



## US urges Pakistan to take 'sustained and irreversible' actions against terrorists



US Department of State Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino said, "we continue to urge Pakistan to take sustained, irreversible actions against terrorist groups that will prevent future attacks and promote regional stability".

WASHINGTON (TIP): The US has asked Pakistan to take "sustained and irreversible" actions against terrorist groups operating from its territory, according to a top State Department official. The State Department statement came as Pakistan, under global pressure after the Pulwama terror attack and India's air strikes against

contd on Page 32

# Former Trump campaign Chairman Paul Manafort sentenced to 47 months in Prison

## Freshman New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez slammed Paul Manafort's "little" jail sentence

ALEXANDRIA, VA (TIP): Former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort was sentenced on Thursday, March 8, to 47 months in prison for tax and bank fraud related to his work advising Ukrainian politicians, much less than what was called for under sentencing guidelines. Manafort, sitting in a wheelchair as he deals with complications from gout, had no visible reaction as he heard the 47-month sentence. While that was the longest sentence to date to come from special counsel Robert Mueller's probe, it could have been much worse for Manafort. Sentencing guidelines called for a 20-year-term, effectively a lifetime sentence for the 69-year-old.

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Manafort steered Donald Trump's election efforts during crucial months of the 2016 campaign as Russia sought to meddle in the election through hacking of Democratic email accounts. Freshman New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (right) slammed Paul Manafort's "little" jail sentence

## China steps up diplomacy to ease India-Pakistan tensions



China's Vice-Foreign Minister Kong Xunyou traveled to Islamabad

Wednesday, March 6, that Vice-Foreign Minister

BEIJING (TIP): China has stepped up its diplomacy to ease tensions between India and Pakistan following the Pulwama attack by sending its special envoy to Islamabad. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lu Kang said on Wednesday, March 6, that Vice-Foreign Minister

contd on Page 32

## India excluded again from student visa relaxation list

Peru, Mauritius and Oman included

LONDON (TIP): India is, once again, not included in an expanded list of countries from where students applying for visas will be subject to less stringent documentation requirements, details provided on Thursday, March 8, showed. This follows last year's controversy when China, Indonesia, the Maldives and other countries were included on the list. The failure to include India triggered much criticism, particularly after the U.K. sought to suggest that the exclusion related to New Delhi's decision to pull out of a Memorandum of Understanding on the return of illegal migrants.

contd on Page 32

## Musharraf calls Jaish-e-Mohammed a terror outfit, welcomes Pak action against it



The intelligence apparatus had used it to carry out attacks in India during his tenure, claims the former President of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Former Pakistan President Gen. Pervez Musharraf (ret'd) on Wednesday, March 7, said the Masood Azhar-led Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) was a terror outfit but indicated that his country's intelligence had used it to carry out attacks in India during his tenure.

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## Soumya Swaminathan is WHO Chief Scientist



Soumya Swaminathan has been moved from the position of Deputy Director-General to Chief Scientist

Photo: Twitter/@doctorsoumya

NEW DELHI (TIP): As part of the reforms at the World Health Organisation (WHO), Soumya Swaminathan has been moved from the position of Deputy Director-General to Chief Scientist heading the division created to strengthen the organisation's core scientific work and ensure the quality and consistency of its norms and standards.

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## Two detained immigrants who were force-fed during a hunger strike deported to India

DALLAS (TIP): Immigration officials say two Indian men who were force-fed through nasal tubes while on a hunger strike inside a Texas detention facility have been deported.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement says the two detainees held at the El Paso Processing Center were deported to India on Friday, March 1.

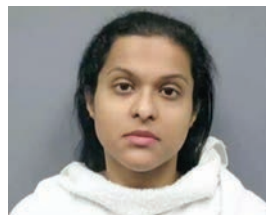
ICE spokeswoman Leticia Zamarripa said Monday, March 4, there are nine detainees from India, Nigeria, Turkey, Bissau-Guinea, Pakistan and Croatia who have been refusing to eat in detention centers in the El Paso, Atlanta, San Diego, Miami and Seattle areas of responsibility. Earlier this year, federal judges authorized nose-to-stomach force-feeding of nine detainees in El Paso. In response, the United Nations human rights office said the U.S. could be violating the U.N. Convention Against Torture because it views force-feeding as potential "ill treatment."

## Charges Dropped against Sini Mathews, Mother of Slain Child Sherin Mathews

DALLAS (TIP): Sini Mathews, the mother of Sherin Mathews, the North Texas 3-year-old girl found dead in a culvert in October 2017, is a free woman after the child endangerment charges filed against her were dismissed Friday, March 1.

Mathews was charged after prosecutors said she left her adopted daughter home alone while she and her husband Wesley went to dinner with their 4-year-old biological daughter on the night before the child was reported missing. Two weeks later Sherin's body was found in a drain pipe near the Mathews family home.

The charges against Sini Mathews were dropped Friday after the district attorney said there was not enough evidence to proceed. Had she been convicted, she would have faced between two and 20 years behind bars.



Sini said, after her release she was looking forward to being reunited with her biological daughter in Houston

The charge was dismissed without prejudice, meaning it is possible the same or different charges could be leveled against her at any time.

Leaving the jail Friday, March 1, Sini told NBC 5's Maria Guerrero she felt "blessed" the charges were dismissed and that she's looking forward to being reunited with her biological daughter, who has been living with family members in Houston. She said the past 15 months she spent in jail awaiting trial were "challenging."

In a letter to the 282nd Criminal District Court, the Dallas County DA wrote that "after extensive investigation it has been determined that the state cannot prove this matter beyond a reasonable doubt at this time ... the state respectfully requests that this case be dismissed without prejudice."

## The INDIAN PANORAMA

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Persons with experience in newspaper reporting will be preferred.

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# Nirpal Singh Shergill: A Britain-based Pioneer Punjabi Journalist



By Principal  
Dr. Sujinder Singh  
Sangha OBE FRSA

I have known Nirpal Singh Shergill for forty years. He is not only a self-made London based -Indian/Punjabi journalist but also a hard-working entrepreneur and publisher. He has been bringing out special editions of his directory 'Indians Abroad and Punjab Impact' since 2002 which include a compilation of topical articles in Punjabi and English. It profiles leading Punjabis from across the world involved in the fields of art, business, civic societies, culture, education, politics, religion, writing and social life. His 2002 - 19 yearly regular series now form a unique source of information on the global Punjabi/Indian community.

The colourful 'Indians Abroad and Punjab Impact' series brings together contact data covering a wide range of international Punjabi/Indian institutions including gurdwaras, government agencies, diplomatic missions, business houses, community organisations, NRIs and the media outlets. This work makes Nirpal Singh Shergill a mobile institution' of the global Punjabi/Indian community whose efforts



*Nirpal's work makes him 'a mobile institution' of the global Punjabi/Indian community whose efforts equate the activities and organization of a large association*

equate the activities and organisation of a large association. His journalistic articles

have been publishing since the early 1980s in many leading Punjabi newspapers and magazines at home and abroad. He also used to publish his own monthly magazine 'Politics' between 1981 and 1984.

Nirpal Singh Shergill commenced his career with the Punjabi Department, Patiala and migrated to the UK in 1966. He built on his earlier business activities by pursuing the field of media advertising in Britain and many other countries of the Punjabi/Indian settlements. His diverse network of contacts worldwide makes him a unique public asset. Mr. Shergill's work and contributions have been appreciated and recognised by many media organisations, The Supreme Sikh authority Sri Akal Takhat Sahib-SGPC, The Mayor of London Borough of Ealing, and in India the Punjab Government. He has also established an export entity in the name of NS Maja Expotrade (Private) Limited. It seems that his aspirations have no limits and he is a role model for people of Punjabi/India origin abroad who want to make a success of their life through toil and drive.

## Shergill's book 'Indians Abroad and Punjab Impact': a special edition dedicated to Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary, released with elan

BY JASWANT SINGH GANDAM

The 21st edition of 'Indians Abroad and Punjab Impact', brought out by UK-based noted Punjabi NRI writer cum columnist, Nirpal Singh Shergill's book 'Indians Abroad and Punjab Impact': a special edition dedicated to Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary, was released with elan in India at Phagwara on February 26.

Having sub-title 'Samundron Par Da Punjabi Sansar' (The Punjabi world across the sea), the edition is a special one dedicated to the coming 550th 'Parkash Purb' of Guru Nanak Dev ji-the founder of Sikh faith.

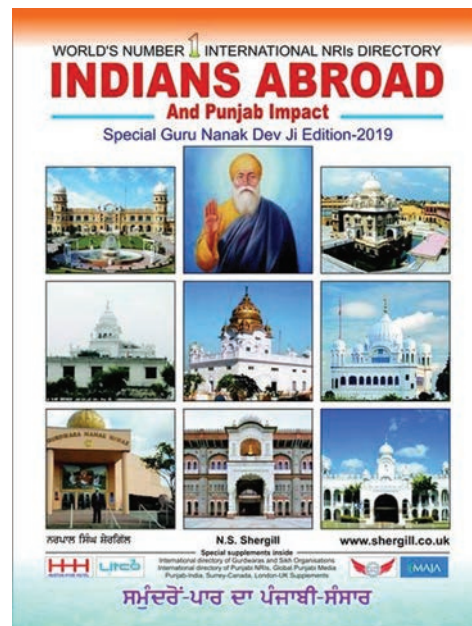
The 'Lok Arpan'(release) function was attended by a large number of Punjabi writers, columnists, journalists. It was organized by literary and cultural organization 'Punjabi Virsa Trust' and a Punjabi monthly magazine 'Sangeet Darpan'.

