe was ousted on Friday by President Maithripala Sirisena, followed a letter signed by 126 MPs, who constitute a majority of the 225-member Parliament, requesting Speaker Karu Jayasuriya to reconvene Parliament immediately, a demand Jayasuriya himself raised before President Sirisena two days ago.

While ousted PM Wickremesinghe was not available to comment on the developing political crisis, Harsh de Silva, state minister of National Policies and Economic Affairs and a member of Wickremesinghe's United National Party, said the entire security of the Prime Minister's official residence, Temple Trees, has been withdrawn by the government. Despite losing his position and

the office, Wickremesinghe continues to occupy the official residence, claiming the support of a majority of MPs.

"This is scary. There are hardly 10 policemen to guard him now. When all security guards were shifted out of Temple Trees, the administration also suspended the services of cooks, drivers and cleaning staff at the PM's official residence. Temple Trees is now protected by hundreds of people who fight for democracy, they have taken over the kitchen and prepare food. President Sirisena has to convene Parliament and respect the democratic practices of this country to avoid further chaos," said de Silva, who is one of the loudest voices in the Wickremesinghe camp.

Sirisena's move to prorogue Parliament till November 16 was a strategy to buy more time to get the numbers in place.

Talking to The Indian Express, the office of President Sirisena refuted reports that the country was heading towards chaos. "The country is completely stable," the office said. When asked about allegations of a "political coup" in the appointment of Rajapaksa as PM, it said: "It is just that Sri Lankan politics, internally, is taking a different political manoeuvring to stabilise the country. When

Australia ousted the prime minister (Malcolm Turnbull), it is a mere political development. When it happens in a third world country, it is being called a 'coup', 'political chaos', all that. Diplomats and embassies who reached out have suggested the idea to convene Parliament. But, let us make it clear that there is no doubt in the President's power to prorogue Parliament, it is fully within his powers... Parliament will be convened on November 16."

When asked about Sirisena's "unconstitutional and illegal move", Namal Rajapaksa, son of the new Prime Minister, said the outcry by the international community and civil society groups is selective as "none of them were seen around" when Wickremesinghe violated the Constitution multiple times, including when he himself became PM in a similar way.

"Against the Constitution, they delayed local body polls for over two years fearing defeat. Fearing people's anger against economic hardships they brought in the last three-and-a-half years, the provincial polls are also delayed," he said, asking why civil society groups or international agencies turned a blind eye to these crucial constitutional issues. (PTI)

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Indian-Origin Student Uses Big Data Analytics to Tackle Parking Problem in US



Sai Nikhil Reddy Mettupally, a student, has created a space-detecting algorithm that can help tackle the problem of finding a parking spot

HOUSTON (TIP): An Indian-origin in the US has created a space-detecting algorithm that can help tackle the problem of finding a parking spot by using big data analytics and save a person's time and money.

Sai Nikhil Reddy Mettupally, who is studying at The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH), has also won second prize at the 2018 Science and Technology Open House competition for his creation.

According to a university press release, Sai's creation relies on big data analytics and deep-learning techniques to lead drivers directly to an empty parking spot.

Big data analytics is a complex process of examining large and varied data sets to uncover information including hidden patterns, unknown correlations, market trends and customer preferences.

Sai conceived the idea shortly after the university transitioned to zone parking last fall.

"The data show that, on a typical day, there is a high chance that students or faculty members will have difficulty getting a parking spot between 11 am and 1 pm, leading to the wastage of time and fuel, and adding to the pollution." He says.

"Hence, finding a parking spot as soon as a person enters the parking lot is essential."

What he needed was to find a way to identify empty spaces and then direct the driver to the location. But unlike other parking apps in the market, he wanted to develop one that didn't rely on the purchase, installation, and maintenance of expensive in-ground sensors.

To help put his plan in action, Sai turned to Vineetha Menon, an Assistant Professor of Computer Science.

As the director of UAH's Big Data Analytics Lab, Ms Menon also had access to the high-performance computing power that Sai needed to create and train his machine-learning model, which relies on a robust parking-lot data set provided by the Federal University of Parana in Brazil.

"The goal of the Big Data Analytics Lab is to establish Big Data Analytics and Data Science as mainstream research areas of the university, so it can accommodate the high computational and memory demands of Big Data generation and processing," Ms Menon says.

Sai, who graduated in electronics and communications engineering from the Birla Institute of Technology and Science in Pilani, hopes to develop a parking-support mobile app dubbed InstaPark—that can display the real-time grid layout of empty and occupied parking spots using the phone's GPS.

Indian-Origin Research Scientist Wins UK's Popular Baking Show

LONDON (TIP): An Indian research scientist has been crowned the winner of a popular baking show on British television after winning over the judges with his intricately-designed cakes and pastries.

Rahul Mandal was announced as the winner of Channel 4's 'Great British Bake Off' after impressing the judges with his "East meets West" style of baking.

"I don't know whether to laugh or to cry. I just feel I need to talk with my mum," he said as the winning name was revealed.

The 30-year-old from Rotherham in northern England battled with disasters during the show's finale when his icing bag exploded during a doughnut challenge. Soon after, his mixing bowl smashed while he was creating his rock garden, inspired by Victorian explorers bringing back exciting plants from around the world, for the "Edible Landscape" show-stopper challenge.

Despite the accidents, the taste and complexity of Mr Mandal's baking saw him win over the judges as he beat fellow British Indian contestant Ruby Bhogal and Kim-Joy Hewlett in the grand finale of the long-running TV show.

"He is one of those characters that you will miss when you are not with him. I don't think he realizes still how good he actually is, and I think that's what's magic about Rahul," said celebrity chef Paul Hollywood, one of the judges. Mr Mandal, who grew up in Kolkata, started cooking and baking as a hobby only after he moved to the UK as a student.

"I never baked when I was in India. My baking journey began in the UK about five years ago when I was feeling lonely, and needed to do something along with my studies," he said.

"At that time, it was limited to making bread and biscuits. The first cake I made was about two years ago, when my parents visited the UK for the first time," he added.

Each year, amateur baking enthusiasts compete to get a spot among 12 bake-off



Rahul Mandal was announced as the winner of Channel 4's 'Great British Bake Off' after impressing the judges with his "East meets West" style of baking.

contestants and spend nine weeks in a large tent to compete in a series of elimination rounds.

The winner is presented with a coveted cake stand trophy and the publicity from the show can result in a huge career boost for many of the contestants.

"Cooking programs always interested me. Even as a child, rather than watching sports, I enjoyed watching cookery shows. I started cooking and experimenting with food from the age of 15, however, proper everyday cooking started since I moved to UK," Mr Mandal said.

"I like the simple classics, sometimes with a little twist in it. My colleagues love my Lemon drizzle cake and its cousins like Lemon and cardamom drizzle cake, or lemon and elderflower drizzle cake -- they like them a lot," he said.

While baking is hobby, he sees a connect with his day job as a scientist as he believes meticulous planning and attention to detail come in handy for both.

"If it is something big, I develop and design it over the week and then execute it over the weekend," he said.

The final three contestants in the 2018 series were evenly matched for this year's finale, which attracted a lot of social media attention.

Fans were divided over Mr Mandal being given an additional 15 minutes after he smashed his mixing bowl while creating his showstopper, but the majority were rooting for the shy and humble scientist-baker.

The latest series proved a ratings success for Channel 4, which took over the show last year following its move from its original home on the BBC.

Indian-American Interviewed by President Trump to Succeed Brett Kavanaugh in US Court

WASHINGTON (TIP): Indian-American Neomi Jehangir Rao has been interviewed by US President Donald Trump to replace Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh in the powerful federal appeals court in Washington, DC, according to a report.

Rao, 45, who is currently administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, was recommended for the judgeship on the DC Circuit Court by former White House counsel Don McGahn.

The report stated that Donald Trump was interested in Ms Rao so that he could appoint a minority woman to Brett Kavanaugh's old job.

Ms Rao, a former clerk for conservative Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, was confirmed by the Senate with a 54-41 vote in July 2017 to head the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. The agency reviews executive branch regulations, a task the DC Circuit often addresses.

Ms Rao in this capacity is called the regulatory czar of the Trump administration.

Before being sworn in as the US Supreme Court Judge, Brett Kavanaugh, whose confirmation process was marred by sexual misconduct allegations, was a judge at the United States Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.



Neomi Jehangir Rao has been interviewed by US President Donald Trump to replace Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh in the powerful federal appeals court in Washington, DC

The position has now fallen vacant and Donald Trump is reported to be interviewing several individuals for this position.

Sree Srinivasan is another Indian-

American on this prestigious US federal court.

While one source told the website that Ms Rao did not leave Mr Trump with a good first impression, another said the president had not ruled her out of contention.

"Immediately after Trump met with Rao, two sources briefed on their encounter say they got the strong impression that the president was not impressed by her," the report said.

Ms Rao has previously served in all three branches of the federal government.

She served as Associate Counsel to President George W Bush; counsel for nominations and constitutional law to the US Senate Committee on the Judiciary; and law clerk to Justice Clarence Thomas of US Supreme Court. She practiced public international law and arbitration at Clifford Chance LLP in London. Ms Rao received her JD with high honors from the University of Chicago and her BA from Yale University.

Last December, Donald Trump had praised Ms Rao's contribution in cutting down regulations.

Ms Rao was born to mother Zerin Rao and father Jehangir Narioshang Rao, both Parsi physicians from India. She grew up in Michigan and did her schooling from Detroit High School.

Ranju Batra Reminisces her Struggle for Diwali Stamp: Says, Gone through the Worst Birth Pangs

By I.S. Saluja

"At the very end of every struggle comes a precious reward that is worth all your blood, sweat and tears." Edmond Mbiaka,

Ranju Batra, Chair of Diwali Stamp Project, now also Chair of Diwali Foundation USA recalled with relish and pride the notification USPS issued on October 5, 2016. She showed it to The Indian Panorama reporter who had visited her to know how she felt now that the Diwali stamp was two-year-old and was one of the hottest selling Forever stamps.

The notification read: "The U.S. Postal Service commemorated the joyous Hindu festival of Diwali by dedicating the Diwali Forever stamp today (October 5, 2016). The first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony took place at the Consulate General of India in New York City.

The public is asked to share the news using the hashtag #DiwaliStamp.

"The Postal Service is honored to issue this Forever stamp that celebrates the Festival of Diwali," said U.S. Postal Service Vice President of Mail Entry and Payment Technology Pritha Mehra. "We hope these stamps will light up millions of cards and letters as they make their journey through the mailstream."

An overwhelmed Ranju Batra had then commented: "While this journey may have taken years, the Postal Service has issued a Diwali stamp that will continue to resonate forever."

"Now for the first time there is a stamp that celebrates Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists as Americans forever. Our heartfelt thanks to all of those who have supported this stamp. The Diwali stamp will be a matter of pride for generations to come", Ms Batra said.

Her man, Ravi Batra, always supportive of his wife had said on the launch of the Forever Stamp on October 5, at the Indian Consulate: "Since the start of the American Revolution, destiny has beckoned the United States and India to be the closest allies. The Diwali Forever stamp represents nothing short of respectful inclusive indivisibility: E Pluribus Unum - within America and between the two sovereigns."

Well, it is history. All that the people now know is there is a beautiful stamp with a lighted diya, symbolic of the most popular festival of Diwali, and it fills Indians with pride and joy to have the kind of unique recognition of their culture in the US.

Diwali is a festival to celebrate victory of good over evil, of virtue over vice. It is a day of celebration of unity, like the unified flame of the diya.

Recalling her struggle for a Diwali stamp, Ranju said it was a grim struggle. At times, she felt frustrated. Even thought of giving up. But something in her told her to go on, and on, until the goal is achieved. And in this, support of her husband Ravi Batra made all the difference.

Of the many meetings she had with a number of officials and politicians, she referred to the one in particular. It was a meeting in Washington, D.C., with the USPS team, that had been facilitated by

Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney two weeks before the dedication ceremony. Batra said: 'They asked me, 'You were saying all along that the stamp is going to sell a whole lot, do you still believe that so many stamps are going to sell?' I said, 'Of course', and they also asked me if I'd be willing to sell stamps on their behalf.'

She did, and by doing so, she created a history of sorts when she single-handedly sold 170,000 Diwali stamps.

"No other stamp has sold as much on day one as the Diwali stamp in USPS' 200-year history," Batra said, noting that the postal service does not authorize any single person or an entity to sell stamps on their behalf, but this was one of the exceptions.

Batra said that in 2016, shortly after the stamp came out, she personally visited several post offices and requested them to display a sample at their respective offices.

The Diwali stamps are here to stay, stated Batra, adding that she has initiated a drive to check the availability of these stamps at every post office in the country. Her goal, she said, is to keep the light of the Diwali stamp shining bright.

"Two things are close to my heart, the Diwali stamp and Diwali holiday. I've already started working towards the holiday."

Recalling the more than two-decade-long uphill battle undertaken by several Indian American community leaders/members before her to get the approval, Batra said that she was told it was a lost cause since their efforts yielded no results.

"I kept asking myself, 'How is it possible that they are issuing other stamps but refusing to issue Diwali stamps when there are so many Indians and they are trying so hard?' Then I found out they were trying the wrong way," said Batra.

In a meeting with the USPS officials, arranged by Maloney, Batra said she questioned them about what could be done to set the ball rolling.

"They said, 'Ranju, a postage stamp goes on paper.' We were collecting signatures online. They could not care less. They want their stamps to be sold and we wanted our Diwali stamp."

She then enlisted the help of other community members/organizations - who had put in years of hard work into this campaign - and started working towards a common goal.

"It wasn't an online petition. We created paper petitions...it was going person to person, explaining them what we were doing, having their signatures, addresses...", said Batra. "It wasn't just Hindus or Indians. It was Christians, Muslims, Chinese, Koreans...Not a single person said they didn't want to."

In her final petition, which featured images of stamps celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, and Eid, among others, she wrote: "We are very happy that you have issued all these stamps, and now it's time for a Diwali stamp."

"I kept pushing them to issue a Diwali stamp," said Batra. "And finally, they heard



Diwali Stamp is inaugurated at the Indian Consulate in New York, October 5, 2016. Seen the picture, among others are-Hardip Singh Puri then India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, and now Minister of State with Independent Charge in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet (left foreground), Consul General of India Riva Ganguly Das (first left), Congresswoman Carolyn B Maloney (second left), Congresswoman Grace Meng (third right), Ranju Batra, (second right), Ravi Batra (right foreground)

Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia



Ambassadors, including India's Ambassador to the United Nations, Syed Akbaruddin, light the lamp to inaugurate the Power of One Award

Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

it."

Batra said that the Diwali stamp isn't just a stamp, it represents something much larger.

"I feel the Diwali stamp is not just a celebration of a religion or a nation, but it is the spirit of inclusiveness and cultural understanding that it represents. I'm happy to say that Diwali stamp is here, and it is here forever. This will be a matter of pride for generations to come."

"In this digital age, a small piece of paper called Diwali stamp celebrates the heritage of over a billion people. To me, Diwali stamp gives out a message of human unity and peace. I'd say Diwali has really put its stamp on America," added Batra.

In 2017, Diwali Stamp made its way to the United Nations. On December 11, 2017, Belarus, Georgia and India joined with Diwali Foundation USA, as Co-Organizers, to bestow "Power of One" Awards - essentially the "Oscars of Diplomacy" upon six exceptional diplomats: Amb. Maged Abdelaziz, Amb. Ion Botnaru, Amb. Lakshmi Puri, Amb. Matthew Rycroft, Amb. Nawaf

Salam, & Amb. Yuriy Sergeyev. This historic event was co-sponsored by Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Botswana, Cyprus, France, Honduras, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Malta, Morocco, Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Spain,

Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America, Permanent Observer State of Palestine, and International Atomic Energy Agency-NY.

Ranju takes legitimate pride in popularizing the already popular festival of Diwali, across the world, through the diplomats at the United Nations. I think, someday, the power of one -Ranju Batra-will be appreciated, recognized and saluted.

Ranju has been variously and honored for her immense contribution. To add to many, August 8th, 2018 was declared Ranju Batra Day in Westchester County by Westchester County Executive.

(The author is the chief editor of The Indian Panorama. He can be reached at salujaindra@gmail.com)



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Eye Foundation of America (EFA) Receives support of AAPI to Provide Vision Care to Millions in India

By Ajay Ghosh



The Eye Foundation of America's work spreads in over 25 countries of the world, with 2 million plus patients treated, 300,000 plus surgeries performed, and , 25000 plus surgeries performed on children

"American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) is excited to join in and collaborate with the over decades of service to humanity by Dr. V.K. Raju and Eye Foundation of America (EFA) to provide vision care to millions in India," declared Dr. Naresh Parikh, President of AAPI, who has been in the forefront, identifying noble projects by Physicians of Indian Origin in India and working with them and coordinating their efforts to maximize the many services they provide across India.

A API has been instrumental in establishing and coordinating several projects and programs across India and established many charitable clinics, serving hundreds of thousands of people in several states in India. AAPI has been doing Global Healthcare Summit for over a decade in India and is known for its commitment to give back to India, their motherland. "The collaboration with Dr. Raju and the Foundation will help mobilize the resources at AAPI's disposal in strengthening the efforts of Dr. Raju," adds Dr. Parikh.

For the past four decades, Dr. Raju and the EFA have been actively and tirelessly on a crusade to eliminate avoidable blindness in areas plagued by poverty and poor access to medical care. The EFA's mission is to eliminate avoidable blindness under the guiding principles of service, teaching, and

research.

The realization of Dr. Raju's vision, the EFA, has a reach that currently extends to 30+ developing countries and the USA. The EFA has served approximately 2.5 million patients and performed 340,000+ vision-saving surgeries, with 30,000+ surgeries performed on children alone.

The over 40 years of noble work bringing vision to millions in India started unexpectedly for Dr. Raju. While living in London, Dr. V.K. Raju traveled home to India on vacation, where a farmer asked him to examine his eyes. Dr. Raju complied, but without any instruments. In 1977, Dr. Raju returned to rural India with personnel and equipment and offered his first eye camp near his hometown in 1977. This was the inception of the foundation's work, beginning with the West Virginia Ophthalmology Foundation. The West Virginia Ophthalmology Foundation subsequently became the EFA in 1992.

"I feel so incredibly thankful for my personal and professional gifts, and I make great efforts to share those gifts with those in need of my services," says Dr. Raju, and he generously gives freely of his own time, money, and medical expertise to help the less fortunate for the past several decades.

This is accomplished through eye camps and brick-and-mortar hospitals in developing countries, training of medical personnel to serve the needy, and educating the population at large on preventative eye care and healthy lifestyle choices. With adequate education, patients are empowered to take charge of



The Founder and President of the Eye Foundation of America, Dr. V.K. Raju is an eminent ophthalmologist who has authored a number of articles and a book "Musings on Medicine, Myth, and History: India's Legacy". His vision is to create a world without childhood blindness.

their lives and their own health and prevent further deleterious consequences of their poor lifestyle choices, while sharing this knowledge with their friends and families.

The public is educated on eye care and injury prevention, and local teachers are taught how to screen for early eye problems in children. Patients, their families, and the greater community benefit from preventative medical care, free procedures, and access to education.

When education and preventative measures are insufficient, medical and surgical interventions are performed. With the aim of permanently providing world-class state-of-the art services to populations with poor access to health care, the EFA helped to build 2 hospitals in rural India: the Srikiran Eye Institute and the Goutami Eye Institute.

The Goutami Institute has a wing dedicated exclusively to children, and the EFA has future plans to build a service and research eye hospital in India where no child will be denied treatment and children from around the world can come to receive services. Dr. Raju and the EFA are also committed to finding new cures for age-old eye disease in children.

The Institute has provided service to more than 400,000 patients and 50,000 surgeries have been performed. It has become an

autonomous institution, and Raju has raised over \$6 million to establish and fund the two facilities. "You can never be tired of giving back," he says. "But to have real success, your intentions should be pure. It is a spiritual act."

