

## Manjit Singh GK resigns as DSGMC president



DSGMC president Manjit Singh GK addressing the media in Delhi on Thursday, December 6  
Photo / Courtesy Tribune- Manas Ranjan Bhui

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Under fire over corruption allegations, Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee president Manjit Singh GK resigned from the post on Thursday, December 6. Other members of the executive committee, including general secretary Manjinder Singh Sirsa, have also resigned *contd on page 32*

## George H.W. Bush Laid to Rest Next to Wife Barbara and Daughter Robin at his Presidential Library and Museum in College Station, Texas

**HOUSTON (TIP):** Following his second funeral service on Thursday, December 6 morning, the former president was buried at the family gravesite beside his wife of 73 years, Barbara Bush, who died in April at the age of 92, and their daughter Robin, who died of leukemia in 1953 when she was only three.

After a state funeral on Wednesday in Washington that was attended by the country's five living presidents and foreign dignitaries, Bush's flag-draped coffin was flown to Houston. *contd on Page 32*

*After four days of memorials and ceremonies in his honor, George H.W. Bush was laid to rest at his Presidential Library and Museum in College Station, Texas, on Thursday, December 6.*



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## The Chatwal Lodge Commences Construction with Ceremonial Groundbreaking in Rural Bethel, NY

Five-star luxury resort to anchor revitalization of iconic Catskill Mountains; opening 2020

**BETHEL, NY :** Developed by Dream Hotel Group and designed by Nunzio Marc DeSantis Architects, The Chatwal Lodge will be a driving force in the ongoing restoration and revitalization of New York's famed Catskill Mountains. Nestled among 26 acres along the wooded shores of the 1,000-acre Toronto Reservoir, the five-star *contd on Page 20*

*The groundbreaking ceremony of Chatwal Lodge took place on Wednesday, December 5. Hospitality Moghul Sant Chatwal, Chairman Dream Hotel Group at the Groundbreaking for \$50M Chatwal Lodge five star luxury retreat in Sullivan County, upstate New York, with his executives and guests Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia*



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# Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of India offer an attractive and conducive environment to foreign investors: Jaitley



Consul General of India in New York Sandeep Chakravorty giving his remarks

**NEW YORK CITY (TIP):** India, among the fastest growing emerging economies in the world, is likely to maintain the "high growth rate" of 7-8 per cent over the next decade, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said emphasizing that landmark reforms such as the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code offer an attractive and conducive environment to foreign investors to come to India.

"Unquestionably it has now been established over the last few years that India is a fast growing economy, faster than some of its contemporaries amongst the emerging economies and my own view is that India,

over the next decade or so, is likely to maintain this high growth rate of at least 7-8 per cent," Jaitley said, giving the inaugural address through video conferencing at the 'Conference on Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code- A New Paradigm for Stressed Assets' at the Indian Consulate General here.

The conference, attended by Principal Economic Advisor in the Ministry of Finance Sanjeev Sanyal, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India Chairman M S Sahoo and Consul General Sandeep Chakravorty, industry analysts, investors and policy experts, was organized by



Finance Minister of India, Arun Jaitley addressing the gathering via video.

Photos / Courtesy Consulate General of India

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in partnership with the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India and the Consulate General of India in New York.

Jaitley said the seven per cent economic growth rate by Indian standards is now considered to be the "lower end of the moderate growth rate. Our aspiration is to

touch and cross that 7 per cent."

Highlighting the investment opportunities in India through the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) process, Jaitley said given the future potential of the Indian economy, the fair manner in which the IBC is now proceeding, "it's a great opportunity as far as investors are concerned and therefore

*contd on Page 6*



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# India and Singapore in collaboration with UNICEF organize World Toilet Day



Photo / Jay Mandal-On Assignment

Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, addresses during the commemoration of the 5th World Toilet Day at the United Nations in New York, November 19.

**UNITED NATIONS (TIP):** India and Singapore in collaboration with UNICEF, organized the 5th World Toilet Day at the United Nations in New York, November 19.

Toilets save lives, because human waste spreads killer diseases. World Toilet Day is about inspiring action to tackle the global sanitation crisis.

The world is not on track to reach Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6): to ensure availability and sustainable management of sanitation and water for all by 2030. Today, 4.5 billion live without a safe

toilet and 892 million people still practice open defecation.

The impact of exposure to human faces on this scale has a devastating impact upon public health, living and working conditions, nutrition, education and economic productivity across the world.

SDG 6 aims to ensure that everyone has a safe toilet and that no-one practices open defecation by 2030. Failure to achieve this goal risks the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2018 Theme: When Nature Calls



Ambassador Burhan Gafoor, Permanent Representative of Singapore to the United Nations, addresses during the commemoration of 5th World Toilet Day at the United Nations in New York, November 19.

Photo / Jay Mandal-On Assignment



Kelly Ann Naylor, Associate Director UNICEF WASH, addresses during the commemoration of 5th World Toilet Day at the United Nations in New York, November 19. Photo / Jay Mandal-On Assignment

## Community Reception to Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard



**NEW YORK CITY (TIP):** Four term Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard was in town, December 4. A reception in her honor was organized, with a couple of community members around to receive her. Consul General of India in New York Sandeep Chakravorty also met the Congresswoman. She was introduced by Swatick Majumdar (in Blue Jacket) There was a Q&A session for about 40 mins, before she left.

Photos / Jay Mandal-on assignment

India's Consul General in New York Sandeep Chakravorty (right) meeting with Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard (left)



Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard (seated) with the community members

## Deputy Consul General Shatrughan Sinha attends Economic Summit in Columbus

**COLUMBUS, OH (TIP):** Shatrughan Sinha, Deputy Consul General, attended the 2018 Economic Summit organized by the Asian American Commerce Group in Columbus, Ohio, November 29. He spoke about investment opportunities, economic reforms and the business environment in India. Photos / Courtesy Consulate General of India, New York



DCG Shatrughan Sinha speaking at the economic summit, November 29.



A view of the gathering

## Indian American Pediatrician named to Wisconsin Governor Elect's Health Policy Advisory Council



*Dr. Dipesh Navsaria has been named by Wisconsin Gov-elect Tony Evers and Lt. Gov.-elect Mandela Barnes to their Health Policy Advisory Council*

**WISCONSIN (TIP):** Indian American Dr. Dipesh Navsaria has been named by Wisconsin Gov.-elect Tony Evers and Lt. Gov.-elect Mandela Barnes to their Health Policy Advisory Council, among others.

Navsaria is a pediatrician at UW Health, as well as a faculty member at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

He earned his medical degree at the University of Illinois College of Medicine and completed his residency at UW Hospitals and Clinics in Madison, Wisconsin.

On Twitter, Navsaria said that he was honored "to be asked to serve the people of Wisconsin" and that this is just "a short-term, volunteer, advisory role."

According to a press release, the council will bring experienced voices from around the state to work with the transition team on health care issues, advising them on policy matters relating to the Department of Health Services, Office of the Commissioner of Insurance, the Department of Employee Trust Funds, and numerous state boards focused on health care.

## Indian American Dr. Sumanta Chaudhuri Named Chief Medical Officer of KPC's Hemet and Menifee Hospitals

**HEMET, CA (TIP):** Indian American Dr. Sumanta Chaudhuri has been appointed as Chief Medical Officer for Hemet Valley Medical Center and Menifee Valley Medical Center according to KPC's official announcement. Hemet Valley Medical Center and Menifee Valley Medical Center are two of seven hospitals affiliated with KPC's southern California-based health system.

A graduate of Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, Dr. Sumanta Chaudhuri most recently served as Program Director of the Transitional Year Internship for graduate medical residents at Hemet Valley Medical Center.

In addition, Dr. Chaudhuri served as the Associate Program Director of the Internal Medicine Residency Program and Director of the Peri-Operative Clinic of the Eye Institute at the Medical College of Wisconsin. Was selected as the Associate Program Director of the Internal Medicine Residency Program at Riverside



*Dr. Sumanta Chaudhuri has been appointed as Chief Medical Officer for Hemet Valley Medical Center and Menifee Valley Medical Center*

Community Hospital and served as Medical Director for local Independent Physician Associations and Hospitalist groups.

"Dr. Sumanta Chaudhuri brings with her a demonstrated track record of success, skill, passion, and expertise in healthcare through her clinical and academic credentials that are a tremendous benefit to the KPC health system and the communities we serve," said Peter Baronoff, CEO of KPC Health.

"I am honored to have this opportunity to serve as Chief Medical Officer for Hemet Valley Medical Center and Menifee Valley Medical Center and will continue to pursue my lifelong goal of supporting high quality and accessible healthcare for our patients and their families," said Dr. Chaudhuri.

KPC operates a group of integrated healthcare delivery systems consisting of acute care hospitals, Independent Physician Associations, medical groups, urgent care facilities, and various fully integrated multi-specialty medical facilities throughout the western United States.

## Indian American Former CEO of Detroit-Based Technology Company Sentenced to One Year in Prison for Bribery

**DETROIT (TIP):** The former chief executive officer of FutureNet Group Inc., an information technology company, was sentenced, December 3, to 12 months in prison followed by one year of supervised release and a fine in the amount of \$10,000 for his role in orchestrating a scheme to bribe an official from the City of Detroit to obtain benefits for FutureNet.

Assistant Attorney General Brian A. Benczkowski of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and Special Agent in Charge Timothy Slater of the FBI's Detroit Division made the announcement.

Parimal D. Mehta, 55, of Northville, Michigan, previously pleaded guilty to one count of federal program bribery before U.S. District Judge Robert H. Cleland of the Eastern District of Michigan.

According to admissions made in connection with his plea, from 2009 through August 2016, Mehta hand-delivered more than \$6,500 to Charles L. Dodd, the former Director of Detroit's Office of Departmental Technology Services, including two cash bribes paid in the restroom of a Detroit-area restaurant in 2016. Dodd previously pleaded guilty to bribery and was sentenced to 20 months in prison on Sept. 11, 2018.

Mehta admitted that he sought preferential treatment for FutureNet in exchange for the bribes he paid to Dodd. Among other things, Mehta asked Dodd to cause FutureNet to be selected to fill open positions for contract personnel and to implement particular technological projects in various city departments. Mehta also asked Dodd to supply him with confidential information regarding Detroit's internal operations, including information regarding Detroit's internal budgets for particular technology projects and personnel, which would benefit FutureNet in its dealings with Detroit.

The FBI's Detroit Division investigated the case. Deputy Chief Robert J. Heberle and Trial Attorney James I. Pearce of the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section are prosecuting the case. (Source: DOJ)

## Indian American Microsoft AI executive Joseph Sirosh joins Compass



*Joseph Sirosh has joined Compass as its Chief Technical Officer (CTO)*

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Indian-origin artificial intelligence (AI) expert Joseph Sirosh has joined Compass as its Chief Technical Officer (CTO) as the American real estate technology company stepped up its efforts to ease sale and purchase of houses in the United States. In his new role, Sirosh will lead the company's engineering team and help in developing new AI-powered products for the New York-based firm's real estate ecosystem. In a tweet, Sirosh said that he was "super excited" to join Compass. "I'm super excited to join Compass! It's bringing agents and technology to empower us in one of the most stressful & consequential transactions of our lives - buying or selling a home. One of the fastest growing platforms that I know, and an inspiring and diverse leadership," he said. Sirosh was associated with Microsoft for five years prior to which he was with Amazon.

Compass also welcomed Sirosh for his new role in the company. "AI, machine learning, and cloud platform expert Joseph Sirosh has joined Compass as CTO! Formerly CTO of AI at Microsoft and VP of the Global Inventory Platform at Amazon, he will lead our engineering team as we develop new AI-powered products for our real estate ecosystem," the twitter handle of Compass said in a tweet. Born in Kerala, Sirosh is an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Technology-Madras and worked with Amazon for nine years as CTO.

## Indian American among Six Area Doctors Charged in Connection with \$464 Million Health Care Fraud

### Scheme Involved Unnecessary Injections and Unlawfully Prescribed Opioids

**WARREN, MICHIGAN(TIP):** A grand jury returned an indictment Tuesday that charges six doctors as part of an investigation into a \$464 million health care fraud scheme that involved over 13 million unlawfully prescribed opioid prescription drugs, United States Attorney Matthew Schneider announced December 6. Schneider was joined in the announcement by Special Agent in Charge Lamont Pugh III of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General's (HHS-OIG) Chicago Regional Office and Special Agent in Charge Timothy R. Slater of the FBI's Detroit Division.

The 56-count indictment charges that Dr. Rajendra Bothra, 77, of Bloomfield Hills, owned and operated a pain clinic in Warren, Michigan that sought to bill insurance companies for the maximum number of services and procedures possible with no regard to the patients' needs. Dr. Eric Backos, 65, of Bloomfield Hills; Dr. Ganiu Edu, 50, of Southfield; Dr. David Lewis, 41, of Detroit; Dr. Christopher Russo, 50 of Birmingham; and Dr. Ronald Kufner, 68 of Ada, all

worked at the clinic in varying capacities but each prescribed opioid pain medication to induce patients to come in for office visits. Once there, in order to receive the highly addictive opioid prescriptions, patients were forced to undergo ancillary services, such as painful facet joint and facet block injections

"The damage that opioid distribution has done to our community and to the United States as a whole has been devastating," said U.S. Attorney Schneider. "Healthcare professionals who prey on patients who are addicted to opioids in order to line their pockets is particularly egregious. We will continue to prosecute such individuals who choose to violate federal law and their ethical oaths."

"Our enforcement actions underscore the commitment of the FBI and our partners to investigate vigorously physicians who use opioid prescriptions to induce patients to submit to unnecessary medical procedures," said Timothy R. Slater, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Detroit Division.

*Read full story on [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)*



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# NYC Public Advocate Candidate Melissa Mark-Viverito Hosts Ethnic and Community Media



Melissa Mark Viverito  
speaks with media



Melissa with mediapersons

**NEW YORK CITY (TIP):** Just days following the launch of her campaign, candidate Melissa Mark-Viverito reached out to ethnic and community media for an informal exchange of information. Gathered at Manhattan Neighborhood Network El Barrio Firehouse with close to 20 news outlets, including Chinese, Arab, Korean, Filipino, African, and Latino, she said, "Your being here today is a reflection of what my campaign for public advocate is all about." She added, "[As Speaker], it was a priority to ensure that us, as a legislative body, were accountable to the diverse constituencies across the city ... it was a priority of the speakership and of my leadership. When I decided to run for Public Advocate that is something that I carried over."

Mark-Viverito says she will use the bully pulpit provided by the position to be a voice around the frustration that all New Yorkers have about our public transit system and public housing. "We have close to half a million New Yorkers that live in this

important affordable housing that is literally falling apart around us." District 11, which she represented as a City Council member, has the most public housing in the country. "There was a great deal of energy put into striking deal with Amazon, where is the energy to address these issues?" She expressed great concern at talk of NYCHA possibly being placed under federal receivership, controlled by an administration she sees as "an all-time assault not only on immigrant communities but communities of color and low-income communities."

She views the lack of investment in infrastructure as a crisis that puts at risk the economic survival of the City. "We are talking about billions of dollars. Our first priority needs to be how to get the subway up to speed," she says. Last year an average of 5.7 million people used the subways each weekday and faced daily breakdowns or delays getting to work or to school. Improving the bus system is an area she believes is overlooked. "The fact that in 2018 we are still

talking about congestion pricing is outrageous. We have seen how it works in other cities."

Asked if the City could push back on the Public Charge, federal legislation currently under discussion that could make very difficult for immigrants to obtain or keep their green card if they use social services -- 75,000 to 475,000 New Yorkers could be affected -- Mark-Viverito observed, "People think that immigration issues only get resolved at federal level, but there are things that cities and states can do through local law to protect communities. We need to figure out creatively what can we do to protect ourselves. As a legislator the way to be effective is to make yourself available to the constituents you represent; they sometimes bring to your attention issues of great concern; getting ICE out of Rikers came out of conversations with the community. Here is an example. We need to stand united to figure out how to push back, but it is hard, it is a very scary time."

Mark-Viverito is known for her advocacy around immigration matters, and criminal justice reform, two of many issues of interest to her. However, she wants her role of public advocate to be one that is engaging for the constituencies she seeks to represent so that they are able to define for her how best they think this office can serve them.

"I am here to present why I believe I am the best candidate for this position. My track record across the years not only as a legislator but also as an activist speaks very strongly to being a coalition builder, of being one that aggressively fights against inequity, and tries to figure out how government can be more responsive to solve some of those inequity issues, to chip away at the systemic racism that exists. So that's the type of advocacy that I will bring to this position. As a woman, as someone who lives in the city of NY, representation matters and the fact that after Tish leaves, we will not have a woman in citywide governance is problematic and so as a constituent that matters to me."

contd from page 2

## Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of India offer an attractive and conducive environment to foreign investors: Jaitley

those seriously thinking about investment in India, there can't be a better opportunity than the present one which is being offered through the IBC process itself. This is the right time and right place to be in India for these kinds of investments."

He noted that about 1200 applications have been filed as far as resolution under the IBC are concerned and about 1000 cases are pending. This means that over the next few months these assets will go in for a bidding process and it's a great opportunity to come

and look at these assets, he said.

Jaitley also pointed out that a Large number of those who are bidding for the assets are domestic investors, but this is a great opportunity in India for investors to come and bid for these assets.

"The number of assets that are going for takeover through the IBC process is extremely large. Inevitably seeing the attractiveness of the proposal, I think it is inevitable that Foreign investors would have a lot of interest as far as many of these projects are concerned. This also then would be directly related to how we see the Indian economy over the next 1-2 decades," he said.

Jaitley stressed that even though it has been a little less than 2 years since the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of India became operational, it was anticipated that in the initial stages there will be some teething troubles.

"But I must confess that it's moved on and its effectiveness has proved far better than what I had anticipated. Our experience of the last two years indicate that a large number of cases have resulted in a situation where the

lender-borrower relationship in India has now significantly changed," he said.

Through various stages of the IBC process, including the Committee of Creditors, Jaitley said the government has made sure that it maintains an "arms-length distance" from this process, which is governed by regulation and rules. "The government has no favorites in the case of any bidding process. It has been demonstrated in all the cases which have happened," he said.

"The entire process has resulted in an early harvest as far as the IBC is concerned. The only downside has been that in some of the cases because of appeals and counter-appeals and litigations the process has got somewhat delayed. But then the Supreme Court has stood up to the occasion," he noted.

Jaitley also understood that this reform has presented a great opportunity as far as entrepreneurship in India is concerned and a large number of investors have been coming in, showing a lot of interest, then bidding and counter bidding so that they are able to get hold of the companies itself.

"The other unintended consequence of this

has been that post the IBC becoming operational, a very large number of potential debtors who fear that they are about to touch or cross the red line after which they will be in the NCLT (National Company Law Tribunal) are now refraining themselves from becoming defaulters. They are borrowing, they are bringing in partners, but they are making sure that they don't cross the red line," he said adding that as a result of this even without resorting to the IBC process, "the mere danger that you may get into that process itself is resulting in a lot of recoveries for the banks and other creditors."

Jaitley expresses satisfaction that the government's experience with regard to IBC so far has been extremely good and even though it had anticipated many more roadblocks in the initial years of bringing the code, "in my own assessment it has been far smoother than what I had anticipated.

"In the coming months and years, because the initial law itself has been laid down, I expect this process to be much more expeditious than what it has been in the past."

(Source: PTI)

## Hindi Manch Rashtriya Mahotsav organized in Boston : Consul Jaideep Chola Inaugurated



**BOSTON (TIP):** Consul Jaideep Chola inaugurated and attended the three-day Hindi Manch Rashtriya Mahotsav, organized by New England Hindi Manch from Nov.30 to Dec.2, 2018 in Boston, Massachusetts.

The event was kickstarted with a musical play on the life of Rani Lakshmbai and a Kavi Sammelan, which was attended by renowned poets who included Aalok Srivastava and veteran actress Deepti Naval, who recited some of her poems from the collection Lamha. Various cultural activities, including plays, singing competitions were organized over the next two days. The event was well attended by more than 3000 people of Indian origin, including some prominent Hindi scholars

*Consul Jaideep Chola lights the lamp to inaugurate the Mahotsav*



*Veteran actress Deepti Naval and Consul Jaideep Chola pose for a photograph*

## Gandhi@150 Interfaith dialogue: Deputy Consul General Shatrughan Sinha addresses



*DCG Shatrughan Sinha giving his remarks*



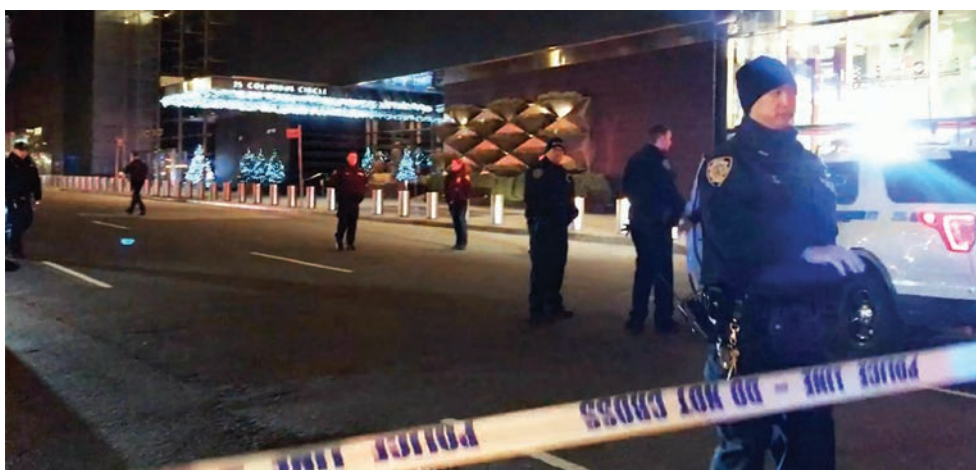
**HUNTINGTON, NY (TIP):** As part of the Gandhi@150 celebrations, an interfaith dialogue was organized at Huntington, New York.