A presidium of eminent writers and columnists including author NS Shergill, Dr Harjinder Singh Walia,

Dr Asa Singh Ghuman, Ujagar Singh, Dr Shyam Sunder Deepti, USA-based NRI Dr Charanjit Singh Gumtala, Gurmit Singh Palahi, Prof Jaswant Singh Gandam and Taranjit Singh Kinra presided over the function. Two resolutions were unanimously adopted. One demanded creation of Rs 100 crore corpus fund for promotion of Punjabi language and culture on the occasion of 550th birth anniversary celebration of Guru Nanak Dev who chose Punjabi as medium of his message and 'Bani'.

The second called upon leaders of home and abroad to shun war and to resolve issues through dialogue which was the main method of Guru Nanak for settling matters.

Speaking on Shergill's huge effort in accomplishing a Herculean task by bringing out a voluminous 412-page colourful book, various writers hailed it as an authentic reference book about Punjabi diaspora. Hailing its encyclopaedic range as far as ready information about Punjabis settled in 50 different countries of the world was concerned, speakers, including Dr Harjinder Singh Walia, Gurmit Singh Palahi and Ujagar



Singh, said it provided 'vishaw di parikarima' (circumambulation of the world). Calling it a 'reference book', they claimed it had achieved global meaning and acceptance as a ready reckoner of Punjabi diaspora. Having mesmerizing colorful shining pictures, glossy paper, impressive printing, the book has 47 pages of International Directory, including business directory of Punjabi NRIs, 48 pages of Sikh Organisations and Gurdwaras, 5 pages of about 150 Indian Newspapers. Radio stations, TV channels, online papers outside India are also mentioned. 2000 Sikh Organizations and Gurdwaras, with 84,000 'Guru Ghar De Sevak', find mention in it.

So do over 200 registered, recognized institutions. And a galaxy of Punjabi NRI achievers, including the 'class of the firsts'. Information of Punjabi NRI entrepreneurs having 2 crore to 4000 crore capital, 160 embassies and missions in New Delhi and other parts of India, 200 international STD codes, 1175 cities national STD codes are its hallmark.

A large number of articles by eminent Sikh scholars on Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Gobind Singh, holy Guru Granth Sahib, Sikhism, its



*UK-based noted Punjabi writer cum columnist Shergill's book 'Indians Abroad and Punjab Impact': a special edition dedicated to 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev-founder of Sikh faith, being released in India at Phagwara*

history and its centers of worship make it unputdownable and worth decking one's library.

Speaking on Guru Nanak Dev's message and philosophy, Prof Jaswant Singh Gandam said it was marked by 'samvaad' (dialogue), 'sehansheelta' (tolerance), 'samanta' (equality).

Regretting that present era was of monologue rather than dialogue, Prof Gandam called for solution of global, especially South Asia's burning issues, through dialogue and discussion.

Lambasting war-mongers, he quoted Sahir Ludhianvi's famous lines to drive home his point- "Jang tau khud ek masla hai, Yeh maslon ka hal kya degi?"

Advocate SL Virdi, while criticising bane of casteism, rued that Guru Nanak's philosophy of dignity of work and casteless society was being ignored. Dr Deepti laid more emphasis on practice, rather than precept, in following the footsteps of Guru Nanak Dev.

Nirpal Singh Shergill, speaking on the occasion, regretted lack of impartial journalism in India. Denouncing double-faced journalism, Shergill advised journalists not to

be hypocrites by hunting with the hound and running with the hare.

"Many journalists claim to be critics of establishment but have back-door goody-goody relations with it", he said, clarifying his point. Taking umbrage to the use of prefix 'Parvasi' for them, Shergill asserted that Punjabis settled abroad were not Parvasis (migrants) but sons of the soil who had gone abroad in search of greener pastures.

"Punjabi intellectuals should find out some honorables sobriquet as 'Parvasi' word for Punjabi NRIs smelt of 'begangi' (alienation) and 'ajnabipan' (strangerhood)", he pleaded.

Prof Kulbir Singh said that control of media by corporate and industrial houses in country was putting hurdles in way of objective journalism. Punjabi poets Harbhajan Virk and Baldev Raj Komal read out their poems. UK-based Punjabi singer KS Bhamra, Bhupinder Singh Kandra from Austria, UK's Jaswinder Singh Rehnci, Dr Jagir Singh Noor, Ravinder Chot, Sital Banga, Dr Jawahar Dheer, Parwinderjit Singh, Raghbir Singh Mann, Sukhwinder Singh, also attended the function.

## Indian American Couple gives \$1 million to UCLA to Establish Ramanujan Visiting Mathematics Faculty



Picture caption -V.S. Varadarajan and his wife, Veda  
Photo / Courtesy UCLA

**LOS ANGELES (TIP):** The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) has received \$1 million from mathematics professor emeritus V.S. Varadarajan and his wife, Veda, to establish the Ramanujan Visiting Professorship in his home department.

The new position honours renowned Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan, who made substantial contributions to mathematics in the early 1900s. The post will help UCLA attract visiting faculty members in Varadarajan's specializations of automorphic forms, an important concept in number theory, and representation theory, which has been linked to elementary particles and quantum physics. The additional expertise will enhance UCLA's renowned mathematics department, which U.S. News & World Report ranked among the top 10 graduate programs in the country in 2018.

Varadarajan's career included work in various areas of mathematics and physics. He taught undergraduate and graduate students; managed the Pacific Journal of Mathematics; and published nine books. Other recognition includes an honorary doctorate in physics from the University of Genova, and the Lars Onsager medal from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology for his work in mathematics. Varadarajan joined UCLA in 1965 and retired in 2014. Veda Varadarajan earned her master's degree in atmospheric sciences in 1976 from UCLA.

# Indian American Writer/Producer Mindy Kaling Inks New Deal with Warner Bros. Television Group

**BURBANK, CA(TIP):** Emmy-nominated writer/producer Mindy Kaling ("The Mindy Project," "The Office") has signed an exclusive, multi-year overall deal with Warner Bros. Television Group (WBTVG).

Under the terms of the pact, Kaling will develop, write and produce new television projects - including original comedy and drama series, longform/event series, unscripted programming, digital content and more - for all platforms, such as broadcast networks, premium/pay and basic cable channels, and streaming/on-demand outlets.

This marks Kaling's first deal with the Studio and continues WBTVG's on-going strategic commitment to collaborate with the finest creators in the industry and support their vision by taking advantage of the artistic freedoms that an independent company can provide. Terms were not disclosed.

Prior to joining Warner Bros., Kaling created, executive produced and starred in the acclaimed comedy "The Mindy Project," which ran for six seasons, three on FOX and three on Hulu. Before that, she was a writer and executive producer for the NBC comedy "The Office," on which she also played customer service representative Kelly Kapoor. Kaling, who wrote 24 episodes of the show, was nominated for six Emmy Awards for her work



Kaling created, executive produced and starred in the acclaimed comedy "The Mindy Project"

on "The Office," sharing in five nominations for Outstanding Comedy Series as part of the show's producing team, as well as a

nomination with Greg Daniels for Outstanding Writing for a Comedy Series. Kaling also earned several Writers Guild of America Award nominations and a win for her time on "The Office," as well as two Screen Actors Guild Awards as part of the show's ensemble cast.

Kaling most recently debuted her new feature film "Late Night," for which she serves as producer, writer and star opposite Emma Thompson. The movie debuted to widespread acclaim at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival and was acquired by Amazon Studios for a record-breaking North American distribution deal. She is also the author of two New York Times-bestselling books, "Why Not Me?" and "Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me? (And Other Concerns)."

As an actor, Kaling's feature film credits include "Ocean's Eight," "A Wrinkle in Time," "The Night Before," "Inside Out," "The 40-Year-Old Virgin" and more.

Kaling's production company, Kaling International, will produce her new series in association with Warner Bros. Television, Warner Horizon Scripted Television or the Television Group's digital studio, Blue Ribbon Content. Warner Bros. International Television Distribution will distribute the programs around the world.

## Indian American Teen Wins National STEM Award



Kavya is a freshman at Harvard University

**BOSTON (TIP):** Indian American student Kavya Kopparapu has been named the winner of 2018/2019 National STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Award that recognizes an individual who exemplifies excellence in the theoretical and practical STEM education fields and who has meaningfully promoted STEM education.

Kavya is a freshman at Harvard University, researching at the intersection of medicine and computer science. Kavya is the inventor of GlioVision, a precision medicine platform powered by AI that predicts tumor characteristics in a fraction of the

time and cost of traditional methods. She has been recognized as a WebMD Health Hero, Thiel Fellowship Finalist, Davidson Institute for Talent Development Scholar Laureate, Regeneration Science Talent Search Finalist, and US Presidential Scholar.