Since its inception, the EFA has facilitated 600+ physician exchanges and trained 200+ ophthalmologists, equipping these medical practitioners with the tools to join the global fight against blindness. The EFA not only trains medical practitioners to join the global fight against blindness through exchange programs, but also provides workshops and training opportunities for medical students and physicians.

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

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

The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) has awarded Dr. Raju 4 times for his teaching and research contributions, including the Outstanding Humanitarian Award in 2002 as Dr. Raju had donated more than \$1 million dollars of his own money that went into building hospitals in India, teaching, and providing services to needy patients.

Dr. Raju received a Lifetime Achievement Award from The Association of Asian Indians in Ophthalmology in the same year and received the Free to Achieve Award from the Maryland chapter of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) for his philanthropy.

AAPI awarded Dr. Raju with their prestigious Distinguished Community Service Award in 2007 for his service, patient care, teaching, research, and professional and community involvement. In 2011, he received a Senior Achievement Award from the AAO. He has received awards from Lions International and Rotary International. For his humanitarian work, the American Medical Association Foundation acknowledged him with the prestigious Dr. Nathan Davis International Award for Excellence in Medicine in 2013. For the past 2 39 years, Dr. Raju has expanded his humanitarian efforts in African countries by joining and joined the Carter Center's



AAPI leadership at the Indian Consulate in New York where AAPI President declared support for the Eye Foundation of America. Dr. Raju is seen standing third from right

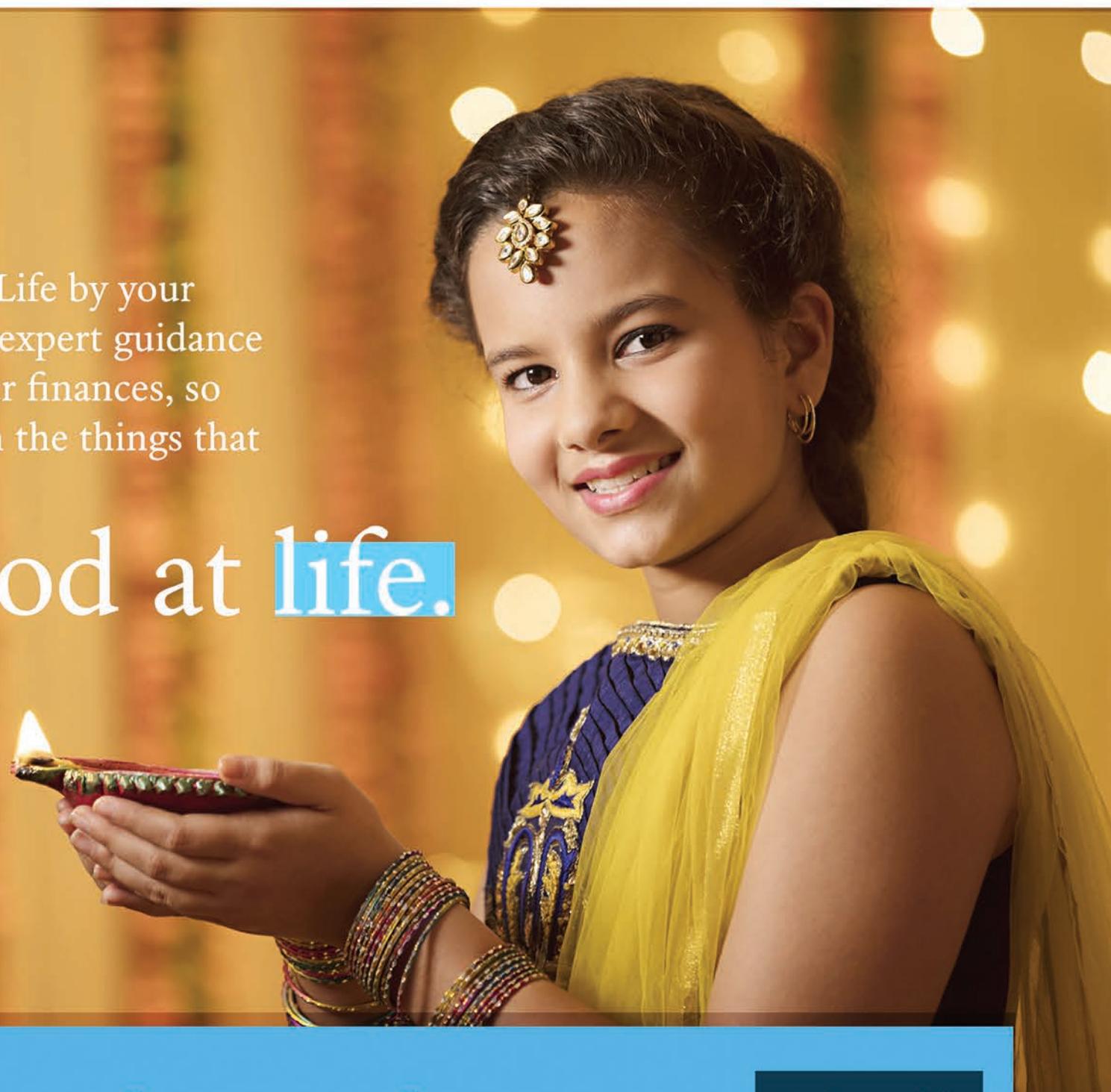
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SMRU 1793959 (Exp 10/22/2020)

A Concert For Hope

Experience the Power of Music at St. Bart's Centennial

By Mabel Pais

To launch its 2018-19 season, the Seton Hall University Chorus, within the College of Communication and the Arts and its Arts Council, performed "Et In Terra Pax: A Concert for Hope" alongside the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra on Sunday, October 28, 2018 at 7 p.m. at Saint Bartholomew's Church (St. Bart's) in New York, N.Y.

"A Concert for Hope" is part of the *Great Music Series* at St. Bart's produced by the Mid-Manhattan Performing Arts Foundation, a nonprofit established to cultivate, promote, sponsor and develop an understanding and love of great music as presented at St. Bartholomew's Church. United by this dedication to the arts, the Seton Hall Choral Program collaborated with *Great Music* at St. Bart's as part of its prestigious 2018-19 season.

Underlining music's tremendous power to inspire and make change, the concert featured Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass (Mass for Troubled Times) and the works of Avro Pärt, Ola Gjeilo and John Tavener, under the direction of Dr. Jason Tramm, assistant professor and director of choral activities.

"The music that an era produces is a snapshot of that historical time - and Haydn's *Mass for Troubled Times* mirrors our own struggles and emotions," said Tramm. "Haydn's work starts serious and austere, yet comes full circle to resonate a spirit of hope with an intense and inspiring movement of music. 'A Concert for Hope' gives the Choral Program an incredible opportunity to perform music that speaks to every person while singing in a prestigious venue."

Hayden's *Mass for Troubled Times* was written in 1798, during a time of instability in Europe. From the gripping



Jason Tramm conducts the choir and orchestra



Overview of Concert in Progress

"Out of the bulk, the morbid and the shallow, Out of the bad majority, the varied countless frauds of men and states, Electric, antiseptic yet, cleaving, suffusing all, Only the good is universal."

- "Song Of The Universal" by Walt Whitman, poet

"Music has the ability to unite and inspire, and this is certainly in troubled and discordant times" ... "in a time when the world is full of social and political dissonance"

- Jason Tramm, Director of Choral Activities, Seton Hall University, NJ

first movement to the life affirming "Dona Nobis Pacem," this work transcends its time and offers hope in our time. Composer Ola Gjeilo's "Song of the Universal" is a setting of verses to Walt Whitman's great work. According to the composer, "I love Whitman's unabashed optimism, exuberance and unwavering confidence in our deeper humanity - all through the prism of a big, warm, beating heart." Works of Pärt and Tavener completed this evening of powerful, atmospheric music.

"Although we find ourselves in challenging time, we need to be reminded that music has the profound power to make change in society and people," shared Tramm. "The evening will demonstrate the impact of great music and leave the audience with the positive, universal message that we are all connected through the arts."

ET IN TERRA PAX: A CONCERT FOR HOPE

Program:

Mid-Atlantic Symphony Chamber Orchestra

Seton Hall University Chorus

Jason C. Tramm, Conductor

Ashley Bell, Soprano

Augusta Caso, Mezzo-Soprano

Victor Starsky, Tenor

Jeremy Galyon, Bass

ABOUT SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

One of the country's leading Catholic universities, Seton Hall University has been showing the world what great minds can do since 1856. Home to nearly 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students and offering more than 90 rigorous academic programs, Seton Hall's academic excellence has been singled out for distinction by The Princeton Review, U.S. News & World Report and Bloomberg Businessweek.

Seton Hall embraces students of all religions and prepares them to be exemplary servant leaders and global citizens. In recent years, the University has achieved extraordinary success. Since 2009, it has seen record-breaking undergraduate enrollment growth and an impressive 110-point increase in the average SAT scores of incoming freshmen. In the past decade, Seton Hall students and alumni have received more than 30 Fulbright Scholarships as well as other prestigious academic honors, including Boren Awards, Pickering Fellowships, Udall Scholarships and a Rhodes Scholarship. The University is also proud to be the third most diverse Catholic university in the nation.

During the past five years, the University has invested more than \$165 million in new campus buildings and renovations. And in 2015, Seton Hall launched a School of Medicine as well as a College of Communication and the Arts. The University's beautiful main campus in suburban South Orange, N.J. is only 14 miles from New York City - offering students a wealth of employment, internship, cultural and entertainment opportunities. Seton Hall's nationally recognized School of Law is located prominently in downtown Newark. The University's Interprofessional Health Sciences (IHS) campus in Clifton and Nutley, N.J. opened in the summer of 2018. The IHS campus houses the University's College of Nursing, School of Health and Medical Sciences and the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine at Seton Hall University.

For more information on the University, visit www.shu.edu.

For more information on Jason C. Tramm, hailed as a "conductor to watch" by Symphony magazine, visit jason.tramm@shu.edu.

The Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra has previously partnered with Seton Hall College's Arts Council programming, performing in a variety of concerts including Prayer for Peace at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), *Freedom's Song* at the Great Auditorium in Ocean Grove, N.J. and multiple *Classical Concert Series* performances.

Great Music at St. Bart's, the concert series produced by the



Jason Tramm



Soloists (left to right) - Jeremy Galyon, Bass; Victor Starsky, Tenor; Augusta Caso, Mezzo-Soprano ; Ashley Bell, Soprano

Photos / www.shu.edu

Mid-Manhattan Performing Arts Foundation (MMPAF), for the past eight years has presented music in St. Bartholomew's Church, a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of New York located in the heart of midtown Manhattan. The magnificent 1918 Romanesque-style church features two of New York's unlikely but outstanding concert spaces: the 150-seat chapel, an intimate and acoustically brilliant space that is perfectly suited for contemporary chamber music, and the majestic 1,000-seat sanctuary - outfitted with comfortable chairs enabling flexible seating - whose Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ is the largest in New York City and one of the finest examples of the American Classic Organ in the U.S.

The 10 events of the 2018-19 season of *Great Music at St. Bart's* continue the programmatic focus initiated by MMPAF Artistic Director William K. Trafka (Director of Music and Organist of St. Bart's): to embrace a wide range of music in programs that shine in St. Bart's spaces.

To learn more, visit www.mmpaf.org.

St. Bartholomew's Church was founded in January 1835. Its present building, a Byzantine style structure with an iconic dome was completed in 1918, has had a vital presence in New York for close to a century. St. Bartholomew's also became a force in the musical life of the city and the wider church: Legendary musicians such as Leopold Stokowski, who went on to a career as one of the world's great conductors, Harold Friedell and James Litton have served the church as Organist and Choirmaster. The parish has committed to inclusion by ministering to a wide community.

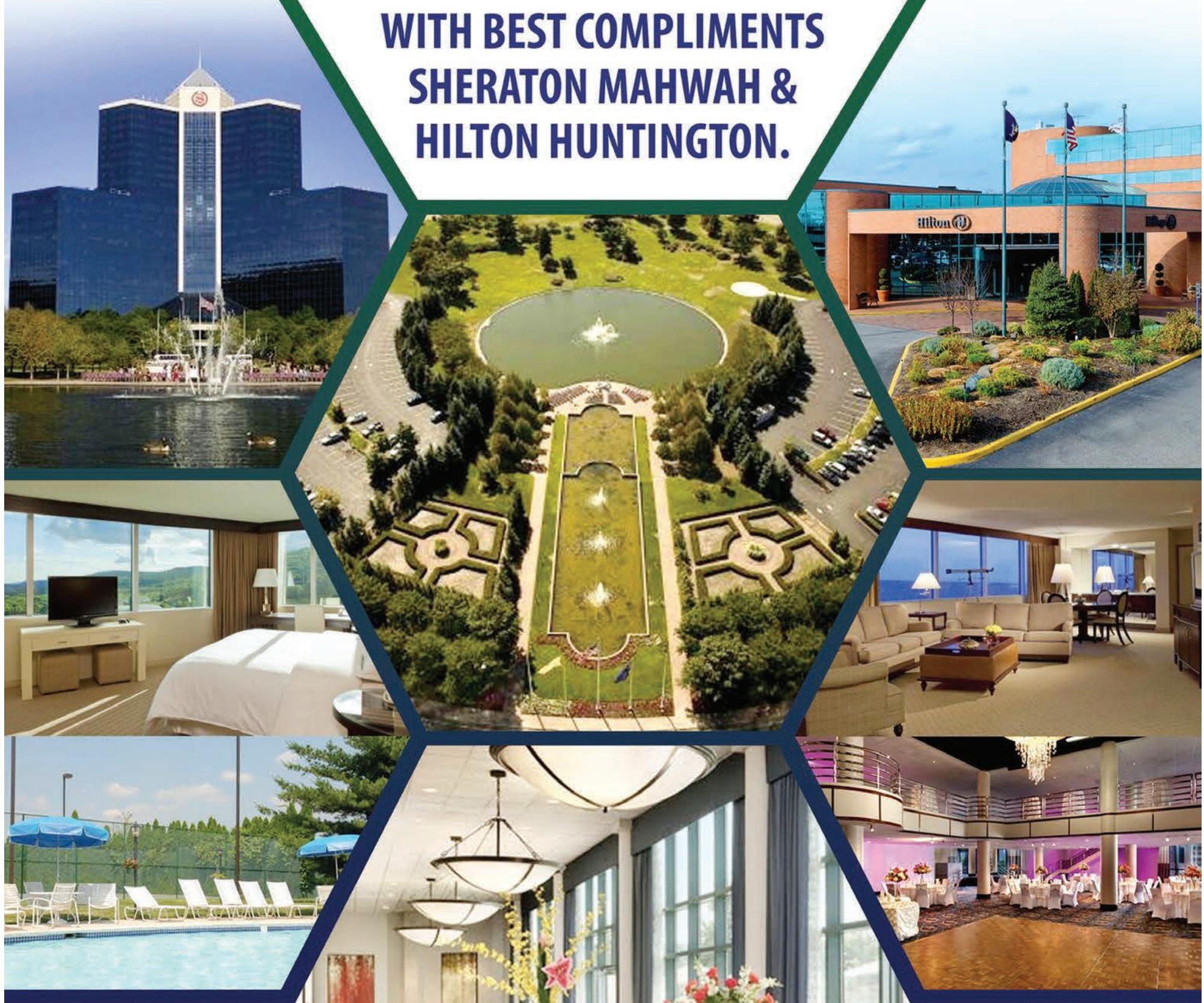
For more information on St. Bart's, visit www.stbarts.org.

(Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Social Issues, Spirituality, and Health and Wellness)



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DIWALI: THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS



Diwali is one of the most important festival celebrated by Hindus all around the world. Diwali 2018 will be celebrated on 7th November in most parts of India, and on 6th November in the South Indian states of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Hindu residents of Singapore will also celebrate Diwali along with these three states on November 6th, 2018.

The festival and its celebrations usually last for five days, among which the third day is the main day. During all the five days of Dhanteras, Chhoti Diwali, Badi Diwali, Govardhan Pooja and Bhai Dooj, houses, temples and public places are all lit up with lights and earthen lamps. The themes of 'victory of good over evil' and 'victory of light over dark' are associated with the festival. The festival falls in the month of Karthik, according to Hindu calendar. According to the Gregorian calendar, the festival falls during the months of either October or November.

Also referred to as the festival of lights or Deepavali, Diwali celebrations have evolved in countless ways over the years. It is considered auspicious to buy new goods during the days preceding Diwali.

Hindus are busy cleaning and renovating their houses and repairing furniture. People also paint their houses and rooms in new colours and purchase new home appliances, clothes and other things in the run up to Diwali. The third day of the five-day festival marks its climax and is a public holiday in the Indian subcontinent.

The Origin of Diwali

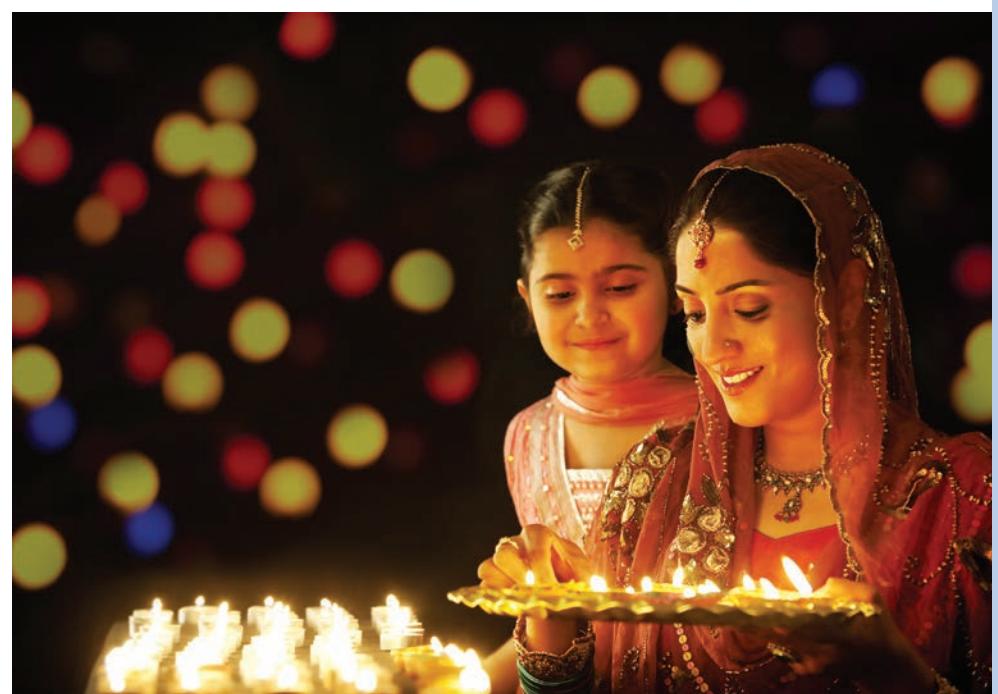
Historically, the origin of Diwali can be traced back to ancient India, when it was probably an important harvest festival. However, there are various legends pointing to the origin of Diwali or 'Deepawali.' Some believe it to be the celebration of the marriage of Lakshmi with Lord Vishnu. Whereas in Bengal the festival is dedicated to the worship of Mother Kali, the dark goddess of strength.

Lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, the symbol of auspiciousness and wisdom, is also worshiped in most Hindu homes on this day.

In Jainism, Deepawali has an added significance to the great event of Lord Mahavira attaining the eternal bliss of nirvana.

The return of Lord Rama

Diwali also commemorates the return of Lord Rama along with Sita and Lakshman from his fourteen year long exile and vanquishing the demon-king Ravana. In joyous celebration of the return of their king, the people of Ayodhya, the Capital of Rama, illuminated the kingdom with earthen diyas (oil lamps) and burst crackers. These Four Days Each day of Diwali has its own tale, legend and myth to tell. The first day of the festival Naraka Chaturdasi marks the vanquishing of the demon Naraka by Lord Krishna and his wife Satyabhama. Amavasya, the second day of Deepawali,



marks the worship of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth in her most benevolent mood, fulfilling the wishes of her devotees.