Shatrughan Sinha, Deputy Consul General attended the event and spoke about Mahatma Gandhi's message on communal harmony and the need for intercultural dialogue.

The event was attended by representatives of various faiths and community.

*A view of the gathering*

## New York Police give all clear after CNN bomb threat



*NYPD close off the front area of the Time Warner Building after a bomb threat in New York on Dec. 6, 2018. MSNBC Screenshot*

**NEW YORK CITY (TIP):** CNN's broadcast offices in New York City were evacuated by police on Thursday, December 6 night for more than an hour after a caller said there were five bombs hidden in the Time Warner Center Building, disrupting the broadcaster's schedule, police said. The "all clear" was given by police shortly before midnight (0500 GMT) after several dozen police officers searched the building floor by floor.

Nothing suspicious was found, CNN reported.

All vehicle and pedestrian traffic had been blocked by police, said New York Police Detective Hubert Reyes.

The call came in after 10 p.m., and the news network briefly switched to pre-taped programming, before cutting to live shots of newscasters, employees and onlookers standing behind police barricades outside the building.

The network's bureau at the Time Warner Center was evacuated in October after a package containing an explosive device, addressed to former CIA Director John Brennan, was discovered.

## IOC Leaders from US hit Campaign Trail in India

**NEW YORK (TIP):** At separate meetings with Congress Party leaders, New York based Mohinder Singh Gilzian, President of Indian Overseas Congress, USA briefed some of the senior Congress Party Leaders in New Delhi on the IOC team effort on behalf of the Party candidates in their respective election bids in Rajasthan and Telangana. He along with many IOC leaders from the United States has already spent weeks accompanying the Congress candidates in these election-bound states, conducting meetings, holding press conferences and meeting with individual voters on the ground.

Mohinder Singh Gilzian visited Anand Sharma, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Department of the AICC, Ashok Gehlot, Ex-Chief Minister of Rajasthan and General Secretary of the AICC, Ahmed Patel, and Treasurer of the AICC and gave an account on the work Overseas Congress members have done during the current campaign. He informed them that the Congress party expectations of victory are very high, and the party apparatus is very much in top gear throughout the campaign period. He was very encouraged and pleased with the great response they received from the voters who recalled the significant advancement in education, employment, industries and infrastructure by Congress Party when they were in power. Voters desperately wanted a change from the present regime, and they were pleased that the Congress Party offered better options dealing with pressing issues of the day.

The IOC delegation was guided and directed by Mr. Himanshu Vyas, AICC Secretary in charge of the Overseas Congress Department of AICC. The delegation included Rajeswar Gangasani Reddy (Chairman, NRI Telangana election committee Chair), Pradeep Samala (Co-Chair), Rajender Dichpally (General Secretary), Zameel Roydass and a number of others from various States in the U.S.





## GUEST COMMENT

### Agusta Westland bribery: Can CBI make the rare catch sing?

Christian Michel fought long and hard to avoid a deportation to India. He was earlier successful in preventing a court appearance in Italy where the case against the chief of Agusta Westland for bribing Indian officials and politicians fell through for want of sufficient proof. Significantly, the then UPA government had moved the Italian court as a civil party. The die was cast for the extradition of Michel from Dubai in July last year when the Enforcement Directorate arrested Shivani Saxena for routing money on his behalf. The claim then, as it is now, was that Saxena will lay out the money trail, especially to politicians, since she herself was a conduit.

Little has been heard of that case. Even in the first CBI charge-sheet, except for former IAF chief SP Tyagi and his kin, no other bureaucrat felt the heat. Indeed, probe into defense deals worldwide is like entering the Bermuda Triangle. Investigations generally run into lack of response from countries and companies involved in the case. The massive financial muscle of the worldwide military industrial complex is generally successful in ensuring that cases where graft is alleged are brushed under the carpet. Against that backdrop it is gratifying that India has bagged a foreigner middleman, an elusive species in all past instances of corrupt defense deals.

The BJP has hoisted Michel's arrest into a poll issue even though two middlemen remain out of India's grasp. The CBI also requires considerable legwork to prove that the alleged money trail went to highly placed political beneficiaries. The issue of middlemen infiltrating the IAF, the Defense Ministry and the higher political echelons needs sincerity of purpose rather than political grandstanding. The ball is in now in the legal domain and will be argued on merits. But there is also a gaping lacuna in the Indian defense acquisition process - onerous conditions have caused a paucity of authorized liaison persons to navigate foreign companies through the shoals of Indian babudom. This gives space for shadowy operators to ply their trade.

(Tribune, India)

## AS I SEE IT

# A Relationship Under Stress



By Stanly Johnny

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has reportedly concluded that Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi Arabian Crown Prince, personally ordered the killing of Jamal Khashoggi. The murder of the Saudi dissident journalist at the Kingdom's Istanbul consulate on October 2 has already triggered a global outrage against MBS, as the Crown Prince is known. But U.S. President Donald Trump seems unfazed by both the findings of his spy agency as well as the mounting global outcry. He called the CIA assessment "very premature", while Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the U.S.'s "historic commitment" to Saudi Arabia is "absolutely vital to America's security" and its "interests in the Middle East".

### Thinking like realists

This is a popular argument in Washington. Realists would say the relationship with Saudi Arabia is so vital for American national interests that the U.S. should overlook certain aspects of Saudi behavior. The Trump administration repeats this argument to justify its lack of action against Riyadh in the wake of the murder of Khashoggi. But does Saudi Arabia actually have such leverage over America?

The Saudi-U.S. partnership can be dated back to the 1945 meeting between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Saudi King Abdulaziz ibn Saud, the founder of modern Saudi Arabia and father of current monarch Salman bin Abdulaziz. In the meeting, held on board the USS Quincy in the Suez Canal, both leaders came to a two-way agreement: the U.S. would support and provide military training for Saudi Arabia, while the Kingdom would provide oil and political backing in return. This alliance made sense for both countries during the Cold War: The Saudis were anxious about communist expansion into the Arab/Muslim world. Half of Yemen fell into the hands of Marxists in 1967, and in 1978 communists took power in Afghanistan. And the U.S. wanted uninterrupted flow of oil for its own economic expansion and the post-war reconstruction of Europe. It also wanted a political ally in West Asia.

But the conditions that laid the foundation of this partnership have changed. The Soviet Union fell apart almost three decades ago. America's dependency on Saudi Arabia for oil has also decreased over the years. True, Saudi Arabia remains a major supplier of oil to the U.S. But it doesn't have the leverage over the American economy as it had in 1973 when Arab countries imposed an embargo on mostly Western nations in protest against their support for Israel during the Yom Kippur War with Egypt. The U.S. is now one of the top three crude producers, along with Russia and Saudi Arabia.

Other arguments in favor of stronger partnership cite the massive Saudi

**“Mr. Trump, wary of not disrupting his West Asia policy, may stay the course on Saudi Arabia for now. But the growing criticisms of the partnership on Capitol Hill can't be ignored. The Senate has already voted with a huge majority to move forward legislation to end the U.S. involvement in the Yemen war.”**



Post-Khashoggi, how long can Saudi Arabia retain leverage over the U.S.?

investments in the U.S., both treasury securities and private businesses. But Saudi Arabia acts in its interest, not with the goal of helping the U.S. economy. If it sells its U.S. assets, that would also hurt the Saudi economy badly. After all, from economic diversification at home to security guarantees, Saudi Arabia needs the U.S. more than the other way around, which offers Washington room for strategic man oeuvre.

While the strategic potential of the partnership has been shrinking, the U.S. has come under greater scrutiny, especially in the post-9/11 world, for its support for Saudi Arabia, the Wahhabi kingdom that stands opposed to everything the U.S. preaches on global stages - from democracy and respecting human rights to religious freedom and independent media. It was this broad context that allowed former U.S. President Barack Obama to take a different approach towards Saudi Arabia. He retained the fundamental elements of the partnership, including trade and economic ties, arms sales and security guarantees, while refusing to act in Syria on the Saudis' behalf and moving further ahead to strike a nuclear deal with Iran. He even asked the Saudis and the Iranians to share West Asia and institute a "Cold Peace" in the region.

### Back to square one

But President Trump has reversed this approach and rebuilt the administration's West Asia policy, making Saudi Arabia its centerpiece. The twin objectives of the Trump policy are to ensure Israel's security and roll back Iranian influence. It's this tilt that is now stopping him from moving against the Saudis. The administration has already declared what its Iran policy is. It has already pulled the U.S. out of the Iran nuclear deal. And the Americans need Saudi support in their effort

to isolate and weaken Iran, something Israel too has been demanding for years. But this is not a larger national security argument, nor is it a realistic one. When the fundamentals of a partnership get weakened and the region undergoes major changes, how long can the U.S. allow its Iran obsession to dictate its policies towards West Asia?

From the realpolitik point, even if the U.S. wants to limit Iranian influence, Saudi Arabia under MBS is not helping the cause. It lost the Syria war. Its intervention in Yemen drove the Houthis further into Iran's embrace. The Qatar blockade has divided the Arab world (Qatar has now quit OPEC as well). The detention of the Lebanese Prime Minister last year has played Lebanese politics into the hands of Hezbollah, the Iran ally.

Mr. Trump, wary of not disrupting his West Asia policy, may stay the course on Saudi Arabia for now. But the growing criticisms of the partnership on Capitol Hill can't be ignored. The Senate has already voted with a huge majority to move forward legislation to end the U.S. involvement in the Yemen war. Republican Senator Bob Corker accused the White House of "moonlighting as a public relations firm for the Crown Prince". Rand Paul, another Republican Senator, says it's time for America to stand up and tell Saudi Arabia, "enough". These are not isolated moral outbursts; they suggest changing undercurrents. There is a growing realization in Washington that the Saudi pillar of its West Asia policy is getting weak. Mr. Trump, driven by his own notional obsessions, might overlook it. But future American Presidents can't. They may have to start from where Mr. Obama stopped.

(Source: The Hindu. The author is a columnist. He can be reached at stanly.johnny@thehindu.co.in)

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# Two Punjabs, one South Asia



By Kanak Mani Dixit

“

Nothing has worked, and we are today in suspended animation between Mr. Modi's India-centric vision of the region and the Pakistani military's control of the geopolitical discourse in Islamabad. At such a time comes the possibility held out by the Kartarpur Corridor.

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For a flickering moment in the last week of November, it seemed as if Congress provocateur and Punjab Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu might set the geopolitical agenda, when he unabashedly spoke of the need for India and Pakistan to mend fences. He was in Lahore on the occasion of the start of work on the Kartarpur Corridor, meant to ease the travel of Sikh pilgrims to the resting place of Guru Nanak.

Unfazed by ridicule on Indian television, the cricketer-turned-politician spoke of peace, trade and people-to-people contact, all of them lost causes of the 'track two' dialogues of past decades. His confidence seemed to emanate from being a Sikh and Punjabi reaching out to Pakistani Punjab, and in his wordy sermons one actually detected the formula for India-Pakistan cohabitation, which would also catalyze cooperation in the larger South Asian region.

## Ultra-nationalist fog

Peace in the Subcontinent presupposes amity between India and Pakistan, and more than 40 years of efforts at regionalism has been held hostage by hostility of the two, with the other countries watching askance.

The abuse hurled by the state establishments of each side is a populist political tool that distracts the public from pressing matters of growth, equity, democracy and accountability. That the cost of maintaining massive militaries in each country drags down efforts at social justice is lost in the fog of ultra-nationalism.

India, as the more stable democracy, should inculcate empathy for the neighbor, but the New Delhi commentariat tends not to recognize the difference between the Pakistani state and its people, the latter struggling against extremism, military supremacy and state-centralism all at one go.

Indian media by and large is not bothered by the travails of Pakistanis, as right-wing trolls rule the airwaves and social media. Similar to how dissent is sought to be silenced with the 'Urban Naxal' tag, since long those seeking India-Pakistan amity and South Asian regionalism are rejected as romantic peaceniks lighting meaningless candles at Wagah-Atari.

The trolling and abuse on all matters related to Pakistan can be expected to peak as India's general election of 2019 draws near, which will only help Islamabad's military-intelligence complex tighten its grip on the society. It is high time to try once again for a plan for South Asian regionalism.

## Opportunity costs

The potential of South Asia for sustained high growth has been blocked by the tightened national borders, with India playing its part by building barbed wire fences on the Pakistan and Bangladesh frontiers. In all of seven decades, the economic history of the Subcontinent has been forgotten, with the ultra-nationalist narrative having us believe that this separate living is how it has always been.

Until Cyril Radcliffe drew the map of Partition, the economic synergy across the different parts of the Subcontinent was an unquestioned historical reality. There is no one to remember or remind that this reality of sealed borders was set only in 1947 for most parts of the Subcontinent, or that the door actually slammed shut only after the India-Pakistan war of 1965.

As the historical 'connectivity' of the Subcontinent crumbled, it created massive dysfunction as economies of scale and production chains were disrupted. The opportunity costs have been incalculable in terms of infrastructure, production and commerce, and the loss in livelihoods would be



India-Pakistan rapprochement and the South Asian future require subnational engagement, starting with Punjab

heart-rending if only we cared to calculate.

The present-day failure of South Asian academia is its unwillingness to theorize on the promise of economic growth and social justice that regionalism holds, through soft/open borders. Of the Indian intelligentsia, the failure is also in seeing economic geography through the New Delhi lens rather than those of the 'peripheral' regions, from Rajasthan to the Northeast.

'South Asia' must be understood as a project for social justice, to be achieved through economic rationalization, sub-regional interactions and reduced military budgets - and open borders such as exists between Nepal and India.

## Counter-populism

The goal of the future should be to learn to compartmentalize one's perceptions of the 'other', that Pakistan is made up of its state and its people just as India too is made up of its state and its people. The mutual demonization has to do with conflating the two, state apparatus and citizenry, as one.

While the Pakistani state is rightfully critiqued for the way the military/intelligence calls the shots - from the Kargil misadventure to cross-border militancy, to even denying Punjab province the right to import energy from India - the self-perception of India as 'good' and Pakistan as 'bad' should have been abandoned long ago.

In Pakistan, the space of the public intellectual is circumscribed by the jihadists, the army and the military intelligence. In India, a much freer country no doubt, there is the rise of pernicious ultra-populism that keeps public figures from speaking up.

In the age of Narendra Modi, proposing South Asian solidarity is frowned upon to such an extent that academics and opinion makers, not to mention bureaucracy and even international funding agencies, all think it is better to keep aloof of the concept. Since 2016, the Prime Minister has been consistent in his refusal to attend the 19th SAARC Summit slated for Islamabad, which has rendered the regional organization comatose. His vision of South Asian regionalism is where the neighbors dance to India's tune.

The fear that South Asia as a concept heralds some kind of supra-sovereignty is misplaced, for there is no plan afoot for supplanting of the nation-state and associated group privileges. No, the capitals are not being asked to relinquish their powers to a Subcontinental center.

Instead, a realistic formula for South Asian regionalism lies in allowing the federal units of the two largest countries - the provinces of

Pakistan and the states of India - autonomy, which today exists only on paper. This is where the Punjab-Punjab formula comes in.

Even as television sought to lampoon Mr. Sidhu, we saw what was required to push for peace in South Asia -chutzpah. The Yiddish word implies the gall or audacity of a showman, and the gift of repartee to challenge the harshest of televangelist anchors.

It does seem that ultranationalist populism can only be cut by counter-populist hyperbole. Responding to the Pakistan Foreign Minister's invitation to the Kartarpur Corridor groundbreaking, the Punjab Minister replied in a letter: "As our nations take this first step, the Kartarpur Spirit can make pilgrims of us all, venturing out on a journey that breaks the barriers of history and opens the borders of hearts and the mind, a journey that our people can walk together towards a future of shared peace and prosperity for India and Pakistan."

If you read the words and not the perception some have of the gentleman, the future of Punjab-Punjab, India-Pakistan and South Asia as a whole can be found in the paragraph.

## Punjabiyyat

Nothing has been left untried in the effort to ease India-Pakistan tensions - Atal Behari Vajpayee visiting Minar-e-Pakistan in Lahore; Mr. Modi flying in for Nawaz Sharif's birthday; secret emissaries rushing hither and yon; and 'track two' and 'track three' events of every kind.

Nothing has worked, and we are today in suspended animation between Mr. Modi's India-centric vision of the region and the Pakistani military's control of the geopolitical discourse in Islamabad. At such a time comes the possibility held out by the Kartarpur Corridor.

Punjab province is by far the most powerful sub-national unit of Pakistan. The Indian Punjab may not be as powerful within India in relative terms, but it is no pushover either. The two Punjabs have one history, as the stepping stone for invaders, battlegrounds that go back millennia, the shared tragedy of Partition, and the shared culture and language of Punjabiyyat.

Given that South Asian regionalism can only come from a turn towards genuine federalism in India and Pakistan, Punjab Province and Punjab State are the places to start anew. It may just be Punjabiyyat is the concept which will help bring India and Pakistan closer to peace, and make South Asia a safer and more prosperous place.

(Source: Tribune.. The author, a writer and journalist based in Kathmandu, is the founding editor of the magazine, 'Himal Southasian')

## UAE says Gulf Arab bloc still strong despite Qatar row

Dubai (TIP): The United Arab Emirates said on Thursday the Gulf Cooperation Council remained valid despite a bitter row with Qatar that has fractured the bloc ahead of an annual summit next week. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and non-GCC member Egypt have imposed a diplomatic and economic boycott on Qatar since June 2017 over allegations Doha supports terrorism. Qatar denies the charges and says the boycott aims to curtail its sovereignty.

"The main success of the council is in its economic aspects and the creation of a Gulf common market," UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash tweeted.

"The political crisis will end when the cause behind it ends and that is Qatar's support of extremism and its interference in the stability of the region."

The dispute has undermined the regional role of the six-nation GCC, set up in 1980 as a bulwark against larger neighbours Iran and Iraq. Last week, Qatar abruptly announced it was quitting OPEC after 57 years to focus on gas in an apparent swipe at the oil-exporter bloc's de facto leader Saudi Arabia.

Qatar's ruler last month said the dispute "exposed the failure" of the GCC and harmed regional security by weakening the block which groups Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. At last year's summit, held in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain sent ministers or deputy prime ministers. (Reuters)

## Four killed at police checkpoint in Taliban attack

KABUL (TIP): Afghan officials say the Taliban have attacked a police checkpoint in the western Herat province, setting off a battle in which a policeman and three civilians were killed. Police spokesman Abdul Ahad Walizada says six of the attackers were killed in the battle late Dec 4.

The Taliban effectively control nearly half the country and carry out daily attacks that mainly target security forces.

In the eastern Nangarhar province, meanwhile, the director of a local TV station was kidnapped.

Attahullah Khogyani, the governor's spokesman, says the TV director, known as Engineer Zelmia, was kidnapped late Tuesday. Zelmia's driver was shot and killed.

No one immediately claimed the abduction, but the Taliban and the Islamic State group are both active in Nangarhar. (AP)

## Nepal's Children at Risk

KATHMANDU (TIP): Thousands of foreigners come to Nepal each year, offering to help children living in poverty. Some provide money, others work for aid organisations or even set up charities. But police say some come for more sinister purposes. A rising number of foreigners have been arrested for allegedly sexually abusing children in recent months. This 101 East investigation finds many of the accused worked for charitable organisations or were financially supporting poor children and their families. "They're misusing their power and they're exploiting our children," says Kabit Katawal, Deputy Superintendent of the Nepal Police. One of those on trial is Peter Dalglis, a world-renowned aid worker who has spent the last two decades helping some of the world's most vulnerable children, from Africa to Afghanistan and Asia. (PTI)

# Pak-origin UK councillor suspended after sending topless woman's photo during meeting

LONDON (TIP): A Pakistani-origin councillor in the UK sent a photo of a topless woman to a group of women during a meeting, prompting the opposition Labour party to suspend him for what he called an "honest mistake", media reports said Dec 6.

Sheffield City councillor Mohammad Maroof posted the image on a WhatsApp group named 'Mums United', BBC reported.

As the group's founder Sahira Irshad presented a petition on knife crime, he sent the picture to the group, it said.

Maroof, who said that he was "very embarrassed" and has apologised for what he described as an "honest mistake", has been suspended by the Labour council pending an investigation, the report said.

He said he was trying to attach a video of Irshad speaking at the meeting and instead accidentally attached the unsolicited image, which he received earlier in the day, according to the Local Democracy Reporting Service.

He claimed that he asked for it to be deleted "within seconds" of sending it.

"This is my private phone and I receive so many things that my WhatsApp has been set up to automatically save everything in my phone's photo file. "Somebody sent me this photo, it may have come in the morning, and it went into my phone's file," Maroof said.