Kavya has spoken at the Smithsonian, NASA Kennedy Space Center, and several Artificial Intelligence Conferences. She is the founder and CEO of GirlsComputingLeague.org which has raised over \$100,000 for computer science programming impacting over 3,800 students across the US.

## Indian American named Penn's Vice President and Secretary of the University



Narvekar has worked in Penn's Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) Office for 32 years

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Indian American Medha Narvekar has been named vice president and secretary of the university at the University of Pennsylvania, effective July 1. The announcement was made by Penn President Amy Gutmann.

Narvekar has worked in Penn's Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) Office for 32 years, beginning shortly after she earned an M.B.A. from Penn's Wharton School. Most recently, she has served as senior associate vice president of DAR, working closely with the president and many trustees.

"Medha is both renowned and respected across Penn," Gutmann said. "Very few people know Penn as well or have worked so successfully with so many people across our University. Her extensive experience across all areas-including working directly with trustees, overseers, and Penn's most generous donors-gives her a unique capacity to step into the important position of vice president and secretary."

Narvekar earned a B.A. from Swarthmore College in 1981 and her Wharton degree in 1986.

In addition to her new responsibilities, Narvekar will continue to provide support to DAR, serving as liaison from Development to the President's Office. In this capacity, she will continue to have a reporting relationship to John Zeller, senior vice president of DAR, and remain a member of the DAR senior management team as the University moves through the final phases of the Power of Penn fundraising campaign.

## Indian American Student Wins \$5,700 Irving Institute Grant



Harish Tekriwal grew up in Richmond, Virginia and graduated from Maggie Walker Governor's School as a National AP Scholar

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Harish Tekriwal, an Indian American student at Dartmouth College has been chosen for a prominent energy grant from Arthur L. Irving Institute for Energy and Society.

"The only undergraduates in a pool of 36 applicants, Bill Cui '21 and Harish Tekriwal '21 outcompeted faculty members and researchers to win a \$5,700 grant from the Arthur L. Irving Institute for Energy and Society", the Dartmouth College posted on twitter.

Harish and Cui were chosen for their project "Constructing Effective Demand Response Programs in New Hampshire's Electric Market."

Harish Tekriwal grew up in Richmond, Virginia and graduated from Maggie Walker Governor's School as a National AP Scholar. At Maggie Walker, Harish served as President of the Class of 2017 as well as President of the Model United Nations club. He also participated in the "We, the People" constitution competition where he and his team were crowned national champions in 2017. Outside of school, he volunteered as an EMT for the local rescue squad, a service he still provides whenever he is home. At Dartmouth, Harish plans to pursue a major in Quantitative Social Science with a minor in Public Policy. He is a varsity athlete on the Dartmouth Lightweight Rowing Team as well as a member of the Dartmouth Mock Trial Society. After graduation, Harish plans to attend law school and pursue a career that combines data analytics and public policy.

## Indian Origin Ex Florida Police Officer Convicted in 2015 Shooting



*Raja is the first Florida officer to be convicted of an on duty shooting in 30 years*

**WEST PALM BEACH, FL (TIP):** A Palm Beach County jury on March 7 convicted former Police Officer Nouman Raja for armed manslaughter and attempted first-degree murder for shooting musician Corey Jones to death in a roadside encounter.

Raja, 41, faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years in prison with the possibility of life for the killing of Jones, whose vehicle had broken down in 2015 when he was shot.

Raja was working undercover as a Palm Beach Gardens police officer and was in plain clothes when he confronted Jones who was in his broken down SUV on the I-95 off-ramp at PGA Blvd. Prosecutors alleged that, based on a recording from a call that Jones had placed for roadside assistance, Raja never identified himself as a law enforcement officer.

According to the prosecutors, the recording also revealed that Jones was afraid of being robbed, as he had a \$10,000 drum kit in the back of his vehicle. When Jones produced a handgun that he had legally purchased days earlier, Raja shot him repeatedly. A police supervisor testified that Raja had been instructed to wear his police vest whenever approaching a civilian. The Palm Beach Gardens Police Department fired him less than a month after the incident.

A statement was released by the jury Foreman Randal Martin saying:

"The jurors and alternates in this case worked very hard and served honorably, listening diligently to the facts and the evidence and doing our very best to apply the law fairly and justly. Today, my heart breaks for both the Jones and Raja families. They have suffered greatly because of that terrible night, and I pray that God would bless and comfort them.

I also respectfully ask for privacy for all of the members of the jury. We are private citizens who were compelled to serve and now wish to return to our families and careers without further public scrutiny."

Raja is the first Florida officer to be convicted of an on duty shooting in 30 years. He will be sentenced next month.

## The House passes Democrats' anti-hate resolution; Some Republicans dissented

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** The House of Representatives passed a broad resolution on Thursday, March 8, to condemn hateful speech and expression, including both anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. The vote comes after first-term member Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) sparked controversy with her comments on Israel.

*Read full story on  
www.theindianpanorama.news*

# Indian American Lawmaker introduces Legislation to delay Obamacare's Health Insurance Tax

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Indian American Congressman Ami Bera (D-CA), along with representatives Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ), Jackie Walorski (R-IN), and Kenny Marchant (R-TX) on Feb 27 introduced H.R. 1398, the Health Insurance Tax Relief Act. This bill would stop the Affordable Care Act's Health Insurance Tax from going into effect until after 2021 and save consumers hundreds of dollars.

"Failing to pass this bill, which would ensure the Health Insurance Tax is delayed for another two years, would cause millions of American families to see higher health insurance premiums," said Rep. Ami Bera, M.D. "In a time of rising premiums and health care costs, preventing the health insurance tax from adding to those costs is necessary as we work to stabilize the insurance markets and lower health care costs. We should pass this bill today."

"When it comes to taxes, the people of New Jersey have had more than enough. They want and deserve lower taxes - and they want lower health care costs, said Rep. Josh Gottheimer. "That's why I am proud to introduce the bipartisan Health Insurance Tax Relief Act, which stops a tax on health



*Indian American Congressman Ami Bera (D-CA), along with representatives Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ), Jackie Walorski (R-IN), and Kenny Marchant (R-TX) on Feb 27 introduced H.R. 1398, the Health Insurance Tax Relief Act*

care premium in its tracks. I will keep working across the aisle to protect our health care and deliver common sense tax cuts for Fifth District families."

"When it comes to health care, Americans are facing rising costs and fewer options," said Rep. Jackie Walorski. "Raising taxes on health coverage would only make matters worse for families, small businesses, and Medicare Advantage enrollees. As we continue working to lower premiums for families and seniors, we need to pass this bipartisan bill to provide relief from the burdensome Health Insurance Tax."

"At a time when healthcare markets are beginning to stabilize, the last thing my constituents need is a tax driving their costs back up," said Rep. Kenny Marchant. "The Health Insurance Tax (HIT) would do just that, and as much as I would like to see it repealed outright, this bill is a step in the right direction by delaying the tax from going into effect."

According to America's Health Insurance Plans, the HIT could increase premiums by over \$470 per family in 2020 if not stopped. The tax would also hit seniors and those with disabilities particularly hard.

## US TO TERMINATE GSP DESIGNATION OF INDIA AND TURKEY

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** At the direction of President Donald J. Trump, the United States intends to terminate India and Turkey's designations as beneficiary developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program because they no longer comply with the statutory eligibility criteria, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer announced March 4. GSP allows certain goods to enjoy duty-free entry into the US.

According to U.S. Trade Representative's office, India's termination from GSP follows its failure to provide the United States with assurances that it will provide equitable and reasonable access to its markets in numerous sectors. Turkey's termination from GSP follows a finding that it is sufficiently economically developed and should no longer benefit from preferential market access to the United States market.

In a separate letter to congressional leaders, Trump explained the reasons for kicking India out of the program, saying:

"I am taking this step because, after intensive engagement between the United States and the government of India, I have determined that India has not assured the United States that it will provide equitable and reasonable access to the markets of India."

Under the United States GSP program, certain products can enter the United States duty-free if beneficiary developing countries meet the eligibility criteria established by Congress. GSP criteria include, among others, respecting arbitral awards in favor of United States citizens or corporations, combating child labor, respecting internationally recognized worker rights, providing adequate and effective intellectual property protection, and providing the United States with equitable and reasonable market access. Countries can also be graduated from the GSP program depending on factors related to economic development.

The United States launched an eligibility review of India's compliance with the GSP market access criterion in April 2018. India has implemented a wide array of trade barriers that create serious negative effects on United States commerce. Despite intensive engagement, India has failed to take the necessary steps to meet the GSP criterion.

By statute, these changes may not take effect until at least 60 days after the notifications to Congress and the governments of India and Turkey, and will be enacted by a Presidential Proclamation. In November 2018, US government had withdrawn the GSP benefits to India on 50 items worth \$70mn.

## Indian Origin Man Sentenced to 33 Months in Prison for Embezzlement

**OAKLAND (TIP):** An Indian origin man was sentenced Feb 28 to 33 months in prison and ordered to pay \$2,618,000 in restitution as result of his mail fraud conviction for embezzling from an East Bay medical device company, announced United States Attorney David L. Anderson and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Special Agent in Charge John F. Bennett. The sentence was handed down by the Yvonne Gonzalez Rogers, United States District Judge.