The story of Lord Vishnu

Amavasya also tells the story of Lord Vishnu, who in his dwarf incarnation vanquished the tyrant Bali, and banished him to hell. Bali was allowed to return to earth

once a year, to light millions of lamps to dispel the darkness and ignorance, and spread the radiance of love and wisdom. It is on the third day of Deepawali - Kartika Shuddha Padyami that Bali steps out of hell and rules the earth according to the boon given by Lord Vishnu. The fourth day is referred to as Yama Dwitiya (also called Bhai Dooj) and on this day sisters invite their brothers to their homes.



OF LIGHTS AND FIRECRACKERS



All the simple rituals of Diwali have a significance and a story to tell. The illumination of homes with lights and the skies with firecrackers is an expression of obeisance to the heavens for the attainment of health, wealth, knowledge, peace and prosperity.

According to one belief, the sound of firecrackers are an indication of the joy of the people living on earth, making the gods aware of their plentiful state. Still another possible reason has a more scientific basis: the fumes produced by the crackers kill a lot of insects and mosquitoes, found in plenty after the rains.

The tradition of gambling on Diwali also has a legend behind it. It is believed that on this day, Goddess Parvati played dice with her husband Lord Shiva, and she decreed that whosoever gambled on Diwali night would prosper throughout the ensuing year. Diwali is associated with wealth and prosperity in many ways, and the festival of 'Dhanteras' ('dhan' = wealth; 'teras' = 13th) is celebrated two days before the festival of lights.

In each legend, myth and story of Deepawali lies the significance of the victory of good over evil; and it is with each Deepawali and the lights that illuminate our homes and hearts, that this simple truth finds new reason and hope.

From darkness unto light - the light that empowers us to commit ourselves to good deeds, that which brings us closer to divinity. During Diwali, lights illuminate every corner of India and the scent of incense sticks hangs in the air, mingled with the sounds of fire-crackers, joy, togetherness and hope. Diwali is celebrated around the globe.

Outside India, it is more than a Hindu festival, it's a celebration of South-Asian identities.

If you are away from the sights and sounds of Diwali, light a diya, sit quietly, shut your eyes, withdraw the senses, concentrate on this supreme light and illuminate the soul.

Here are the dates for all the five days of Diwali 2018 and a day-wise significance:

1. DHANTERAS 2018: Dhanteras will be celebrated on November 5th, 2018 this year. This is the day that most people go out to buy new things like utensils, gold coins and jewellery. Houses and offices are cleaned and decorated with earthen lamps and artificial lights.

2. CHHOTI DIWALI 2018: This day is also known as Narak Chaturdashi, but is commonly known as chhoti Diwali. Falling on November 6th 2018 this year, this is a major day for purchasing sweets made from various ingredients for guests, friends and family. Halwais or sweetmeat makers work over time to meet the increased demand for sweets like laddos, halwas and more, during the run up to this day. Families are also busy preparing homemade delicacies for the guests who visit on the main day of the festival, that is, Diwali.

3. DIWALI 2018: This is the main day during the five-day festival and is also known as the day of Lakshmi Puja. This is because Goddess Lakshmi, who is the Goddess of wealth and prosperity, is worshipped on this day. The muhurat or auspicious timing for conducting Lakshmi Puja this year is between 5.57 pm and 7.53 pm on November



7th, 2018. During this time, the family gets together and recite prayers and sing holy songs in unison. After the conclusion of the prayers, everyone takes blessings from the holy flame and indulges in sweets. This is the time to meet and greet with friends, family and relatives and exchange gifts and sweets.

4. GOVARDHAN PUJA 2018: This is the day right after Diwali and this year it will be celebrated on November 8th, 2018. This day celebrates the unique bond between husband and wife and in some Indian regions, this is the day when husbands give gifts to their wives. In yet other regions, parents invite

their newly married sons or daughters along with their spouses to a family meal and bless the couple with gifts.

5. BHAI DUJ 2018: Bhai Duj or Bhau Beej is the last day of the five-day festival and this year, it will be celebrated on November 9th, 2018. This day celebrates the bond between brothers and sisters. On this day, the brother travels to his sister's house and the 'tilak' ritual involves the sister decorating her brother's forehead with a round of vermillion. The day is similar in spirit with another Hindu festival of Rakshabandhan.



SIGNIFICANCE OF DIWALI



All of the simple rituals of Diwali have a significance and a story behind them. Homes are illuminated with lights, and firecrackers fill the skies as an expression of respect to the heavens for the attainment of health, wealth, knowledge, peace, and prosperity.

According to one belief, the sound of firecrackers indicates the joy of the people living on earth, making the gods aware of their plentiful state. Still another possible reason has a more scientific basis: the fumes produced by the firecrackers kill or repel many insects, including mosquitoes, which are plentiful after the rains.

Spiritual Significance of Diwali

Beyond the lights, gambling, and fun, Diwali is also a time to reflect on life and make changes for the upcoming year. With that, there are a number of customs that revelers hold dear each year.

GIVE AND FORGIVE: It is common practice that people forget and forgive the wrongs done by others during Diwali. There is an air of freedom, festivity, and friendliness everywhere.

RISE AND SHINE: Waking up during the Brahmamuhurta (at 4 a.m., or 1 1/2 hours before sunrise) is a great blessing from the standpoint of health, ethical discipline, efficiency in work, and spiritual advancement. The sages who instituted this Deepawali custom may have hoped that their descendants would realize its benefits and make it a regular habit in their lives.

UNITE AND UNIFY: Diwali is a unifying event, and it can soften even the hardest of hearts. It is a time when people mingle about in joy and embrace one another.

Those with keen inner spiritual ears will clearly hear the voice of the sages, "O children of God unite, and love all."

The vibrations produced by the greetings of love, which fill the atmosphere, are powerful. When the heart has considerably hardened, only a continuous celebration of Deepavali can rekindle the urgent need of turning away from the ruinous path of hatred.

PROSPER AND PROGRESS: On this day, Hindu merchants in North India open their new account books and pray for success and prosperity during the coming year. People buy new clothes for the family. Employers, too, purchase new clothes for their employees. Homes are cleaned and decorated by day and illuminated by night with earthen oil lamps. The best and finest illuminations can be seen in Bombay and Amritsar. The famous Golden Temple at Amritsar is lit in the evening with thousands of lamps.

This festival instills charity in the hearts of people, who perform good deeds. This includes Govardhan Puja, a celebration by Vaishnavites on the fourth day of Diwali. On this day, they feed the poor on an incredible scale.

ILLUMINATE YOUR INNER SELF: The lights of Diwali also signify a time of inner illumination. Hindus believe that the light of lights is the one that steadily shines in the chamber of the heart. Sitting quietly and fixing the mind on this supreme light



illuminates the soul. It is an opportunity to cultivate and enjoy eternal bliss.

From Darkness Unto Light

In each legend, myth, and story of Deepawali lies the significance of the victory of good over evil. It is with each Deepawali and the lights that illuminate our homes and

hearts that this simple truth finds new reason and hope.

From darkness unto light—the light empowers us to commit ourselves to good deeds and brings us closer to divinity. During Diwali, lights illuminate every corner of India, and the scent of incense sticks hangs in the air, mingled with the sounds of

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Diwali is celebrated around the globe. Outside of India, it is more than a Hindu festival; it's a celebration of South-Asian identities. If you are away from the sights and sounds of Diwali, light a diya, sit quietly, shut your eyes, withdraw the senses, concentrate on this supreme light, and illuminate the soul.

DHANTERAS

THE FIRST DAY OF DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

According to the Hindu mythology, Lakshmi Puja should be done at the Dhanteras throughout the Pradosh Kaal (best muhurta for Lakshmi puja). Puja can be started after the sunset and end for next 1 hours and 43 min. The Dhanteras puja is also known as the Dhanwantari Triodasi, Dhanvantri Jayanti Puja, Yamadeep and Dhantrayodashi.

DHANTERAS 2018

Dhanteras 2018 would be celebrated by the people in India as well as abroad on 5th of November, at Monday.

Dhanteras Puja Muhurta 2018: Puja will start at 6:05 pm to 8:00 pm in the evening. The whole duration of puja will be = 1 Hour and 55 Min.

WHAT IS DHANTERAS

It is the first day celebration of the five days long Diwali festival celebrations throughout the India as well as outside the country. The meaning of Dhanteras is puja of wealth at 13th day (in the Krishna paksha, dark fortnight) of the month of Ashvin according to the Hindu lunar calendar. Goddess Lakshmi puja is held at this day and there is a custom of purchasing precious things and bring it at home in the myth of Lakshmi came at home. It brings home a lot of destiny and prosperity.

HOW DHANTERAS IS CELEBRATED

At this great occasion people generally repair their home, white washing, thorough cleaning, decorate house interiorly and exteriorly, make Rangolis, light clay diyas and many more traditions to follow.

They stick readymade footprints of the Goddess Lakshmi to come wealth and prosperity to their home.

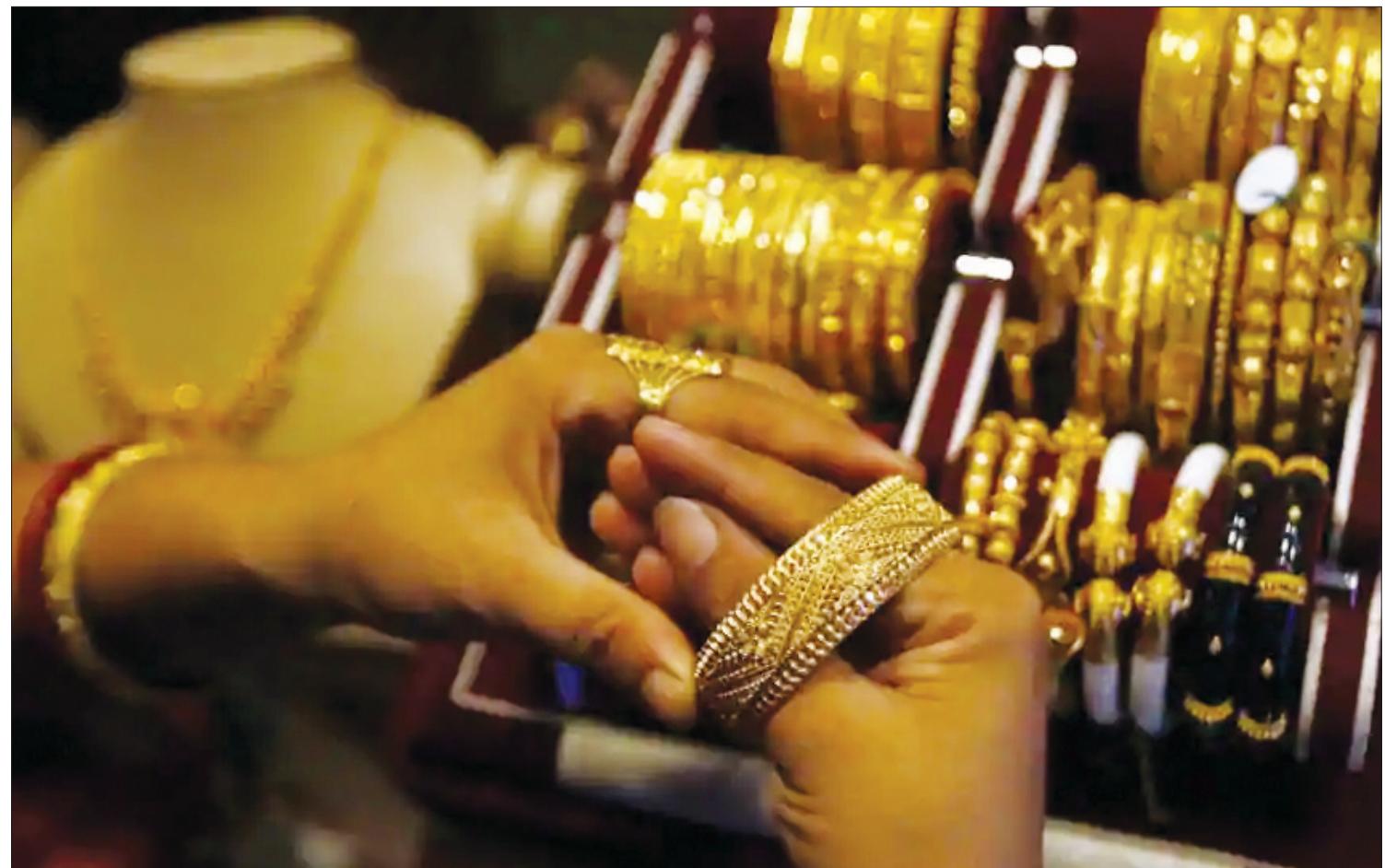
After sunset, people offer puja to the Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesh to prosperity, wisdom and well being by offering rose or marigold garland, sweets, ghee diyas, dhoop deep, agarbatti, camphor and etc.

People chant mantras, bhakti songs and arti for Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesh. People wear new clothes and jewellery and play the game of gambling.

LEGENDS AND STORIES OF DHANTERAS

The legend behind celebrating the Dhanteras is the story of 16 years old son of the King Hima. He was forecasted his death by the snake biting at the 4th day of his marriage. His wife was very clever and searched the way to save the life of her husband. She had not allowed his husband to sleep on that special day. She had collected lots of her own ornaments and coins of gold and silver and made a heap at the doorway of his bed room and lit lamps everywhere in the room. She recited the stories in order to keep her husband awoken.

The god of Death, Yama had arrived there in the form of Serpent. Suddenly his eyes were started dazzling because of the lighting lamps and jewellery. He was unable to enter the room that's why he tried to go through the climbing over the heap of coins. But after listening the song of prince's wife he sat down there for whole night. And slowly it became morning and he went away without taking her



husband. In this way she had saved the life of her husband, from then the day was started celebrating as Dhanteras.

Another legend behind celebrating Diwali, the ocean was churned by Gods and demons to get Amrita or nectar. Dhanvantari (known as physician of Gods and an embodiment of Lord Vishnu) had emerged out (having jar of elixir) from the ocean churning. The same day is celebrated as the Dhanteras.

TRADITIONS AT DHANTERAS

According to the Hindu mythology there are variety of customs and traditions followed by the Hindus at this festival. People consider it is good to buy things such as gold or silver coins, jewellery articles, new utensils or other new things. People consider that bringing new things at home is the sign of Lakshmi coming home whole year. Lakshmi Puja is carried out in the evenings and people lit various diyas in order to drive out the evil spirits shadow. People sing bhakti songs, aarti and mantras as well to drive out the evil powers.

People in villages decorate their cattle and worship as they understand them their major source of income. South Indians offer decorated cows as an embodiment of the Goddess Lakshmi.

IMPORTANCE OF DHANTERAS

Bringing new things at home is considered as very auspicious event at the Dhanteras. People perform Lakshmi puja during the subh muhurta according to the calendar. At some places seven cereals (wheat, gram, barley, Urad, Moong, Masoor) are worshipped while performing puja. Golden flower and sweets are offered during puja to the Mata Lakshmi. This festival plays a great role in the life of every people. It brings a lot happiness, wealth, prosperity, wisdom and good destiny for all.



People clean up everything at this day in order to remove all the bad energy and idleness from their surroundings. People take bath and wear new clothes in order to clean up their body,

mind and soul before performing puja. As this day is the birth day Dev Dhanwantri, all the new innovations related to medical science are established at this day.



MALAIKA ABOUT METOO: FOR ACTUAL CHANGE, PEOPLE NEED TO SIT UP AND DO SOMETHING

The #MeToo movement has entered India, starting a conversation around making the workplace safe for all. But actor Malaika Arora feels there is more noise than actual change at the moment. "I don't see too much of a change. I hear people. I think there is more noise than change," Malaika told IANS over the phone from Mumbai when asked about the change coming with the discussions around the #MeToo movement in India.

After making quite an impact in the West, the #MeToo wave has swept into Bollywood and beyond, following Tanushree Dutta recounting an unpleasant episode with veteran actor Nana Patekar on the sets of Horn OK Pleassss in 2008. It has brought out many dark truths from the world of Bollywood, with women coming out to name and shame the offenders. Big names like Vikas Bahl, Chetan Bhagat, Gursimran Khamba, Kailash Kher, Rajat Kapoor, Alok Nath, Anu Malik and Sajid Khan have been named for using their position to exploit the vulnerable.

But Malaika says there is still a long way to go. "If we are talking about this industry, one is seeing a lot (of things) happening. People are talking about it. But for actual change to happen or for people to actually sit up and do something about it and actually make movement out of it, mindset has to change and people's mindset cannot change overnight," added the mother of one.

Source: IANS

KANGANA TO BE CREDITED AS CO-DIRECTOR WITH KRISH FOR MANIKARNIKA

After refusing credit in the teaser of Manikarnika, the ambitious biopic of Laxmi Bai, queen of Jhansi, Kangana Ranaut will be credited as the film's co-director, along with original helmer Krish. According to a report in Mid Day, producer Kamal Jain took a call after a meeting with the head honchos of Zee Studios on Monday.

Quoting an insider, Mid Day said: "Kangana helmed the 45-day schedule that included the reshoot of several key parts of the drama. Not just that, after she returned from the US earlier this week, she was thoroughly involved in the editing process along with Rameshwar Bhagat. She is overseeing the VFX work, the music and the final cut as well, all of which are the director's responsibilities. Kangana also cut short the first schedule of Panga to accommodate the post-production of Manikarnika."

It may be recalled that the teaser of the biopic, which was unveiled on October 2 (Gandhi Jayanti), did not identify Kangana as the film's co-director. Reports had suggested that Kangana was offered the opportunity to claim credit, but had refused to do so.

Krish left the project midway after the makers were not content with some crucial segments of the shoot as they felt some plot points were missing, the report said. He soon moved on to his other big project, the Telugu language NTR biopic and passed the baton on to Kangana.

Confirming the development, Kamal told Mid Day that the final product is looking exactly the way the makers had envisioned it. "The film is finally looking exactly the way we had envisioned it. Kangana is a perfectionist who headlined every department. We are happy with what she has done and it would be unfair to not give her credit where it's due."

Manikarnika is expected to chronicle the life of Laxmi Bai, her succession issues and her final battle against the British during the Revolt of 1857.



Shah Rukh Khan unveils Katrina Kaif's superstar look, Anushka Sharma's wheelchair-bound avatar

Setting the momentum for the grand trailer reveal on his birthday on November 2, Shah Rukh Khan has shared two new posters for his upcoming film, Zero, and they're well worth the wait. King Khan treated his fans with a new poster that shows his dwarf avatar, with Katrina Kaif staring into his eyes. He captioned it, "Sitaaron ke khwaab dekhne walon, humne toh chaand ko kareeb se dekha hai. #ZeroPoster." Indeed, the diva looks glamourous in a figure-hugging red gown with a thigh-high slit as she embraces Shah Rukh's character. In the second poster, Shah Rukh finally unveiled the first look of Anushka Sharma, who is seen on a wheelchair. This went with the caption, "Iss poori duniya mein, meri barabar ki ek hi toh hai... #ZeroPoster."