He represents Nether Edge and Sharrow Ward which includes the districts of



Brincliffe, Carter Knowle, Nether Edge, Sharrow Vale, and most of Banner Cross, and is one of the 28 electoral wards in the City of Sheffield, England.

"I tried to send the group a video and by mistake I pressed the wrong photo. As soon as I realised, I asked for it to be deleted as I couldn't delete it myself. It was only there for a second," Maroof said in his defence.

He said that he has sent an apology to the group chat. "I sincerely apologise. I had no intention to do such a thing and to cause such

disruption. I have a lot of respect for the group," he said.

A member of the group, on condition of anonymity, said it was "absolutely disgraceful". Council leader Julie Dore said it was "a very serious matter" and his suspension was immediate "until we have ascertained the details". Maroof, who was educated in Pakistan and the UK, said the WhatsApp group was set up to empower women, the report added. (PTI)

## Sri Lanka's disputed prime minister takes his fight to the Supreme Court

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka's prime minister is appealing a court decision that temporarily bars him and his cabinet from carrying out official duties, amid a constitutional crisis that has left the island nation without effective leadership.

The ruling by Sri Lanka's Court of Appeals on Monday comes after Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa refused to step down despite losing two no-confidence votes last month.

Rajapaksa said he will take his appeal to the Supreme Court on Tuesday and seek an order halting the decision. "We do not agree with the decision given by the Appeals Court as Constitutional matters are finally decided by the Supreme Court," Rajapaksa said on Twitter.

Judge Arjuna Obeyesekere said in his ruling that if Rajapaksa and his cabinet continued to hold office, it would cause "irreparable" damage. "Such damage would also have far reaching consequences to the whole country," Obeyesekere said.

Even though the decision would leave the nation without a functioning government, "allowing a set of persons who are not entitled in law to function as the prime minister or the cabinet of ministers or any other minister of government," would do far greater harm, he added. The ruling restrains Rajapaksa and his 48 ministers from holding office until the court has heard a petition by 122 lawmakers that challenges his claim to power. Rajapaksa and the cabinet members have until December 12 to prove to the court that they have authority to govern. Sri Lanka's former president and new prime minister Mahinda Rajapakse arrives at the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy on October 28, 2018.

Sri Lanka has been in crisis since October 26 when President Maithripala Sirisena ousted Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and appointed Rajapaksa -- a two-time former President -- to take his place. Sirisena then dissolved parliament and called for snap elections for January 5, a move that was temporarily halted by the country's Supreme Court.

The president and Rajapaksa have refused to recognize two separate motions of no confidence voted by parliament on November 14 and 16.

Parliament is expected to debate another motion of no confidence against Rajapaksa on Wednesday. The motion, which requires the support of 113 out of 225 lawmakers, has been signed by seven members of ousted prime minister Wickremesinghe's United National Front (UNF). The Tamil National Alliance has also declared its 14 lawmakers will support the UNF.

The Supreme Court is now set to begin hearings on the legality of Sirisena's actions, with judges due to meet Tuesday. Sirisena told a UNF delegation on Friday that he would accept parliament's decision but insisted that he would not appoint Wickremesinghe as prime minister. The political crisis is leaking into the financial markets. On Monday, Fitch Ratings downgraded Sri Lanka to 'B' from 'B+', saying in a report that the "ongoing political upheaval, which has disrupted the normal functioning of parliament, exacerbates the country's external financing risks." (CNN)

## 'Open Wagah Border for Free Business': Economist Suggests on 'Below Potential' India, Pak Trade

ISLAMABAD (TIP): The current trade between India and Pakistan is at a little over USD 2 billion, much below than the potential, and can go up to USD 37 billion if the two countries tear down artificial barriers like lack of connectivity, trust deficit and complicated and non-transparent non-tariff measures, according to a World Bank Report.

The report titled 'Glass Half Full: Promise of Regional Trade in South Asia' was released here on Wednesday. Dawn reported that it says that the current trade between the two countries is much below than full potential. It could only be harnessed if both countries agree to tear down artificial barriers.

The bank also estimated Pakistan's potential trade with South Asia at USD 39.7bn against the actual current trade of USD 5.1bn. The report also unpacks four of the critical barriers to effective integration. The four areas are tariff and para-tariff barriers to trade, complicated and non-transparent non-tariff measures, disproportionately high cost of trade, and trust deficit.

Talking to a group of journalists on key points of the report at the World Bank office in Islamabad, lead economist and author of the document Sanjay Kathuria said it was his belief that trust promotes trade, and trade fosters trust, interdependency and constituencies for peace.

In this context, he added, the opening of the Kartarpur Corridor by governments of Pakistan and India would help minimise trust deficit. (News18)

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## Gender pay gap is dramatic among top US lawyers, survey finds

WASHINGTON (TIP): Men who are partners in top US law firms average a yearly income of nearly one million dollars, while women in the same jobs make a third less money, according to research released on Dec 6.

The income gap between men and women has its roots in how much business they lure to their firms and their hourly rates, said Major, Lindsey & Africa, a legal search company that conducted the survey.

In the United States overall, women last year working full-time year-round earned 80 per cent of what men earned, according to commonly cited data from the US Census Bureau.

Another recently published calculation – factoring in women who leave and return to the paid work force, often to care for families – showed women earning 49 cents for every man's dollar. At top US law firms, the average income for male partners last year was \$959,000 and \$627,000 for female partners, the legal research found. US law firms typically feature partnerships, in which lawyers become part-owners and share in profits.

Male partners bring in an average of \$2.7 million in client business compared with \$1.6 million for women, and men's hourly billing rates averaged \$736 compared with \$650 for women, the research said.

The findings raise questions of why women bring in less business, said Jeffrey Lowe, author of the study and global practice leader of the search firm's legal practice.

"Is it the old boys' network that is driving the relationships? Are women excluded from participating in activities that might lead to business, either consciously or unconsciously?" he said to the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Female partners may tend to work in less profitable areas of the law, the research said.

The firm surveyed 1,390 US law partners.

Congress outlawed pay discrimination based on gender in 1963, yet public debate over why wages still lag drastically for women has snowballed in recent years.

Globally, the World Economic Forum reported an economic gap of 58 per cent between the sexes for 2016. (Reuters)

# Former Attorney General William Barr may get old job again

WASHINGTON (TIP): William Barr, who served as attorney general under President George HW Bush, has emerged as a top contender for that job in President Donald Trump's Cabinet, two people familiar with the president's selection process said Thursday. The appointment of a new attorney general would come at a precarious time as special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation, which the department oversees, is showing signs of entering its final stages.

Trump is "very seriously considering" Barr, said one of the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because no decision has been announced, adding that Barr is "someone very much on the president's mind." The other person characterized Barr as "the leading contender."

Trump has been known to change his mind on key personnel decisions before announcing them.

Barr was attorney general between 1991 and 1993, serving in the Justice Department at the same Mueller oversaw the department's criminal division. Barr later worked as a corporate general counsel and is currently of counsel at a prominent international law firm, Kirkland & Ellis LLP.

The White House declined to comment.

Trump is "very seriously considering" Barr, said one of the sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because no decision has been announced, adding that Barr is "someone very much on the president's mind." The other person characterized Barr as "the leading contender."

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The White House declined to comment.

"What I have said, without mentioning Mr. Barr – I've said, the best thing the



administration can do is to get somebody who had majority support from Republicans and Democrats alike for attorney general. Those are the best attorneys general," said Democratic Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which would hold hearings on a nominee.

Barr, he said, could fit that bill.

Still, while in private practice, Barr has occasionally weighed in on hot-button investigative matters in ways that could prompt concerns among Democrats.

He told The New York Times in November 2017, in a story about Sessions directing his prosecutors to look into actions related to Trump rival Hillary Clinton, that "there is nothing inherently wrong about a president calling for an investigation" – though Barr also said one should not be launched just because a president wants it.

He said there was more basis to investigate a uranium deal approved while Clinton was secretary of state in the Obama administration than potential collusion between Russia and the Trump campaign.

"To the extent it is not pursuing these matters, the department is abdicating its responsibility," Barr told the newspaper.

He also wrote an op-ed for The Washington

Post in May 2017 defending Trump's decision to fire former FBI Director James Comey, one of the actions Mueller has been examining for possible obstruction of justice.

He was quoted two months later in a Post story as expressing concern that members of Mueller's team had given contributions to Democratic candidates.

"In my view, prosecutors who make political contributions are identifying fairly strongly with a political party," Barr said. "I would have liked to see him have more balance on this group."

Barr has been on a White House short list of contenders for several weeks, said a person with knowledge of internal discussions who was not authorized to speak publicly. But some inside the White House were concerned that Barr was too aligned with establishment GOP forces.

One of the people who spoke to the AP said there have been discussions among senior administration officials about Barr's willingness to do the job, and said the belief was that he was open to doing it if asked.

At least one other contender who has received serious consideration from the White House, according to the person, is Rep. John Ratcliffe, a Texas Republican. (AP)

## Top US general urges Google to work with military

WASHINGTON (TIP): "We are the good guys and it's inexplicable to me that we would make compromises in order to advance our business interests in China," Marine General Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said during an event.

The top US general said on Thursday that it was "inexplicable" that technology giants like Alphabet Inc's Google did not want to work with the Pentagon even as they seek out business with China, where companies have less freedom than in the United States.

"We are the good guys and it's inexplicable to me that we would make compromises in order to advance our business interests in China where we know that freedoms are restrained, where we know that China will take intellectual property from companies," Marine General Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said during an event.

A Google spokeswoman for China issues did not immediately respond to a request to comment. Google Chief Executive Sundar Pichai has previously said the company has



invested in China for years and plans to continue to do so, but that the company also was continuing to work with the US government on projects in health care,

cybersecurity and other fields.

Earlier this year Google said it was no longer vying for a \$10 billion cloud computing contract with the US Defense Department, in

part because the company's new ethical guidelines do not align with the project.

In June, Google said it would not renew a contract to help the US military analyse aerial drone imagery when it expires, as the company sought to defuse internal uproar over the deal. The defense program, called Project Maven, set off a revolt inside Google, as factions of employees opposed Google technology being used in warfare.

At the same time, Google is developing a censored search engine for Chinese users, which it says is experimental and not close to launching.

Google has long sought to have a bigger presence in China, the world's largest internet market. It needs government approval to compete with the country's dominant homegrown internet services. Current and former employees, human rights activists and US lawmakers have criticized Google for not taking a harder line against the Chinese government's policy that politically sensitive results be blocked. (Reuters)

# Trump to pick State Department spokeswoman for UN ambassador: WH officials

Washington (TIP) : President Donald Trump will nominate State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert as US ambassador to the United Nations, two White House officials said on Dec 6, tapping someone with no prior policy or political experience to deal with some of the world's thorniest issues.

The decision was expected to be announced on Dec 7 morning, the officials said, requesting anonymity.

Nauert, whose nomination would require Senate confirmation, is a former Fox News Channel correspondent and anchor. She became the State Department's spokeswoman in April 2017 and was named earlier this year as the acting undersecretary for public diplomacy and public affairs.

If confirmed, Nauert, 48, would succeed Nikki Haley, who said in October she would be leaving the U.N. post at the end of the year.

A senior White House official said late on Thursday that the U.N. ambassador post would not remain part of the Cabinet, as it has been under Haley.

The State Department declined to comment and Nauert did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Nauert, who earlier this year had been considered a possible successor to White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders, gained experience on diplomacy by working at the State Department, but she lacks the political and policy credentials of Haley, a former South Carolina governor.

Having the direct support of the president and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo could



buttress her image, however, among global diplomats at the United Nations, who have bristled at Trump's "America First" foreign policy. She will face a variety of challenges if confirmed for the job, including championing U.S. efforts to contain Iran's influence in the Middle East and ensuring the global body maintains tough sanctions on North Korea as Washington tries to negotiate an end to Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs.

Trump has been critical of the United Nations, complaining about its cost to Washington and criticizing it for focusing on bureaucracy and process rather than results.

He pulled the United States out of the U.N. human rights body in September, citing bias

toward Israel, and his administration has cut funding for the U.N. refugee agency and last year proposed U.S. funding cuts for aid and diplomacy that could curb the work of the global body.

But Trump has also used the United Nations to try to advance his foreign policy agenda on Iran and North Korea.

The administration has also worked through the United Nations to try to find a political solution to the wars in Syria and Yemen, two issues that will confront Nauert.

The president is weighing a number of other end-of-year staff changes, including replacing Chief of Staff John Kelly, two of Trump's advisers said on Thursday. (Reuters)

## Donald Trump targets pair of Obama-era green rules to boost oil, coal

WASHINGTON (TIP): The Trump administration took aim at two Obama-era environmental policies on Thursday to boost the oil and coal industries, proposing to open up a bird's wildlife habitat to drilling and mining and remove hurdles to new coal-fired power plant construction. The moves, part of a broader agenda by U.S. President Donald Trump to revive the ailing coal industry and ramp up domestic energy production, come amid increasingly urgent warnings from within his own government about climate change, and as world leaders gather at a United Nations conference to combat planetary warming. Announced separately by Trump appointees who were both former energy lobbyists, the proposals cheered the coal and oil industries but triggered an uproar from environmental groups who raised the prospect of legal challenges.

"Trump and his deputies are delivering on the wish list of the coal and oil industries, but they are up against the public and market demand for clean energy," said Mary Anne Hitt, senior director of Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign. The U.S. Interior Department proposed easing Obama-era protections for a bird, the greater sage-grouse, to boost oil drilling and mining across Western states, potentially opening up hundreds of thousands of acres of grouse habitat in states like Colorado and Utah to oil and gas leasing.

Announced by Interior Department Deputy Secretary David Bernhardt, a Colorado native and a former energy lobbyist, the proposal would allow for changes to habitat boundary maps of the chicken-sized prairie fowl – considered by conservationists to be a key indicator species for America's dwindling sagebrush ecosystem. (Reuters)

# White House, Trudeau seek to distance themselves from Huawei move

OTTAWA, WASHINGTON (TIP): President Donald Trump did not know about plans to arrest a top executive at Chinese telecoms giant Huawei in Canada, two US officials said on Dec 6, in an apparent attempt to stop the incident from impeding crucial trade talks with Beijing. Huawei Technologies Co Ltd's chief financial officer, Meng Wanzhou, the 46-year-old daughter of the company's founder, was detained in Canada on Dec. 1, the same day Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping dined together at the G20 summit in Buenos Aires.

A White House official told Reuters Trump did not know about a U.S. request for her extradition from Canada before he met Xi and agreed to a 90-day truce in the brewing trade war.

Meng's arrest during a stopover in Vancouver, announced by the Canadian authorities on Wednesday, pummeled stock markets already nervous about tensions between the world's two largest economies on fears the move could derail the planned trade talks. The arrest was made at Washington's request as part of a U.S. investigation of an alleged scheme to use the global banking system to evade U.S. sanctions against Iran, according to people familiar with the probe.

Another U.S. official told Reuters that while it was a Justice Department matter and not orchestrated in advance by the White House, the case could send a message that Washington is serious about what it sees as Beijing's violations of international trade norms. The



A White House official told Reuters Trump did not know about a US request for her extradition from Canada before he met Xi and agreed to a 90-day truce in the brewing trade war. (AP)

official, speaking on condition of anonymity, acknowledged that the arrest could complicate efforts to reach a broader U.S.-China trade deal but would not necessarily damage the process.

Meng's detention also raised concerns about potential retaliation from Beijing in Canada, where Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sought to distance himself from the arrest. "The appropriate authorities took the decisions in this case without any political involvement or interference ... we were advised by them with a few days' notice that this was in the works," Trudeau told reporters in Montreal in

televised remarks.

### IRAN SANCTIONS

The United States has been looking since at least 2016 into whether Huawei violated U.S. sanctions against Iran, Reuters reported in April. More recently, the probe has included the company's use of HSBC Holdings Plc to make illegal transactions involving Iran, people familiar with the investigation said. In 2012, HSBC paid \$1.92 billion and entered a deferred prosecution agreement with the U.S. attorney's office in Brooklyn for violating U.S.

sanctions and money-laundering laws.

Huawei is under intense scrutiny from Washington and other governments over its ties to the Chinese government, driven by concerns it could be used for spying. It has been locked out of U.S. and some other markets for telecom gear, but has repeatedly insisted Beijing has no influence over it.

On Dec 7, a person with direct knowledge and a person briefed on the matter told Reuters that Japan plans to ban government purchases of equipment from China's Huawei and ZTE Corp. The Yomiuri newspaper, which first reported the news, said the Japanese government was expected to revise its internal rules on procurement as early as Monday to prevent intelligence leaks and cyber attacks.

ZTE pleaded guilty in 2017 to violating U.S. laws that restrict the sale of American-made technology to Iran in efforts to curb Tehran's missile and nuclear programs. Before the arrest on Wednesday, Britain's BT Group said it was removing Huawei's equipment from the core of its existing 3G and 4G mobile operations and would not use the Chinese company in central parts of the next network.

Republican Senators Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and Ben Sasse welcomed news of the arrest and said the world's biggest telecoms equipment maker posed a security threat. Cruz tweeted: "Huawei is a Communist Party spy agency thinly veiled as a telecom company." Huawei has said it complies with all applicable export control and sanctions laws and other regulations. (Reuters)

## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT: MISSION STEPS IN, MIKA SINGH RELEASED FROM DETENTION IN UAE

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Following the efforts of the Indian Mission in Abu Dhabi, Punjabi singer Mika Singh has been for now released from detention.

A team of Indian officials through their intervention helped Mika get released at 11.30pm last night local time.

Speaking to The Tribune, Indian Ambassador Navdeep Suri said, "Our Embassy is following the issue closely with UAE authorities. Our team was at the police facilities till he was released. He was grateful for all the help he received from the mission. We will continue to follow up the matter."

Mika is expected to now be produced in a court sometime on Friday despite it being a Friday weekly holiday in the Emirate. The singer and music composer has been accused of sexual misconduct. His detention followed a complaint reportedly by a Brazilian teenager who accused him of sending her inappropriate pictures.

India Embassy officials say that they have a responsibility towards all its nationals. The mission will be able to learn of all details of the complaint and ascertain facts further only once the matter comes up in court.

Source: The Tribune

## India abstains from voting on General Assembly resolution to rap Hamas



US Ambassador Nikki Haley (C) has been a strong supporter of Israel at the United Nations.

**UNITED NATIONS (TIP):** India has abstained from voting on a UN General Assembly draft resolution put forward by the US that would have condemned the activities of Hamas and other militant groups in Gaza.

The resolution 'Activities of Hamas and other militant groups in Gaza' got 87 votes in favour, 58 against with 32 abstentions. The resolution failed to be adopted on Thursday as it could not garner two-thirds support in the General Assembly. India was among the 32 countries that abstained from voting on the resolution which would have condemned Hamas for "repeatedly firing rockets into Israel and for inciting violence, thereby putting civilians at risk", and for its use of resources in Gaza to construct military infrastructure, including tunnels to infiltrate Israel and equipment to launch rockets into civilian areas.

The resolution had specified that further engagement by the UN Secretary-General, and the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, in efforts to de-escalate the situation in Gaza, was also needed.

Through a procedural vote held before the main vote on the resolution, the Assembly had voted to apply the two-thirds majority requirement for the adoption of the draft.

Before the voting, US Permanent Representative to the UN Nikki Haley said despite more than 500 General Assembly resolutions condemning Israel, not one condemning Hamas has ever been adopted.

She described the two-thirds decision, which passed by just a handful of votes, as "unfair" adding that the Hamas resolution was an opportunity for States to "do the right thing".



# CBI chief's fate hangs in balance, ruling reserved

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The Supreme Court on Thursday reserved order on the plea of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) director Alok Verma challenging Centre's decision to divest him of his powers. Earlier, the court observed that the director of the CBI must continue in his post for two years.

Verma, who was involved in a bitter feud with his deputy and CBI's No. 2 officer, special director Rakesh Asthana, has been sent on forced leave by the government. Both Verma and Asthana, who has been sent on leave as well, have accused each other of corruption.

Verma has filed a petition challenging the government's authority to send him on leave, arguing that it went against rules that mandate a two-year term in office for a CBI chief.

The government has argued that Verma has not been "removed" from the post but has just been sent on leave since he and Asthana were "fighting like cats". Verma is still the CBI director, the government has argued.

Today, the government repeated the same arguments in court as it sought to convince a Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi-led bench that had to intervene and take action against Verma since there were serious charges of corruption against him.

In response, Verma's lawyer argued that the rules mandate that a CBI director must "remain in office" for two



CBI director Alok Verma (in grey suit) and his deputy Rakesh Asthana (left) have been involved in a bitter feud. Both men have been sent on leave.

years. "It's not a nomenclature that he can call himself the Director. He must remain in office," Verma's lawyer said.

The Supreme Court observed that the director has to continue for two years. The court also asked why the government moved against Verma and Asthana overnight if the fight between them had not emerged overnight.

Earlier on Wednesday, the government told the Supreme Court that the CBI director and the special director were fighting like "kilkenny cats", exposing

the country's premier investigating agency to public ridicule.

Attorney General (AG) K K Venugopal also told the top court that the government was well "within its right to intervene" and send both officers on leave by divesting them of their powers. The top law officer asserted that "only the God knows where and how this fight between the two top officers would have ended" if the government would not have taken the action which was aimed at restoring the public faith in the CBI.