Dinesh Shankar, 41, of San Jose, Calif., pleaded guilty to one count of mail fraud on November 1, 2018. According to the plea agreement, from March 2013 until January 2018, Shankar was an employee of an Emeryville-based medical device company. Beginning in July 2013 until December 2017, the defendant submitted false expense reports and false invoices to the company's finance department, causing the company to pay more than half a million dollars in excess of the legitimate expenses and expenditures for services provided to the company. In addition, Shankar admitted he created false invoices that appeared to be issued by six different entities. The entities were actually fictitious business names for entities that Shankar controlled. Shankar prepared the false invoices to make it appear the entities had provided testing and quality assurance services to his employer when, in fact, they had not provided the services. Shankar admitted he caused a total loss to the company of about \$2,576,384.

A federal grand jury indicted Shankar on April 12, 2018, charging him with six counts of mail fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1341. Shankar pleaded guilty to one count and the remaining counts were dismissed.

In addition to the prison sentence and restitution, Judge Gonzalez Rogers also sentenced the defendant to serve a three-year term of supervised release. The defendant will begin serving the sentence on May 1, 2019.

# Cohen Sues Trump Organization; claims he was denied \$1.9 Million in fees

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Michael D. Cohen, the former personal lawyer and fixer for President Trump, sued the Trump Organization on Thursday, March 8, New York Times reported. He accused the company of breaking a contract when it refused to pay about \$1.9 million in legal costs after he began cooperating with federal prosecutors.

The lawsuit, filed in State Supreme Court in Manhattan, said that the Trump Organization had failed to live up to an agreement to pay for any legal fees or related costs Mr. Cohen incurred in his work with the Trump Organization.

Mr. Cohen is also seeking reimbursement for an additional \$1.9 million he was ordered to pay in fines, forfeiture and restitution after he pleaded guilty to breaking campaign finance laws, evading taxes and lying to Congress, the lawsuit said.

In a statement, a lawyer for the Trump Organization, Marc Mukasey, disputed Mr. Cohen's claims.

"The Trump Organization doesn't owe Michael Cohen one penny of legal fees," he said. "This is a desperate money grab by a desperate convicted felon."

The lawsuit was the latest salvo in an escalating feud between Mr. Trump and Mr. Cohen, who represented Mr. Trump for



*A combative Michael Cohen filed a suit against Trump Organization for denying his legal fees running to 1.9 million*

close to a decade and once said that he would "take a bullet" for his client.

It also underscored just how precipitously Mr. Cohen fell out of Mr. Trump's orbit as investigators increased scrutiny of the president and his advisers. The complaint chronicled, from Mr. Cohen's perspective, how he went from being a trusted Trump associate, so intertwined with the president's family business that it offered to pay his legal costs, to a bitter enemy, who last week told lawmakers that Mr. Trump was a "cheat," a "racist" and a "con man."

The lawsuit said Mr. Cohen and the Trump Organization had entered an agreement under which the company would pay for Mr. Cohen's legal fees and

costs arising from investigations being conducted by Congress and by Robert S. Mueller III, the special counsel who is examining Russian interference in the 2016 election.

In his cooperation with prosecutors, Michael D. Cohen, President Trump's former lawyer, has implicated the president in a hush-money scandal and provided other information to the special counsel, Robert S. Mueller III.

In the complaint, Mr. Cohen's lawyers listed 11 separate matters in which he had continued to incur legal costs after the Trump Organization stopped paying his lawyers. They include lawsuits involving his payment to Ms. Daniels, meetings connected to Mr. Mueller's ongoing investigation, multiple House and Senate hearings and a lawsuit brought by New York's attorney general against the Donald J. Trump Foundation.

The complaint also said that under the agreement, the Trump Organization was also responsible for paying the nearly \$2 million penalty Mr. Cohen received after he pleaded guilty to campaign finance violations, tax evasion and bank fraud. Mr. Cohen is expected to begin serving a three-year sentence on those charges, and an additional count that he lied to Congress, in federal prison in May.

## DRDO Chairman Named Missile Systems Award Winner



*For his distinguished contributions, Dr Satheesh has received several prestigious international and national awards*

**MARYLAND (TIP):** G. Satheesh Reddy, Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organization, Ministry of Defence, India, is the joint winner of the 2019 Missile Systems Award given by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics in the US (AIAA). The Award will be presented during the AIAA DEFENSE Forum, held 7-9 May at the Korsakoff Center at Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland. Dr. Reddy will receive his award in India.

The award recognizes excellence in developing or implementing missile systems technology, including significant technological accomplishments or for inspired leadership of missile systems programs.

Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy was selected for his over three decades of significant national contributions toward indigenous design, development, and deployment of diversified strategic and tactical missile systems, guided weapons, advanced avionics, and navigation technologies in India. Reddy joined Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad in the year 1986 and subsequently joined Research Centre Imarat (RCI), the brain child of Dr Kalam, after its formation. From a young navigation scientist and System Manager he rose steadily and after his multiple significant appointments and decades of sustained contributions to Defence R&D, was elevated as Distinguished Scientist in Sep 2014 and was appointed as Scientific Adviser to Defence Minister in May 2015.

As SA to RM, significantly contributed towards the formulation of many national policies and pivotal in evolving roadmap for self-sufficiency in Missiles. As Director General, Missiles and Strategic Systems (DG, MSS), he spearheaded Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex Laboratories - ASL, DRDL and RCI, ITR, TBRL & other technical facilities. He led the design and development of a wide range of tactical and strategic missile systems to attain complete self-sufficiency in Missiles and initiated many new projects to equip Armed forces with state-of-the-art weapons and technologies.

He holds the distinction of being inducted as Fellow of Royal Institute of Navigation (FRIN), London, Royal Aeronautical Society, UK (FRAeS) and Foreign Member of the Academy of Navigation & Motion Control, Russia. He is an Honorary Fellow of CSI & Project Management Association of India, Fellow of Indian National Academy of Engineering, IET (UK), Associate Fellow of American Institute of Aeronautics & Astronautics, USA and many other Academies/scientific bodies in the country and abroad.

For his distinguished contributions, Dr Satheesh received several prestigious international and national awards which includes the Indian Science Congress Association Homi J. Bhabha Memorial Gold Medal, National Aeronautical Prize, National Design Award, National Systems Gold Medal, the first IEI-IEEE (USA) joint award for Engineering Excellence and was conferred with the Silver Medal of Royal Aeronautical Society, London. He is also a recipient of Dr Biren Roy Space Science Design Award, Astronautical Society of India Rocketry & Related technologies Award and has been conferred with Honorary Degrees of Doctor of Science by many leading Universities in the country.

# Indian American Professor accused of stealing and selling Student's Invention

**MISSOURI (TIP):** Indian American Ashim Mitra, former professor at Missouri Kansas City, who is already infamous for forcing graduate students to work at his home, is now accused of stealing a grad student's work and profiting from it.

The University of Missouri System's Board of Curators filed a federal lawsuit Feb. 26 against the former professor of pharmacy and his wife for allegedly stealing intellectual property and making \$1.5 million off of it to date through therapeutics companies. According to the Kansas City Star, the suit says the sale has the potential of earning \$10 million additional dollars in royalties over the next five years. The suit said the money rightfully belongs to the



*Ashim Mitra is accused of stealing a grad student's work and profiting from it*

university because the student Kishore Cholkar, who developed a new and more effective way to deliver drugs to the eye - through nanotechnology - did so while employed as a graduate research assistant at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. The former professor, Ashim Mitra, is further accused of concealing his work with industry from the university and then lying about it during recent internal investigation. Mitra already tendered his resignation amid an eight month university investigation into separate claims that he forced foreign graduate students from India into doing yard work, taking care of his dog and other tasks like cleaning Mitra's flooded basement.

# USISPF High-Level American Business Delegation to Aero India Engages with Government of India

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** The US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) on Feb 22 wrapped up the visit of its high-level US delegation to Bengaluru led by Vikram Singh, Senior Advisor, Defense and Aerospace at USISPF and Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for South and Southeast Asia. The action-packed, three-day agenda focused on key Government of India defense priorities and ways in which U.S. industry can actively support the partnership between the two countries.

The delegation kicked off with an industry reception featuring Ambassador Kenneth I. Juster, U.S. Ambassador to India; Alan Shaffer, Deputy Under Secretary for Acquisition & Sustainment; Lieutenant General Charles Hooper, Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency; along with other visiting U.S. government dignitaries. Immediately post the Inaugural Session, the Forum hosted an event on Anti-Drone Technology, which included key leaders from the Indian Army and technology sectors. The seminar featured discussions on how India can develop counter drone technologies, after recent incidents that have threatened security and disrupted airport travels. As drones continue to pose growing security threats to both civilian and military entities, a new market for anti-drone technology is

emerging. To date, over 200 anti-drone products are either in the market or under active development. Considering this growing threat, USISPF program generated great interest, including participation from other countries such as Israel and Finland.