Zero is the story of Bauua, a vertically challenged man played by Shah Rukh. Katrina plays a superstar and details of Anushka's character haven't been revealed so far. The makers had shared a glimpse of the Shah Rukh

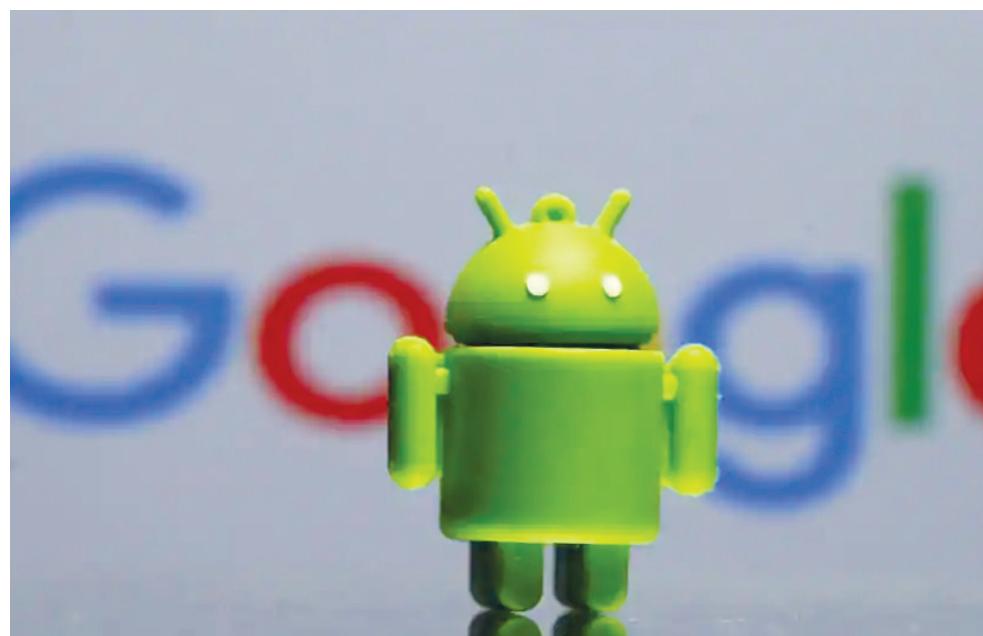
Shah Rukh Khan treated his fans by sharing two new posters of his upcoming film with Anushka Sharma and Katrina Kaif, Aanand L Rai's Zero

Khan and Salman Khan song in the second teaser that released on Eid.

The trailer of the film will be released at a grand event at IMAX, Wadala, on Shah Rukh's birthday. Making it a special event, the venue has been converted into the replica of Meerut city complete with a Ghanta Ghar along with the colourful mela-like set-up with food joints and game stalls. His residence is also decked up for the big day.

The film has been directed by Aanand L Rai of Tanu Weds Manu fame and is set to hit the theatres ahead of Christmas on December 21.

Source: HT





NAOMI WATTS TO STAR IN GAME OF THRONES PREQUEL

Naomi Watts has been signed to play the lead role in the forthcoming Game of Thrones prequel. Little is known about Watts's character yet, but Variety reports that she will play "a charismatic socialite hiding a dark secret". Watts, best known for star turns in Twin Peaks and Mulholland Drive, was also recently signed to Fox's Roger Ailes biopic, playing anchor Gretchen Carlson.

The new show, as revealed earlier this year, will be set millennia before the events of Game of Thrones. According to HBO, it will "chronicle the world's descent from the golden Age of Heroes into its darkest hour".

The author George RR Martin also appeared to confirm on Twitter yesterday that the prequel would have its long-rumoured name "The Long Night": With the next series of Game of Thrones being its last, HBO have been searching for a replacement.

They put five separate prequels and spinoffs into development; this project, from Kingsman screenwriter Jane Goldman, is the only one to be given the go-ahead.

The new show is not expected to air until at least 2020. Game of Thrones will complete its run in 2019.

Why Brad Pitt wont date celebrities again after Angelina Jolie divorce

Actor Brad Pitt is not likely to date another celebrity again in the near future, says his close associate. Pitt's marriages to Jennifer Aniston and Angelina Jolie have ended in divorce.

He has started dating again, but wants to keep his love life low-key, reports pagesix.com. "I can't see Brad dating someone super famous again, I can definitely see him dating someone with a lower profile," said someone who has worked closely with the actor.

According to other sources, Pitt, who is currently filming director Quentin Tarantino's Once Upon a Time in Hollywood, has been "hanging out" with a few women over the past few months. But he is working to keep things private after having had so many very public relationships over the years, with women such as Gwyneth Paltrow, Juliette

A source says that while the actor has been casually dating since his split from Angelina Jolie, it is unlikely that he will date another celebrity in the future

Lewis and Aniston, to whom he was married from 2000 to 2005.

The spotlight can be a "challenge" for people who aren't used to it, said the source who has worked with Pitt. "There's all this gossip and suddenly this person becomes a public character."

According to a friend, Pitt is "focused on his children, his work and wanting to have some sense of normalcy. He's dating casually but, for the foreseeable future, everything is about the kids."

Source: IANS

JULIA ROBERTS: WORKING ON HOMECOMING WAS CHALLENGING

Actress Julia Roberts says working on the thriller "Homecoming" was a challenge, and feels the show can be renamed "No Easy Days". Hollywood's "Pretty Woman" Roberts is entering the world of the small screen with Amazon Prime Original series "Homecoming", adapted from a podcast with the same name.

"I was really taken with the podcast," said Roberts in a statement to IANS. "The characters were terrific. (Actress) Catherine Keener is a friend of mine -- she played Heidi in the podcast -- and she was fantastic. I was listening to it with (a TV series) in mind. The audio, the sound production, the fish-tank bubbles... it was all so visual. Micah and Eli know this material inside and out," she added.

Directed by Sam Esmail, the show follows the life of case worker-turned-waitress Heidi Bergman (Roberts) as she struggles to remember her time working at a facility that treats soldiers returning from war.

The actress was happy to work with Esmail. "He's an incredible intellect and has such a very specific vision," she said. "I come from films where there's just one captain throughout. And I know from friends and family who work in television that there's a changing-of-the-guard in every episode, which I'm unaccustomed to."

"Homecoming" was just so surgical in its complexity, said the actress. "The different time periods, all the different characters - they required a need for one voice behind it the whole time.

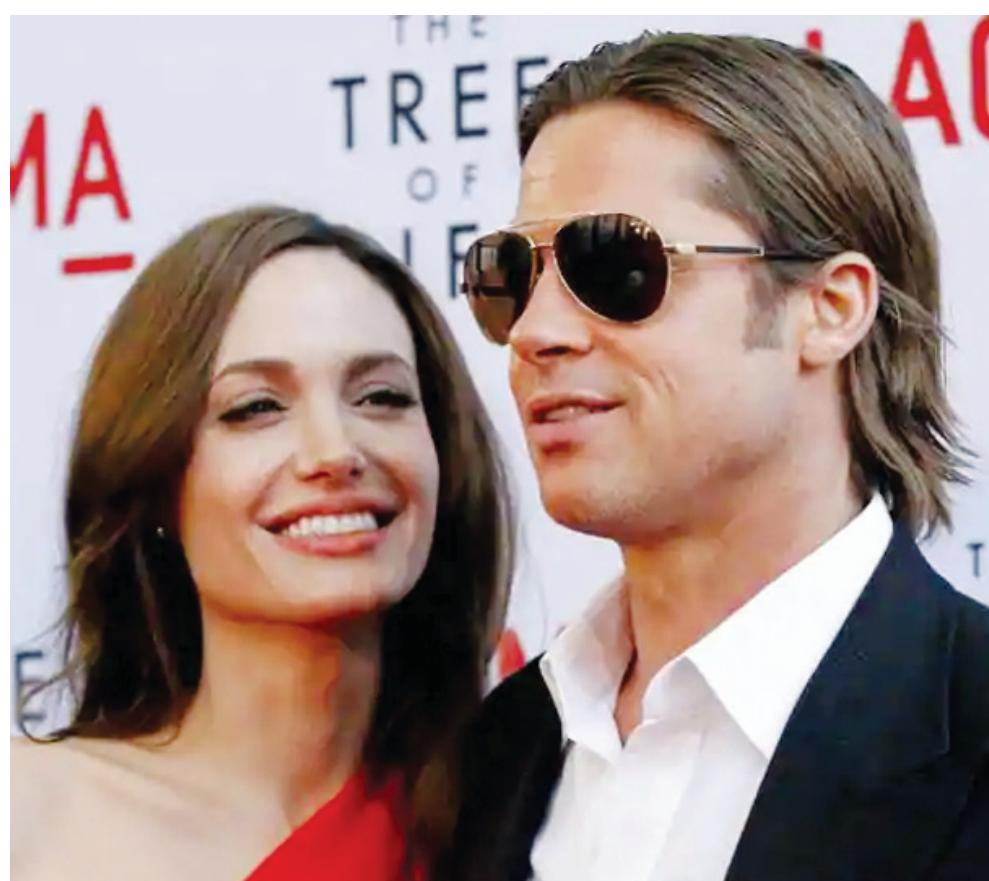
"I said from the beginning that I really wanted one person to direct all the episodes. And if that person wasn't Sam, then I probably wouldn't do it." Roberts echoes her collaborators' enthusiasm



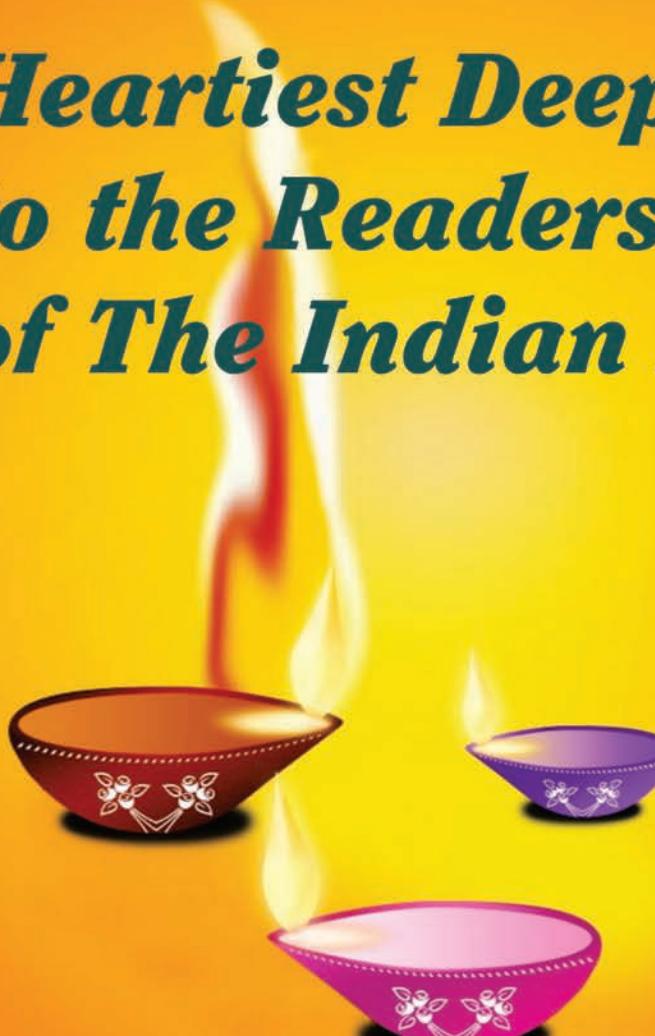
about the show's set design.

The "Eat Pray Love" star said: "They built it so that we could do these incredible camera maneuvers. I think there are days when we've done 11 pages of dialogue in one camera move up and down hallways, down stairs, through huge conference rooms and cafeterias - it's pretty amazing.

"It's been pretty challenging. The show could be renamed, 'No Easy Days', because there were none! But my collaboration with Sam has been so joyful. We're just two peas in a pod. He's very specific and clear in his direction. It's been relatively effortless." "Homecoming" will stream on Amazon Prime Video from November 2.



**Heartiest Deepavali Greetings
to the Readers
of The Indian Panorama**



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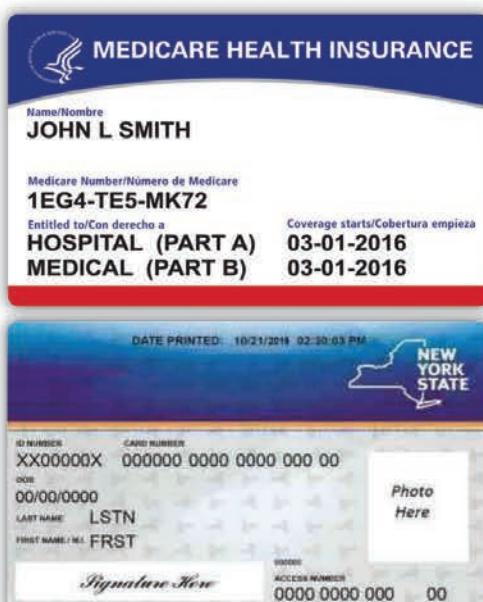
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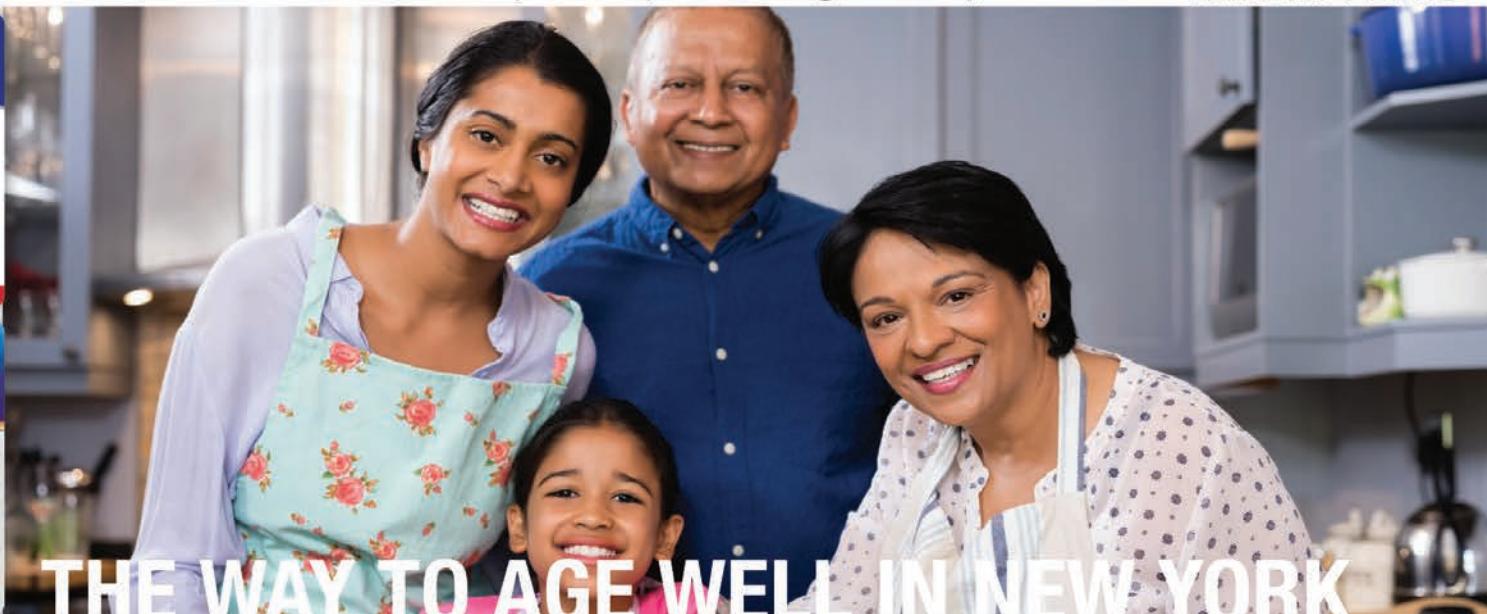
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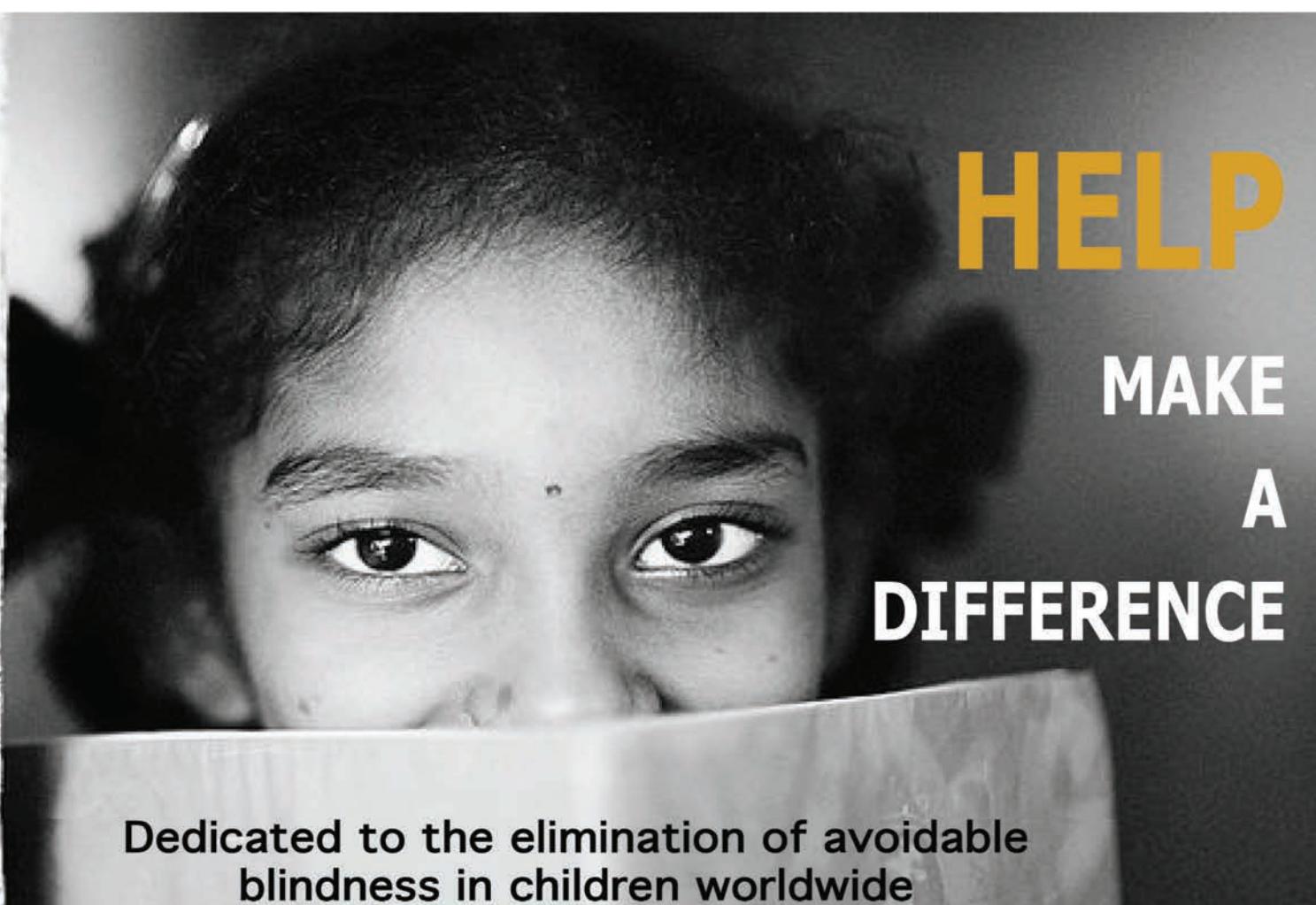
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Heartiest *Diwali* Greetings



Ellis Island Medal of Honor recipient Shiv Dass is President of Jackson Heights Indian Merchants' Association, besides being a member of Queens Community Board, and advisory member of Elmhurst Hospital. He was recently felicitated on his 80th birthday by Congressman Joseph Crowley and Council Member Daniel Dromm. Shiv Dass (extreme right) is seen in the picture receiving the proclamation from Joe Crowley (second from right). Also seen, from L to R: Elmhurst Medical Hospital CEO Israel Rocha, Daniel Dromm, and Gurdeep Singh Narula.

Heartiest *Diwali* Greetings



MALINI SHAH
Community Cultural
Liaison NYC
(Council Member
Paul Vallone)
19th District Queens





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, launched 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 NOVEMBER 5 - NOVEMBER 11, 2018

Aries:

Ganesha says, Cosmobiology, the study of the living universe as a whole, to just playing the flute to while away an idle hour, is your full range, and Ganesha adds, you should be proud of it. If interested in computers, children (either delivery or start of conception), hobbies, sports, fun and play, a major creative pursuit (say an epic, a film, a painting, drama, research, statistical surveys, economic policies for company or country or both, Ph.D. thesis) the RIGHT TIME TO START IS NOW.