## AgustaWestland case: After Michel, India now presses for extradition of 2 other middlemen

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** After the successful extradition of Christian Michel from the UAE, the Indian government has joined another legal process in the VVIP AgustaWestland chopper scam.

India Today TV has learnt that the government has joined Italian prosecutors to appeal against the acquittal of former Finmeccanica officials in the VVIP chopper deal case.

In January, a court in Milan, Italy, had acquitted former AgustaWestland head Bruno Spagnolini and former Finmeccanica (now Leonardo) chief executive Giuseppe Orsi, of charges related to alleged bribes paid in exchange for a multi-million euro contract to sell 12 helicopters to the Indian government. In its order, the Milan Court of Appeal had said that there wasn't sufficient proof to establish corruption in the helicopter deal.

The Indian government has now joined the Italian prosecutors in their appeal before the Supreme Court of Cassation as a civil party, claiming damages due to alleged corruption by top executives of Finmeccanica and AgustaWestland.

India hopes that a success in Italy's top court would prove India's case in the VVIP chopper deal case on a global stage, which may pave the way for the extradition of two other middlemen and top executives of Finmeccanica.



Christian Michel

In December 2016, the Italian Supreme Court had ordered a re-trial of this case, after the two former executives were found guilty on corruption charges related to the contract.

According to Italian prosecutors, kickbacks were given by the then management of the Italian defence firm through three middlemen: Guido Ralph Haschke, Christian James Michel and Carlo Valentine Gerosa.

Christian Michel, a British citizen who had fled to the UAE was extradited to India on Tuesday night. On Wednesday, a court in Delhi sent him to five days of police custody.

The case came to light following the arrest of a former Finmeccanica executive in 2012. This executive informed Italian police that kickbacks had been given to India in order to secure the VVIP Chopper deal. This information led to extensive surveillance of Finmeccanica's top management and Italian middlemen Carlo Gerosa and Guido Haschke.

In early 2013, Guido Haschke was arrested in Switzerland, and later turned into a witness. Following a complaint filed by India, Interpol Red Corner Notices were issued against Christian Michel, Carlo Gerosa and Guido Haschke.

While Christian Michel has been successfully extradited from UAE with help of the Interpol red corner notice, he notice against American-Italian businessman Haschke was removed in 2016.

Christian Michel has alleged that it was done under a deal between the Indian and the Italian government and he was offered the same deal. A massive uproar had broken out in India, once the news of corruption spread.

Indian agencies swung into action. The Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate have filed separate chargesheets in a Delhi court, where former Air chief SP Tyagi is among the ones facing corruption charges. Source: India Today

# Dalit MP Savitri Phule quits BJP, says country needs 'Constitution not temple'

LUCKNOW (TIP): Accusing the BJP of dividing society, disgruntled party MP from Bahraich Sadhvi Savitri Bai Phule on Thursday, December 6 resigned from the saffron party.

Speaking to reporters in Bahraich, Dalit leader said upholding the Constitution and the rights it guarantees to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is her duty for which she is resigning.

Phule announced to hold a massive rally at Ramabai Ambedkar maidan in Lucknow on December 23. She promised to make an "explosive announcement" at the rally.

"I have resigned from the party. But I will continue as a Lok Sabha member till the end of my tenure," she said.

She has also accused the BJP of dividing society and often the party over its Hindutva plank.

The Dalit MP, who has long been critical of the party's leadership and resigned from the party on the death anniversary of B R Ambedkar, said she wants to get the Constitution implemented in letter and spirit.

"Desh ke chowikdar ki pehredari mein, sansadhono ki chori karai ja rahi hai (the country's resources are being looted under the watch of the country's gateman)," she said in a derisive reference to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Slamming the BJP, she said people did not get Rs 15 lakh as promised but money was being misused in the construction of statues and temples.

"It (BJP) is spreading hatred by raking up Hindu-Muslim, India-Pakistan issues and doing nothing to bring back those who fled with our money," the 37-year-old MP said.

Ministers, she added, were making statements against the spirit of the Constitution "It seems the BJP wants to run the country from Manusmriti and not from the Constitution," Phule asserted, referring to the ancient Hindu code.

"I am resigning on the death anniversary of B R Ambedkar as



Member of Parliament (MP) Savitribai Phule addresses a press conference after resigning from the BJP, in Lucknow on Thursday, December 6.

Pic Courtesy: PTI

Manuwadi mentality is being promoted and the RSS, the VHP and the BJP are hurting the sentiments of Dalits and Muslims by creating a 1992 like situation. They are playing divisive politics and vitiating the communal atmosphere..." she said.

Phule also said she wanted to draw the country's attention towards the issue of reservations in promotion.

Reacting to her resignation, BJP spokesperson Harishchandra Srivastava said Phule was trying to hide her failures as she had failed to meet the expectations of the people of Bahraich.

"From today onwards, I have nothing to do with the BJP. My voice was being ignored in the party as I am a Dalit. There is a great conspiracy against Dalits and their rights. Reservation for Dalits and backwards is also being slowly taken away," she said.

Known for her controversial statements, Phule has been attacking the BJP and its governments at the Centre and in Uttar Pradesh for their

alleged indifference to the concerns of Scheduled Castes.

On Tuesday, Phule said Lord Hanuman was "a Dalit and a slave of 'Manuwadi' people", adding her voice to the row which erupted over UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's statement that the deity was a Dalit.

Asked about the Ram temple issue, pending in the Supreme Court, Phule said the BJP is raking up the matter as it has no other issues.

"The country does not need a temple. Will it end unemployment and other problems of Dalits and backwards? The temple will benefit Brahmins, who are only 3 per cent. The money offered in temples are used by them for their gains and make our community (Dalit) their slave," she had said.

Phule earlier also raised questions on BJP leaders dining at Dalit homes and termed Pakistan founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah, "a mahapurush" (great personality), causing embarrassment to her party.

(With inputs from PTI and Tribune)

## 'I FEEL INSULTED,' RAJE ON SHARAD YADAV'S BODY SHAMING

NEW DELHI (TIP): Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje on Friday said she felt "insulted" by former JD (U) leader Sharad Yadav calling her "fat" while campaigning in the state.

"I actually feel insulted and I think even women are insulted," Raje told media after casting her vote in Jhalrapatan constituency of Jhalawar for the Rajasthan assembly election, reported ANI.

Raje cast her vote at 8.38am at the specially made Pink booth at the community centre of Housing Board Colony in Jhalawar. Raje was accompanied by her son and Member of Parliament from Jhalawar, Dushyant Singh and his wife, Niharika Singh.

"We never issue personal statements against any leader and it is not civilized behavior. To set an example for future it's important that EC takes cognisance of this kind of language," she said, referring to Yadav's comment.

At a rally in Rajasthan's Alwar, Yadav said, "Vasundhara ko aaram do, bahut thak gayi hain, bahut moti ho gayi hain, pehle patli thi. Humare Madhya Pradesh ki beti hai (Give some rest to Vasundhara, she has become very tired, very fat. She used to be thin. She is our Madhya Pradesh' daughter)."

The BJP had on Thursday condemned his remarks as sexist and filed a complaint with the election commission demanding action against Yadav.

Voting is being held in Rajasthan after a bitter electoral campaign between the Congress and the BJP in the state. The results from today's voting will be declared on December 11, the day the votes will be counted. Source: HT

## Sabarimala row: Kerala govt moves SC against HC decision to form 3-member panel



Devotees arrive at Sabarimala Temple, in Pathanamthitta.

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Kerala government on Thursday approached the Supreme Court challenging the High Court's decision to set up a three-member committee for "overall supervision" at Sabarimala temple where the annual pilgrim season is underway.

Taking note of allegations of police excess at the temple, the High Court had on November 27 formed a committee comprising two of its former judges and an IPS officer to oversee security and other arrangements at the hill shrine, where tension has been simmering since the September 28 verdict of the apex court lifting age restrictions on entry of women.

The HC order came as a setback to the Pinarayi Vijayan government which had mobilised a huge contingent of police at Sabarimala, purportedly to implement the SC verdict.

The government said the High Court order amounted to "interference with the executive function of the state". It said that several petitions were filed in the High Court after the Supreme Court and contended that "many such petitions are motivated without basis..."

The government pointed out that the High Court had from time to time set up committees for various matters in Sabarimala and four committees, including the committee of observers, were currently active.

It said the "High Court appears to have entered the domain of pure administrative functions, including maintaining of law and order in a sensitive zone". The plea said the "state administration has to effectively control and manage the pilgrimage smoothly which interalia includes the law and order situation which has taken a serious turn... Police bandobast is necessary in view of large number of pilgrims (about 75,000 every day) during this period".

## Days after Bulandshahr violence, Yogi meets PM

NEW DELHI (TIP): Days after the Bulandshahr violence that led to the killing of two, including one policeman, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his official home in New Delhi on Thursday.

Even though what transpired between them was not officially communicated, sources in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said the Chief Minister invited PM Modi for the "Ardh-Kumbh" to be held in Allahabad next month.

Sources also said that CM Yogi briefed PM Modi about the recent violence in Bulandshahr in which Police Inspector Subodh Kumar Singh was killed by a mob.

Earlier yesterday, family members of the killed policeman met the CM Yogi in Lucknow. Yogi Adityanath announced a



Inspector Subodh Kumar Singh (right, top) and another person was killed in a mob violence in Bulandshahr district on Monday allegedly over cow slaughter.

compensation of Rs. 50 lakh to the family and assured them justice in the case.

Yogi Adityanath has promised

education loans and a government job to one of the family members of the Bulandshahr violence victim.

# 2018 BAM'S NEXT WAVE FESTIVAL Continues....

By Mabel Pais

**"It is with immense pride and gratitude that I share the programming....a broad array of wondrous personal expression and unique artistic perspectives"**

Joseph V. Melillo, BAM Executive Producer

**"It is the duty of every citizen.... to defend truth and keep it alive through dialogue and culture. It may prove the best defense we have against letting our societies sink into oblivion"**

Anthony S. Papadimitriou, The Onassis Foundation

The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) 2018 Next Wave Festival, Oct 3-Dec 23, continues its 35-year-celebration of innovative, boundary-pushing performing arts.

BAM'S 2018 Next Wave Festival, features 26 shows packed into three short months: music, opera, theater, physical theater, dance, film/music, and performance art engagements in the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Harvey Theater, and BAM Fisher.

BAM Executive Producer Joseph V. Melillo said, "It is with immense pride and gratitude that I share the programming for my final BAM Next Wave Festival. The original Next Wave concept, envisioned by Harvey Lichtenstein, remains vital and dynamic. This year's festival features work by local and global artists across artistic genres, with new work by artists including Ted Hearne, Sasha Waltz, and Michelle Dorrance; landmark revivals - including a new production of Satyagraha; the return of companies including Cheek by Jowl, Circa, SITI Company, and Wordless Music; as well as a number of BAM debuts. The season comprises a broad array of wondrous personal expression and unique artistic perspectives."

## Book - BAM: The Next Wave Festival

An illustrated book celebrating the history of the cross disciplinary arts festival that has championed the work of Trisha Brown, Pina Bausch, Robert Lepage, Bill T. Jones, Robert Wilson, Steve Reich, and Meredith Monk is a compendium of the Festival.

## The Humanities Programming: Speaking Truth To Power

BAM Humanities is a forum for adventurous ideas, providing context for the cultural experience at BAM and beyond. The artist talks, master classes, lecture and discussion series, and innovative literary programs facilitate engagement and discovery.

## Speaking Truth To Power: A partnership of BAM and the Onassis Cultural Center New York

As part of the 2018 Next Wave Festival, BAM and Onassis Cultural Center New York present *Speaking Truth to Power*, a fall series of theater productions, conversations, and film screenings that explores the concept of free speech as a form of resistance, and examines the challenges facing individuals, societies, and movements that seek to employ it.

This robust series comprises two theater productions; four humanities programs; a four-part film series; a conversation and film event; a visual art installation; and an exhibition of materials from the BAM Hamm Archives.

Anthony S. Papadimitriou, President and Treasurer of the Board of Directors of the Onassis Foundation, said, "It is the duty of every citizen, as it is ours at the Onassis Foundation--which exists for the benefit of the public and, beyond Greek art and ideas, promotes social welfare in all its forms--to defend truth and keep it alive through dialogue and culture. It may prove the best defense we have against letting our societies sink into oblivion. We hope that our collaboration with BAM in Speaking Truth to Power highlights this responsibility and its urgency today more than ever before."

The final segment of *Speaking Truth To Power* comprises a Talk *On the Economics of Fatalism*, the Opera *Greek* and the Film *Taxi*.

*The Bacchae*, play by Euripides presented Oct 3-7, and *Greek*, opera presented Dec 5-9, are theater productions.

TALK: On the Economics of Fatalism

With Sarah Jaffe and Sanjay G. Reddy

In conversation with Simon Critchley

In *Greek*, the story of Oedipus - both a search for one's truth and an attempt to prove one's free will against the forces of



Alex Otterburn as Eddy.

Photo / Jane Hobson

destiny - is transposed to Thatcher-era Britain and the economic fatalism felt by many at the time. Philosopher Simon Critchley speaks with journalist Sarah Jaffe and economist Sanjay G. Reddy about the relationship between economic circumstances and the expression and reception of the truth of one's lives experience.



Allison Cook and Alex Otterburn.

Photo / Jane Hobson

Dec 8 at 6pm

## OPERA: Greek

Mark-Anthony Turnage's groundbreaking and profane 1988 two-act opera, *Greek*, is now a cult classic in the modern chamber opera repertoire. Composed and set in Britain's Thatcher era, and based on the in-your-face stage play by Steven Berkoff, *Greek's* bleak humor and exploration of social and political unrest continue to resonate. Scottish Opera/Opera Ventures' acclaimed new production is presented in its New York premiere, and the engagement also marks the New York premiere of the opera.



(left to right) Allison Cook, Susan Bullock, Andrew Shore and Alex Otterburn.

Photo / Jane Hobson

*Greek* is a retelling of Sophocles' tragedy Oedipus Rex, set in cockney-accented north London. An aimless young man, Eddy, longs for a better life away from his family. His father tells him of a fortuneteller's prophecy years earlier that Eddy would sleep with his mother and murder his father.

Eddy storms off, disgusted, brawling his way across a turbulent city rife with strikes, gas rationing, violence, and plague. Following a row with police, Eddy escapes into a café, where he argues with the café manager and kills him. The distraught café manager's wife falls in love with Eddy and they make a life together. She tells him of her young son who was lost in the Thames River years ago. Years later, Eddy's parents find him and finally tell him how they rescued him from the river. Horrified, Eddy realizes the fortune teller's prophecy has come true.

Scottish Opera/Opera Ventures

Libretto by Steven Berkoff from his play *Greek*

Adapted by Mark-Anthony Turnage and Jonathan Moore

Composed by Mark-Anthony Turnage

Conducted by Stuart Stratford

Directed by Joe Hill-Gibbins

Associate Director Daisy Evans

Set design by Johannes Sch?tz

Costume design by Alex Lowde

Lighting design by Matthew Richardson

Video design by Dick Straker

Movement by Jenny Ogilvie

Dramaturgy by Caroline Steinbeis

Soloists from The Orchestra of Scottish Opera

In English with English titles

Co-produced by Opera Ventures and Scottish Opera

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House (30 Lafayette Ave)

Dec 5, 6 & 8 at 7:30pm; Dec 9 at 3pm

## FILM: Taxi (2015)

Director Jafar Panahi, after being banned from making films by the Iranian government, posed as a taxi driver to craft this resourceful, exceptionally moving, and quietly thrilling answer to the state's attempts to challenge his agency as an artist.

BAM Rose Cinemas 30 Lafayette Avenue; Dec. 3 at 7 p.m.

## Visual Art

The Onassis Cultural Center New York and BAM present a new co-commissioned artwork by Brooklyn-based Greek artist Ioanna Pantazopoulou. Titled *A.M.T.P. (A Mad Tea Party)*, this sprawling hanging sculpture suspends from the ceiling as a topsy-turvy, upside-down tea party with cups and saucers on chairs, architectural teapot mountains, and colorful dusters and crystals under a life-size fake palm tree. Dining accouterments become undomesticated, while furniture is sliced like food. Dissected and reconfigured, very practical objects transform into the unworkable. Such

deconstruction guards against the belief that the world is simple and can be known with certainty.

In deconstructing material culture-a manifestation of capitalistic power-and embracing disorder, Ioanna's work criticizes our often-tacit acceptance of excess and invites audiences to reinterpret ur relationship to materialistic consumption that has become endemic in contemporary society.

*A.M.T.P. (A Mad Tea Party)*, 2018

Ioanna Pantazopoulou

Wood, stainless steel teapots, artificial palm tree, Rainbow static dusters, crystals, mixed media

Dimensions Variable

BAM Harvey Theater (651 Fulton St)

On view from September 13, 2018 - January 6, 2019

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Speaking Truth to Power at the Academy: In Their Own Words

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BAM Harvey Theater (651 Fulton Street)

On view from September 13, 2018- January 6, 2019

For more information on past or future events of the BAM's 2018 Next Wave Festival, visit [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

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



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## MAHIRA BURNS TROLL WHO QUESTIONED HER ON PICS WITH RANBIR

Pakistani actor Mahira Khan has addressed and apologised to old ladies for the Ranbir Kapoor controversy several times but her haters don't want it to let it go just yet. Another troll reminded her of the same thing recently on Twitter but this time Mahira didn't take it lying back.

Mahira tweeted her congratulations and good wishes to cricketer Mohammed Hafeez as he announced his retirement from test cricket on Tuesday. "Mubarak on a great innings and thank You!! I'm so glad I got to watch you play live. Love to you and the family," she wrote in her tweet.

A troll commented, "Lgta hai koi khaas kaam nahin mil rha jab say ranveer kapoor waali pictures out hueen (Looks like you are not getting any work since your pictures with Ranveer Kapoor were leaked online)." Mahira gave a single word reply to the troll: 'Ranbir\*'

Her fans also applauded her for the reply.

Mahira's pictures with Ranbir were leaked online in September 2017. The pics showed the two actors grabbing a smoke together at a hotel in New York. The pictures fanned rumours of their relationship and also got Mahira a lot of hate for her backless dress and smoking. She also got a lot of support from her fans and peers in the film industry, like Ali Fazal.

Ranbir, too, had called people's treatment of Mahira unfair in a statement to NDTV.

# PRIYANKA SAYS SHE IS AT 12 ON HAPPINESS SCALE, NICK SAYS HE LOVES INDIAN WEDDINGS

After a fairytale wedding with American singer Nick Jonas, actor Priyanka Chopra is beaming with joy. "On a scale of 1 to 10 in happiness, I'm on 12," Priyanka told IANS on stage at her wedding reception at the Taj Palace Hotel here on Tuesday night, as Nick smiled away.

"I'm a fan of Indian weddings," said Nick, who has embraced Indian traditions since his 'roka' ceremony with Priyanka in Mumbai in August. There was no trace of tiredness on the newly married couple's face despite almost a week full of celebrations. But like Priyanka told IANS here, "It's all merry time... No time to be tired."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the reception to congratulate the newly-married couple. He was escorted on stage by Priyanka's mother Madhu Chopra, and remained on stage for about 10 minutes, meeting Nick and Priyanka's families with folded hands and exchanging pleasantries.

Priyanka first made India proud by winning the Miss World crown in 2000, and then became a leading Bollywood actress with films like Fashion, Dostana and Mary Kom, followed by a rare successful crossover into Hollywood with American TV show Quantico, while Nick and his brothers Kevin and Joe are known for having formed a pop-rock band, The Jonas Brothers, in 2005. The band split up in 2013.

For the reception, Priyanka dazzled in an elegant and shimmering Falguni and Shane Peacock ensemble with a multi-layered diamond necklace and earrings, with her hair neatly tied in a bun complete with white roses. She flaunted the "choora" -- traditional red bangles worn by a Punjabi bride -- and sported vermillion. Nick was dressed in a velvet dinner jacket and completed the look with a bow tie.

The couple of the night posed with



panache, but also engaged in banter throughout the party even as guests queued up to meet them one after another.

The venue, the Durbar Hall at the Taj Palace Hotel, was done up elegantly with exotic white and soft pink flowers. The "NP" icon, which has remained a staple throughout the couple's wedding, stood out on the elaborate stage.

Candles flickered away at different spots of the venue which was enlivened by the sound of live music as well as a free flow of cocktails and a wide variety of food.

There was also an element of quirk with a vintage car which read "Just Married", apart from exotic flower arrangements adorning the hall.

Guests, which mostly included Priyanka's family members, also saw designers like Ritu Kumar, Rohit Bal, Ritu Beri, Anju Modi, JJ Valaya, Raghavendra Rathore, Gaurav Gupta, Rohit Gandhi and Rahul Khanna, along with Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) President Sunil Sethi, in attendance. Key mediapersons were also invited.

Source: IANS



## Aishwarya is a boss lady in a red pantsuit on new magazine cover

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan sure knows how to rock a magazine cover. The actor shared a picture on Instagram on Wednesday that shows her on the cover of Conde Nast Traveller's December-January issue.