In addition, USISPF co-hosted a seminar in partnership with India's Ministry of Defense called "Start-up Manthan." The event featured U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for South and Southeast Asia, Dr. Joe Felter along with senior officials from Indian Ministry of Defense. The program discussed in detail the IDEX incubator that has been launched in India and learnings from the U.S. experience in developing an innovation ecosystem.

USISPF also hosted meetings with Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State for Defense Dr. Subhash Rao Bhamra, Deputy Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal, VR Chaudhari, AVSM VM and Defense Secretary Sanjay Mitra.

"The U.S. and India are ready to take defense ties to the next level as partners in high tech defense innovation by partnering with startups and entrepreneurs in both countries," said Vikram J. Singh. "American companies, investors and the US government showed a terrific commitment to this goal at Aero India 2019," he added.

## Hardik Patel to join Congress, contest LS polls from Jamnagar

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** It is official, Patidar leader from Gujarat, Hardik Patel, will join the Congress.

According to Patidar Anamat Andolan Samiti (PAAS) sources, a decision was taken at the Andolan's meeting held at Tarkhadi village of Rajkot district. Gita Patel of PAAS said that only Hardik Patel from the Samiti will join the Congress.

However, Hardik could not be contacted in person.

A senior Gujarat Congress leader while talking to THE WEEK confirmed that Hardik was joining the Congress and that he would contest the Lok Sabha election from Jamnagar. The constituency is currently represented in the Lok Sabha by Poonamben Maadam of the BJP.

However, Gujarat Congress chief spokesperson, Manish Doshi, was guarded in his response. He told THE WEEK that the Congress welcomes youth in politics. Doshi recalled that Hardik has been responsible in exposing the double standards of the BJP and raising issues of education and employment. It was because of Hardik's agitation that the government had been forced to bring 10 per cent reservation for those not falling in the reservation category.

Earlier in the day, when the rumours were rife that Hardik would join the Congress, Gujarat BJP president Jitubhai Vaghani said that the PAAS leader had stood exposed in 2017 assembly elections when he openly sought votes for the Congress.

## Sajjan Kumar instigated mob to kill Sikhs, victim tells Delhi court

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** A key prosecution witness in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case on Thursday reiterated before a Delhi court that former Congress leader Sajjan Kumar had instigated the mob to kill Sikhs.

While cross-examining Cham Kaur, Kumar's lawyer suggested: "You took names of all the rioters in your statement.... but you never named Sajjan Kumar. You are taking his name now." To this, Kaur said: "I have always taken the name of Sajjan Kumar."

Kaur had earlier told the court that she had seen Kumar allegedly addressing the crowd in national capital's Sultanpuri area in 1984 that Sikhs had killed "our mother" and instigated the mob to kill them.

"On October 31, 1984, we were watching TV on the demise of Indira Gandhi. On November 1, 1984, when I stepped out to look for my goat, I saw Sajjan Kumar addressing the crowd and was saying 'hamari ma maar di. Sardaro ko maar do' (our mother was killed... kill the Sikhs)," Kaur had told district judge Poonam A Bamba.

She said that the next morning, they were attacked in which her son and her father were killed.

"My son Kapoor Singh and my father Sardarji Singh were pulled out of the hiding place on second floor, thrashed and were thrown down from the roof," she said, adding that she herself received injuries in the attack.

During the proceedings, Kaur had also identified Kumar, who was present in the court. "I could recognise the accused Sajjan Kumar, as we used to visit him for getting help in making ration card, passport. We used to visit the accused for getting the papers stamped as he was the MP/MLA," she said.

# Sonia, Rahul in Congress' first Lok Sabha polls list; no Priyanka

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi are among 15 candidates named by the Congress in its first list for the national election just weeks away. The list names 11 candidates in Uttar Pradesh and four candidates in Gujarat. Rahul Gandhi, the Congress president, and his mother Sonia Gandhi, will contest from Amethi and Raebareli, the family strongholds that have voted them since 2004.

Amethi and Raebareli are the only seats the Congress had retained in the 80-seat Uttar Pradesh when they were decimated by the BJP in the 2014 general elections.

The Congress first list does not include Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who joined politics in January and was made the party general secretary in charge of eastern Uttar Pradesh. There was speculation that Priyanka Gandhi could contest from her mother's constituency. Priyanka Gandhi has, for years, campaigned for her mother and brother in Raebareli and Amethi. Thursday's announcement also ends speculation about Sonia Gandhi retiring.

The Congress announced that it will contest all 80 seats in Uttar Pradesh after the Samajwadi Party of Akhilesh Yadav and Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party announced a grand alliance in January without the party.



The rivals-turned-partners made one concession for the Congress; they said they would not field candidates in Amethi and Rae Bareli.

Also on the Congress list is senior leader Salman Khurshid, who will contest from Farrukhabad, where he had contested from and lost in 2014.

The other leaders on the list for UP are RPN Singh from Kushi Nagar, Imran Masood from Saharanpur, Jitin Prasad from Dhaurahra, Annu Tandon from Unnao, Rajaram Pal from

Akbarpur, Brij Lal Khabri from Jalaun and Nirmal Khatri from Faizabad.

In Gujarat, senior Congress leader Bharatsinh Solanki will contest from Anand. He had won the Lok Sabha elections from the seat in 2004 and 2009. But he lost to Dilipbhai Patel of the BJP in 2014.

Raju Parmar will contest the elections from Ahmedabad West seat, Prashant Patel will contest from Vadodara, and Ranjit Mohansinh Rathwa will contest from Chhota Udaipur seat.

## Rafale case: Why can't PM Modi be probed, asks Rahul

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** A day after the Centre informed the Supreme Court that Rafale documents were stolen from the defence ministry, Congress president Rahul Gandhi launched a fresh attack against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the NDA government. Addressing a press conference on Thursday morning, Rahul said that there were clear indications of parallel negotiations by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in the Rafale deal. "PM Modi performed bypass surgery in Rafale deal... (The) purchase was delayed to benefit Anil Ambani," said Rahul.

He questioned why PM Modi should not be probed in the case. "In defence ministry files it is written that the PMO carried out parallel negotiation. Why can't PM be investigated? Investigate everybody, investigate prime minister as well in the Rafale deal," the Congress president said, continuing his attack on the Modi government. Further, Rahul also questioned Centre's claim on the theft of the Rafale documents from the defence ministry. "Rafale files disappeared, it was said that an investigation should be conducted against you (media) because Rafale files disappeared; but the person who was involved in Rs 30,000 crore scam, no investigation against him?"

"On one hand you are saying the documents are missing. So this means the documents are genuine and its clearly written in them that PMO was carrying out parallel negotiations," Rahul added. "Media warned of probe in the Rafale deal, but there has been no probe against those involved in the scam. The government is manipulating institutions to save PM Modi."

On Wednesday, the Centre claimed in the Supreme Court that the documents on Rafale deal relied upon by petitioners were stolen from the defence ministry. Attorney General K.K. Venugopal submitted in the Supreme Court that newspaper reports, especially The Hindu's revelations on the Rafale deal, were based on these stolen documents from the defence ministry. Venugopal even went to the extent of saying that the media houses should be booked under contempt of court. "I am suggesting that the newspaper is guilty under IPC for theft and under Official Secrets Act for accessing privileged documents... These are matters which involve the very security of the state," he had said.

**Rahul Gandhi challenged PM Modi to face an investigation over alleged wrongdoing in the Rafale deal, and said the new motto of the government should be "gayab ho gaya", a day after the Centre told the SC that some documents related to the deal were stolen from the defence ministry.**

## Rahul should be ashamed of seeking air strike proof: Shah



BJP chief Amit Shah being garlanded along with the party workers at Bamora village in Sagar.

**SAGAR (TIP):** BJP president Amit Shah on Thursday said Congress chief Rahul Gandhi should feel ashamed of asking for proof of India's air strike on a terror camp in Pakistan.

People will give Gandhi a reply for (saying) it during the ensuing Lok Sabha polls, the BJP leader said.

Addressing the party's booth-level workers at Bamora near Sagar town in Madhya Pradesh, Shah said an IAF official at a press conference asserted that the IAF had hit terror targets.

Even after this conclusive statement, Gandhi is insulting thousands of martyrs of India by asking for evidence of the air strike, Shah said.

The IAF conducted air strike last month on a camp of Jaish-e-Mohammed in Pakistan, in retaliation to the terror outfit's attack at Pulwama district in Jammu and Kashmir in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed. Shah lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his "work and untiring attitude".

Earlier "only two countries" were known for avenging attack on their forces. "Modiji has now ensured India's name is also counted among such countries," he said.

In the last 25 years, Modi has not taken a single vacation, Shah said. He targeted Gandhi for "going on vacations frequently". The country has got a prime minister who works for 18 out of 24 hours a day and is very dedicated towards the nation, the BJP chief said. "What the Modi government has done in 55 months of rule, the Congress was unable to do in 55 years with Gandhi family's four generations ruling the country," he said.

The Modi government brought a major change in the country by implementing 135 welfare schemes, including Ayushman Bharat, Rs 6,000 per annum for small and marginal farmers and Rs 3,000 pension for labourers, Shah said.