Taurus:

This is one of the key periods for a job, money, pets, projects of magnitude and importance which might start in a small way. Health is also highlighted for the simple reason, that, TOO MANY PRESSURES AND PULLS, INVARIABLY TAKE THEIR TOLL IN THE SHAPE OF ILL HEALTH. Hypochondria is a failing of many Taureans, good but very sensitive people. Therefore this warning.

Gemini:

Now could be a huge trapeze exhibition for you. There is the superb Sun, fame, Jupiter, money and marriage, placing, and Mars, energy, Jupiter, generosity, juxtaposition. If delay and disappointments are Saturn's coinage, that of Jupiter is good news and prosperity. Therefore this will be a period of mixed results. You could run into problems in your personal and professional relationships. Separation is just a possibility.

Cancer:

Ganesha asserts a strong, sharp, focus on finance and family. In finance we include loans, funds, investments and assets too, liabilities and debts, joint - finance and insurance, jewelry, income - tax, very specifically your earned income, rentals, shares, debentures, buying / selling. Also, and this is equally important, those who live by speech or writing, will have an extra edge.

Leo:

The period sets you free from tense situations and circumstances. Also, it allows you to be your natural self. You will set a hectic pace, run like the wind: be it heavy industries, journey, trips, pilgrimages, tour, enlisting in clubs and organizations, cleaning up your image and that of the company you represent, religious impulses and spiritual experiences, publicity, ceremony, rites, fun and fanfare, ads, computers and electronics, for the reach out to people and places.

Virgo:

Ganesha says after the free - wheeling and the fun and the progress achieved, it will be in this period that the home and the outside world will really converge and finally blend in beautifully with each other. This period is thus the halfway house. Till the middle of this period, the trends of the last period, will be very much there. Take advantage of them and push for all you are worth.

Libra:

"There is a garden in her face / Where roses and white lilies grow" - sang the poet Thomas Campion. Perhaps he sang it just for you. You will love and be loved. You could find a heavenly paradise on earth, at least a temporary one! And yes "pleasant fruits" will be the outcome of your efforts. Isn't that wonderful? Let me be the first to rejoice for you. Ganesha says, this period will have a direct link with the next period.

Scorpio:

The moon connects beautifully with Jupiter, money, Mars, force, Venus, home and comforts. Therefore, an ideal period to be outgoing and forward, communicate and contact, be social and amiable (you are very good at it, when you want to be). A period to please not only yourself, but also others. Get your work done and yet make others happy, should be your motto. Those with an inclination or talent or penchant for music, painting (particularly so), sculpture, modelling, pottery (very satisfying), acting and so on have it made.

Sagittarius:

Ganesha says, now we come to that real mosaic. I said mosaic because three trends will be operating almost simultaneously:

- A tremendous release of energy and output, so much so, that it overflows into November;
- there will be periods of rare insights and introspection and self - improvement;
- changes in office / home / shop, may be a move, a shift too.

Capricorn:

This period is for good food, excellent clothes, sparkling jewelry, monetary transactions, fast and furious, and gadding about, chuckles Ganesh. The great secret is to be amiable and sociable. Yes, the social graces will stand you in good stead and do the trick for sure. Savvy, polish, charm are your bullets, not cold logic and analysis. As long as you remember that, all is well. Parties, dinners, banquets, luncheons, buffets is the way it should go. Enjoy!

Aquarius:

Love slides in effortlessly, children given huge satisfaction, new enterprises will be launched, expansion of factory / industry is probable, and you will feel relaxed, at least partially, which is saying a lot indeed! Those in films, arts, research, entertainment, education, make things hum handsomely.

Pisces:

Ganesha says, like the confluence of the Yamuna and the Ganga, the two trends of the home and the big, outside world, do meet, giving you deep satisfaction. The Mars Uranus beautiful placings assure you success as well as joy. But the health of parents, in-laws, elders, boss, could cause a few anxious moments. Travel is another indication of these placings. Let me put it all differently. Love and enthusiasm will be your travelling companions in this period.

MAKE YOUR HAIR SUPER SILKY

You know silky hair when you see it: shiny, healthy, and free of tangles. But if you, like me, put your hair through the ringer, styling it with hot tools, using tons of product, and coloring it regularly, silkiness seems only but a dream. Luckily, with the right products, you can improve the look and feel of our hair in just a few weeks—especially since silky hair relies on the health and condition of the cuticle (the outside layer).

The surface of your hair is kind of like shingles on a roof. When all of those shingles lay downward and smooth from roots to ends, that's when your hair looks and feels smooth and shiny—not knotty and tangled; it's also when it reflects the most light.

If you're reading this because you deal with dullness and tangles daily/weekly/whenever, follow the eight tips below to transform your strands and restore your natural shine.

Be mindful when shampooing

When shampooing, the tendency is to pile your hair on top of your head, and wash the entire length of your strands. This technique not only creates tangles, but also dries out the ends of the hair, which already lack moisture—especially of those with curly hair.

With naturally straight hair, oil from the scalp can go from roots to ends very quickly because gravity will pull it down. But with curly hair, the oil has to travel around the coiled shaft, so the oil doesn't get there as quickly.

What this means is that people with curly hair don't need to shampoo their hair as often. And, when it is time to wash, consider swapping out your regs shampoo with a cleansing conditioner to keep from stripping your hair of its necessary natural oils.

Comb when wet, brush when dry

Most people are not delicate enough when brushing, which can prevent your hair from looking its best. If you're raking through wet hair with a paddle brush, that detangling noise that you're used to hearing is actually the sound of your hair ripping. Instead of smoothing the cuticle, this action is causing damage



to the outside layer. A gentler way to detangle hair? Using a comb when it's wet (or a brush designed for use on wet hair), and only using a brush when your hair is dry. Work through the knots and tangles by starting at the ends before moving to the middle and roots, rather than working from roots to ends, which could worsen the problem.

Use a T-shirt to dry your hair

Somewhere along the way, we wrongly learned to "rough dry" hair by rubbing a towel back and forth against it. This action creates friction, which fluffs up the cuticle. And when the cuticles are fluffed up, they catch on one another, cause knots and breakage, and result in frizz. The number one key to having smooth hair is no friction. When someone's hair gets super tangly, it's usually because the cuticle is open. The tighter the cuticle, the more resistant it is to opening, and the smoother the hair is overall. So, switch out your fluffy friction-causing towel for a smoother cotton T-shirt. And instead of rubbing

your head, wrap the ends in the shirt and squeeze all the water out, working it down to the ends.

Sleep on silk pillowcases

If you're currently using a cotton pillowcase, that very well might be the cause of your frizzy or tangled hair. Makes sense if you think about it: a silky smooth pillowcase leads to silky smooth strands. Cotton absorbs all the moisture from your strands, while silk or satin maintains the oils necessary for nourished hair.

Finish blow drying with cold air

It sounds like a time-sucking extra step, but Picciano argues that finishing a blow out with cold air after the hair is dry is key for not only locking in the amount of volume, direction of your style, and movement of your hair; it also helps close the cuticle. Make sure to always use a nozzle or concentrator. It makes sure the direction of the air goes from roots to ends, closing the cuticle rather than roughing it up.

FOOD CORNER

ROGAN JOSH

Ingredients

1 Kg Meat, 1 Cup Mustard/refined oil, 3 tsp Red chili powder, 3 tsp Fennel powder, 2 tsp Ginger powder, 2 tsp Cumin powder, 3 tsp Brown cardamom powder, 1 tsp Asafoetida, 4 Pieces Green cardamom, 2 Cinnamon sticks, 2 Bay leaves, 2 Cloves, 1/3 tsp Saffron (optional), 1 Cup Curd, A pinch of Salt.

Method

- Wash the meat properly. Heat oil in a pressure cooker.
- Put cinnamon, bay leaves, green cardamom, cloves, a teaspoon of salt, asafoetida, and meat together.
- Fry meat till it turns brown. Once browned, pour a cup of water. Add the red chili powder and saffron into the meat. Keep stirring for about a minute.
- Mix the curd nicely in the mixer and pour it into the pressure cooker. Keep on stirring till you get a reddish tinge.
- Add 2 cups of water, fennel powder, ginger powder, and pressure cook for 2 minutes.
- Check if the meat is tender. Peel and grind green and brown cardamom and add to the meat dish.
- Finally sprinkle cumin powder and simmer for a minute and serve.



Things you need to do for healthy skin at any age

As you get older, your diet, lifestyle and hormones take a toll on your skin. Wrinkles, loss of elasticity, dark circles and blemishes can be a shock when you look in the mirror. Therefore, you need to give your skin a little more care in your 50s than you did in your 20s or 30s. Neeleshwari Basak, owner of WIGP and Harpreet Ahluwalia, owner of Earthly Creations, share useful tips to ensure glowing, vibrant skin after 50:

Balance the hormones

The hormones in our body act like messengers. With ageing, these hormones become unbalanced and we can see the changes following menopause. Due to this, women experience dry skin or oily skin and even adult acne. When these hormones are well-balanced, we feel and look energetic, healthy and vibrant.

As we age, it is important to know the interplay between hormone, health and beauty. There are superfoods like berries, walnut, avocado and turmeric when combined with proper diet and a healthy regime can give us glowing skin.

High insulin is bad

High levels of insulin can increase wrinkling of the skin. Our body gets an excess of insulin when we indulge in sugary foods like bakery items, packed juices, and other sweet items. If you go for sugar-laden eats, it's not only bad for the waistline, you are also likely to have a dull complexion and damaged skin. The high level of insulin manifests as excess hair growth and dark patches on the neck and body folds. Try to avoid sugar in your diet.

Prefer more probiotics foods

Reach out for foods that are high in antioxidants as well as probiotics, which are naturally occurring and good-for-your-gut bacteria. Probiotics help in creating a healthy gut, so less toxins are absorbed into the bloodstream.

Toxins obstruct the absorption of important vitamins, minerals and nutrients in our body. Consuming probiotics will promote better moisture absorption and help in delaying the signs of aging. Lactic acid helps reduce wrinkles and tighten pores. This also helps to strengthen our immune system. A good immune system will strengthen all of your protective organs, including your skin.



WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR BODY IF YOU DON'T DRINK ENOUGH WATER

Water is essential for human life. It accounts for 50-70% of our body weight and is crucial for most bodily functions.

Any deficit in normal body water – through dehydration, sickness, exercise or heat stress – can make us feel rotten. First we feel thirsty and fatigued, and may develop a mild headache. This eventually gives way to grumpiness, and mental and physical decline.

We continually lose water via our breath, urine, faeces and skin. Most healthy people regulate their body's water level remarkably well via eating and drinking, and are guided by appetite and thirst. But this is more difficult for infants, the sick, the elderly, athletes, and those with strenuous physical occupations, especially in the heat.

You're constipated

An imbalance of fluids can affect your digestive system. "We tend to think of fibre as the primary solution to constipation, but water is equally important. Fibre helps to pull out toxins in the gut system, but those toxins can't exit our system without being flushed out, and for that we need water."

Your skin gets irritated

If your body isn't getting enough water, the effects can also show on your skin. Dry skin, which lacks oil, is different from dehydrated skin, which lacks water. However, there are some similar symptoms, particularly flakiness, itchiness, sensitivity, tightness, and dullness. Dehydrated skin can also be prone to breakouts.

Bladder, kidney or urinary infection

Kidneys and water have a sort of symbiotic relationship. The kidneys work to regulate your body's water balance, but they also flush out the waste



from your bloodstream and along with your liver, they act as your "body's natural filtration system." They need water to work properly, and if they don't have enough to do their job, you could wind up with bladder and urinary infections. "In addition, the mineral and salt deposits that naturally accumulate in your kidney require water to break down. Without it, those deposits can turn into very painful kidney stones."

You feel hungry even when you're not

A lot of times, people confuse dehydration for hunger. If you've just eaten but you're not feeling satisfied, try downing a glass of water to see if your body is really asking you for a snack. Research indicates drinking water can help fill you up.

You feel distracted, confused

Dehydration can do a number on both

energy levels and cognition, making it difficult to stay alert. In fact it is the most common reason for daytime fatigue and can also lead to mood changes, including increased anger. All of our body's systems rely on the oxygen delivered by our blood to function. When that blood delivery is challenged by dehydration, none of our organs work at the level they should, causing sluggishness of not only the body but also of the mind and leading to short-term memory problems and difficulty focusing.

The best way to prevent any of this from happening is to follow the recommended intake of two liters of water a day, which can be in multiple forms. You can get necessary fluids from foods, including soups, fruits, and vegetables, as well as drinks that contain water, including coffee, tea, milk and 100% fruit juice, as long as you watch your calorie intake.

High carbohydrate diet may induce obesity

Researchers have identified a DNA mutation common in animals that may explain why a diet high in carbohydrates induces obesity and diabetes in some but not others.

The study, published in the journal PLOS Genetics, showed a surprising difference between two sets of the fruit flies when feeding with alternate diets high in protein and high in carbohydrates.

Fruit fly larvae with a noted mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) mutation showed a pronounced increase in development when eating high carbohydrate diet of banana, but stagnated on a high protein diet of passion fruit, Xinhua news agency quoted the study as saying.

Conversely, fruit fly larvae without that mutation thrived on the high protein diet, but dropped in frequency when put on carbohydrates, the report said.

The six-year collaborative study by Australian, American and Spanish researchers challenged the neutral theory of molecular evolution in which changes in species at the molecular level are random, not caused by natural selection and provide no benefit or disadvantage to the species.

According to lead author Bill Ballard from the University of New South Wales, the research was a rare demonstration of positive selection at work in evolution.

Given that humans share 75 per cent of the same genes as



fruit flies, and have the same mtDNA genes, it is likely, according to the study, that the same mutation inherited in human mtDNA may metabolise carbohydrates in a similar way.

"But, the news is not all bad for people harbouring the mutation," said Ballard.

"You would need to manage your carbohydrate intake when you are younger, but if you are unfortunate enough to develop Parkinson's Disease, a high carbohydrate diet will help you maintain weight," Ballard added.

Source: IANS



Vegan diet linked to reduced Type-2 diabetes risk

A vegan diet rich in fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes and seeds, with few animal products, is linked to a significantly lower risk of developing Type-2 diabetes. The study explored that vegan diet is associated with improved psychological well-being in addition to reduction in the risk factors for Type-2 diabetes, and heart diseases.

For the study, researchers from the University of London, examined 433 people aged mid-50s, on average.

Results of the study, published in the journal BMJ, showed that while quality of life — both physical and emotional — improved significantly, depressive symptoms and nerve pain (neuropathic pain) also improved in people on plant-based diet. In addition to a sharp fall of blood glucose levels in those who cut out or ate very few animal products, these participants also lost nearly twice as much weight.

The fall in blood fats — a risk factor for cardiovascular disease — was also greater in those on plant-based diets.

Those following a vegan diet were able to discontinue the drugs they were taking for their diabetes or high blood pressure. "Furthermore, plant-based diets could potentially improve diabetic neuropathic pain and the levels of total cholesterol, cholesterol and triglycerides in Type-2 diabetes," the team said.

Source: IANS

High heels can cause major joint problems, says AIIMS expert

Wearing stilettos or pencil heels might be fashionable, but it can have an adverse effect on health, especially bones, and may lead to major health hazards like degenerative arthritis — also called osteoarthritis. According to Uma Kumar, HOD, Rheumatology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), wearing high heels every day for long hours can lead to cumulative damage of bones and emerge as a leading cause for arthritis.

Osteoarthritis, one of the most common chronic and long-lasting joint condition, is caused by joint damage where the cartilage breaks down, causing the bones within the joint to rub together. This leads to pain, stiffness and other issues.

"Women, especially those who are below 40, are coming to AIIMS with such joint pain-related issues caused due to wearing of high heels. If ignored, these may lead to severe health problems which might need surgery to be cured," Uma Kumar told IANS. High heels cause unequal weight distribution on the foot bones, exposing those areas of joints to bear weight which are normally not designed to do so. This results in painful foot conditions like bunions and metatarsalgias — also known as fore-foot pain, she said.

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TALK TO GOOGLE HOME SMART SPEAKER IN HINDI NOW

Google on Thursday announced its smart speaker Home will now be able to respond in Hindi with uniquely Indian contexts.

Already available on smartphones in Hindi, people can now talk to Google Assistant smart speaker in the language, the company said in a statement.

Open the "Google Home App" on smartphone, tap the 'Account' icon at the lower-right corner, then select 'Settings'.

Upon navigating to the 'Assistant' tab, select 'Add a language' and set Hindi as the first language in the list.

Just say "Ok Google" to start a conversation with Assistant on Google Home.

"Our team has been hard at work teaching the Assistant on Google Home to understand Hindi, and it will now respond to you with uniquely Indian contexts."

"The Assistant is already available in Hindi on your smartphone, and now you can also get hands-free help at home in Hindi to get things done in your world," said Purvi Shah, Technical Programme Manager, Google Assistant.

The feature will help many users take Google Assistant's help for daily commute to listening to their favourite music.

Source: IANS



Parker solar probe breaks record for closest approach to Sun: NASA

NASA's Parker Solar Probe has clinched the record for closest approach to the Sun by a man-made object, the US space agency said.

The spacecraft passed the current record of 26.55 million miles from the Sun's surface on October 29 as calculated by the Parker Solar Probe team, NASA said in a statement.

The previous record for closest solar approach was set by the German-American Helios 2 spacecraft in April 1976, it said.

As the Parker Solar Probe mission progresses, the spacecraft will repeatedly break its own records, with a final close approach of 3.83 million miles from the Sun's surface expected in 2024, it said.

"It's been just 78 days since Parker Solar Probe launched, and we've now come closer to our star than any other spacecraft in history," said Project Manager Andy Driesman, from the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in the US.

"It's a proud moment for the team, though we remain focused on our first solar encounter, which begins on October 31," Driesman said.

Parker Solar Probe is also expected to break the record for fastest spacecraft travelling relative to the Sun. The current record for heliocentric speed is 153,454 miles per hour, set by Helios 2 in April 1976, according to NASA.

The Parker Solar Probe team periodically measures the spacecraft's precise speed and position using NASA's Deep Space Network, or DSN.

Source: PTI

TWITTER TESTING HOME BUTTON TO SWITCH TWEET ORDER

Twitter is testing a home-screen button to help its 326 million users switch the order of the tweets they see, the social network announced on Thursday.

The micro-blogging platform said a small number of iOS users will soon see a button on the home screen that allows them to switch between a display of tweets.

"Sometimes you want to see the latest Tweets, first. We're testing a way for you to make it easier to switch your timeline between the latest and top Tweets."

"Starting Thursday, a small number of you will see this test on iOS," tweeted the company.

The feature is currently available on the iOS but will come to Android too.

Giving its over million users more



control, Twitter in September announced that it would completely revert their timeline into a pure reverse chronological feed.

The micro-blogging platform in 2016 announced that it will only show "most important tweets" and stop the most recent tweets first which irked many users.

It announced that in the coming

weeks, it will start testing a "way to switch between a timeline of tweets that are most relevant for you and a timeline of the latest tweets".

"We've learned that when showing the best Tweets first, people find Twitter more relevant and useful. However, we've heard feedback from people who, at times, prefer to see the most recent tweets," said Twitter.

"Our goal with the timeline is to balance showing you the most recent tweets with the best tweets you're likely to care about, but we don't always get this balance right," it added.

Twitter has also confirmed it was considering removing the heart-shaped 'Like' button after its CEO Jack Dorsey admitted that he was not a fan and would be getting rid of it "soon". *Source: IANS*

New ways that expose your browsing history to hackers

Scientists have discovered four new techniques to expose internet users' browsing histories, which could be used by hackers to learn which websites they have visited.