Aishwarya is seen in a red jacket over a red satin shirt and a striped pair of pants. Her outfit is complimented by the red in her hair as well. Her fans also loved the picture, calling her a queen in the comments.

Talking to the magazine, Aishwarya said the fact that people start seeing someone's social media presence as a "barometric reflection of your popularity or status" was a put off for her. So far, she says, her social media journey has felt natural.

"I don't post whatever happens through the course of the day because then it would become a job and then

you're constantly focusing only on the fruition of it, and not the actual experience. I need to be connected to my real life," said Aishwarya, according to excerpts shared with IANS.

What made her decide to make her social media foray finally? "I think it's the patience, prodding and perseverance of my well-wishers... I mean, it's the way of the world; I get it. The reason I stayed away for so long was that the nature of the beast is such that it becomes a business. Everyone wants numbers, they start to see it as a barometric reflection of your popularity or status. How do you then monetise it, or treat it professionally?"

"It's fine that it's a business at the end of the day, but I didn't want to get drawn into that entire world, the drama. That said, it's a way of life, it's the world in which our kids are

growing up, it's here to stay, and there's nothing wrong with it," added the mother of one.

Aishwarya and her actor husband Abhishek Bachchan have a daughter named Aaradhya together. Glimpses of their vacations are sometimes a part of what the actress shares with her fans online. Talking about her favourite vacation style -- beaches, mountains, cities, jungles or deserts -- she said: "Abhishek and I are happy everywhere but I've been doing a lot more beach destinations since we had Aaradhya."

What is always in Aishwarya's travel bag? "You can't ask me that! Abhishek always laughs and says my bag is like a Mary Poppins bag - even before Aaradhya. Whatever you need will pop out of it. Everything that you could possibly think of is in there," she said.

Source: IANS



## ANNE HATHAWAY OFFERED ROLE IN 'THE WITCHES' REBOOT

Anne Hathaway might be headed to *The Witches*. According to *Variety*, Hathaway has been offered a role in Back to the Future director Robert Zemeckis' adaptation of Roald Dahl's 1983 children's novel, *The Witches*. While the actress has not officially accepted the role, the report that she is considering it even as she considers another film offer -- a starring role in Warner Bros.' *Sesame Street* movie.

The report didn't specify what role Hathaway was offered for *The Witches*, but it's possible that she was offered the role of the Grand High Witch, a character played by Anjelica Houston in the very loose 1990 adaptation of the novel, also entitled *The Witches*.

That film, which was produced by The Jim Henson Company and was the last one that Jim Henson personally worked on prior to his death, centered on a child who encounters a real world of witchcraft hidden plain sight. The plot of the film involved witches who pretend to be everyday women, so that they can kidnap and kill children. In the story, they are thwarted by a child they had turned into a mouse and his grandmother. At the end, the implication is that our heroes will have to journey out into the wider world and begin defeating witches beyond just the ones in England. Since there was no sequel, that plot thread was never picked up on.

# ANGELINA JOLIE, BRAD PITT REACH CHILD CUSTODY AGREEMENT, SAYS LAWYER

Divorcing Hollywood power couple Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt have reached a final agreement over the custody of their six children, Jolie's lawyer said on Friday, after more than two years of often bitter negotiations. "A custody arrangement was agreed weeks ago, and has been signed by both parties and the judge," Jolie's lawyer Samantha Bley DeJean said in a statement to Reuters.

"The agreement, which is based on the recommendations of the child custody evaluator, eliminates the need for a trial. The filing and details of the agreement are confidential to protect the best interests of the children." Representatives of Pitt had no immediate comment.

Jolie and Pitt, once one of Hollywood's most glamorous couples, separated in September 2016 after a more than 10-year romance and two-year marriage. Jolie, who filed for divorce citing irreconcilable differences, had been seeking primary custody of their six children, three of whom are the couple's biological children and three of whom are adopted. Friday's statement did not say how custody would be divided, and Jolie's spokesperson declined to give details. A trial date in the custody case had been tentatively set for December 4 before a private judge in Los Angeles. A source close to Jolie said that she "is very pleased to be entering the next stage and relieved with progress for the health of their family."

The 2016 divorce filing triggered a bitter custody dispute during which Pitt was investigated and cleared of child abuse, and both sides accused each other of trying to manipulate media coverage in their favour. The couple are yet to reach a final divorce settlement. Moneyball actor Pitt, 54, and *Maleficent* star Jolie, 43, began dating in late 2005 and married in 2014. They are parents to Maddox, 17, Pax, 15, Zahara, 13, Shiloh, 12, and 10-year-old twins Knox and Vivienne.



## NEW CAPTAIN MARVEL TRAILER TO ARRIVE TUESDAY

Marvel on Sunday released a new poster for the upcoming *Captain Marvel* movie, ahead of the unveiling of the film's second trailer on Tuesday.

The *Captain Marvel* story, with Brie Larson starring as the first woman to lead a Marvel superhero movie, is foreshadowed in the closing scene of *Avengers: Infinity War*, this year's blockbuster, with a global box office take of \$2.05 billion.

"Check out the new poster and tune-in to @ESPN's Monday Night Football to see the brand new trailer for Marvel Studios' #CaptainMarvel," Marvel Studios tweeted alongside the poster, which shows Larson as the superhero.

Just as this year's *Black Panther* built buzz around a major character in *Infinity War*, the March release of *Captain Marvel* will pave the way for the next *Avengers* movie, as yet untitled but called *Avengers 4* by the Marvel cognoscenti. Its release date is scheduled for April 26 in the UK, and May 3 in the US.

In an interview to *Entertainment Weekly*, Larson spoke about her character, "She can't help but be herself. She can be aggressive, and she can have a temper, and she can be a little invasive and in your face. She is also quick to jump to things, which makes her amazing in battle because she's the first one out there and doesn't always wait for orders. But the [not] waiting for orders is, to some, a character flaw."

Directed by Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck, *Captain Marvel* has shaken off the traditional origin-story template.

Set in the 1990s, *Captain Marvel* follows the title character as she becomes one of the strongest heroes during an intergalactic war. It also served as the first solo, female-led movie in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, and an introduction into the most powerful hero the MCU has ever had.

The movie will also stars Samuel L. Jackson, Lee Pace, Djimon Hounsou, and Clark Gregg. Among those joining the cast also include Jude Law, Gemma Chan, and Annette Bening.



# The Chatwal Lodge Commences Construction with Ceremonial Groundbreaking in Rural Bethel, NY



Sant Chatwal speaking at the Groundbreaking

Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

## CONTD FROM PAGE 1

luxury retreat is expected to open in spring 2020 with 34 private villas and suite accommodations, refined rustic design and world-class, farm-to-table culinary experiences by DUCASSE Paris, founded by multi-Michelin-starred chef Alain Ducasse.

The groundbreaking ceremony for this exciting development took place Wednesday, December 5, 2018, at 11:00am, and featured New York State Assembly Member Aileen M. Gunther and Bethel Town Supervisor Dan Sturm as keynote speakers, leading members of the Dream Hotel Group team: Chairman Sant Singh Chatwal, CEO Jay Stein, and Vice President of Operations, Luxury Division Ashish Verma, as well as Chapin Estate Developer Steve Dubrovsky, Architect Nunzio DeSantis, and Granite Associates Chairman & CEO Alan Gerry, among others.

"We're grateful for Mr. Sant Chatwal and his Dream Hotel Group team bringing The Chatwal Lodge to the region. The caliber of this project is remarkable, and, once open, will become a world-class destination and an extraordinary addition to both New York State and Sullivan County," said New York State Assembly Member Aileen M. Gunther.

"The Chatwal Lodge will bring full- and part-time jobs, both during construction and after it opens," said Bethel Town Supervisor Dan Sturm. "The new tourists and visitors that will come to Bethel will also bring new commerce and better economic opportunity for all the businesses already located here."

President and CEO of Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association Roberta Byron-Lockwood added, "The Catskills is a picturesque mountainous region that has been long known as a popular getaway since the beginning of the twentieth century. The Chatwal Lodge will help solidify its reputation as a global destination for years to



Alan Gerry, an American billionaire and founder of Cablevision Industries, congratulating Sant Chatwal

Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia



Chatwal Lodge mainstays. L to R: Steve Dubrovsky, Developer, Chapin Estate; Alan Gerry, Chairman & CEO Granite Associates, L.P.; Sant Chatwal, Chairman Dream Hotel Group; and Jay Stein, CEO, Dream Hotel Group

come."

Rustic and refined, The Chatwal Lodge offers an elegant and charming play of details literally carved straight out of the woods from which it stands. The luxurious hideaway features hand-hewn timbers, oversized stone fireplaces and mighty trunks of 40-foot white pine trees towering from floor to ceiling in the Main Lodge. Luxurious meeting and event venues located at water's edge are ideal for corporate retreats, social events and lavish destination weddings. Harmonizing with nature, its serene spa offerings will also include some of the most desirable wellness services.

The opening of The Chatwal Lodge is part of a larger economic development plan for the town of Bethel, New York. Within this beautiful swath of the Catskills, located just 90

miles from midtown Manhattan, the wilds of nature are discovered in everyday life. The Chatwal Lodge is located within The Chapin Estate along the shores of Sullivan County's two largest lakes. Named as one of the 'top 10 regions to visit in 2019' by Lonely Planet, the Catskills and Sullivan County have seen an increasing number of visitors due to its vast recreational activities, as well as growing arts and culture community. The Chatwal Lodge is expected to generate tax revenue and create new jobs, while also offering the growing residential and business communities a new reason to work and play in the countryside destination.

"We are delighted to finally commence construction on this iconic project," said Developer Steve Dubrovsky. "We greatly appreciate the patience and guidance of

everyone involved as we carefully design and connect this new, five-star retreat within the expanse of Chapin Estate, one of the Catskills' most serene and beautiful natural landscapes."

"The Chatwal Lodge is born from our signature New York City location and five-star luxury brand The Chatwal," said Sant Singh Chatwal, Chairman, Dream Hotel Group. "Within this decadent and simply unprecedented country retreat, The Chatwal Lodge is a magical destination where luxury meets nature, and we are committed to embracing the natural resources of the area to create an enterprise that truly redefines the town and country luxury living experience."

"All of us at Dream Hotel Group are proud to play a role in creating what will be one of the most spectacular destinations in Sullivan County," remarked Jay Stein, CEO, Dream Hotel Group. "Drawing inspiration from the Catskills' rich history, rustic architecture and breathtaking natural setting, The Chatwal Lodge will be the star of Sullivan County and a critical addition to our growing global portfolio."

With 18 hotels open today and 20 new locations currently in development worldwide, Dream Hotel Group is on track to triple its existing portfolio by 2022. The groundbreaking of The Chatwal Lodge signals another exciting milestone in the continued growth and evolution of the company and its portfolio of lifestyle brands.

Indian-American hotelier Sant Singh Chatwal voiced confidence in the county at a groundbreaking for The Chatwal Lodge. The hospitality mogul's company, the Dream Hotel Group, plans to build the 50-room, \$50 million, five-star luxury retreat inside The Chapin Estate, an elite residential community.

Up to \$100 million could eventually be invested, depending on the project's success, Dream Hotel Group CEO Jay Stein told the Times Herald-Record last year.

CONTD ON PAGE 21

# The Chatwal Lodge Commences Construction with Ceremonial Groundbreaking in Rural Bethel, NY



Jay Stein, CEO, Dream Hotel Group outlining the ambitious project  
Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia



Siddhartha Pahwa, CEO Yo1 Luxury Nature Cure outlined the services his company will provide to rejuvenate the visitors to the Lodge Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia



Ashish Verma, Vice President, Luxury Division, Dream Hotel Group, and Riyaz Akhtar, Executive Vice President, Human Resources, Dream Hotel Group spoke with The Indian Panorama about various aspects of the project  
Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia



The Old World Charm of the location

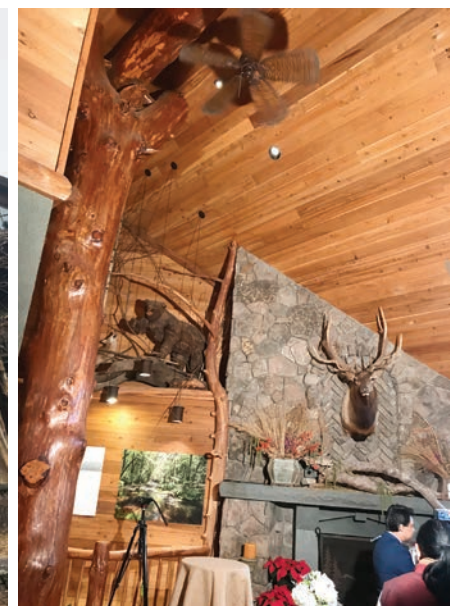


Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

bars worldwide. The company has another 20 hotels under construction.

Now, Chatwal is betting on the Catskills, after three decades of running uber-trendy, high-end urban hotels with long lines for attractions like rooftop bars.

The Chatwal Lodge's first 25 rooms at Chapin are due by the second half of 2020, followed by another 25 rooms. If they're a hit, the 26-acre site has space for 50 more rooms, Stein said on Wednesday.

Accommodations will cost between \$500 and \$5,000 per night. Some will be beside the Toronto Reservoir.

## The Nunzio Marc DeSantis-designed complex will include:

- 34 luxury villas with 50 total rooms. The rooms will be spread among accommodations such as eight one- and two-bedroom luxury cabins; three or four glamor-camping tents; a guest home with a presidential suite, and a handful of large, ultra-luxe, glass-roofed treehouses;
- a restaurant and catering by chef Alain Ducasse, and the Ducasse Paris company, which operates three restaurants that have each earned a coveted three-star Michelin rating;
- a pool, a fitness center, a wedding area and cabin amenities ranging from fire pits to decks to golf carts and kayaks; some spa elements on site and others at the YO1 Luxury Nature Cure center in the Town of Thompson;
- and a main lodge, created from Chapin Estate co-founder Steve Dubrovsky's 13,000-square-foot home.

Dubrovsky, Howard Schoor and Dan Silna began building The Chapin Estate in 2000. Residences sell for between \$500,000 and \$15 million. In July 2017, Chatwal took the leading stake in the community's roughly 2,500 undeveloped acres, which amount to about 280 unsold lots.

Sullivan County Legislature Chairman Luis Alvarez and other local leaders



Alleen M. Gunther, Assembly Member, New York State Assembly sharing her thoughts Prof. Indrajit Saluja, Chief Editor and Publisher of The Indian Panorama

Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

## CONTD FROM PAGE 20

"Sullivan County has very great potential, just go back to the history of this area, and how it was number one for tourism in the tri-state area," Chatwal said Wednesday. "Now, it's time to bring it back." "Look at Manhattan, and how no one

wanted to go to Times Square," and how it was redeveloped, Chatwal added. "This is the same story that should happen here" in Sullivan County.

Dream Hotel Group operates 20 hotels, including the Chatwal New York and Time Hotels, and more than 50 restaurants and

cheered Chatwal's hotel plans on Wednesday.

"Sullivan County is not standing behind on development," Alvarez said. "We're in the front again as a family destination."

Hal Teitelbaum, a Chapin Estate resident and Crystal Run Healthcare CEO, said he's

uncertain what the Dream Hotel Group's project will bring to Bethel.

"If they provide amenities, and if they're good stewards of the environment, it could be a fantastic thing both for the Chapin community and for Sullivan County," Teitelbaum said.



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# Suicide car bomber kills at least three in southeast Iran

**AHVAZ (TIP):** At least three people died and 24 others were injured in a suicide car bomb attack on the police headquarters in Iran's southeast on Thursday, state media reported, adding that the perpetrator was killed. Television also reported shooting in the area, located in the region of Sistan-Baluchestan, which is home to a Sunni Muslim minority in the largely Shi'ite country and has long been plagued by violence from both drug smugglers and separatists.

"Three people were killed and some others were injured," Chabahar's acting governor Rahmdel Bameri told state television. An official told TV that "the terrorist who carried out the attack was killed". He did not elaborate. Mohammad Hadi Marashi, deputy governor for security affairs, told state television two police officers had been killed. The state news agency IRNA said some 24 people had been wounded. There was no immediate claim of responsibility.

Videos posted on Twitter, purportedly from Chabahar, showed thick smoke rising from the area. Reuters could not verify their authenticity. "Police stopped the explosive-laden car and started firing at the driver ... who then set off the explosion near the police headquarters in Chabahar," said Bameri. Suicide bombings are rare in Iran, but Sunni militant groups have carried out several attacks on Iranian security forces in the Sistan-Baluchestan province in recent years.

Iran has stepped up security in border areas after gunmen in September opened fire on a military parade in Iran's southwestern city of



Ahvaz, killing 25 people, almost half of them members of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards corps. An Iranian ethnic Arab separatist Sunni militant group and Islamic State both claimed responsibility for that attack.

Last year, in the first deadly assault claimed by Islamic State in Tehran, 18 people were killed at the parliament and mausoleum of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, founder of the Islamic Republic. Jaish al-Adl (Army of Justice), a Sunni militant group that has carried out several attacks on Iranian security forces, mainly in Sistan-Baluchestan, claimed responsibility for an attack that killed 10 border guards near Pakistan in 2017.

In 2010, two suicide bombers killed at least 28 people, including some of the elite

Revolutionary Guards, at a Shi'ite mosque in southeast Iran, an attack Iranian leaders said was backed by the United States. The attack was claimed by a Sunni separatist group called Jundullah (Soldiers of God). Tehran accuses its Sunni-led regional rival Saudi Arabia and the United States of funding most of these groups, a charge that Riyadh and Washington deny.

Iran also says that militant groups are sheltering across the border in Pakistan and has threatened to attack their bases if Islamabad does not confront them. Chabahar is a free trade zone and the site of an Indian-backed port complex being developed as part of a new transportation corridor for landlocked Afghanistan. (Reuters)

## Luxembourg set to become first country to provide free public transport

**LUXEMBOURG CITY (TIP):** In a bid to do away with its traffic woes and keep up with its promises of social welfare, the Xavier Bettel-led government in Luxembourg has decided to provide free public transport to commuters. The move, which is scheduled to come as a major relief to Luxembourgers during next summer, shall witness fares lifted on trains, trams and buses, The Guardian reported.

Luxembourg City, the capital of the tiny, landlocked European country bears the infamy of being one of the worst traffic congestion-hit cities in the world. Although home to around 110,000 people, the capital witnesses 400,000 commuters coming to the city to work. A recent study cited by The Guardian showed that drivers in the capital spent an average of 33 hours in traffic snarl-ups in 2016.

With a population of 600,000 inhabitants, Luxembourg also proves to be the workplace of 200,000 people from France, Belgium and Germany who cross the border daily to work. Luxembourg has increasingly manifested a progressive attitude when it comes to transportation. This summer, the government introduced free transport for every child and young person under the age of 20.

Apart from providing free public transport, Bettel's coalition government also intends to legalise cannabis and introduce two new public holidays. Prime Minister Bettel, who sworn in for a second term Wednesday will form a coalition with left-wing Socialist Workers' party and the Greens, had previously vowed to prioritise the environment throughout its election campaign. (PTI)

## EU court to issue Brexit ruling on December 10

**LUXEMBOURG (TIP):** The European Court of Justice will deliver its judgment on whether Britain can unilaterally reverse its move to leave the European Union on Monday, December 10, at 0800 GMT, the court said on Dec 6.

The ruling, delivered with unusual urgency, will come on the eve of a crucial vote in the British parliament on whether to accept a Brexit deal negotiated by Prime Minister Theresa May. An ECJ adviser issued an opinion in the case on Tuesday that Britain could simply stop Brexit without seeking approval from other member states, boosting hopes of those who want to halt the process. The judges usually follow such opinions. (Reuters)

## New Caledonia issues tsunami evacuation alert after 7.6 quake

**NOUMEA (TIP):** New Caledonia on Wednesday ordered the evacuation of coastal areas following a tsunami warning, after a powerful undersea earthquake of magnitude 7.6 struck off the east coast of the French territory. The quake was just 10 km (6 miles) deep and about 155 km (95 miles) east-southeast of the Loyalty Islands, the Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre said. (Reuters)

## Sydney's most iconic house isn't joining the property downturn

**SYDNEY (TIP):** The Sydney Opera House's price-tag has been put at A\$6.2 billion (\$4.5 billion), jumping by more than a third in just five years.

That's Deloitte Access Economics's new estimate of the building's so-called social value, which seeks to quantify a range of benefits from economic return to cultural and iconic status. The upbeat report paints a very different picture to the city's residential property market, where prices are dropping at the fastest rate since the global financial crisis.

"The Opera House is Australia's premier cultural institution and tourism destination," Deloitte said in its 'Revaluing Our Icon' report Thursday. "It is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a masterpiece of human creative genius and a world-class performing arts centre."

Indeed, the property is in a somewhat different league to other Sydney real estate. It spurred just under A\$1 billion in tourism expenditure in fiscal 2017 and is estimated to support more than 8,000 full-time equivalent jobs, Deloitte found. Almost nine out of 10 international visitors said the Opera House was a consideration in their decision to visit Sydney.

Danish architect Joern Utzon's design for the building was selected in 1957 after a worldwide competition. The 1.82-hectare (4.5-acre) structure is located on a platform podium for which Utzon found inspiration in the Mayan building culture. It includes five halls with some 5,500 combined seats.