# Hizbul behind Jammu grenade attack that killed teen; one arrested

**JAMMU (TIP):** Kashmir separatist organisation Hizbul Mujahideen was behind the grenade attack at a bus stand in Jammu on Thursday, the police said. One person has been detained in connection with the blast that killed a teenager and left over 30 injured.

Jammu and Kashmir Inspector General of Police Manish K. Sinha said Yasir Bhatt, who was detained based on oral testimony of eye-witnesses, has confessed to the crime. Sinha said Bhatt was tasked to throw the grenade by Farooq Ahmed Bhatt alias Omar, the district commander of Hizbul Mujahideen in Kulgam.

Sinha said several teams have been constituted to probe the incident that happened at 11.30am when a grenade rolled under a parked bus went off in the crowded area. This is the third such attack by suspected terrorists on this bus stand in nine months. The deceased was identified as Mohammad Sharik, 17, a resident of Haridwar in Uttarakhand. Security agencies believe the attack is an attempt to disturb the communal harmony in the city.

The Hindu-dominated Jammu city had recently seen widespread protests after a suicide attack orchestrated by Jaish-e-Mohammad at Pulwama on February 14 killed 40 CRPF jawans, escalating the tension between India and Pakistan.

The injured in Thursday's grenade attack included 11 residents of Kashmir, two from



A sniffer dog and policemen inspect the site of a grenade attack in Jammu.

Bihar and one each from Chattisgarh and Haryana, the officials said. Four of them are reported to be critical.

Sinha had earlier said preliminary investigation suggested that someone lobbed the grenade in the bus stand area, causing the explosion. "Local investigation has been initiated into the incident. The government has already given complete liberty to the

forces to take all necessary steps," Minister of State for Defence Subhash Bhamre was quoted as saying by ANI.

Earlier, on December 28 and 29 last year, suspected terrorists targeted the local police station building in a grenade attack. On May 24, 2018, another grenade attack along the BC Road had left two policemen and a civilian injured.

## AYODHYA DISPUTE

# Supreme Court appoints 3-member mediation team



**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The Supreme Court on Friday announced the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute in Ayodhya would be referred for mediation for its amicable resolution. The Supreme Court announced a three-member committee would mediate.

The mediators are former Supreme Court justice F.M. Kalifulla, spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and legal mediator Sriram Panchu. Kalifulla would be the chairman of the committee. The mediation committee's proceedings would be conducted in Faizabad and would be in-camera, without media presence. The mediation process will conclude in eight weeks, with the three-member committee being asked to submit a 'status' report in four weeks.

Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi announced there was no "impediment to mediation". The next hearing on the issue in the Supreme Court would be after six weeks.

A five-member Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi had reserved its order on the issue of mediation on Wednesday. Interestingly, while Muslim bodies supported the Supreme Court's suggestion of referring the Ayodhya dispute for mediation, only the Nirmohi Akhara, among the Hindu bodies, supported it. The Hindu Mahasabha was split on the issue of supporting mediation.

During its hearing on Wednesday, the Supreme Court declared the Ayodhya dispute was not just about 1,500sqft of land, but also about religious sentiments. The Supreme Court said it was conscious about the gravity of the Ayodhya dispute and its impact on the "body politics" of the country.

# Russia to lease nuclear submarine to Indian Navy in \$3 billion deal

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** India on Thursday sealed a \$3 billion deal with Russia for leasing a nuclear-powered attack submarine for the Indian Navy for a period of 10 years, military sources said.

The two countries signed an inter-governmental agreement capping months of negotiations on price and various other aspects of the deal. Under the pact, Russia will have to deliver the Akula class submarine, to be known as Chakra III, to the Indian Navy by 2025.

It will be the third Russian nuclear submarine to be leased to the Indian Navy. A spokesperson in the Defence Ministry refused to comment when asked about the deal.

India has been significantly bolstering its naval prowess in the backdrop of China's attempts to expand its influence in the Indian Ocean region.

The Indian Navy had taken two submarines from Russia on lease previously. The first nuclear-powered submarine—christened INS Chakra—was taken in 1988 under a three-year lease from the Soviet Union; the first INS Chakra was a 'Charlie' class cruise missile-armed submarine.

A second INS Chakra was taken on lease in 2012 for a period of 10 years; this vessel was an Akula class submarine.

The lease of Chakra-II will expire in 2022 and India is looking at extending the lease, sources said.

The deal for the Chakra-III came days after Indo-Russian joint production facility to manufacture AK-203 assault rifles for the Indian Army was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Amethi in Uttar Pradesh.



# Match-fixing between Modi, Pak: Cong leader

**BENGALURU (TIP):** Senior Congress leader BK Hariprasad has alleged there was a "match-fixing" between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan which allowed the Pulwama terror attack to occur.

Congress' member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha Hariprasad made the remarks while speaking to reporters in Bengaluru on Thursday in response to Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad's criticism of the Congress for demanding proof of the strike by the Indian Air Force on Jaish-e-Mohammed's terror camps in Balakot in Pakistan.

"Ravi Shankar Prasad should clarify whether there is any match-fixing between Pakistan and Narendra Modi. Or else, without their knowledge this Pulwama instance would not have taken place. If you look at the chain of events that have taken place after Pulwama it looks like Narendra Modi had a match-fixing with Pakistan people," he said.

Hariprasad was referring to the death of 40 CRPF personnel in the February 14 suicide attack on a convoy in Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir. India had responded to the incident by launching air strikes on the Jaish camp that it claimed had killed many terrorists.

The Centre and opposition have sparred over the impact of the air strike, with some international media organisations claiming that they missed the target.

S Prakash, the spokesperson of the Karnataka unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party, said Hariprasad's comment on the Pulwama attack was of "low level".

# Cabinet clears ordinance on teachers' reservation

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The Union Cabinet on Thursday rolled back a controversial faculty hiring system for universities and colleges that had angered Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Other Backward Class (OBC) communities — the second time in seven months the Centre has reversed a court order following protests.

In a briefing, Union finance minister Arun Jaitley announced that the Cabinet cleared the 'Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Ordinance, 2019' that replaced the 13-point roster in which reservation is determined at the departmental level.

The old system — the 200-point roster that the government has gone back to — takes the entire institution as a single unit for hiring purposes, providing 27% quota to OBCs, 15% to SCs and 7.5% to STs. The 13-point roster was introduced by the University Grants Commission (UGC) last year after an Allahabad high court order in 2017 said the whole institution couldn't be taken as a single unit to determine reservation. The court's order was challenged by the Centre, which also stopped faculty recruitment in universities, in the Supreme Court (SC) but its petition was rejected. Thursday's meeting, apparently the last of this government, was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

According to people with direct knowledge of the developments, he said that the next meeting of the Cabinet would be in June — a date after the upcoming general elections.



## GUEST COMMENT

### Attack on press freedom: Using OSA to fight the Rafale battle in court

The Attorney General of India's submission to the Supreme Court, later retracted, that the Government was considering action against The Hindu under the undemocratic and draconian Official Secrets Act (OSA) was unwarranted and awkward. Casting the legalese aside, the Government was seeking to shoot the messenger for publishing secret documents that questioned the Rafale deal. The AG could have sounded more credible if he had argued that the secret documents revealed by the media house were incorrect or irrelevant to the case. If these documents were not edited to tamper with the context or to further political or corporate interests, they remain valid.

Instead of arguing on the validity of the information put out in the public domain, the Government has given the impression of threatening journalists for raising uncomfortable or inconvenient questions. The Editors' Guild has rightly noted that any attempt to wield the Official Secrets Act against journalists is as 'reprehensible' as asking journalists to disclose their sources. If the aim was to stop the courts from looking at those documents merely because they were suspected to be purloined, the ploy failed. Journalists have every right to obtain documents and publish them for greater public good. A journalist's public-spirited attempt to bring out the truth should go beyond handout journalism and it can never be termed a breach of national security. The court has rightly turned down the AG's plea not to look at evidence just because it was obtained through leaks. All great stories have been leaked out by some public-spirited official or the other.

Unless the Government proves that these documents have been planted on the newspaper for partisan reasons, the consequences of the documents being declared genuine are indeed far-reaching. For they seem to hint at an attempt to compromise the Defence Ministry's negotiating position due to the interference of the Prime Minister's Office as well as suppression of facts from the Supreme Court. More reprehensible is the threat to force journalists to reveal their sources. It is universally recognized that the relationship between the media and the State ought to be adversarial, with the media playing an Oppositional role. It should remain so for our democracy to remain vibrant and viable.

(Tribune, India)

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## AS I SEE IT

# Pulwama attack: Politicizing a conflict for electoral gains



By George Abraham

Ever since the attack in Pulwama by a suicide bomber killing 42 of India's security personnel, the country has been on the edge, fearing an all-out war with Pakistan. Any civilized person could view the barbarity of this dastardly terrorist act only with disgust and rage. However, a confrontation between these two nuclear powers is neither in the interest of these two nations nor does it bode well for the future of this turbulent region. Pakistan has been waging a proxy war with India over the Kashmir issue from the time of Independence, and a final solution to this crisis is not within sight.