The techniques fall into the category of "history sniffing" attacks, a concept dating back to the early 2000s.

However, the attacks demonstrated by the researchers from the University of California - San Diego in the US can profile or 'fingerprint' a user's online activity in a matter of seconds, and work across recent versions of major web browsers.

All of the attacks the researchers developed worked on Google Chrome.

Two of the attacks also worked on a range of other browsers, from Mozilla Firefox to Microsoft Edge, as well as various security-focused research browsers.

The only browser which proved immune to all of the attacks is the Tor Browser, which doesn't keep a record of



browsing history in the first place, researchers said.

"My hope is that the severity of some of our published attacks will push browser vendors to revisit how they handle history data, and I'm happy to see folks from Mozilla, Google, and the broader World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) community already engage in this," said Deian Stefan, an assistant professor at UC San Diego.

Most internet users are by now familiar with "phishing," cyber-

criminals build fake websites that mimic, say, banks, to trick them into entering their login details, researchers said.

The more the phisher can learn about their potential victim, the more likely the con is to succeed, they said.

After conducting an effective history sniffing attack, a criminal could carry out a smart phishing scheme, which automatically matches each victim to a faked page corresponding to their actual bank.

Source: PTI

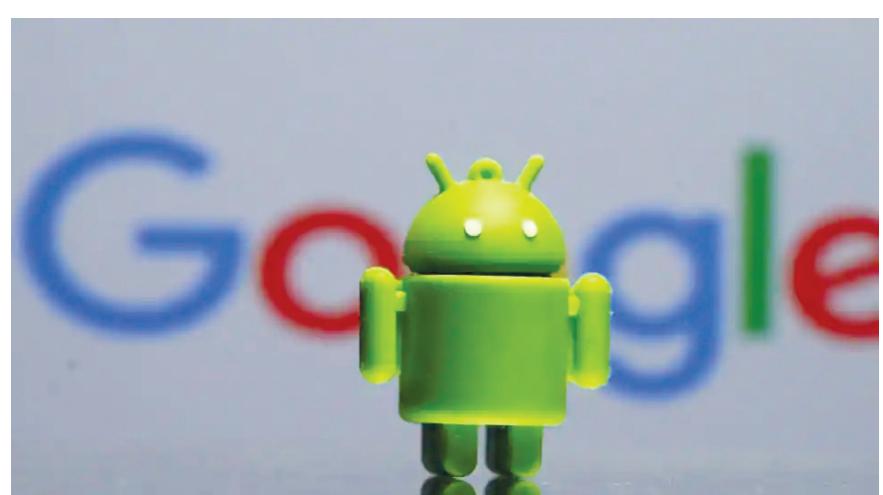
Nokia 6.1 gets Android Pie 9.0 update

Finnish company HMD Global, which manufactures and markets Nokia smartphones, has announced its Nokia 6.1 has started receiving Android 9 Pie operating system (OS).

Notably, this is the second smartphone from the HMD stable with Android Pie, is the ninth major update and the 16th version of the Android OS.

"The Nokia 6.1 has been selected by Google to join the Android One family and therefore, users get exclusive access to 'Apps Actions' -- a feature only available to Android One and Google Pixel devices. 'App Actions' helps users get things done faster by predicting their next move and displaying the right action on the go," the company said in a statement late on Tuesday.

Android Pie brings a range of useful



new features such as adaptive battery, tweaked navigation and improved notifications.

Another interesting feature that

Android Pie brings is "Adaptive Brightness" which learns how you like to set the brightness in different settings and does it for you.

Source: IANS

Faced with trade war, Xi admits 'uncertainty' in China's economy

BEIJING (TIP): President Xi Jinping sought to reassure Chinese entrepreneurs at a meeting Thursday with promises to prop up private firms with lower taxes and more funding, as he acknowledged uncertainty in China's economy.

Xi held the meeting amid signs that the world's second largest economy is losing steam as it faces a trade war with the United States, a massive debt buildup and a weakening currency.

Though China's overall economic status is stable, "uncertainty in our country's economic development has clearly increased, downward pressure has grown, and companies are facing more difficulties," said Xi, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

Xi, who has voiced his support for private firms multiple times this year, made several policy suggestions, including lowering corporate taxes and resolving funding challenges faced by companies.

He also proposed that provincial governments raise their own "rescue funds" to bail out companies.

Xi also emphasised creating a fair and competitive business environment and tasked local governments with "correcting" the behaviour of certain government departments, as well as large companies that use their dominance to "bully" smaller firms.

Sapping confidence

US tariffs on half of what China exports to the United States have sapped confidence in Beijing's ability to maintain current growth levels.

Analysts say that the country's overleveraged companies and local governments are likely to put a further



drag on expansion.

It was the second meeting this week in which Chinese leaders vowed to protect the economy.

Xi presided over a conclave of the Politburo on Wednesday, with the leadership saying China had "achieved overall economic stability with steady progress" in the first three quarters but more work needed to be done to help the private sector.

A key indicator on Wednesday showed that Chinese factory activity slowed in October, the latest sign that the economy is losing momentum.

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) came in at 50.2 for the month, down from 50.8 in September, the National Bureau of Statistics said.

A separate survey calculated independently by the Caixin media group showed factory activity at 50.1 in October, up from 50 a month earlier, which had been its lowest level for 16 months.

A number under 50 indicates a contraction.

Further complicating the picture is the falling price of the yuan against the

dollar, with the unit at its lowest level in a decade.

A weaker yuan makes Chinese exports less expensive overseas, offsetting some of the higher costs brought by the US tariffs. But it has also driven up the cost of importing critical raw materials from abroad and threatened domestic confidence in the currency, driving some investors to move assets overseas.

As the trade war rages on, China is also trying to build business alliances with other countries and entice more foreign enterprises into its markets.

Next week, China will host an enormous import fair in Shanghai featuring thousands of international companies, including General Motors, Ford, Microsoft, and Foxconn.

Xi has called it "no ordinary exhibition" and a sign of China "actively opening up markets".

But the playing field is far from level for international firms in China, critics say.

In an annual report released by the European Chamber of Commerce in September, foreign companies listed a myriad of woes, including preferential treatment for monopolistic state-owned companies, market access barriers and government red tape, as well as intellectual property protection and forced technology transfer.

"China's old economic order is still lingering in society," said Mats Harborn, president of the EU Chamber, noting that the Communist Party's determination to make state-owned enterprises "stronger bigger and better" was actually detrimental to the development of China's economy.

Source: AFP

IMF says monitoring situation in India, bats for RBI's independence

WASHINGTON (TIP): The IMF has said it was monitoring the reported rift between the RBI and the Centre in India, and expressed its opposition to any move that compromises the independence of central banks anywhere in the world.

There were reports of mounting tension between the Ministry of Finance and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) over the autonomy of monetary policy makers after Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Tuesday criticised the central bank for failing to check indiscriminate lending during 2008 and 2014 that has led to the present bad loan or Non-Performing Asset (NPA) crisis in the banking industry.

"We're monitoring the development on that issue and will continue to do so," International Monetary Fund (IMF) Director of Communications Gerry Rice told reporters on Thursday when asked about the row.

"Just stepping back, as a general principle, and we've said this before. I've said this before standing here that we support clear lines of responsibility and accountability... And, international best practice is that there should be no government or industry interference that compromises the independence of the central bank and financial supervisor," Rice said.

This is true across the range of countries that the independence of the central bank and the financial supervisor is of utmost importance, he asserted.



"We regard it as such and we have to make that statement in the context of a number of countries. So, I think that's probably the best response I can give you," Rice said, responding to a question on the increasing efforts globally to criticise central banks, including the one by the US President Donald Trump in recent weeks.

The row was sparked off last Friday when RBI Deputy Governor Viral Acharya in a hard-hitting speech warned that undermining central bank's independence could be "potentially catastrophic", possible indication of the RBI being pushed to relax its policies ahead of general elections next year.

Source: PTI

JEFF BEZOS SETS NEW WEALTH RECORD, LOSING \$19.2 BILLION OVER TWO DAYS

Jeff Bezos is still the world's richest person, but he's a lot closer to No. 2 Bill Gates than just a few months ago. The Amazon.com Inc. founder lost \$19.2 billion over the past two trading days -- the most ever in that time, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index -- amid a global market sell-off fuelled by fears of further trade tensions. Facebook Inc.'s Mark Zuckerberg held the previous record, set in July, when the social-media giant reported revenue and user growth that missed estimates, lopping \$16.5 billion from his fortune.



Technology stocks led Monday's declines, with the Nasdaq Composite Index sliding to its lowest since April. Shares of Amazon tumbled 6.3 percent, on top of Friday's 7.8 percent drop, leaving Bezos with \$128.1 billion, down from a peak of \$167.7 billion early last month.

The \$8.2 billion hit he took Monday was the biggest by far on the Bloomberg ranking of the world's 500 richest people. Mexican telecom tycoon Carlos Slim's \$2.5 billion drop was the day's second-largest. Gates, the Microsoft Corp. co-founder, lost \$558.3 million and is now worth \$92.8 billion.

Source: Bloomberg

India considers option of selling debt-ridden lender

NEW DELHI (TIP): India is examining options including an outright sale of Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd. (IL&FS), a person with knowledge of the matter said, as the government tries to stem defaults at the lender with \$12.6 billion of debt.

A plan to be presented to a bankruptcy court on Wednesday by the state-appointed board of the lender includes selling the entire stake to a financially strong investor and ensure business continuity, the person said, asking not to be identified as the matter is private. Other options include splitting businesses according to verticals and disposing them off to several buyers or injecting liquidity at group level to avoid an outright sale.

The beleaguered financier hasn't stopped missing payments even after the government sacked the lender's board and pledged to stem defaults. Fixing the cash flow crisis at the company is vital to revive confidence in India's credit markets at a time when Asia's third-largest economy grapples with rising oil prices and a plunging currency. The Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) this month started an investigation into IL&FS.

The plan finalised by the new board led by Asia's richest banker, Uday Kotak will be put up before the National Company Law Tribunal on October 31. The court had approved the government's move to take over the lender and accepted the plea that the move was crucial to protect the financial markets. Finance ministry spokesman DS Malik declined to comment.

Source: Bloomberg

Apple delivers strong profits, but investors punish shares

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): Apple has delivered blockbuster earnings, but saw shares punished after a disappointing holiday season forecast and word that it will stop reporting how many iPhones it sells. The California-based technology giant makes most of its money from iPhones, and sales numbers have been seen as a bellwether of the company's fortunes. Apple shares dove 6.5 percent to \$207.78 in after-market trades following the release of earnings figures for a record-setting September quarter.

The firm said net profit climbed 32 percent to \$14.13 billion on revenue that was up 20 percent to \$62.9 billion with help from growing sales of digital content and services to users and other Apple gadgetry.

"We're thrilled to report another record-breaking quarter that caps a tremendous fiscal 2018, the year in which we shipped our two billionth iOS device, celebrated the 10th anniversary of the App Store and achieved the strongest revenue and earnings in Apple's history," said chief executive Tim Cook.

Source: AFP

Eye Foundation of America (EFA) Receives support of AAPI to Provide Vision Care to Millions in India



A few of the thousands of children treated by the Foundation

CONT'D FROM PAGE 24

Ambassador Program 2 years ago. President Barack Obama presented Dr. Raju with the 2016 President's Lifetime Achievement Award. He was recently inducted into the University of Toledo Global Medical Missions Hall of Fame Class of 2017.

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

Dr. Raju, who has travelled to more than 50 countries to help people with defective vision, says, he not only sees hundreds of patients in a day, but also teaches other eye doctors. He feels that most of his trips are enjoyable working vacations, particularly in India. "With each visit, I get my insights improved," he says. "It is like I am getting a gift. Sometimes trips like this feel better than a holiday."

"As I had said, the farmer I met long ago is the beginning of

this work. Maybe so many friends getting involved in the Foundation's work may be my greatest motivation," says Dr. Raju. "Confidence is that which compels you to do the thing you think you cannot do, but you continue to do it. Many friends gave me the confidence to keep going. Many close friends were peripherally involved with the Foundation initially, but as the work of the Foundation continued, so did their involvement. This gave me incredible confidence."

Recalling how a friend of Dr. Raju had told him that after 20+ years of foundation work, "Raju, I believed in your character. That's why I'm very much part of it," Dr. Raju says, "I was reminded of Abraham Lincoln's quote, "Reputation

and character are two different things. Reputation is your shadow and character is the real you." He states, "People from distance know your reputation, but only close friends know your character. This kind of involvement from close friends maybe one of the biggest motivators for continuing the work of the Foundation."

"Over these years, I read volumes of books by Nani Palkhivala, Mortimer Adler, and some Telugu poets. This also must have motivated me. Finally I will add this- my mother used to say, "Whatever you do, you keep on doing more and more of it."

Doctors in America have too many comforts, he comments. "There may be some emptiness in many of us, there is also an intellectual poverty," he says. "Some of this can be relieved by voluntary service. We have so much potential to help others - and in doing so, we may be helping ourselves much more than others."

With all of Dr. Raju's momentous achievements, he has also ensured that his life's work and vision are self-sustaining. Dr. Raju has passed on his knowledge, plans, and vision to the future leaders of this movement: Dr. Leela Raju, Dr. Raju's daughter and fellow ophthalmologist, is the EFA's Secretary and Coordinator for Education and actively participates in its mission. Her father's humanity and passion stimulate whatever she undertakes, Leela says. "This is not a job for him; it has never been a job," she says. "He does his work with passion and he enjoys it. His enthusiasm and passion are infectious."

He believes in and practices Ayurveda, an ancient Indian health care philosophy that emphasizes a holistic approach in which prevention is stressed to help lessen the need for treatment. "Eating right and exercising are the most important preventative measures according to Ayurveda," says Dr. Raju. "The word 'doctor', in Latin, means teacher. A doctor's primary responsibility is educating the patient," he continues. In West Virginia, Dr. Raju accepts patients that do not have medical insurance and performs surgical procedures that are not covered by insurance.

India and Ghana are actively engaged in avoidable blindness elimination projects with cooperation from their governments. More than 11,560 children received vision screenings in Ghana schools; eye glasses and follow-up care were provided when necessary. Dr. Raju describes with a sense of satisfaction and pride.



Goutami Eye Institute and Hospital in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh, India is a leading eye hospital run by the Eye Foundation of America

Dr. Raju hopes that the AAPI joining and collaborating with successful projects such as the Eye Foundation of America's children's project will provide continuity of care and the mission of AAPI will be realized, benefitting millions who need eyecare.

Praising Dr. Naresh Parikh for his great vision and for seeking collaboration with several individual projects across India by numerous Physicians of Indian Origin, Dr. Raju says, "I dream to do a well-planned mega fundraiser by AAPI for a WORLD WITHOUT CHILDHOOD BLINDNESS." According to Dr. Raju, the first project will be implemented in India. We will reach 100,000 children in remote villages of India in the next 12 to 18 months." Dr. Raju says, "EFA and Goutami Eye Institute have the infrastructure to accomplish this, which could be a model project."

Dr. Raju's charisma and vision inspire the EFA's trainees return to their native countries to prevent and/or alleviate blindness in the field. The execution of his vision, affordable and accessible healthcare, has provided innumerable individuals with the invaluable gift of sight. In children, this gift results in 75 years of a full and productive life. These children, who would be considered a burden to society, are then able to contribute to their families and to society. Never too tired to give his best for preventing, caring, and sustaining the vision for the visually impaired, Dr. Raju says, "Our work is only just beginning."

As one of the Upanishads say:
"YOU ARE WHAT YOUR DEEP DRIVING DESIRE IS
AS YOUR DESIRE IS , SO IS YOUR WILL
AS YOUR WILL IS, SO IS YOUR DEED
AS YOUR DEED IS , SO IS YOUR DESTINY."

For more information on AAPI and the EFA, please visit www.aapiusa.org and www.eyefoundationofamerica.org



American Academy of Ophthalmology Certificate of Appreciation

This certificate is to recognize

Dr. and Mrs. V.K. Raju

FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE

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Rotary appreciation of Mrs. & Dr. V.K. Raju

VEERBHADRA – A FEARFUL AVATAR OF LORD SHIVA

Lord Shiva is one of the main deities of Hinduism, one of the Trimurti Gods along with Vishnu and Brahma. He is worshipped by most Hindus who greatly revere him and are eager to seek his blessings.

Lord Shiva had manifested many times during the course of history and there is ample reference to this all through Indian mythology.

Veerbhadra was a powerful being created from the wrath of Lord Shiva. This manifestation was quite fearsome in appearance and larger than life, while also being more powerful than all the Gods.

Daksha Prajapati was a son of Lord Brahma and the father of many daughters, including Dakshayini or Sati.

Dakshayini had a wish to get married to Lord Shiva but Daksha objected as he didn't respect Lord Shiva as much as the other Gods.

Daksha held a Yagna where he invited all the Devas instead of Lord Shiva, who Daksha considered unsuitable.

Shiva had still arrived at the Yagna with his ganas. He was not greeted by Daksha and Dakshayani couldn't stand this humiliation.

Dakshayini jumped into the sacrificial fire and this angered Lord Shiva. He manifested as a demon named Veerbhadra, destroyed Daksha's Yagna, trampled on Indra, broke Yama's staff and killed Daksha by beheading him.

After this incident, Lord Brahma himself prayed to Lord Shiva to forgive all the Gods and return Daksha's life. Lord Shiva agreed to it and gave back Daksha's life and replaced his head with that of a goat. He also undid all the damage that he had caused.

Then Lord Shiva was invited to the Yagna and all the Gods respected him henceforth, including Daksha. Such is the greatness of Lord Shiva and his Veerbhadra Avatar.

Why Is Lord Shiva Known As Mahakal

Mahakal is an avatar of Lord Shiva who is worshiped primarily at the Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga Temple in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh. It is a form of the Lord which is widely revered by the devotees of Lord Shiva worldwide.

The meaning of 'Kaal' in Hinduism is time and the 'Maha' or greatness of Lord Shiva is thought to be greater than time itself. Lord Shiva is so powerful that the concept of mortal time doesn't affect him in any way. Instead Lord Shiva has the power to end time itself, as he is the divine destroyer of the Universe and all things in it.

It is said that during the incident of Daksha yagna Sati had jumped in the yagna fire when her father Daksha refused Lord Shiva her hand in marriage. This enraged Lord Shiva and he began his Tandav, the dance of death



which threatened to destroy the entire universe. In this form also, Lord Shiva was known as Mahakal.

Another interesting legend behind Lord Shiva being called Mahakal is the story of a Brahmin and his four sons, who were all devoted bhakts of Lord Shiva. Once when they were busy in their penance for Lord Shiva, a demon named Dushan attacked them. Dushan was very powerful as he had gained a boon from Lord Brahma.

Just as Dushan was about to attack the

Brahmins, the earth split open and Lord Shiva manifested before him in his huge form of Mahakal. When Dushan refused to back down, Lord Shiva burnt him to ashes.

Then on the request of the people of Ujjain and the king Chandrasena (who Shiva had also helped), Lord Shiva agreed to stay back as

the swayambhu murthi or lingam of Mahakaleshwar.

Mahakal Shiva who resides in the Mahakaleshwar Temple offers blessings and protection to the people from physical harms and spiritual evils, and to all those who come to visit his sacred shrine throughout the year.

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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."

BANDI CHHOR DIVAS

The Sikh celebration of the return of the sixth Nanak from detention in the Gwalior Fort coincides with Hindu festival of Diwali.

This coincidence has resulted in similarity of celebration amongst Sikhs and Hindus. The Sikhs celebrate this day as Bandi Chhor Divas i.e., "the day of release of detainees", because the sixth Nanak had agreed to his release on the condition that the other fifty-two detainees would also be released. These other fifty-two detainees were the vassal kings who had done something to annoy the emperor.