Decades on, the Opera House remains Australia's No. 1 tourist destination. It attracted 10.9 million visitors — including 2.9 million from overseas — in fiscal 2017, which is up 46 per cent since 2013, Deloitte said.

Deloitte surveyed 3,000 Australians and 500 international tourists from the US, China, U.K. and New Zealand for the report, which was commissioned to mark the 45th anniversary of the building's opening. (Bloomberg)

## Holiday hiring in Brazil reaches out to transgender community

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Brazilian LGBT+ rights activists on Tuesday hailed Dutch retailer C&A for directing a new hiring campaign at underrepresented minorities, including transgender people.

The company announced that it would be hiring for 5,000 temporary roles at more than 270 stores across the country, and encouraged both transgender people and refugees to apply.

An announcement directed specifically at transgender workers appeared last week on the Facebook page of local advocacy group, Transempregos, which collaborated with C&A to promote the vacancies among its followers.

"For C&A, fashion is a platform of expression that allows everyone to show who they are," reads the job announcement. "To be in touch with the times, C&A is offering a work environment that believes in the value and richness of differences."

The C&A Foundation, affiliated with retailer C&A, is a funding partner of the Thomson Reuters Foundation on its coverage of human trafficking.

"It's marvellous," Symmy Larrat president of the Brazilian Association of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transvestite and Transgender people (ABLGBTT) told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"It sends a message that goes against the exclusion that people live day to day."

The hiring campaign draws attention to the difficulties confronting transgender Brazilians, who, despite recent decisions from the nation's top court recognizing trans rights, regularly face violence and discrimination.

According to advocacy group Trans Murder Monitoring, 167 trans people were killed in Brazil last year, the most of any country.

Javier Corrales, professor of political science at Amherst College, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation that workplace discrimination is also a daily reality for transgender people, both in Brazil and across Latin America.

"This is a very serious problem," he said. "They might have access to a limited number of jobs, mostly low-paying jobs, and they don't get promoted."

Worse still, said Corrales, those trans people that do get hired often experience anxiety and self-exclusion from trying to hide their identity, which can impact productivity. By contrast, moves like these to promote inclusion can help boost workplace performance.

"A company that cultivates a culture of diversity makes everyone feel much more comfortable," he said. "It attracts more talent, and it's a win-win: it's a win for productivity, and it's a win for workers." (Reuters)

# WAYS TO GET SHINY HAIR AT HOME

**H**air tends to lack sheen when it is not healthy. When your hair is well-moisturized and nourished, it has cuticles that lie flat against the hair shaft. When light hits this hair, the smooth surface allows the light to bounce right off, making your hair look shiny. However, with unhealthy hair, the cuticles rise and do not allow light to bounce off your hair. Unhealthy hair also leads to problems like frizz, breakage, split ends, etc.

Using DIY methods to get shiny hair is not only convenient but it also gives you the freedom to tweak the recipe to suit your hair type and texture. Unlike commercial products, you know exactly what is going into your hair care mix. Keep reading to find the perfect hair care solution to make your hair healthy and shiny.

## Coconut oil as a rinse

Coconut oil is one of the most popular ingredients in hair care and for good reason. The oil is rich in medium fatty chain acids and has antimicrobial properties that make it an effective solution for nourishing your hair while maintaining scalp health. It is one of the most penetrative oils, which allows it to be seeped right into your hair shaft, nourishing it. It smooths down your hair cuticle, preventing protein and moisture loss by forming a protective barrier around your hair shaft.

While coconut oil can be used in a hot oil treatment, or applied as a deep conditioner, another popular method of use is as an oil rinse. An oil rinse is not only quick, but it also helps keep your hair conditioned for extended periods of time. It keeps your hair protected from factors like moisture loss and the harmful effects of the sun. The oil coats your hair while not weighing it down, ensuring that your cuticles remain unharmed by the sun or a dehydrating environment. In case you have a sensitive scalp, coconut oil as a rinse also helps keep it soothed and cool.

## Egg Hair Pack

Eggs are packed with protein, which



is what your hair is made up of. Using an egg pack will add instant shine to your hair while nourishing it and increasing its tensile strength. To make a simple egg hair pack for shiny hair, you will need one egg, two teaspoons of honey, and one teaspoon of almond oil. If your hair is extremely long, you can double the amount of ingredients that you are using.

## Banana Pack

Bananas are rich in Vitamins A, B, C, and E, which makes it a perfect ingredient to fix damaged hair. These vitamins help nourish your hair while adding shine, and make your hair much softer and manageable. Making a banana hair pack at home is easy. Just get a ripe

banana, mash it, and apply it to your hair. Optionally, for extra conditioning, you can add a teaspoon of your favorite hair oil, such as almond or coconut.

## Aloe Vera

Since aloe vera is 95% water, it is extremely hydrating, which makes it the perfect ingredient for hair care. It has been used in hair care for a long time as an ingredient that battles dandruff, moisturizes, and boosts hair growth. To use aloe vera in a hair pack, extract 1 cup fresh aloe vera gel from the plant. To this, add a tablespoon of castor oil, which is an ingredient known to control frizz. Apply this mixture to your hair. You can leave it on for 45 minutes or even overnight.

wrinkles will disappear, and your skin will get a second lease of life

## Minimise sun damage

- While it isn't really a sunscreen, red wine, with its antioxidants and amino acids, can help form a natural barrier against the strong UV radiation of the sun. Surely you must know that a glass of red wine can help prevent cancer

## For radiant skin

- A red wine massage is your ticket to radiant skin
- Just spritz some red wine on your face and massage very gently
- Rinse it off with a cleansing agent like Olay Total Effects 7 in One Foaming Cleanser after 10-15 minutes
  - Also, check out 9 benefits of glycerin for skin whitening here.



# RED WINE FOR FACIAL SKINCARE

## To soothe inflammation

- Once again, the antioxidants in red wine work on inflamed skin
- Gently dab a few drops on red and inflamed skin, and soothe your agitated complexion

## To fight acne

- You can use red wine for skin that is affected by acne
- The antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties cleanse skin of oil and impurities, and also reduce further breakouts

## As a toner

- Instead of investing in a cosmetic product, you can use red wine as a toner and get soft, clear and supple skin

## FOOD CORNER

### FULLY LOADED EGGS

#### Ingredients

6-8 eggs, 5-6 sausages, 1 chicken ham, 1-2 onions, 1/4th red bell pepper, Olive oil, 3-4 Tbsp butter, 1 potato, 2 green chillies, 1 cup mushrooms



#### Method

- Slice up sausages, ham, red bell pepper and chillies.
- Heat olive oil and butter. Add onions and saute them. Then add small chopped pieces of potatoes.
- Add the sausages, ham, chillies, bell peppers and diced mushrooms. Cook for few minutes.
- Add salt and pepper and keep them aside.
- In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs with some salt and pepper. Make the batter fluffy/frothy.
- In another bowl, add butter and put the sausage mixture in it.
- Add the eggs and put them in the oven for 5-7 minutes at 170-180 degree.
- Serve the frittata in a plate. Garnish with coriander and sprouts and serve.

### Subz Badam Ka Shorba

#### Ingredients

200 carrot, 200 beans, 200 cauliflower, 200 green peas, 100 onion, 30 ginger, 20 garlic, 60 cooking oil, 20 khada masala, 30 dhania green, 100 almond, to taste salt

#### Method

- Take fresh vegetables - carrots, beans, cauliflower and green peas. Wash them properly and keep it aside.
- Take ghee in a pan. Put jeera, ginger, garlic and all the vegetables. Cook it properly. Once cooked, let it cool down.
- Grind into fine paste.
- Take oil in a pan. Add chopped ginger, garlic and the grinded vegetables. Add water.
- Let it boil.
- Check seasoning and serve hot with namak pare.





# EXCESS OR POOR SLEEP LINKED TO HEART DISEASE

**D**o you sleep too much or do you not get sufficient sleep? If so, there is bad news. The amount of time you sleep, including daytime naps, is associated with the risk of developing cardiovascular disease (CVD) and death, a new study warns.

The study found that people who slept for longer than the recommended duration of six to eight hours a day had an increased risk of dying or developing heart disease or stroke.

"Our study shows that the optimal duration of estimated sleep is six to eight hours per day for adults," said Chuangshi Wang, postdoctoral student from the McMaster University in Canada.

"Too little sleep could be an underlying contributor to death and cases of cardiovascular disease and too much sleep may indicate underlying conditions that increase risk," Wang added.

Although daytime napping was associated with higher risks of death or cardiovascular problems in those with sufficient or longer sleep at night, this was not the case in people who slept under six hours at night as it compensated for the lack of sleep at night and mitigated the risks.

For the study, the team looked at a total of 116,632 adults aged between 35 and 70.

The findings, published in the European Heart Journal, showed that compared to people who slept for the



recommended time, those who slept a total of eight to nine hours a day had a five per cent increased risk of developing the disease.

In addition, people sleeping between nine and ten hours a day had an increased risk of 17 per cent and those sleeping more than 10 hours a day had a 41 per cent increased risk.

Furthermore, they also found a nine per cent increased risk for people who slept a total of six or fewer hours.

Importantly, the team also found that for every 1,000 people sleeping six or fewer hours a night, 9.4 per cent

developed CVD or died per year.

This occurred in 7.8 per cent of those sleeping six to eight hours, 8.4 per cent of those sleeping eight to nine hours, 10.4 per cent of those sleeping nine to 10 hours and 14.8 per cent of those sleeping more than 10 hours, findings further revealed.

"The general public should ensure that they get about six to eight hours of sleep a day. If you sleep too much regularly, then you may want to visit a doctor to check your overall health," Salim Yusuf, Professor from the varsity noted.

Source: IANS

**N**eurons that influence metabolism are active for up to two days after a single workout, according to a study in mice.

The study, published in the journal Molecular Metabolism, offers new insight into the brain's potential role in fitness and may provide a target for developing therapies that improve metabolism.

"It doesn't take much exercise to alter the activity of these neurons," said Kevin Williams from the University of Texas in the US.

"Based on our results, we would predict that getting out and exercising even once in a semi-intense manner can reap benefits that can last for days, in particular with respect to glucose metabolism," Williams said.

Researchers measured the effects of short- and long-term exercise on two types of neurons that comprise the melanocortin brain circuit, which is shared by both humans and mice.

One of the neuron types (POMC) is associated with reduced appetite, lower blood glucose levels, and higher energy burning when activated, researchers said.

The other type (NPY/AgRP) increases appetite and diminishes metabolism when activated, they said.

The study found that a single bout of exercise can boost the activity of POMC neurons and inhibit the counterparty NPY/AgRP neuron for up to two days.

Those changes last longer with more training, researchers said.

The findings expand the scientific understanding of the melanocortin circuit, which previous studies showed could be altered through feeding or

## SINGLE WORKOUT CAN BOOST METABOLISM FOR DAYS



fasting but had not yet been linked to exercise.

The results also provide another avenue to research potential treatments to improve glucose metabolism in patients with conditions such as diabetes.

"It is possible that activating melanocortin neurons may hold therapeutic benefits for patients one day, especially for diabetics who need improved blood-glucose regulation," Williams said.

The study measured brain circuit activity in mice given training regiments that lasted from zero to 10

days.

Scientists found that a single workout (consisting of three 20-minute treadmill runs) caused a decrease in appetite that lasted up to six hours.

"This result may explain at the neural circuit level why many people don't feel hungry immediately after exercise," Williams said.

The longer-term effects of exercise were seen in the POMC neurons, which improve glucose metabolism when activated.

These neurons remained active longer if they also expressed a protein called the leptin receptor.

Source: PTI



## Chemicals in soaps, cosmetics may speed up puberty in girls

**G**irls exposed to chemicals commonly found in toothpaste, makeup, soap and other personal care products before birth may hit puberty earlier, according to a study published on Tuesday.

Researchers from the University of California (UC) Berkeley in the US found that daughters of mothers who had higher levels of diethyl phthalate and triclosan in their bodies during pregnancy experienced puberty at younger ages.

The results, published in the journal Human Reproduction, came from data collected as part of the US Center for the Health Assessment of Mothers and Children of Salinas (CHAMACOS) study, which followed 338 children from before birth to adolescence.

Diethyl phthalate is often used as a stabiliser in fragrances and cosmetics.

The antimicrobial agent triclosan—which the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned from use in hand soap in 2017 because it was shown to be ineffective—is still used in some toothpastes, researchers said.

"We know that some of the things we put on our bodies are getting into our bodies, either because they pass through the skin or we breathe them in or we inadvertently ingest them," said Kim Harley, an associate adjunct professor at UC Berkeley.

"We need to know how these chemicals are affecting our health," Harley said.

Researchers suspect that many chemicals in personal care products can interfere with natural hormones in our bodies, and studies have shown that exposure to these chemicals can alter reproductive development in rats.

Chemicals that have been implicated include phthalates, which are often found in scented products like perfumes, soaps and shampoos; parabens, which are used as preservatives in cosmetics; and phenols, which include triclosan.

The CHAMACOS study recruited pregnant women living in the farm-working, primarily Latino communities of Central California's Salinas Valley between 1999 and 2000.

While the primary aim of the study was to examine the impact of pesticide exposure on childhood development, the researchers used the opportunity to examine the effects of other chemicals as well.

The team measured concentrations of phthalates, parabens and phenols in urine samples taken from mothers twice during pregnancy, and from children at the age of 9.

They then followed the growth of the children — 159 boys and 179 girls—between the ages of nine and 13 to track the timing of developmental milestones marking different stages of puberty.

The vast majority—over 90 per cent—of urine samples of both mothers and children showed detectable concentrations of all three classes of chemicals, with the exception of triclosan which was present in about 70 per cent of samples.

Source: PTI

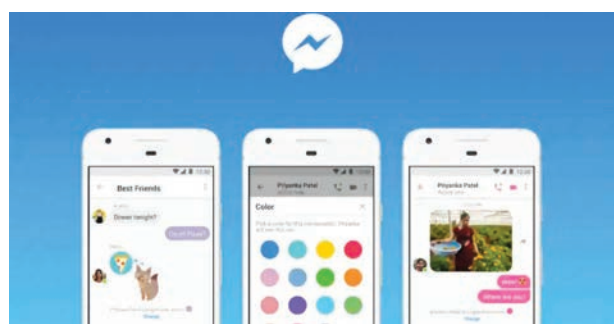
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## FACEBOOK MESSENGER LITE GETS GIF SUPPORT

Facebook's Messenger Lite has got richer with more features such as animated GIFs and most customisation features that were available in the full-sized Messenger app.

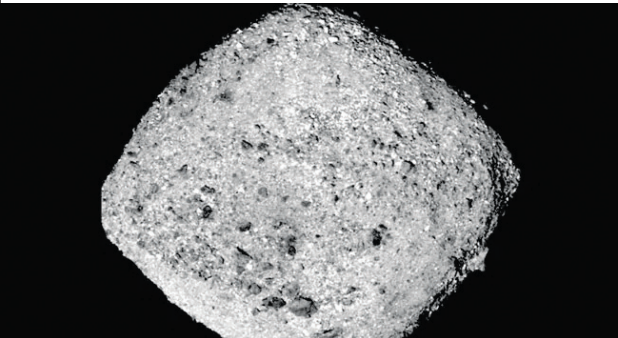
"While you could receive GIFs in Messenger Lite for some time, they were not animated. Starting now, people can express themselves more in chats with family and friends by sending and playing animated GIFs," Krish Gali, Product Manager, Facebook, wrote in a blog post.

"To send a GIF, use a third party keyboard (such as the Google keyboard), search for GIFs in their library, and send a more expressive message," Gali added.

Users can now also customise their conversations with different people and groups and make various colour choices and emojis to make the chat more personal.

With the new updates, Facebook's Messenger Lite app has become a feature-rich service but the size still remains under 10MB. The lightweight messaging app is available in over 100 countries got video chat capabilities earlier this year.

Messenger Lite earlier had Messenger's core experiences such as messaging, sending and receiving photos and links and receiving stickers. It uses the same bolt logo as Messenger but with colours reversed. The bolt is blue with a white chat bubble background. *Source: PTI*



## NASA SET TO GRAB A PIECE OF ASTEROID THAT MAY HIT EARTH 200 YEARS LATER

For the past two years, the OSIRIS-REx spacecraft has sailed across the solar system by the light of the stars. Like ancient mariners and the Apollo astronauts, it needed the constancy of the constellations to navigate the dark unknown.

All that changed Monday, when the NASA probe finally reached its target, an Empire State Building-sized asteroid called Benu. Now OSIRIS-REx faces a whole new kind of challenge: exploring the smallest object ever orbited by a spacecraft. Sitting at mission control at the Denver offices of Lockheed Martin, which operates the spacecraft for NASA, engineer Javi Cerna waited for the signal indicating OSIRIS-REx had begun the burn needed to bring it close to its target.

"Standby for Benu arrival," Cerna announced.

He fidgeted in his chair, then stood. The room was utterly silent. Then Cerna grinned and spread his arms out wide.

"We have arrived!"

OSIRIS-REx was within 12 miles of Benu's surface - about the distance between the White House and NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, which manages the spacecraft.

Soon an image of the asteroid appeared on the mission control screens: a diamond-shaped body with a rough, speckled exterior. OSIRIS-REx was finally at the doorstep of its new home. Benu is a carbonaceous asteroid - a primitive, carbon-rich piece of debris left over from the process that formed the solar system 4.6 billion years ago. OSIRIS-REx will spend the next 18 months there, surveying the landscape and probing Benu's chemical makeup before finally selecting what piece of the asteroid it wants to bring back home. In a kiss-like maneuver, the spacecraft's robotic arm will collect some material from Benu's surface, then sling the sample back toward Earth.

# GOOGLE RELEASES CHROME 71, TAKES AIM AT DECEPTIVE WEBSITES

Google has announced its newly-released Chrome 71, the latest version of its web browser, is now rolling out for Windows, Mac and Linux operating systems (OS), which aims to keep deceptive websites off.

The latest version of Google's browser was in the works over the past few months and has just left the beta programme.

"The Chrome team is delighted to announce the promotion of Chrome 71 to the stable channel for Windows, Mac and Linux. This will roll out over the coming days/weeks.

"Chrome 71.0.3578.80 contains a number of fixes and improvements—a list of changes is available in the log. Watch out for upcoming Chrome and Chromium blog posts about new features and big efforts delivered in 71," the tech giant wrote in a blog post late on Tuesday.

In the new version, users would be warned when a site appears to be hiding the real costs and terms for a



transaction.

With Chrome 71, experiences on websites that fall under Google's definition of abusive would be filtered.

These include web experiences that are not just limited to ads, such as auto-

redirects that happen without any action from a user or trick-to-click experiences like a warning notification that actually leads to an ad or another website's landing page, according to The Verge. *Source: IANS*

## 100 New Exoplanets Discovered

An international team of astronomers have discovered more than 100 extrasolar planets (exoplanets) -- that revolve around stars other than the Sun -- in only three months, using a combination of ground- and space-based telescopes.

These planets are quite diverse and expected to play a large role in developing the research field of exoplanets and life in the Universe.

The team involving researchers at the University of Tokyo and Astrobiology Center of the National Institutes of Natural Sciences investigated 227 exoplanet candidates based on data from second mission of NASA's Kepler Space Telescope (K2 mission), as well as using other space telescopes and ground-based telescopes.

They confirmed that 104 of them are really exoplanets. Seven of the confirmed exoplanets have ultra-short orbital periods less than 24 hours.

The formation process of exoplanets with such short orbital periods is still unclear. The team also confirmed many low-mass rocky exoplanets with masses less than twice that of the Earth as well as some planetary systems with multiple exoplanets.

## Developed, smallest wearable, battery-free device

Scientists have developed the world's smallest wearable, battery-free device that can measure exposure to light across multiple wavelengths, from the ultra violet (UV), to visible and even infrared parts of the solar spectrum.

When the solar-powered, virtually indestructible device was mounted on human participants, it recorded multiple forms of light exposure during outdoor activities, even in the water, said researchers from the Northwestern University in the US.

The device monitored therapeutic UV light in clinical phototherapy booths for psoriasis and atopic dermatitis as well as blue light phototherapy for newborns with jaundice in the neonatal intensive care unit.

It also demonstrated the ability to measure white light exposure for seasonal affective disorder, according to the research published in the journal Science Translational Medicine.

The device enables precision phototherapy for these health conditions, and it can monitor, separately and accurately, UVB and UVA exposure for people at high risk for melanoma, a deadly form of skin cancer.

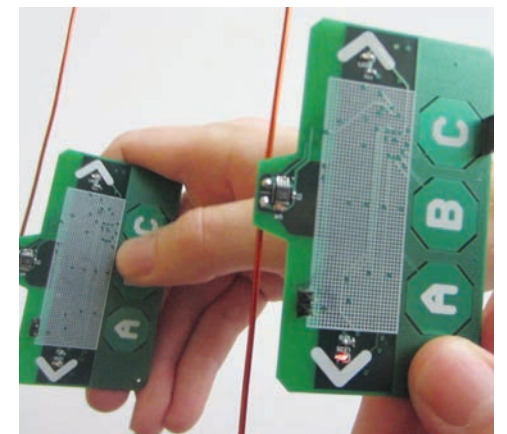
For recreational users, the sensor can help warn of impending sunburn, researchers said.