Some would argue that this is the time of war and everyone should keep their apprehensions about its conduct or any other questions they may have close to their chest. However, a massive intelligence failure of this magnitude over the Pulwama tragedy should not be missed. How did a young man in his twenties, who was already on the radar of the Security personnel, come to possess, pack & conceal, and then drive 300KG explosives towards a military convoy undetected? Reports from the region suggest that a police advisory was already in effect a week before this, stating that the Central Reserve Police Force deployment would be targeted. Where is the accountability on these massive security lapses?

A recent New York Times report paints a scathing image of India's vintage military equipment and its impact on military readiness. "India's armed forces are in alarming shape. If intense warfare broke out tomorrow, India could supply its troops with only 10 days of ammunition, according to government estimates. And 68 percent of the army's equipment is deplorably old. It is officially considered 'vintage'". A swollen bureaucracy together with lack of funding obviously rendered these procurement and training processes anything but cumbersome.

Nevertheless, India was left with no choice but to retaliate. Pakistan has been aiding and abetting Jaish-e-Mohammed and its leader Masood Azhar for long despite the pressure from the U.N. and other international bodies. The Air Force was tasked to strike the terror targets in Balakot region: an order that was carried out despite bad weather conditions. The Indian Military has been known for its professionalism and respect for civilian leadership in a democratic setup. Air Chief Marshal B.S. Dhanoa refused to give a casualty count saying "IAF doesn't count the number of dead" and the "casualty figure in an air strike on Balakot camp will be given by the government," referring to the air strike it had carried out on February 26, 2019.

However, what we have witnessed following the strike, from the Government and the BJP leaders would not only sully the image of India but also the nation's credibility through overt politicization of this conflict, as the country is preparing itself for a critical election. First, the leaked information from sources to the media put the casualty count at 300 to 350. Western intelligence sources and the International press immediately cast severe doubt on these numbers, and some

What we have witnessed following the strike, from the Government and the BJP leaders would not only sully the image of India but also the nation's credibility through overt politicization of this conflict, as the country is preparing itself for a critical election.

Another shameful spectacle that is unfolding in India today is the blatant display of jingoism by the media and their networks to propel a wider war. Instead of bringing together the nation at a time of crisis, some of these news channels are creating divisions, promoting hate and sowing discord.



reports directly from the ground characterized the damages as minimal.

However, in public speeches, Amit Shah, the President of the ruling party BJP, talked about 250 terrorists being wiped out. Other BJP leaders like BS Yeddyurappa said that his party would win 22 seats in Karnataka after the strike. It is as if BJP leaders are relishing these moments of war and salivating about the prospects of riding to victory in the fog of a protracted fight between the two nations. It boggles one's mind to believe that after the Pulwama attack, the terrorists associated with Jaish-e-Mohammed just gathered together to sleep in one place, making an easy target of themselves for the IAF!

Anyone who questioned the veracity of the BJP leaders' claims is called an anti-national and accused of doing Pakistan's bidding. "At a time when our army is engaged in crushing terrorism, inside the country and outside, some people within the country are trying to break their morale, which is cheering our enemy," Modi said at an election rally. "I want to know from Congress and its partners why they are making statements that are benefiting the enemies", he added. Modi is apparently absent from the capital in managing the conflict. Instead, he is entirely taking advantage of the ongoing battle on his campaign trail, vilifying the opposition and questioning their patriotism for political advantage.

Another shameful spectacle that is unfolding in India today is the blatant display of jingoism by the media and their networks to propel a wider war. Instead of bringing together the nation at a time of crisis, some of these news channels are creating divisions, promoting hate and sowing discord. They broadcast manufactured news; shamelessly appropriate nationalism; and designate a segment as enemy's allies. Many of them have become vassals of special interests mostly controlled by crony capitalists aligned with the ruling party.

It is also sad to hear that there is an atmosphere of fear and intimidation created

for Kashmiri students across the country, as Sangh Parivar forces target them for revenge attacks. "It is no secret that the Bajrang Dal and the student wing of the Sangh were foremost in fomenting trouble against Kashmiri students in various parts of India. This was done keeping in mind the upcoming general election", Omar Abdulla, former Chief Minister of Kashmir said. "It is obvious that BJP sees an advantage in such environments. It helps them paper over Modi's mistakes like demonetization, joblessness, India's poor economic growth and the distress faced by the country's agricultural sector" he added.

We collectively admire the bravery and sacrifice of our armed forces. They are fighting to keep all Indians safe and protect the sovereignty of the nation from terrorists and a country that provides haven to them. Moreover, they are fighting to safeguard our democratic traditions and way of life. As Sashi Kumar, a commentator eloquently put it recently, "they are not fighting for this or that political party; they are not fighting for the electoral gains of the ruling party or of the opposition. However, they are, if anything, fighting the religious fundamentalism of one kind but not to replace it with the rampant religious fundamentalism of another kind, even of the majoritarian variety".

The BJP's strategy appears to be clear and straightforward: playing up Hindu nationalism; linking Kashmiri youth and Jihadi terrorists supported by an enemy, Pakistan; and providing 'red meat' to a large segment of the voting public, who are so disappointed with Modi's failure to deliver his campaign promises. However, this is all at the risk of endangering India's democratic and pluralistic values, and accelerating animosity between two armed nuclear neighbors, which may even put them on a path to potential disaster!

(The author is a former Chief Technology Officer of the United Nations and current Vice-Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, USA)



For Part 2 of Why Punjab cannot make progress, please go to page 10.

# WAKE UP CALL TO INDIA

- WILL INDIA CAPITALIZE ON "USA-INDIA CLOSE ALLY" STATUS?
- WILL INDIA SEIZE THE OFFER OF THE USA TO TRANSFER 100% OF US TECHNOLOGY?
- WHAT LESSONS INDIA LEARNED AFTER THE AIR SKIRMISHES WITH PAKISTAN ON 26th and 27th FEBRUARY?



By Ven Parameswaran

“ Prime Minister Modi must take full advantage of 'CLOSE ALLY' relationship and start doing business with the USA that will benefit both. China opened its economy in 1979 and within 20 years it became the second economic power in the world. India has excellent credit and therefore India can mobilize resources needed for modernizing India and its defense. India must embrace capitalism as China did, and not continue to fool around with socialism.

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At the outset, I must say that this is the first time India received worldwide support since its independence in 1947. During the end of Harry Truman's Presidency, Pakistan aligned with the USA by signing a Mutual Security Agreement. President Trump changed this after his election. He canceled aid to Pakistan and gave ultimatum to Pakistan to get rid of all terrorist organizations, including Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba. These two major Pakistan's homegrown terror organizations with the implied support of Pakistan's military and the I.S.I. (intelligence agency) attacked the Indian Parliament in 2001. In 2008, they tried to seize Mumbai and thru terror tactics killed 165 Indians and foreign nationals. Since then, various governments of Pakistan refused to mete out justice to the assailants, the leaders of Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba. Pakistan's military and the I.S.I. have been ruling Pakistan. The military has installed Prime Minister Imran Khan. The so-called civil government and its parliament are mere window-display.

## PAKISTAN HAS BEEN VIOLATING THE LINE OF CONTROL BETWEEN INDIAN KASHMIR AND PAKISTAN OCCUPIED KASHMIR

Pakistan has been violating the Line of Control systematically resulting in thousands of deaths of Indian soldiers during the past two decades. On 14th February, Pakistan used Jaish-e-Mohammed as its proxy and killed 41 Indian military police. Prime Minister Modi said, "Enough is Enough. India cannot and will not tolerate." And he ordered his military to take action.

## USA-INDIA CLOSEST ALLY STATUS IN PLAY

Before India took military action, India created a favorable political atmosphere in the world that pumped out political support from the sole superpower, the USA. The National Security Adviser, John Bolton and the Secretary of State, Pompei extended vehement support. This was followed immediately by discussion in the U.S. Congress. Several leaders of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives accused Pakistan and offered their overwhelming support to India. There was a general consensus that Pakistan must take action to get rid of all terrorists. The leadership of the USA was followed by the European Union, Australia, Japan, Canada and many countries. The United Nations discussed the matter and asked Pakistan to get rid of Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba. I am explaining to show that India did not act hastily and alone. It even had the implied support of China.

## INDIA NEUTRALIZED CHINESE SUPPORT OF PAKISTAN

It must be pointed out that China chose not to support Pakistan against Indian attacks. Instead, China appealed to both India and Pakistan to use restraint and settle the differences. But China emphasized that Pakistan must get rid of its terrorists. It is also important to note that China refused to intervene or support Pakistan in 1971, when India used force to liberate East Pakistan and created Bangladesh.

This is in spite of the historical fact that India and China had fought in 1962 on territorial differences. Pakistan had banked on Chinese support and was disappointed. Significantly, China did not even mention the territorial violation of Pakistan by India. Equally, Pakistan was furious that the U.N. was silent when India attacked Pakistan's airspace and violated its sovereignty. It is interesting that India's Foreign Minister, Sushma Swaraj timed her strategic meeting in Peking during the crisis, and she told her counterpart: "No military installations were targeted. The limited objective of the preemptive strike was to act decisively against the terrorist infrastructure of Jaish-e-Mohammed in order to pre-empt another terror attack on India. India does not wish to see further escalation of the situation. India will continue to act with responsibility and restraint."