Emperor Jahangir had imprisoned the sixth Nanak because he was afraid of the Guru's growing following and power. The Sikhs on this day, which generally falls in October-November, hold a one-day celebrations in the Gurdwaras. So in the evening, illuminations are done with Deewé (earthen oil lamps) or candles and fireworks. The celebrations are held both in the Gurdwaras and in homes.

The story of Diwali for the Sikhs is a story of the Sikh struggle for freedom. From the time of Guru Nanak (1469 - 1539), the founder of Sikhism, popular seasonal or folk festivals like the harvest festival of Vaisakhi, or ancient mythological festivals like Holi and Divali, or worship rituals like Aarti, began to take on a new significance for the Guru's students, the Sikhs.

The Guru used these festivals and special days e.g. first day of each lunar month, as symbols or pegs for his teaching themes. And so the Sikhs were slowly diverted from darkness of superstitious ritualism based on fear and ignorance to an enlightened ideology based on reason and belief in One Creator. The enlightened ideology of Guru Nanak gave new significance to ancient festivals like Divali and Vaisakhi. So what about Divali, the festival of lights when, according to Indian lore, Lord Rama returned home after destroying the demon god Ravana who had taken away Rama's wife, Sita?

The story of course, has no significance in the Sikh tradition. However, in the Sikh struggle for freedom from the oppressive Mughal regime, the festival of Divali did become the second most important day after the Vaisakhi festival in April. The Sixth Guru Hargobind, was freed from imprisonment in the famous fort of Gwalior by Emperor Jahangir in October, 1619.

The reason for the young Guru's imprisonment was no more than religious bigotry. The Guru's father, Guru Arjan, had been martyred for the same reason. According to Sikh tradition, the Guru agreed to be freed only if the other Indian chiefs (rajas) imprisoned with him were freed. Jahangir was under pressure from moderate but influential Muslim religious leaders like Hajrat Mian Mir, a friend of the Guru. So he relented grudgingly and ordained, Let those rajas be freed who can hold on to the Guru's coat tails and walk out of prison. He had in mind no more than four or five being freed with the Guru.

However, the Guru was not to be outmanoeuvred in this way. He asked for a special coat to be made with 52 coat tails - same number as the rajas in prison with him! And so the rajas were freed and the Guru became known popularly as the Bandi Chhor (Deliverer from prison). He arrived at Amritsar on the Divali day and the Har Mandar (now known as the Golden Temple) was lit with hundreds of lamps i.e. he was received in the same way as the Lord Rama and the day came to be known as the Bandi Chhor Divas (the day of freedom). Guru



Hargobind reached Amritsar on the eve of Diwali, after his release from Gwalior fort, during the reign of Jahangir.

The People illuminated the Golden Temple and the city splendidly to celebrate the return of their Guru to the city.

Thereafter, Diwali is being celebrated at Amritsar with great pomp and show, and also with a lot of religious fervour. During the fair, religious congregations are held at Manji Sahib, Akal Takhat and Baba Atal which continue for three days. A large number of poets and singers also participate. Recitation of Granth Sahib is done at Darbar Sahib, Akal Takhat and various gurudwaras in the vicinity of Golden Temple.

Early in the morning, pilgrims take a holy dip in the sacred tank, while reciting Japji Sahib and thereafter, they go to the Golden Temple for paying their obeisance. They make offerings of various kinds both in cash and kind, such as flowers, candy-drops and parched-rice grains, but mostly the offerings are of karah parshad, which is prepared and sold to the pilgrims by the management. Circumambulation of the tank is considered sacred by the pilgrims. Illuminations and pyrotechnic display are the unique features of the Diwali celebrations.

A mammoth gathering in the parikarma and on the adjoining buildings witness to their great delight the multicolored lights thrown up in the sky and their reflections in the water of the tank. Chain of the electric lights hang along the causeway and on the Darshani Deorhi.

Small earthen lamps lighted and fed with sarson oil are arranged in lines all around the tank. All buildings in the compound are bedecked with coloured lights. Candles and small earthen lamps fed with pure ghee are floated in the tank. This fair is attended by people in the large numbers who come from far and near.

A large number of visitors take shelter in the verandahs of the various buildings in the premises. All local inns, rest houses and other common places are packed to capacity. The free mess, called Guru Ram Dass Langar, remains open for all. The whole function is organised by Shiromani Gurudwara



Parbandhak Committee. During the fair, qualified doctors render free medical service to the pilgrims. Thenceforth, the Sikh struggle for freedom, which intensified in the 18th Century, came to be centred around this day. In addition to the Vaisakhi day (now in April), when Khalsa, the Sikh nation was formally established by the Tenth Guru Gobind Singh, Divali became the second day in the years when the Khalsa met and planned their freedom strategy.

On the occasion of Bandi Chhor Divas, Sikhs observe a one-day celebrations in the Gurdwaras. In the evening, illuminations are lighted with Deewé (earthen oil lamps) or candles and fireworks are also bursted. Such celebrations are held both in the Gurdwaras and in homes.

Another important Sikh event associated with Diwali is the martyrdom in 1734 of the elderly Sikh scholar and strategist Bhai Mani Singh, the Granthi (priest) of Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple). He had refused to pay a special tax on a religious meeting of the Khalsa on the Divali day. This and other Sikh martyrdoms gave further momentum to the Khalsa struggle for freedom and eventually success in establishing the Khalsa rule north of Delhi. Bhai Mani Singh was a great scholar and he transcribed the final version of Guru

Granth Sahib upon dictation from Guru Govind Singh ji in 1704. He took charge of Harmandir Sahib's management on 1708. Diwali was not celebrated in Golden Temple at that time.

In 1737, he received permission from Mogul emperor of Punjab, Zakaria Khan for celebrating Diwali at Golden Temple for a massive tax of Rs. 5,000 (some authors say it was Rs 10,000). Invitations were sent to the Sikhs all over India to join Bandi Chhor Divas celebrations at Harmandir Sahib. Bhai Singh thought he would collect the tax-money from the Sikhs as subscriptions who would assemble for the purpose of Diwali Celebrations.

But Bhai Mani Singh Ji later discovered the secret plan of Zakaria Khan to kill the Sikhs during the gathering. Bhai Mani Singh Ji immediately sent message to all the Sikhs not to turn up for celebrations. Bhai Mani Singh could not manage to arrange the money to be paid for tax.

Zakaria Khan was not happy about the situation and he ordered Bhai Mani Singh's assassination at Lahore by ruthlessly cutting him limb-by-limb to death. Ever since, the great sacrifice & devotion of martyr Bhai Mani Singh Ji is remembered on the Bandi Chhor Divas (Diwali) celebration.

Bhai Dooj, the festival that is celebrated just one day after the grand Diwali festival celebration is much like the festival of Raksha Bandhan that strengthens the brother-sister bond. It is one of the auspicious and very popular Indian festivals that are celebrated across India with great excitement. For every brother and sister, the day of Bhai Dooj festival celebration comes as a day of opportunity to celebrate their bond of love and care as well as strengthen it by following the auspicious rituals.

The most important ritual of the celebration of Bhai Dooj is the aarti and tika ceremony. On the day of Bhai Dooj sister firstly puts does the aarti of her brother with the holy flame and does the tika on her forehead and then she prays to God for his long and healthy life. This is the way of expressing care and love to brother by a sister. In this return, sisters get a token of love from brothers. It's a Bhai Dooj gift.

Nowhere is the bond of brotherly-sisterly love glorified with such grandeur as in India. Hindus celebrate this special relationship twice every year, with the festivals of Raksha Bandhan and Bhai Dooj.

After the high voltage celebrations of Diwali, the festival of lights and fire-crackers, sisters all over India get ready for 'Bhai Dooj' - when sisters ceremonize their love by putting an auspicious tilak or a vermilion mark on the forehead of their brothers and perform an aarti of him by showing him the light of the holy flame as a mark of love and protection from evil forces. Sisters are lavished with gifts, goodies and blessings from their brothers. Bhai Dooj comes every year on the fifth and last day of Diwali, which falls on a new moon night. The name 'Dooj' means the second day after the new moon, the day of the festival, and 'Bhai' means brother.

Legends

Bhai Dooj is also called 'Yama Dwiteeyaa' as it's believed that on this day, Yamaraj, the Lord of Death and the Custodian of Hell, visits his sister Yami, who puts the auspicious mark on his forehead and prays for his well being. So it's held that anyone who receives a tilak from his sister on this day would never be hurled into hell. According to one legend, on this day, Lord Krishna, after slaying the Narakasura demon, goes to his sister Subhadra who welcomes him the lamp, flowers and sweets, and puts the holy protective spot on her brother's forehead. Yet another story behind the origin of Bhai Dooj says that when Mahavir, the founder of Jainism, attained nirvana, his brother King Nandivardhan was distressed because he missed him and was comforted by his sister Sudarshana. Since then, women have been revered during Bhai Dooj.

In Bengal this event is called 'Bhai Phot'a', which is performed by the sister who religiously fasts until she applies a 'phot'a' or mark with sandal wood paste on her brother's forehead, offers him sweets and gifts and prays for his long and healthy life. Every brother eagerly awaits this occasion that reinforces the bond between brothers and sisters and their affectionate relationship. It's an opportunity for a good feast at the sister's place, coupled with an enthusiastic exchange of gifts, and merriment amid the resounding of conch shells in every Bengali household.

Significance

Like all other Hindu festivals, Bhai Dooj too has got a lot to do with family ties and social attachments. It serves as a good time, especially for a married girl, to get together with her own family, and share the post-Diwali glee. Nowadays, sisters who are unable to meet their brothers send their tika - the spot of protection - in an envelope by post. Virtual tilaks and Bhai Dooj e-cards have made it even easier for brothers and sisters, who're far away from each other, specially remember their siblings on this propitious occasion.

BHAI DOOJ



Uttar Pradesh

In Uttar Pradesh, at first, sisters give a piece of cloth, knotted into a circular shape, full of batashas (sugar balls) to their brothers. This piece of cloth is called as 'aabf'. For each brother, there are two aabf. After all the rituals, sisters apply a tika of roli and rice on the forehead of the brothers and then perform aarti, praying for the long and happy life of their brothers. At last, they offer sweets to them and then the story of Bhai Dooj is narrated.

Bengal

In Bengal this festival is called Bhai Phot'a. On this day, sisters observe fast till the time all the traditional customs have been performed. After this, they apply tika made of sandalwood paste, ghee and kohl (kajal) on their brothers' forehead. Then the aarti is performed and sisters give sweets to their brothers to eat. Kheer and coconut laddus are the traditional sweets which are prepared on this day.

Bihar

In the Bihar, the festival of Bhai Dooj is celebrated in the most unique way. The sisters curse their brothers in order to keep the evil spirits and dangers away from them. At first, they say very bad things to their brothers and then prick their own tongue with a wild prickly fruit as a punishment. By doing this, they ask their brothers to forgive them for the ill behaviour and mistakes which they have done till the date. Besides this, there is a unique custom in which brothers eat grains of bajri with water, from the hands of their sisters.

Punjab

In Punjab, the day after Diwali is celebrated as tika and on this day, sisters make a paste with saffron and rice and apply tika on their brothers' forehead to keep away all the difficulties and dangers from them. After this, they exchange gifts and sweets among each other.



Gujarat

Bhai Dooj in Gujarat is known as Bhai Beej and on this auspicious occasion, sisters get up early in the morning and then the traditional tilak ceremony is held. After this, they perform aarti of their brothers and pray for their good fortune and life. Then they offer sweets to their brothers and in return the brothers bless them and exchange gifts.

Maharashtra & Goa

Marathi communities call this festival as Bhav Bij. On this day, sisters draw a square on the floor in within the boundaries of which the brothers have to sit. After they are seated, it is a custom for to have a bitter fruit named Karith. After this, the rituals and applying the Tilak, traditional sweets such as Shrikhand Puri and Basundi Puri are served.

While Diwali, or the Festival of Lights, may be native to Nepal and India, is it observed and celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs and Jains around the world.

The festival, which usually lasts five days, coincides with Hindu New year, signifying new beginnings.

Around the world, people clean and decorate their homes, light oil lamps called diyas, pray to the Gods and then set off fireworks and enjoy a feast and sweets with their families.

The growing ethnic and cultural diversity of Hindu religion throughout the world provides the opportunity to participate in the celebrations and rituals of Diwali festival that enhances the feelings of being part of a close-knit group of Indians. Most Diwali celebrations around the world focus on family and friends and it is a time to reflect on the past and envision for a future, perhaps, in a world where people live together in harmony.

Outside India also, as Diwali approaches, people clean their home to escape bad luck in the upcoming year and families gather for a feast and stay up late, celebrating with the help of crackers and sweets. They believe that the Hindu goddess of good luck visits homes that are brightly lit. Children make "diyas" which are small clay lamps to light and bring the good luck goddess to their home so they can receive new clothes and toys. One family may have many thousand of these little diyas decorating their home.

Mauritius

Diwali is celebrated with great enthusiasm at Mauritius as this country has great Indian crowd. The Diwali celebrations at Mauritius is as good as in India. The festival of lights-Diwali is celebrated in October/November. Diwali marks the victory of Rama over Ravana and also commemorates Krishna's destruction of the demon Narakasuran. Earthen oil lamps are placed in front of every home turning the island into a fairyland of flickering lights.

Mauritius is a beautiful landmass full of picturesque landscapes and enchanting spots. Mauritius accounts a 63% of Indian majority of which 80% follow Hinduism. Hence, celebration of almost all the Hindu festivals in this island is a common phenomenon. In Mauritius, Diwali celebration is an age-old tradition. Beautiful rows of twinkling candles and lamps of all sorts are lit all over the island to celebrate the return of the hero of the Ramayana, Rama, from his 14 years of exile.

Nepal

Surrounded by majestic Himalayas, Nepal, is a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual society and the only Hindu Kingdom of the world. Hindus in Nepal celebrate the Diwali festival with bright lights, gift exchanges, fireworks, and elaborate feasts to welcome Lakshmi, the goddess of light and wealth. Various houses and shop front in Katmandu, Nepal, displays the bright lights typical of Hindu communities during Diwali.

Diwali is celebrated here with the usual Hindu festivities and rituals. Diwali in Nepal is known as Tihar. Just like most places in India Diwali is celebrated here to honor the goddess of wealth and god of prosperity-Lakshmi and Ganesh respectively. The festival here continues for five days. Every day has its special significance. The first day is dedicated to cows as they cook rice and feed the cows believing that goddess Lakshmi comes on cows. The second day is for Dogs as the Vahana of Bhairava. Preparation of delicious food especially meant for the dog is a typical characteristic of the day. Lights and lamps are lit to illuminate the entire surrounding and some of the specialty items are prepared to mark the third day of the festival.

Australia

Australia the wonderful island country on Indian Ocean has an estimated 100000 Indians

DIWALI AROUND THE WORLD



Diwali fireworks in Melbourne.



Fireworks at South Street Seaport Diwali in New York.

as settled in Australia. Most of them are the follower of the Hindu religion. Though, some of the Indians here are recent arrivals that belong to the affluent sections of the Indian society. Due to the large number of Hindus here, Diwali is one of the major festivals that is celebrated with great enthusiasm. The lightening of lamps and diyas on Diwali is a common practice. However, the non-availability of the appropriate material of or some other reason have influenced the celebrations and has given in the touch of modernity in the celebration of the festival of light.

Malaysia

Malaysia as a country is well known for its diversity. Among diverse culture of Malaysia, Diwali is celebrated in Malaysia by people of all races inhabiting there. Far away in

another part of the world, even though Diwali Festival is not celebrated with all that pomp and gaiety, for Indians it is still a time to take a trip back the memory lane and enjoy the festival days spent back home in India celebrating the grand occasion. It is time to invite the Malays and Chinese to their houses. Its a public holiday in Malaysia and time to visit and pay homage to the elders. However crackers are banned in Malaysia.

The Hindu community of Malaysia constitutes about 8% of its total population. The community celebrates Diwali festival as a symbol of triumph of good over evil. The Malaysian people call Diwali as Hari Diwali. The south Indian tradition of oil bath precedes all the rituals of Diwali Festival. The Diwali celebration includes visits to temples and prayers at household altars. Diwali is celebrated almost all over the Malaysia except in Sarawak & Federal Territory of Labuan.

Leicester

Bright lights, fireworks and chaotic-celebrations - it can only be Diwali. Millions of Hindus, Jains and Sikhs in India and across the world have been marking the annual five-day festival of light this week with traditional prayers, fireworks and a huge amount of feasting. The festival, which coincides with Hindu New Year, involves lighting traditional earthen diyas (candles), decorating houses with colourful rangoli (floor patterns created with coloured rice or powder), and wearing new clothes, often gifts from relatives. Each faith has its own reasons for celebrating Diwali, but the main theme which runs throughout the festival is the triumph of good over evil and light over darkness, shown with huge fireworks displays and by decorating houses with candles and long strings of lights. In India, traditional holiday traffic saw cities across the country draw to a standstill as firecrackers burst overhead, shops buzzed with customers buying gold - Diwali is an auspicious time for new purchases - and children letting off firecrackers in the streets. Sweets are a major part of the festival, and Indian shop windows have been filled with towering arrays of neon-coloured hand-made Diwali specialties such as sutarfeni (sweet shredded dough topped with pistachio nuts). More than 35,000 people attended a Diwali parade on the streets of Leicester city centre October end, an area which is known for some of the largest Diwali festivities outside of India.

United States

Diwali was first celebrated in the White House in 2003 and was given official status by the United States Congress in 2007 by former president George W. Bush. Barack Obama became the first president to personally attend Diwali at the White House in 2009. On the eve of his first visit to India as the president of United States, Obama released an official statement sharing best wishes with "those celebrating Diwali. The Diwali Mela in Cowboys Stadium boasted an attendance of 100,000 people in 2009. In 2009, San Antonio became the first U.S. city to sponsor an official Diwali celebration including a fireworks display; in 2012, over 15,000 people attended. In 2011, The Pierre in New York City, now operated by Tata Group's Taj Hotels, hosted its first Diwali celebration. There are about 3 million Hindus in the United States.

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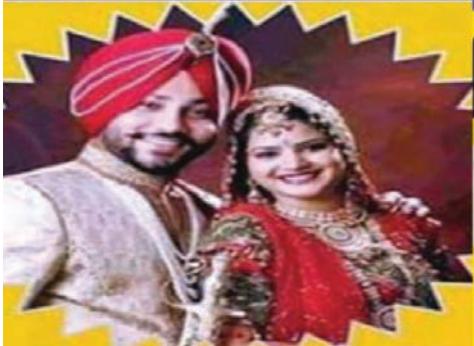
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contd from page 3

Four days before US midterm...

This year's election will break all manner of records in terms of spending as well. According to the Centre for Responsive Politics, approximately \$5.2bn will be spent in this year's midterms.

In one race alone \$93m has been spent to get the Senate seat from Texas. Democrat and current US House Democrat Beto O'Rourke and Republican incumbent Ted Cruz have been trading barbs as poll numbers show a tight race.

In Georgia, Democratic governor candidate Stacey Abrams looks to make history as the first female African-American governor in the country's history. Controversy abounds as opponent Republican Brian Kemp is also the Georgia secretary of state who would be in charge of a possible runoff election should neither candidate receives 50 per cent of the vote.

Barack Obama and Oprah have joined Ms Abrams on the campaign trail and former president Jimmy Carter has even asked Mr Kemp to resign from his current position in light of his candidacy.

In Florida, Andrew Gillum, the current Democratic Mayor of Tallahassee, squares off with Republican Ron DeSantis in an important race for the president as he begins campaigning for his 2020 re-election bid.

Amid the debates on healthcare policy and taxes, a migrant caravan of approximately 7,000 people still 1,000 miles away from the US-Mexico border has been in the headlines on the campaign trail.

US to allow 8 countries to...

India is one of the countries expected to get the exemptions. But senior administration officials refused to spell out the names on Friday.

The list of these exemptions would be announced on Monday, November 5, Pompeo told reporters during a conference call on Iranian sanctions, with US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin.