"From the standpoint of the user, it couldn't be easier to use -- it's always on yet never needs to be recharged," said John Rogers, a professor at Northwestern University.

"It weighs as much as a raindrop, has a diameter smaller than that of an M&M and the thickness of a credit card. You can mount it on your hat or glue it to your sunglasses or watch," Rogers said.

It's also rugged, waterproof and doesn't need a battery.

"There are no switches or interfaces to wear out, and it is completely sealed in a thin layer of transparent plastic," Rogers said.



"It interacts wirelessly with your phone. We think that it will last forever," he said.

Currently, the amount of light patients actually receive from phototherapy is not measured.

"We know that the lamps for phototherapy are not uniform in their output -- a sensor like this can help target problem areas of the skin that aren't getting better," said Steve Xu from the Northwestern University.

Doctors don't know how much blue light a jaundiced newborn is actually absorbing or how much white light a patient with seasonal affective disorder gets from a light box.

The new device will measure this for the first time and allow doctors to optimise the therapy by adjusting the position of the patient or the light source.

Since the device operates in an "always on" mode, its measurements are more precise and accurate than any other light dosimeter now available, the scientists said.

Current dosimeters only sample light intensity briefly at set time intervals and assume that the light intensity at times between those measurements is constant, which is not necessarily the case, especially in active, outdoor use scenarios. *Source: PTI*

# RBI KEEPS KEY INTEREST RATES UNCHANGED, GDP PEGGED AT 7.4%

**MUMBAI (TIP):** The Reserve Bank of India kept the key interest rates unchanged on Wednesday with the Repo rate at 6.5%, Reverse repo rate at 6.25% and bank rate at 6.75%.

The bank also projected the Gross Domestic Production (GDP) for 2019-20 at 7.4% while Inflation projection of second half of 2018-19 is 2.7-3.2%.

Investors were watching how RBI chief Urjit Patel would respond to the state's push for more say over the central bank's role. Economic Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg, a government representative on the RBI's board, has called for the bank's governance structure to be changed and panels set up to oversee its functioning.

Having raised the interest rates twice this year, the RBI keep its repurchase rate unchanged at 6.5 percent. This decision is bound to appease the government, which is seeking more support for banks to continue lending.

Here's a look at what else to watch out for:

## Tight Liquidity

Since the last meeting in October, liquidity in the financial system has declined, forcing lenders to raise rates. Some of the reasons include sales tax payments to the government, a seasonal pick-up in loans and intervention by the central bank in the foreign-exchange market to prop up the rupee.

The RBI may seek to assure investors about liquidity conditions by stepping up bond purchases and pumping more cash into the system. The central bank -- which has limited its bond purchases to 400 billion rupees (\$5.7 billion) a month since October -- is expected to increase that to 500 billion rupees a month in the



March quarter, according to Indranil Sen Gupta, an India economist at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

## Subdued Inflation

First the good news. Inflation eased to a 13-month low of 3.31 percent in October, well below the 3.9 percent lower end of the RBI's forecast range for the second half of the financial year to March. The miss may prompt the RBI to lower inflation projections amid a slide in the price of crude oil, the nation's top import, and a rebound in the rupee from record lows.

Now to the bad news. A subdued inflation reading on account of falling food prices is likely to translate into lower incomes for farmers, which in turn could be a drag on economic growth. Higher guaranteed crop prices announced by the government hasn't really been of much help so far.

"If public sector construction slows following the national elections in 2019

as the government shifts its focus back to fiscal consolidation, we believe that rural incomes, and with them food inflation, will remain contained for longer," said Pranjul Bhandari, chief India economist at HSBC Holdings Plc.

## Slower Growth

Gross domestic product growth in the July-September quarter was disappointing, slowing to 7.1 percent from 8.2 percent in the previous three months to June.

While activity might rebound as some high-frequency data suggest, consumption -- the backbone of the economy -- is likely to suffer due to tighter liquidity conditions stemming from the shadow banking sector.

Prachi Mishra, chief India economist at Goldman Sachs Group Inc., estimates the cash crunch could lower its growth forecast for the current fiscal year by 12 to 21 basis points. *Source: Bloomberg*

# Oil prices rise as US, China bury hatchet; Qatar says will exit OPEC

**DOHA (TIP):** Qatar is withdrawing from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) as of January 2019, Saad al-Kaabi, the country's energy minister said on Monday.

The decision to withdraw from OPEC came after Qatar reviewed ways to enhance its role internationally and plan its long-term strategy, al-Kaabi told a news conference.

Oil prices soared by around 5 percent on Monday after the United States and China agreed to a 90-day truce in their trade war, and ahead of a meeting this week by OPEC that is expected to result in a supply cut.

Looking ahead, oil traders will eye a meeting by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) on Dec. 6. At the meeting, the producer group, along with non-OPEC member Russia, is expected to announce cuts aimed at reining in a production overhang that has pulled down crude prices by around a third since October.

Analysts expect a reduction of 1 million-1.4 million bpd versus October levels, which were the highest by OPEC as a group since December 2016.

Qatar's oil production is only around 600,000 bpd, while it is the world's biggest exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG).

The small Middle East country has also been at loggerheads with its much bigger neighbour and de facto OPEC leader Saudi Arabia.



Outside OPEC, Russian oil output stood at 11.37 million bpd in November, down from a post-Soviet record of 11.41 million bpd it reached in October, Energy Ministry data showed on Sunday.

Meanwhile, oil producers in the United States continue to churn out record amounts of oil, with crude output at an unprecedented level of more than 11.5 million bpd.

With drilling activity still high, most analysts expect US oil production to rise further in 2019. *Source: Reuters*



## HCL TECH TO ACQUIRE SELECT IBM SOFTWARE PRODUCTS FOR USD 1.8 BILLION

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Indian IT company HCL Technologies Friday said it will acquire select IBM software products for USD 1.8 billion (over Rs 12,700 crore) in an all-cash deal.

The transaction, subject to "completion of applicable regulatory reviews", is slated to close by mid-2019, HCL Technologies said in a statement.

The deal entails seven products in areas including security, marketing and collaboration solutions, and represents a total addressable market of more than USD 50 billion, HCL Tech said in a regulatory filing.

"IBM and HCL Technologies today announced a definitive agreement under which HCL will acquire select IBM software products for USD 1.8 billion," it said.

With this acquisition, HCL Tech will get software products in areas of marketing, commerce, security and collaboration, a "highly profitable revenue stream" containing a significant annuity component, and access to over 5,000 large clients across industries and geographic markets, along with sales and marketing teams, the filing said.

HCL Tech Chief Financial Officer Prateek Aggarwal told PTI that the deal also entails transfer of IBM employees, but did not divulge any numbers. The cash deal will be funded largely through internal accruals, with USD 300 million of debt, HCL Tech said, adding that nearly half of the total amount will be paid at close of the deal.

This is the biggest acquisition for HCL Tech till date, and among the largest by an Indian tech company. The acquisition also reflects HCL's ambitions for software products business -- considered to be the next growth frontier for IT companies. *Source: PTI*

## Hindustan Unilever to merge with GSK Consumer Healthcare

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Hindustan Unilever Ltd will merge with GSK's healthcare business in India. This was announced in New Delhi on Monday. The merged entity will be worth Rs 31,700 crore.

The merger will include all operations within GSK Consumer Healthcare India Ltd, which will include the consignment selling contract to distribute GSK Consumer's over-the-counter and oral health products in India.

With brands such as Horlicks and Boost in its inventory, GSK Consumer Healthcare India is the market leader in the health food category. Its product portfolio, with a long history in India, is supported by strong nutritional claims. Horlicks was originally introduced in India in the 1930s.

The merger of GSK Consumer with HUL will be on a basis of a share swap ratio of 4.39 HUL shares for each GSK Consumer share, implying a total equity value of Rs 31,700 crore for 100 per cent of the latter. Once the new HUL shares are issued, Unilever's holding in HUL will be diluted from 67.2 per cent to 61.9 per cent, the company said.

"With this proposed strategic merger with GSK Consumer Healthcare India, we will be expanding our portfolio with great brands into a new category catering to the nutritional needs of our consumers. I'm confident that this merger will create significant shareholder value through both revenue growth and cost synergies," HUL CMD Sanjiv Mehta said in a statement.

"The turnover of our F&R (food and refreshment) business will exceed Rs 10,000 crore and we will become one of the largest F&R businesses in the country. We look forward to welcoming new brands and great talent into the Unilever and HUL family, once the transaction is complete," Mehta added.



# Chancellor Carranza and Mayor De Blasio announce new accessibility in admissions policy

## New admissions change will give students with accessibility needs priority at accessible buildings

**NEW YORK CITY (TIP):** Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza and Mayor de Blasio announced, December 6, a new admissions policy to better match students with accessibility needs to accessible school buildings. Starting this admissions cycle, students who have an accessibility need will receive priority in admissions to school buildings that are fully or partially accessible.

This new policy builds on the city's unprecedented investments to improve school accessibility citywide-\$750 million in the new proposed capital plan for accessibility needs, the largest capital funding investment in accessibility to date.

"Equity is at the heart of everything we do for our students including those with accessibility needs. We're making necessary improvements to make the admissions process fairer and easier for students who need accessible spaces, by giving them priority at schools that better meet their needs," said Mayor Bill de Blasio.

"This is the right thing to do to serve students and families who need accessible school buildings, and it's an important part of achieving our vision of Equity and Excellence for All," said Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza. "We want to ensure that our community of students with accessibility needs knows that we hear you. Through this admissions reform and a record \$750 million investment in building accessibility in the new proposed Capital Plan, we are expanding access to high-quality school options where students can achieve and thrive."

"We anticipate this change in policy should make a world of difference for students with physical accessibility needs who have historically found it nearly impossible to make the same use of NYC's school choice system as their friends and family without similar needs. We thank the DOE for taking this public step forward to include students with accessibility needs across the City in school choice," said Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children.

Families have been able to indicate on kindergarten, middle and high school applications whether or not their child has an



*Schools Chancellor Richard A. Carranza and Mayor de Blasio announced, December 6, a new admissions policy*

accessibility need. Starting this year for students who are applying to enter kindergarten, middle or high school in fall 2019, the priority will work in the following way:

- **Kindergarten:** Students with accessibility needs will be prioritized within their priority group. For example, for a zoned kindergarten program, zoned students with accessibility needs will receive offers before zoned students without accessibility needs.
- **Middle and High School:**
- **Screened programs:** Students with accessibility needs who meet the selection criteria will be prioritized before students without accessibility needs.
- **Unscreened, educational option zoned middle and high schools:** Students with accessibility needs will be the first priority group.
- **All accessible middle and high schools** will prioritize students with accessibility needs regardless of zone or district of residence.

This policy change will affect roughly 500 students who have a physical disability or health condition that requires access to an accessible building. The Office of Student Enrollment will follow up directly with each family who has indicated an accessibility need on their application. OSE will also make calls to families who did not specify an accessibility need on their application, yet who may be able to take advantage of this new priority based on DOE data.

The Enrollment and Special Education Offices previously piloted this admissions priority with a small group of students and schools. Both offices will follow up with any individual schools affected by this policy to provide additional support and guidance throughout this process.

Currently, 45 percent of elementary schools, 55 percent of middle schools, and 58 percent of high schools are fully or partially accessible. The DOE is currently in the process of surveying all partially accessibility school buildings and creating building accessibility profiles for each that provide specific and detailed accessibility information about different floors, rooms and classrooms in each

school.

"Inclusive education is at the very core of equality for people with disabilities," said Victor Calise, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. "When a child has equal access to a quality education, they have a space to foster their productivity and imagination which will prepare them for college and the workforce. On a larger scale, this change will have a greater long-term effect on all students who will now be part of a more diverse classroom. As these children learn and grow alongside their classmates with disabilities, they will become a generation that is more mindful of people with disabilities."

"As someone who has fought to get elevators and other accessibility features in schools, including I.S. 93 in my own Assembly district, I know that this is a much-needed initiative and I applaud the Chancellor and the New York City Department of Education" said Assembly Member Catherine Nolan, Chair of the Assembly's Education Committee.

"Accessibility is a basic rights issue for our city, and this is welcome progress in aligning our schools admissions process with our values. Prioritizing students with accessibility needs is one of the many ways we can build a fairer city. While there is still work to be done, this is a significant move in the right direction. I commend the leadership of students, parents, advocates, and Chancellor Carranza, who worked to make this possible," said Council Member Mark Treyger, Chair of the New York City Council's Committee on Education.

"This new admissions policy is welcome news for students with accessibility needs," said Council Member Daniel Dromm. "Inaccessible facilities create barriers to learning for our children. This is both unfair and unnecessary. I am pleased that the DOE has brought a greater degree of fairness to the admissions process. Many more young people with accessibility needs will excel because of this progressive change. I will continue to work with the administration to transform our schools into welcoming and inclusive places for all students."

## 2018 Airtel Delhi Half Marathon raises a record-breaking Rs 16.60 Crore for social causes

### 105% jump from last year; 91 Civil Society Organizations benefitted

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** It wasn't just the race that saw records tumbling at the 2018 edition of the IAAF Gold Label Airtel Delhi Half Marathon. India Cares, the Philanthropy partner to the event with the perseverance of 91 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) shattered all records in their philanthropic efforts raising an astounding Rs. 16.60 crore - a 105% increase from the amount that was raised in 2017.

The citizens of Delhi showcased in abundance their 'heart of gold' and that impossible is nothing! Since inception, Airtel Delhi Half Marathon has now raised a total of Rs 67.16 crore towards charity.

The funds raised by the CSOs will focus on creating a positive impact for different sections of our society - children in homes and schools, youth skill development, environment protection and saving animals, special care for differently abled and health services.

For this edition, India Cares Foundation concentrated their efforts on providing support and guidance in communications and appeals to reach out to more people - this has shown results with 82% of funds coming from and through an individual asking another individual.

66 companies fielded 91 corporate cares teams and 195 individuals reached out and received contributions from 8,010 family members, friends and colleagues. Incidentally, many CSOs got the confidence to reach out to networks and individuals on their own and this has generated 61% of the total funds!

The remarkable feat by the top fundraising CSO Udayan Care, raising Rs 9.02 crore, has set new records in crowd funding, not just for ADHM, but for Marathons across the world. This amount would be in the top-5 Charities of Boston Marathon in 2018 and it is also more than all the other 90 CSOs of this edition!

Murray Culshaw, Chairperson and Founder, India Cares Foundation, states: "Delhi amazes us. When we think there is no more room to push, it stretches! Our emphasis on encouraging individuals to raise funds is now well established, with 82% of contributions this year coming from individuals and raised by individuals.

A 'thank you' is such an inadequate word, for the impact that these funds will enable CSOs (NGOs) to bring for the betterment of our Society. Until we find a stronger word...



*Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, government of India, Vijay Goel presenting the highest fundraising award to Udayan Care Foundation*

Thank You to every donor, fundraiser and CSO who participated in Airtel Delhi Half Marathon and especially to Procam International and the sponsors for creating this platform!" In his concluding remarks, Vivek Singh, Jt.MD Procam International, said, "Sport remarkably pushes humans to unprecedented limits. It has the ability to inspire, birth incredible stories and bring out the gold in humanity. Rs. 16.60 crores raised towards charity is a testimony to the effectiveness of ADHM as a platform and its potential to create an ever-lasting impact on society.

*Read full story on [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)*

# SHIVA NATARAJA: THE LORD OF THE DANCE

**N**ataraja or Nataraj, the dancing form of Lord Shiva, is a symbolic synthesis of the most important aspects of Hinduism, and the summary of the central tenets of this Vedic religion. The term 'Nataraj' means 'King of Dancers' (Sanskrit nata = dance; raja = king). In the words of Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Nataraj is the "clearest image of the activity of God which any art or religion can boast of...A more fluid and energetic representation of a moving figure than the dancing figure of Shiva can scarcely be found anywhere."

## The Origin of the Nataraj Form

An extraordinary iconographic representation of the rich and diverse cultural heritage of India, it was developed in southern India by 9th and 10th-century artists during the Chola period (880-1279 CE) in a series of beautiful bronze sculptures. By the 12th century AD, it achieved canonical stature and soon the Chola Nataraja became the supreme statement of Hindu art.

## The Vital Form and Symbolism

In a marvelously unified and dynamic composition expressing the rhythm and harmony of life, Nataraj is shown with four hands represent the cardinal directions. He is dancing, with his left foot elegantly raised and the right foot on a prostrate figure—'Apasmara Purusha', the personification of illusion and ignorance over whom Shiva triumphs. The upper left-hand holds a flame, the lower left-hand points down to the dwarf, who is shown holding a cobra. The upper right-hand holds an hourglass drum or 'dumroo' that stands for the male-female vital principle, the lower shows the gesture of assertion: "Be without fear."

Snakes that stand for egotism, are seen uncoiling from his arms, legs, and hair, which is braided and bejeweled. His matted locks are whirling as he dances within an arch of flames representing the endless cycle of birth and death. On his head is a skull, which symbolizes his conquest over death. Goddess Ganga, the epitome of the holy river Ganges, also sits on his hairdo.

His third eye is symbolic of his omniscience, insight, and enlightenment. The whole idol rests on a lotus pedestal, the symbol of the creative forces of the universe.

## The Significance of Shiva's Dance

This cosmic dance of Shiva is called 'Anandatandava,' meaning the Dance of Bliss, and symbolizes the cosmic cycles of creation and destruction, as well as the daily rhythm of birth and death. The dance is a pictorial allegory of the five principle manifestations of eternal energy—creation, destruction, preservation, salvation, and illusion. According to Coomaraswamy, the dance of Shiva also represents his five activities: 'Shrishti' (creation, evolution); 'Sthiti' (preservation, support); 'Samhara' (destruction, evolution); 'Tirobhava' (illusion); and 'Anugraha' (release, emancipation, grace).

The overall temper of the image is paradoxical, uniting the inner tranquility, and outside activity of Shiva.

## A Scientific Metaphor

Fritzof Capra in his article "The Dance of Shiva: The Hindu View of Matter in the Light



of Modern Physics," and later in The Tao of Physics beautifully relates Nataraj's dance with modern physics. He says that "every subatomic particle not only performs an energy dance but also is an energy dance; a pulsating process of creation and destruction...without end...For the modern physicists, then Shiva's dance is the dance of subatomic matter.

As in Hindu mythology, it is a continual dance of creation and destruction involving the whole cosmos; the basis of all existence and of all natural phenomena."

## The Nataraj Statue at CERN, Geneva

In 2004, a 2m statue of the dancing Shiva was unveiled at CERN, the European Center for Research in Particle Physics in Geneva. A special plaque next to the Shiva statue explains the significance of the metaphor of Shiva's cosmic dance with quotations from Capra: "Hundreds of years ago, Indian artists created visual images of dancing Shivas in a beautiful series of bronzes. In our time, physicists have used the most advanced technology to portray the patterns of the cosmic dance. The metaphor of the cosmic dance thus unifies ancient mythology, religious art, and modern physics."

## Why Lord Shiva Did Tandav?

The dance performed by Lord Shiva is known as Tandava. His dance indicates the destruction of the universe. Tandava is a powerful dance that is the source of the cycle of creation, preservation and dissolution.

According to belief, The tandava performed with joy/happiness is called "Ananda Tandava" and performed in violent/anger mood is called "Rudra Tandava".

Have you ever wondered from where Tandava emerged? Why Shiva cried so hard that his anger made him perform vigorous Tandava? Did you know Ravana(King of Lanka) was the composer of Tandava Stotram ? Know more interesting mythology behind

Tandava dance.

The dance performed by Lord Shiva's wife Parvati in response to Shiva's Tandava is known as Lasya.

The Shiva's dance 'Tandava' is respected in the tradition as it is the most outstanding expression of the divine rhythm, ecstasy, energy and cosmic balance.

## When Shiva heard about his Sati's death

Once Sati's father was performing yajna but he did not invited Sati and her husband Lord Shiva. When Sati visited there without invitation, her father insulted her and Shiva. Sati felt humiliated and burnt herself by self-immolation.

When Lord Shiva got the news of his beloved wife, he pulled his hair and created Maha-Kali (name of the first incarnation of Adya-Shakti) and Birbhadra/ virbhadra.

He placed the dead body of Sati over his shoulder and started his dance. He carried her body & began to perform the Rudra Tandava

creating wild thunder storms all around the universe, even shattering the Sun. The more Shiva danced, the more destruction arose.

Daksha was beheaded. But on the insistence of many gods, Daksha was brought back to life. His head was replaced with that of a goat. Daksha felt guilty and thus, Shiva liberated him.

Out of grief and sorrow, Shiva carried Sati's body and roamed around the universe with it.

It caused huge destruction of the world. So, Lord Vishnu cut down Sati's body into 52 pieces . Wherever a piece of the dead body of Sati had fallen, that place is considered as a Shakti Peetha.

Tandava's rhythm of birth and death was created by Ravana.

When Ravana sings the "Tandav Stotra" in praise of Shiva and in acceptance of his defeat at Shiva's hands, Shiva was pleased and that is how Shiva danced to Ravana's tune. So, Ravana was the one who sang Shiv tandav strotram /Stuti the very first time for Shiva.

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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."**

# SRI CHINMOY PEACE TORCH



**PANAJI, GOA (TIP):** Dreamer of world peace Sri Chinmoy founded Peace Run in 1987. Now the Peace Torch has travelled in more than 147 countries inspiring millions of children and peace-loving people on the way. The torch has been held by persons such as Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee, President Nelson Mandela, President Michael Gorbachev, Mother Teresa, Pope John Paul II, Carl Lewis, Swami Ramdev and many others.

Recently at the Opening ceremony of International Yoga Conference India's Hon. Ayush Minister Shripad Naik held the torch and prayed for the World Peace. At the Kala Academy Sri Chinmoy's statue is located. Hon. Minister and people walked 2 miles with the torch from Kala Academy to Miramar beach and back. (Press release by Ashok Parulekar .Mobile: 9970730161 - India)

*Hon. Minister Shripad Naik is holding Sri Chinmoy Peace Torch with Ashok Parulekar from SriChinmoy Centres International, New York.*



## SALDEF National Gala on April 6, 2019

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** SALDEF has announced its National Gala. In a statement, a SALDEF spokesperson said they will be hosting the gala on April 6, 2019 at the Sheraton Tysons Hotel in Tysons, VA. The gala will include awardees, special guests and entertainment.

"Make sure you mark your calendars now to ensure you can attend. The gala will also coincide with the Washington D.C. Cherry Blossom festival so make sure to book your hotels and airfare early! Stay tuned for more information or for questions email [info@saldef.org](mailto:info@saldef.org).

"As a reminder the 2017 National Gala was sold out and a great success so please make sure to get your tickets early!

"We look forward to seeing you there!"

"We know that many of you look forward to our annual National Gala and this past 2018 we were unable to host our scheduled program due to critical programming and unforeseen events. We hope you accept our sincerest apologies and help us make the 2019 National Gala a truly special event that not only celebrates the accomplishments and future of SALDEF but also of all Sikh Americans"

# IRS sees surge in email phishing scams; Summit Partners urge taxpayers: 'Don't Take the Bait'



**WASHINGTON (TIP):** With the approach of the holidays and the 2019 filing season, the Internal Revenue Service, state tax agencies and the nation's tax industry warned people to be on the lookout following a surge of new, sophisticated email phishing scams.

Taxpayers saw many more phishing scams in 2018 as the IRS recorded a 60 percent increase in bogus email schemes that seek to steal money or tax data. These schemes can endanger a taxpayer's financial and tax data, allowing identity thieves a chance to try stealing a tax refund.

The Internal Revenue Service, state tax agencies and the tax community, partners in the Security Summit, are marking "National Tax Security Awareness Week" Dec. 3 -7, with a series of reminders to taxpayers and tax professionals. In part two, the topic is email phishing scams.

"The holidays and tax season present great opportunities for scam artists to try stealing valuable information through fake emails," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. "Watch your inbox for these sophisticated schemes

that try to fool you into thinking they're from the IRS or our partners in the tax community. Taking a few simple steps can protect yourself during the holiday season and at tax time."

In the second part of this week's National Tax Security Awareness Week series, the IRS and Summit partners warned against a new influx of phishing scams.

Tax-related phishing scams reported to the IRS declined for the prior three years until a surge in 2018. More than 2,000 tax-related scam incidents were reported to the IRS from January through October, compared to approximately 1,200 incidents in all of 2017.

One recent malware campaign used a variety of subjects like "IRS Important Notice," "IRS Taxpayer Notice" and other variations. The phishing emails, which use varying language, demands a payment or threatens to seize the recipient's tax refund.

Taxpayers can help spot these schemes by examples of misspelling and bad grammar. Taxpayers can forward these email schemes to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

The most common way for cybercriminals to steal money, bank account information, passwords, credit cards or Social Security numbers is to simply ask for them. Every day, people fall victim to phishing scams or phone scams that cost them their time and their cash.

Phishing attacks use email or malicious websites to solicit personal, tax or financial information by posing as a trustworthy organization. Often, recipients are fooled into believing the phishing communication is from someone they trust. A scam artist may take advantage of knowledge gained from online research and earlier attempts to masquerade as a legitimate source, including presenting the look and feel of authentic communications, such as using an official logo. These targeted messages can trick even the most cautious person into taking action that may compromise sensitive data.

The scams may contain emails with hyperlinks that take users to a fake site. Other versions contain PDF attachments that may download malware or viruses.

Some phishing emails will appear to come

from a business colleague, friend or relative. These emails might be an email account compromise. Remember, criminals may have compromised your friend's email account and begin using their email contacts to send phishing emails.

Not all phishing attempts are emails - some are phone scams. One of the most common phone scams is the caller pretending to be from the IRS and threatening the taxpayer with a lawsuit or with arrest if payment is not made immediately, usually through a debit card.

In addition, [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov) continues to receive a large volume of IRS telephone scam complaints. These phone scams increased again in 2018 with reports to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov) recording thousands of telephone numbers from email complaints each week.

Phishing attacks, especially online phishing scams, are popular with criminals because there is no fool-proof technology to defend against them. Users are the main defense. When users see a phishing scam, they should ensure they don't take the bait.

### Here are a few steps to take to protect against phishing and other tax-related schemes:

Be vigilant; be skeptical. Never open a link or attachment from an unknown or suspicious source. Even if the email is from a known source, approach with caution. Cybercrooks are adept at mimicking trusted businesses, friends and family -- including the IRS and others in the tax business. Thieves may have compromised a friend's email address, or they may be spoofing the address with a slight change in text, such as [name@example.com](mailto:name@example.com) vs [narne@example.com](mailto:narne@example.com). In the latter, merely changing the "m" to an "r" and "n" can trick people.

Remember, the IRS doesn't initiate spontaneous contact with taxpayers by email to request personal or financial information. This includes asking for information via text messages and social media channels. The IRS

does not call taxpayers with aggressive threats of lawsuits or arrests.

Phishing schemes thrive on people opening the message and clicking on hyperlinks. When in doubt, don't use hyperlinks and go directly to the source's main web page. Remember, no legitimate business or organization will ask for sensitive financial information via email.

Use security software to protect against malware and viruses found in phishing emails. Some security software can help identify suspicious websites that are used by cybercriminals.

Use strong passwords to protect online accounts. Each account should have a unique password. Use a password manager if necessary. Criminals count on people using the same password repeatedly, giving crooks access to multiple accounts if they steal a password - creating opportunities to build phishing schemes. Experts recommend the use of a passphrase, instead of a password, use a minimum of 10 digits, including letters, numbers and special characters. Longer is better.

Use multi-factor authentication when offered. Some online financial institutions, email providers and social media sites offer multi-factor protection for customers. Two-factor authentication means that in addition to entering your username and password, you must enter a security code generally sent as a text to your mobile phone. Even if a thief manages to steal usernames and passwords, it's unlikely the crook would also have a victim's phone.

The IRS, state tax agencies and the tax industry are working together to fight against tax-related identity theft and to protect taxpayers. Everyone can help. Visit the "Taxes. Security. Together." awareness campaign or review IRS Publication 4524, Security Awareness for Taxpayers, to learn more. Tax professionals can also get more information through the Protect Your Clients; Protect Yourself campaign as well as the Tax Security 101 series.

(Press Release)

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# Oil firms on drop in US crude stocks, market awaits OPEC/Russia supply decision

**SINGAPORE (TIP):** US oil prices stabilised on Dec 7, buoyed by a fall in U.S. crude oil inventories, but sentiment remained weak as producer group OPEC postponed a final decision on output cuts, awaiting support from non-OPEC heavyweight Russia. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were at \$51.61 per barrel at 0037 GMT, 12 cents above their last close.

WTI was supported by drop in U.S. commercial crude inventories, which fell by 7.3 million barrels in the week to Nov. 30, to 443.16 million barrels. International Brent crude oil futures had yet to trade.

The stabilising prices came after crude slumped by almost 3 percent the previous day, with the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ending a meeting at its headquarters in Vienna, Austria, on Dec 6 without announcing a decision to cut crude supply, instead preparing to debate the matter on Dec 7.

Analysts still expect some form of supply reduction to be decided. "We are beginning to witness the outline of the next iteration of production cuts, with OPEC conforming to cut its own production by around 1 million barrels per day, with the cartel lobbying non-

OPEC members to contribute more," Japan's MUFG bank said in a note.

Oil producers have been hit by a 30-percent plunge in crude prices since October as supply surges just as the demand outlook weakens amid a global economic slowdown.

Oil output from the world's biggest producers - OPEC, Russia and the United States - has increased by 3.3 million bpd since the end of 2017, to 56.38 million bpd, meeting almost 60 percent of global consumption. The increase alone is equivalent to the output of major OPEC producer the United Arab Emirates.

cont from page 1

## George H.W. Bush...

Located on the campus of Texas A&M University, the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum houses Bush's presidential archives and is also home to exhibitions dedicated to him and the former first lady.

Bush's granddaughter Jenna Bush Hager takes comfort in the fact that the three of them have finally been reunited. "I had the opportunity to talk with my grandpa about the afterlife," the Today show star, 37, captioned a touching tribute on Instagram. "This is what he said: He answered without any hesitation. 'Yes, I think about it. I used to be afraid. I used to be afraid of dying. I used to worry about death. But now in some ways I look forward to it.' And I started crying. I managed to choke out, 'Well, why? What do you look forward to?'"

In response, he said: "Well, when I die, I'm going to be reunited with these people that I've lost.' And I asked who he hoped to see. He replied, 'I hope I see Robin, and I hope I see my mom.'"

Her grandfather went on to share that he didn't know whether his daughter would still look like "the 3-year-old that she was, this chubby, vivacious child," when they saw each other again, or whether she would be all grown up.

George W. Bush expressed the same gratitude for their reunion during the emotional eulogy he delivered at his father's state funeral on Wednesday. "Every day of his 73 years of marriage, dad taught us all what it means to be a great husband ... He was dedicated to her totally," the 43rd president reflected on his parents' relationship.

Following the death of wife Barbara on April 17, Bush 41 remained devoted to his bride, sitting beside her casket for hours in his wheelchair as mourners paid their respects while she laid in repose one day before her invitation-only funeral.

But the weight of her passing clearly took a toll on Bush, who was hospitalized less than 24 hours after burying his wife after contracting an infection that spread to his blood. He later recovered and traveled to the family's beloved summer home in Kennebunkport, Maine, in mid-May, but a week later was readmitted to the hospital for low blood pressure and fatigue.

In the days since the former president's death last Friday at the age of 94, Washington and the rest of the country have come together to mourn his loss.

His remains laid in state at the U.S. Capitol Rotunda, followed by a state funeral at the Washington National Cathedral on Wednesday. President Trump, First Lady Melania Trump, as well as all living former presidents and their spouses - Barack and Michelle Obama, Bill and Hillary Clinton, and Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter - attended to pay their respects in person.

Shortly after the service, George W. and wife Laura Bush as well as their extended family traveled back to Houston with Bush's casket on Special Mission 41. Following the second funeral service, the casket was transported by train to Bush's final resting place at College Station, where he rejoined his wife and daughter at last.

"We're going to miss you," George W. added during his eulogy. "So through our tears, let us know the blessings of knowing and loving you, a great and noble man ... The best man a son or daughter could have ... And in our grief, let us know that dad is hugging Robin and holding mom's hand again." (Source: Agencies)

## Manjit Singh GK resigns as DSGMC president

and sent their resignations to Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal.

Earlier, Manjit Singh GK announced elections to the executive committee three months before the due date of March 29. The announcement was made after a meeting of the executive board called by general secretary Manjinder Singh Sirsa following the directions of Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal.

After heated arguments in the meeting between members, Manjit Singh GK announced that the elections will be held either on December 28 or December 29.

A proposal for the elections would be sent to the Directorate of Gurdwara Elections, Delhi government, for the exact date. (Source: Tribune)

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# ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

A perfect getaway, Andaman and Nicobar, is an archipelago at the confluence of the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea. With an array of thrilling water sports, leisure facilities, and a host of activities, a vacation in Andaman and Nicobar can be as relaxed or filled with adventure as you'd like it to be. The weather is temperate most of the year and the best time to visit is between December-May. If you're planning to head here in this summer break then here's a pick of outdoorsy things which will keep you busy.

## RADHANAGAR BEACH, HAVELOCK ISLAND

Beach number 7 (or more commonly known as Radhanagar Beach) was bestowed with the title of 'Asia's Best Beach' in 2004 by the TIME magazine. Known for its picturesque sunset, white sand and turquoise blue waters, the beach is a very popular hub lying on the western coast of Havelock Island. There's a watersports centre at the beach where visitors can hire snorkelling and scuba equipment and boats.

One of the best beaches in Andaman Islands, Radhanagar beach is one of the most romantic destinations that cater to couple who come for their honeymoon. It is a well-known picnic spot where families also visit to enjoy their vacations. Nature and adventure lovers visit this island to enjoy the pristine landscape. In recent time, this island has encouraged tourist to visit in large numbers. It is surrounded by pristine water where you can find turtles, large fishes and dolphins. At the first glance, from about 500 meters from the beach, all one can see is a hint of water and towering trees all around the shoreline. As you get closer to it, the stretch of the Radhanagar beach takes your breath away and leaves you in total awe!

The sun rays bounce off the sparkingly white sand making it gleam like sprinkled diamonds. This is the time when one comes to realise why it's considered to be one of the best beaches not only in India also in the entire continent of Asia. This beach is locally known as beach No. 7. If you are into swimming and love to traverse new waters, Radhanagar beach is where you should be. Deep sea divers also prefer this destination for their adventure outing. The calm waters and the high quality coral reef invite many divers every year. The lush and verdant trees on the side of beach offer tourists opportunity to unwind and relish the serenity and nature's charm. The breathtaking sight of sunset on this beach makes the tourists forget all the woes of life. The best time to visit this place is from October to February. Radhanagar beach resorts are some of the finest stay option on the island. With all the required facilities and amenities, these resorts lure you into spending some days here. To reach this beach, one has to take a seaplane or Makruzz (catamaran) from Port Blair. Thanks to its landscape, Radhanagar beach attracts photographers from all around the globe.

## HAVELOCK ISLAND

Havelock Island at the Andamans is the most popular spot for scuba diving. Home to one of the richest coral reef ecosystem in the world, the waters here are pristine, and teeming with diverse marine life. There are two diving operators on Havelock—Barefoot Scuba and Dive India—which provide wannabe divers with training and all the requisite equipment. Both the operators are PADI (Professional Association of Diving



Instructors) certified dive centres.

## MANGROVE CREEK

Baratang Island is located about 100 kilometres away from the Port Blair city and offers a boat-safari, amidst the nature-made tunnel of thick mangrove plantations. A variety of exotic birds can be spotted along the lush trail of dense tree knots and canopies. This mangrove creek leads to the magnificent Lime Stone Caves, for which you must carry a torch with you.

## NORTH BAY BEACH

Located just 15 minutes away from the Rajiv Gandhi Water Sports Complex, the North Bay Beach offers one of the easiest water sports—Sea-walking—in Andaman and Nicobar. Walking barefoot on the base of the sea offers you an exquisite view of rich marine-life and the corals. If you're heading to Andaman and Nicobar, don't miss this. Skilled life guards accompany you underwater, to ensure maximum safety.

## MT. HARRIET

This trek stretches up 16 kilometres starting from Mt. Harriet to Madhuban, winding across a picturesque terrain. Expect to see exotic birds and rare plants along the lush trail. Taking a guide along is highly recommended. Tents and all the trekking equipment are available on hire from the Andaman Teal House. Do not forget to acquire food, water, torch, and first aid, before you start. The best time to go hiking here is November-April.

## How to reach

### By air

Veer Savarkar International Airport or Port Blair Airport is the main airport connecting these islands with other parts of the country and world. Airlines such as Air India, Spice Jet, GoAir and Jet Airways have regular flights for Port Blair from prime Indian cities?Chennai, Kolkata, Vishakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Cochin and Delhi. From Port Blair, travellers can take ships to reach the Andamans. There are several ships available on a regular basis, so



there won't be much issue!

### By sea

People often wonder how to reach Andaman by ship. The Andamans can be easily reached by sea route but it's a time-consuming journey. From Kolkata and

Chennai, three to four ships sail every month to Port Blair and vice versa. Moreover, a ship sails from Vishakhapatnam too once a month. The sea journey takes around 50 to 60 hours. If you are up for some sea drama and motion, nothing can be better. After all, its experience that counts and for what we live for.

# France stun Olympic champs Argentina, Spain out



**BHUBANESWAR (TIP):** Unbelievable is the word that sums up the match between France and Argentina. Nobody could have imagined world No. 2 and reigning Olympic champions Argentina losing to France, the lowest-ranked team in the tournament at 20.

But the French hockey team shocked the South Americans 5-3 at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium in Bhubaneswar on Thursday to stay in contention.

Thursday was the third time the two sides faced each other in World Cup — after 1971 and 1990 and on both the occasions, the South Americans came out winners.

France, playing a World Cup after 28 years, took a surprise 4-1 lead after only two quarters.

Taken aback, Argentina who are also known as 'The Lions', hit back late and made it 3-4 with nine minutes to go. It seemed the South Americans would come back to win but then France stepped up the intensity to cause the biggest upset of the tournament.

"It was a crucial game for us and the future of hockey in France depended a lot on our performance at the World Cup. Our team did us proud," said France coach Jeroen Delmee. "For the last two years, we were preparing hard for the World Cup and the way our team played today gives us confidence to take on the world's best in the future. Our aim is to be among the top-10 in the world," the coach added.

France player Gaspard Baumgarten said, "Before the game, we never thought we would dominate the match. But



France's Hugo Genestet with teammates celebrate after scoring a goal against Argentina during the field hockey group stage match between France and Argentina at the 2018 Hockey World Cup in Bhubaneswar. Pic courtesy: AFP

as the match progressed, the momentum carried us."

For France, Hugo Genestet (18), Victor Charlet (23), Aristide Coisne (26), Gaspard Baumgarten (30) and Francois Goyet (54) were the scorers, while for Argentina after Lucas Martinez's goal in the 28th minute, Gonzalo Peillat scored twice in the 44th and 48th minute.

Spain, who drew 2-2 with New Zealand earlier in the evening, crashed out of the tournament after finishing fourth. Both France, who finished second in the group and third-placed New Zealand will play crossover games. Argentina, despite the loss, topped Pool A and made it to the quarter-finals. *Source: HT*

## Cheteshwar Pujara rates century in Adelaide Test as one of his top innings

**ADELAIDE (TIP):** Cheteshwar Pujara raced past 5,000 Test runs and on the way scored one of his best centuries on Thursday, with the experienced number three crediting a stint at Yorkshire for helping him prepare.

The 30-year-old compiled a patient 123 in hot and difficult conditions at Adelaide Oval to help India stay in the opening Test against Australia with 250-9 at stumps.

He rated his 16th Test ton as among his most memorable, hitting seven fours and two sixes in his 246-ball stay at the crease as wickets fell around him.

"It was one of my top innings in Test cricket, I could say top five. I can't rate whether it was one of the best but the teammates who were appreciating said that this is one of the best," he said.

Pujara began slowly, grinding out ones and twos, and only really started going after the bowlers as they tired towards the end of the day.

He was run out attempting a quick single on the second-last ball of the day by a diving Pat Cummins.

"I was a bit disappointed but I had to take that single because only the last two balls were left and I thought I should be on strike, so I took the chance but he fielded brilliantly," he explained.

Pujara tends not to play much white ball cricket and said the extra time he



had to prepare for the Test series had paid dividends.

He said his innings had demonstrated that he was as comfortable scoring runs overseas as at home.

"It means a lot (the century), but I would also like to say that people say that I've scored more runs in India," said the right-hander, who is playing his 65th Test. *Source: AFP*

## Yasir Shah becomes fastest cricketer to take 200 Test wickets

**ABU DHABI (TIP):** Pakistan leg-spinner Yasir Shah became the fastest cricketer to take 200 Test wickets on Thursday, breaking an 82-year-old record and putting Pakistan within sight of a series win in the third and final Test against New Zealand.

The 32-year-old trapped nightwatchman Will Somerville leg before for four—his second wicket of New Zealand's second innings—to reach the milestone in his 33rd Test, beating Australian leg-spinner Clarrie Grimmett's record of 36 Tests set against South Africa in Johannesburg in 1936.

Yasir's strike left New Zealand fighting to save both the match in Abu Dhabi, and the series—currently tied at 1-1—as they reached 112-4 at lunch on the fourth day.

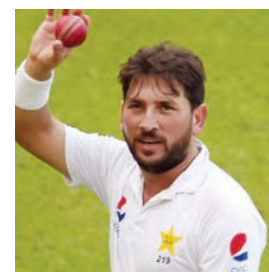
Skipper Kane Williamson was batting on a pugnacious 55 for his 29th fifty—and second in the match—and with him Henry Nicholls unbeaten on a chancy 20, as New Zealand led by 36 runs with six wickets intact.

The two have added 52 runs for the fifth wicket but Nicholls was lucky to overturn a leg-before decision off Yasir on nine, and survived two other appeals.

Resuming at 26-2, New Zealand also lost Ross Taylor who cracked three of his four boundaries in one over from paceman Shaheen Shah Afridi before finally hooking the same bowler into the hands of Bilal Asif for 22.

But the day started with Yasir's world record.

Yasir, whose 14 wickets helped Pakistan level the series 1-1 in Dubai, now has 27 wickets in the three Tests against New Zealand.



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