While the US had previously wanted countries including India to completely halt oil purchases from Iran by November 4 when its full sanctions against Tehran come into force, it seems to have relented considering the havoc the move to completely take out Iranian supplies from the market would have had on prices.

Pompeo said that countries like India, if it gets the exemption, would be asked to bring down their oil imports from Iran to zero in six months' time.

Negotiations are still ongoing, he said explaining the reasons for not revealing the names of the countries that are expected to get exemptions from the US from this latest and so far the toughest American sanctions on Iran.

"We expect to issue some temporary allotments to eight jurisdictions, but only because they have demonstrated significant reductions in their crude oil and cooperation on many other fronts and have made important moves towards getting to zero crude oil importation. These negotiations are still ongoing. Two of the jurisdictions will completely end imports as part of their agreements. The other six will import at greatly reduced levels," Pompeo said.

These economic sanctions are just a part of the US government's total effort to change the behavior of the Iranian regime, he said.

"On November 5th, the United States will re-impose sanctions that were lifted as part of the nuclear deal on Iran's energy, shipbuilding, shipping and banking sectors. These sanctions hit at core areas of Iran's economy. They are necessary to spur changes we seek on the part of the regime," he said.

"In order to maximize the effect of the president's pressure campaign, we have worked closely with other countries to cut off Iranian oil exports as much as possible," Pompeo said.

The expected list of exemptions to eight jurisdictions, that too temporary, is far less than the 20 countries, including India, which were exempted from Iranian sanctions during the previous Obama administration, he said.

"We will have issued, if our negotiations are completed, eight and have made it clear that they are temporary," he said.

"Not only did we decide to grant many fewer exemptions, but we demanded much more serious concessions from these jurisdictions before agreeing to allow them to temporarily continue to import Iranian crude oil. These concessions are critical to ensure that we increase our maximum pressure campaign and accelerate towards zero," Pompeo said.

As a result of the latest sanctions, he said the US expects to have reduced Iranian crude oil exports by more than 1 million barrels even before these sanctions go into effect. "This massive reduction since May of last year is three to five times more than what many analysts were projecting when President Trump announced our withdrawal from the deal

back in May," he said.

"Starting today, Iran will have zero oil revenue to spend on any of these things. Let me say that again: Zero. 100 percent of the revenue that Iran receives from the sale of crude oil will be held in foreign accounts and can be used by Iran only for humanitarian trade or bilateral trade in non-sanctioned goods and services," he said.

Pompeo said the latest US sanctions are targeted at the regime, not the people of Iran who have suffered grievously under this regime.

"It's why we have and will maintain many humanitarian exemptions to our sanctions, including food, agriculture commodities, medicine and medical devices," he said.

India, which is the second biggest purchaser of Iranian oil after China, is willing to restrict its monthly purchase to 1.25 million tons or 15 million tons in a year (300,000 barrels per day), down from 22.6 million tons (452,000 barrels per day) bought in 2017-18 financial year, sources in New Delhi said.

The US will also demand the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) global financial network stop supporting Iranian banks as part of enforcing sanctions over Tehran's nuclear program and alleged support for terrorism.

In May, President Donald Trump pulled the US out of the 2015 landmark Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) terming it "disastrous". Under the Obama-era deal, involving five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany, Iran agreed to stop its nuclear program in exchange for relief from economic sanctions.

After the US' withdrawal from the deal, Trump signed fresh sanctions against Iran and warned countries against any cooperation with Tehran over its controversial nuclear weapons program.

Iran has dismissed these charges and maintains that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. (Source: PTI)

India to be among 3 largest...

four years ago, India has moved from the ninth to sixth position in the global economic landscape.

"Next year, India will become the fifth largest economy," he said, adding he hoped that the country would be among the top three economies of the world in the next few years.

India emerged as the world's sixth largest economy in 2017, surpassing France, and is likely to go past the United Kingdom, which is at the fifth position, according to an analysis of data compiled by the World Bank.

In 2017, India became the sixth largest economy with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$2.59 trillion, relegating France to the seventh position.

The United Kingdom, which is facing Brexit blues, had a GDP of \$2.62 trillion, which is about \$25 billion more than that of India, the data showed.

The US is the world's largest economy with a size of \$19.39 trillion, followed by China (\$12.23 trillion). Japan (\$4.87 trillion) and Germany (USD 3.67 trillion) are at the third and fourth places, respectively.

Referring to India's significant jump in the World Bank's ease of doing business index, Jaitley said it has improved 65 notches to the 77th position during the four years of the NDA government.

He said the Prime Minister has set a target of taking India among the top 50 nations in the World Bank's ease of doing business ranking.

"We are very near the target," Jaitley said, as he criticized the Congress-led UPA government for "policy paralysis" and "corruption", which discouraged domestic as well as foreign investors.

He said during the last five years of the UPA government, inflation averaged around 10.4 per cent, whereas all economic parameters are now stable.

Jaitley further said that Aadhaar, which was criticized by the Opposition, has actually helped the government in saving Rs 90,000 crore annually, which is enough to fund four schemes like Ayushman Bharat.

The minister also said the MSME sector has benefited from implementation of GST, under which taxes were reduced on 334 items in the first year of its rollout. (Source: PTI)

Heather Nauert is Trump's top...

over from Nikki Haley, who surprised White House officials last month when she announced her decision to step down at the end of the year.

People close to the President cautioned that his pick is not final until it is formally announced. The White House declined to comment on the matter. Nauert has been keeping a low profile this week after meeting with Trump on Monday. Two of her daily briefings have been conducted by her deputy.

Speaking at the White House on Thursday, November 1, Trump confirmed that Nauert is "under very serious

consideration" to become the next US ambassador to the UN.

"She's excellent. She's been with us a long time. She's been a supporter for a long time. And she's really excellent," Trump said.

"We'll probably make a decision next week," Trump said in his remarks. "We have a lot of people that want the job and they're a lot of really great people."

Trump has eyed several people to replace Haley, including Ric Grenell, the US ambassador to Germany; Jamie McCourt, the US envoy in Paris; and Kelly Craft, the ambassador in Canada. One person initially considered a leading contender, former deputy national security adviser Dina Powell, withdrew from consideration early in the process. Trump has repeatedly told aides he wanted a woman to fill the role.

Nauert, who came to government from Fox News, served as State Department spokesman for both Rex Tillerson and Mike Pompeo but has enjoyed a closer relationship with Trump's second secretary of state than she did Tillerson, who was privately skeptical of her close ties with the West Wing.

Her elevation to a top diplomatic role underscores the importance Trump has placed on having his top aides also serve as television surrogates. Nauert has briefed regularly from the State Department podium and had a long career in television news before that.

Still, as a diplomat she lacks experience. Previous holders of the UN ambassador position - including current national security adviser John Bolton - came to the role with years of foreign policy experience. Nauert served briefly as Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy from March until October.

Nauert would face what could be a contentious confirmation hearing, with Democrats quizzing her on her qualifications for the post.

Instead, Nauert comes with something perhaps more valuable in the Trump administration: loyalty and a willingness to defend the President. That loyalty has at moments caused friction at the State Department. As Tillerson's relationship with Trump began to deteriorate in his final months, he privately told allies he thought she was more loyal to the West Wing than the State Department. Chief of staff John Kelly informed Tillerson his time in the top diplomatic post was expected to end while on a multi-country sweep through Africa. Trump later announced his firing on Twitter.

The UN ambassador role is viewed by some as a launching point for higher-profile positions. Both Bolton and Susan Rice, who served in the post under President Barack Obama, eventually became White House national security advisers.

The position is based in New York, so is also viewed as having less direct oversight than a high-level post in Washington.

Nauert's move to the United Nations would take her out of the running for other roles in the West Wing, which has struggled at times to fill key positions and went without a communications director for months. Nauert was widely seen as the front-runner to replace Sarah Sanders as White House press secretary when she leaves which she is expected to do in the coming months after more than a year in the role, according to multiple officials.

US makes it tougher for...

the Department of Labor is significant because before sponsoring a foreign worker for the H-1B visa, the company needs to get its labor application approved by it.

The department certifies that there are no domestic workers for that particular position and as such the company can hire a foreign guest worker under the H-1B visa category.

The Labor Condition Application form updates will now require employers to provide more detailed information about H-1B worker employment conditions, including disclosing all places of employment for H-1B workers, including periods of short duration and providing the estimated number of H-1B workers at each place of intended employment.

It also requires the clear identification of secondary entities which are using H-1B workers and seeks H-1B dependent employers which are claiming an exemption solely on the basis of education, such as a master's degree, to provide documentation of the degree.

Under the new forms, employers also need to give an estimate of the total number of foreign nationals already working at each location listed in the application.

Further, revisions to the worker complaint form include added data fields designed to better describe the nature of an alleged program violation, the department said in a statement on Tuesday. To allow appropriate time for transition, the new forms will be made available for use in the coming weeks. An announcement will be made on the Office of Foreign Labor Certification's website identifying the date when they will be made available, it said.

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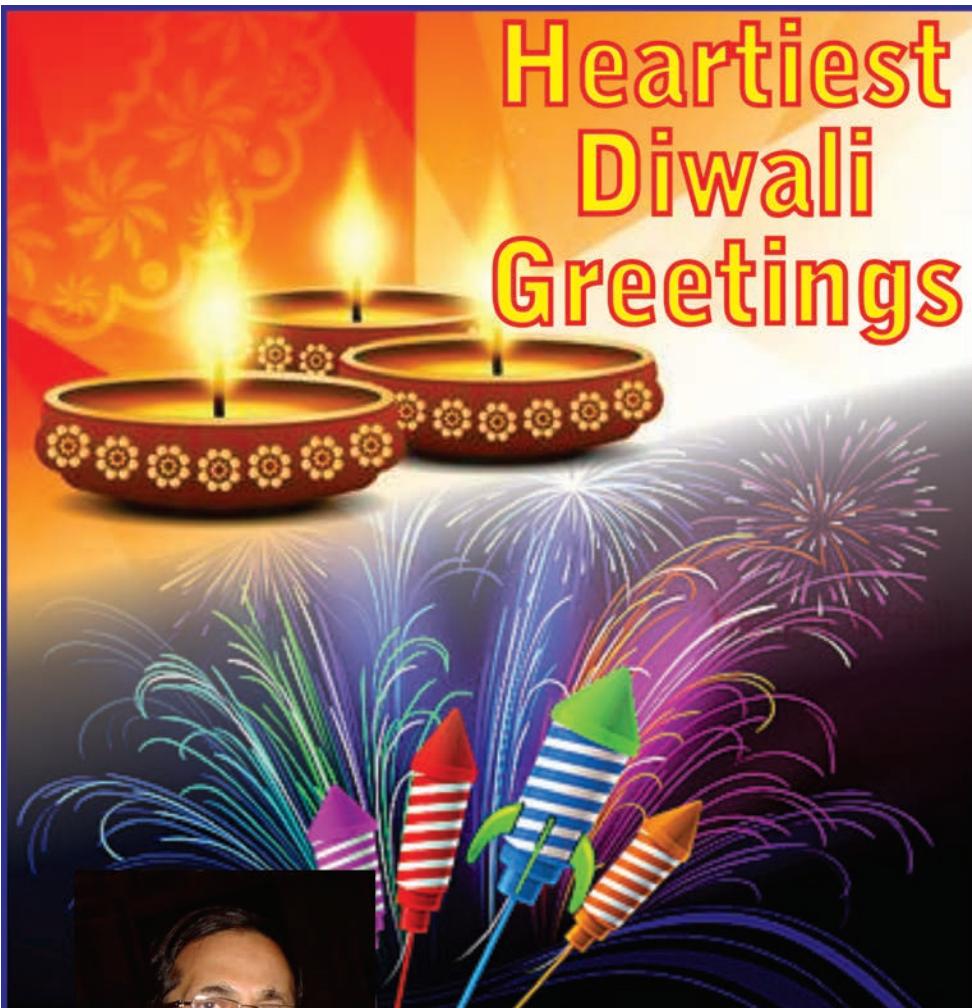
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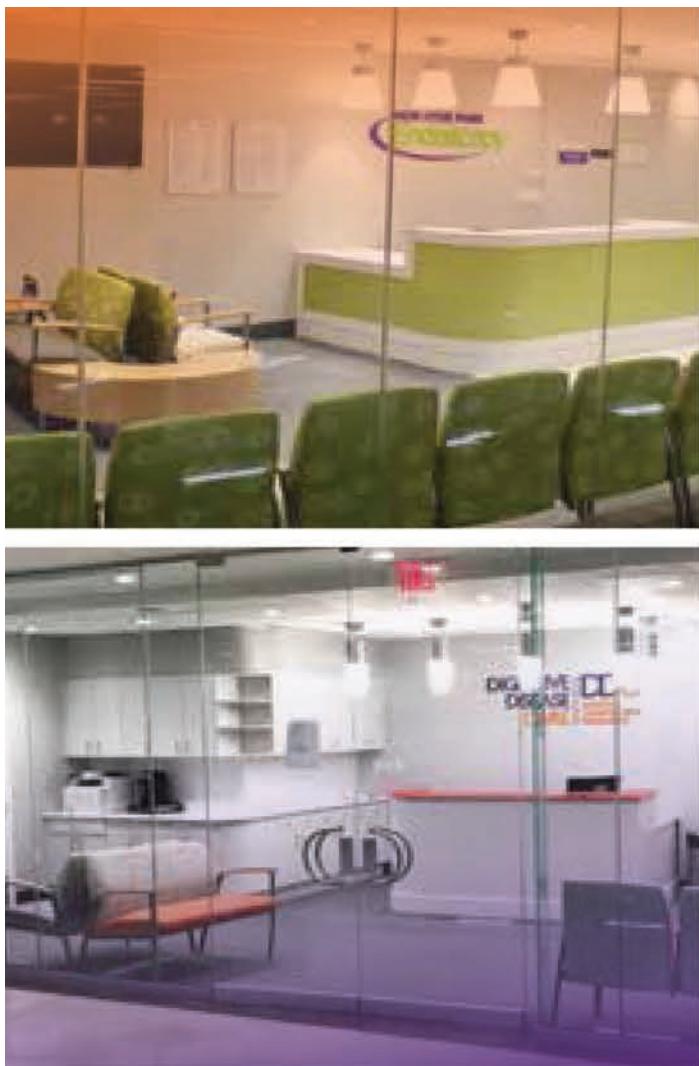
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India beat West Indies by 9 wickets to bag series 3-1



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (TIP):

Left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja led India's brilliant bowling performance in a lopsided nine-wicket win against West Indies to wrap up a 3-1 series victory in the final ODI here on November 2. Jadeja, who turns 30 next month, picked up 4/34 as the West Indies batting line-up capitulated for 104 inside 32 overs after captain Jason Holder won the toss and opted to bat.

Rohit Sharma made 63 not out and captain Virat Kohli remained unbeaten on 33 as the hosts chased down the target in less than 15 overs, having lost Shikhar Dhawan early.

India opener Dhawan's run of poor scores continued as he chopped on a delivery from Thomas to be out for four,

going through the five-match series without a half-century. Any semblance of hope West Indies had was over when Holder allowed an edge from Kohli to burst through his hands at first slip when the batsman, who scored three consecutive centuries in the series, had made only four. Sharma also got a reprieve when he was caught off a Thomas no-ball on 18.

The duo made the most of their reprieves once they had negotiated the early pace barrage. Taking the attack to the visitors, Rohit pulled Thomas for a four to show his intent and then launched the bowler for a straight six in his next over. He hit three more sixes and five fours in his 56-ball innings to bring up his 37th ODI half-century after

scoring 162 in the previous match in Mumbai. Kohli also dealt largely in boundaries, hitting six fours in his 29-ball knock.

West Indies' batting again suffered a meltdown after their below-par performance in Mumbai, when they were bundled out for 153. India's fast bowlers struck early, sending back Kieran Powell and Shai Hope without scoring inside the first two overs.

The touring side never recovered from the early jolts with only three batsmen managing to make double figures against the relentless Indian attack. The two sides will next contest a three-match T20 series, starting at Kolkata's Eden Gardens on Sunday.

Source: Reuters

DHONI STILL INTEGRAL PART OF THE TEAM, SAYS VIRAT



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (TIP): India captain Virat Kohli on Thursday reiterated that MS Dhoni remains an integral part of the ODI team and the veteran wicketkeeper batsman decided not to play the upcoming T20s only to make way for Rishabh Pant. "I think selectors have already addressed this if I'm not wrong. And he's been spoken to, firstly... So, I don't see any reason why I should be sitting here and explaining that. I think the selectors have come out and explained exactly what happened," said Kohli.

"I was not part of that conversation so... It is what the selectors explained. I think people are putting too much variables into the situation, which is not the case. He's still a very integral part of this team and he just feels that in the T20 format, someone like Rishabh can get more chances."

Dhoni has been dropped for the upcoming T20 series against West Indies and Australia and there is a possibility that he would never again play for India in the shortest format. "He anyway plays the ODIs for us regularly, so from that point of view, he's only trying to help the youngsters," Kohli said.

'Rayudu, Khaleel positives from series'

On the positives from the West Indies series, Kohli said he was happy with the way Ambati Rayudu played at No.4, and how the young Khaleel Ahmed bowled. "Those two things are something we were looking for a while; someone to back up Bhuvneshwar and Umesh. A left-arm seamer gives you variation in the attack. Khaleel was really good and Rayudu, of course, grabbed his opportunities," he added.

Source: PTI

Djokovic stunned by return to top spot



PARIS (TIP): Novak Djokovic described his return to the world number one ranking as "a phenomenal achievement" on Thursday as he recorded yet another personal landmark in reaching the Paris Masters quarter-finals.

Djokovic will replace Rafael Nadal as the world's top player on Monday after a two-year absence.

The 31-year-old's elevation is remarkable as it comes just five months after he slumped to 22 in the world -- his lowest ranking for 12 years -- when he was knocked out of the French Open in the quarter-finals.

Since then, however, he has won Wimbledon and the US Open, taking his Grand Slam tally to 14, winning 20 consecutive tour-level matches for the sixth time, and 29 of his past 30 encounters.

"Reflecting on what I've been through in the last year, it's quite a phenomenal achievement," said Djokovic after making the quarter-finals in Paris when Bosnian opponent Damir Dzumhur retired trailing 6-1, 2-1.

"I'm very, very happy and proud about it. Five months ago, it was highly improbable considering my ranking and the way I played and felt on the court."

"I'll probably be able to speak more profoundly about it when the season is done and hopefully if I get to finish as No. 1."

Victory on Thursday meant that Djokovic

has also extended his sequence of consecutive winning sets to 30, passing his previous best mark of 29 from 2015.

The four-time Paris champion, who next

faces Marin Cilic in the last eight on Friday, was guaranteed a return to the ranking summit when Nadal withdrew from Paris with an abdominal injury on Wednesday.

"It's not the end of the season. Rafa obviously is struggling with injuries since the US Open. But the race is still there," added Djokovic.

"Roger (Federer) is in the race. Rafa is in the race. It depends who is going to play the ATP Finals in London. So as I said, I can't be too ecstatic about it."

Cilic, the fifth seed, secured his quarter-final ticket with a 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 defeat of Grigor Dimitrov.

Cilic fired 29 winners to advance to the last eight in the French capital for the third straight year.

The win also improved the Croat's prospects of making the ATP Finals in London starting on November 11.

"I am very close to London, to securing my spot mathematically," said Cilic, who is part of the Croatia team facing France in the Davis Cup final at the end of this month.

"In the next match against Novak it will be another big challenge. (It will be) great to play him again."

Cilic, who has beaten Djokovic just twice in 17 meetings, ended reigning ATP Finals champion Dimitrov's season.

Djokovic and Cilic were joined in the quarter-finals by Karen Khachanov who saved two match points against John Isner on his way to defeating the eighth-seeded American 6-4, 6-7 (9/11), 7-6 (10/8).

Source: AFP

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