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE AIR SKIRMISHES WITH PAKISTAN

1. **INTELLIGENCE:** On the 26th attack on Balakot, Pakistan, Indian intelligence failed to target the right place for bombing.
2. **TECHNOLOGY:** On the 27th dogfight, the Indian pilot, Abhinandan Varthaman, was downed because his MIG-21 was no match to Pakistan's F-16. Even the latest MIG-35 is no match to F-16. Thus, superior technology matters.
3. **PUBLIC RELATIONS:** Public Relations is also very important. P stands for Performance and R stands for Reporting. Indian bureaucrats failed to report. The media and the public wanted to know when and where F-16 plane was downed and how. The speculation is the Indian pilot before he was downed also inflicted damage to the F-16 forcing its pilot to go down. Also, when India



*Decades of hostility between two neighbors has created rogue elements who are always on the look out to accentuate tensions, leading to conflicts. Will it ever change is anybody's guess.*

failed to identify the target in Balakot, India claimed it had destroyed the Jaish-e-Mohammed's training camp of 300.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION TO CAPITALIZE ON "INDIA-USA CLOSE ALLY" RELATIONSHIP

1. India must take bold steps to make its economy modern and grow its GDP @10% minimum for the next decade. This will create multi millions of jobs badly needed by the unemployed.
2. Liberalize and open the economy. Make it most business friendly and create most favorable environment for foreign investment.
3. Modern warfare is won using sophisticated technologies and superior intelligence. India must be prepared to make dynamic changes in its military preparedness. India must once and for all decide to buy the best and most superior military hardware from the USA. India should be prepared not to depend on Russia. Indian factories that make Russian MIGs are outmoded and should be closed. What is the use of buying cheap or paying in rupees if you cannot win the war?
4. China's defense budget is \$175 billion, India's is \$45 billion. Out of India's budget, \$28 billion is allocated for salaries and pensions, leaving only \$17 billion for military hardware. To protect India's sovereignty and its international standing, India has no choice but to increase its defense budget to \$175 billion.
5. India has ammunitions to last only for 10 days of war. This is precarious and not acceptable.
6. India should immediately allocate \$100 billion to buy sophisticated military hardware, especially, quantity fighter planes to defend against China and Pakistan.

**NEXT STEP:** Prime Minister Modi should make a definite schedule for President Trump to visit India for at least three days. He will be accompanied by a large delegation of Fortune 500 corporations, investment banks etc. During the visit Prime Minister Modi could discuss with President Trump, India's requirements to build its economy and defense. Instead of India negotiating to buy directly from American military hardware manufacturers, President Trump could negotiate as he is good at cutting the price to the bottom. He helped Vietnam finalize purchase of planes from Boeing during the North Korean summit held in Hanoi.

President Trump's grand strategy is to balance against the aggressive and growing Chinese influence in Asia. He is interested in replacing China with India as a source for consumer and industrial goods. However, today India does not have the necessary infrastructure to manufacture on large scale. India must deliver water and energy to all for 24/7. India has a large supply of engineers and managers. India has a comparative advantage with China. India must privatize its public sector corporations and release resources. Lockheed Martin, United Technologies, Boeing, Raytheon and others are ready and willing to manufacture in India. Making weapons in India has a comparative advantage especially with an oversupply of professional engineers and managers.

Prime Minister Modi must take full advantage of 'CLOSE ALLY' relationship and start doing business with the USA that will benefit both. China opened its economy in 1979 and within 20 years it became the second economic power in the world. India has excellent credit and therefore India can mobilize resources needed for modernizing India and its defense. India must embrace capitalism as China did, and not continue to fool around with socialism.

*(Ven Parameswaran, MBA, Columbia University, lives in Scarsdale, N.Y. He is a Senior Adviser to Imagindia Institute, a think tank in New Delhi)*

# Why Punjab cannot make progress



By Harjap Singh Auja

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In America it is mandatory for the state governments to balance their budgets by imposing new taxes or enhancing old taxes, only the federal government can borrow from outside to manage the national economy. If this type of fiscal discipline would have been made a part and parcel of the budgeting process of all Indian states too, Punjab state government would have been a lot more responsible spender. This unbridled expenditure of the past few decades on wasteful populist schemes has multiplied exponentially and that has crippled the state financially.

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**Harjap Singh Auja's special article on Punjab's shameful fall from being the numero uno State of India to a hopelessly wrecked State is being carried in two parts. Readers may please revisit March 8 issue for part two of the story.- EDITOR**

COND FROM LAST ISSUE

Less than two years after his assassination, Punjab was trifurcated. Haryana was created as a new state and the hill areas were merged into Himachal Pradesh. The capital Chandigarh was made a perpetually in dispute, union territory. This division occurred on November 1st, 1966.

After the assembly elections of 1967, the Congress for the first time, lost control of Punjab. Justice Gurnam Singh of the Shiromani Akali Dal, a retired judge of the high court, became the chief minister twice for short durations. A revolt in the party led to the nine-month long stint of Sardar Lachhman Singh Gill as the chief minister. Mr. Gill was another dynamic chief minister. In a short span, he introduced Punjabi language as the sole language of administration within the state. He is also credited with start of two crash programs of linking every village with a metalled road and electrification of all villages. For this virtually impossible goal, he plugged all populist loopholes in the state's expenditure. He was a practical chief minister, whom most of the older generation Punjabis still admire. Ruralelectrification was completed by CM Zail Singh. The economy of the state went downhill in subsequent years, about which I have a story to tell. Nearly four decades ago, I was sitting with a

very rich landlord. He was applying for a huge amount of loan. Realizing that he owned hundreds of acres of land, I suggested to him to rent some of his land to a needy farmer and tighten his belt a little bit and he will do fine. He told me that influential people don't need to repay the loans. What is the fun of obtaining a loan, if it has to be paid back? As long as he was alive no one came after him, but after a few years he died and his next of kin had to pay nearly double the amount. This is the type of politicians, who have been running the state most of the time. In larger Punjab, no geographical enclave was dominant. Leadership could come from any region and who so ever emerged more popular could rule. But since the election of 1967, entire leadership, with the exception of Darbara Singh, has come from one region. Big landlords, with the exception of a few have been ruling Punjab. In their own lives, the big landlords have seen no shortages of resources. Such people have the tendency of becoming irresponsible spend thrifths. They are totally alien to sound economics, which has built great nations. From a well off state, Punjab has become a borrower.

In America it is mandatory for the state governments to balance their budgets by imposing new taxes or enhancing old taxes, only the federal government can borrow from outside to manage the national economy. If this type of fiscal discipline would have been made a part and parcel of the budgeting process of all Indian states too, Punjab state government would have been a lot more responsible spender. This unbridled expenditure of the past few decades on wasteful populist schemes has multiplied exponentially and that has crippled the state financially.

In order to win elections, our state governments have been distributing grants to villages in their own areas without imposing checks and balances of proper accounting. When the British built the canal system in Punjab, in order to defray costs, they imposed "Abiana" on the use of canal water. Our recent governments have abolished canal water charges. One government went to the extent of waiving bills on electricity consumed by tube-wells. This freebee started with less than one thousand crores in its first year, but it has grown to more than ten thousand crores of rupees per year depending on the rainfall received and acreage under rice paddy. The government has recently been taking additional loans to pay interest on previous loans. Grants are distributed liberally by the people in power in their own neck of the woods. Even previously profitable corporations like MARKFED, state roadways and power corporation are under debt. Total debt of Punjab today, according to some estimates, has exceeded 2.5 lakh crore rupees. Prior to 1947, Lahore was the political and educational capital and Amritsar was the industrial and financial capital. The areas around these largest cities flourished like the Chandigarh area is developing now. Amritsar became one of the three leading textile manufacturing centers, after Bombay and Ahmedabad. Nearby Dhariwal became the foremost woolen merchandise manufacturing center. Batala became the hub of foundry and agricultural implements industry. Phagwara developed into a sugar and cotton textile hub. After 1947 also, new industrial centers sprung up in Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Mandi Gobindgarh, Rajpura, Panipat, Sonapat and Faridabad.

In early 1950s, the capital was built in an arid area of Punjab with hundreds of feet deep water. It had no canals and no rivers. It was located within the Punjabi Region of Punjab, but at the border with the Hindi region and in the foothills of what is now Himachal Pradesh. Had Punjab



remained undivided, Chandigarh would have been an ideal place for administration. Now it is in an Eastern corner of Punjab, at the North Western corner of Haryana and in the southern foothills of Himachal Pradesh. Since it became the capital, the fulcrum of all educational and political activities moved quickly to the state capital region. Three Tehsils, favorite of the people in power, forming a part of sprawling Ferozepur district were detached and converted into full fledged districts.

The Doaba region consisting of Hoshiarpur, Nawanshahr, Jalandhar and Kapurthala has been totally abandoned by the successive governments formed after 1970. This area now survives on the financial support of its diaspora. The state governments have neglected it completely. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh had devised a unique system of state and central shares in the development projects of states. In accordance with his scheme, the largest cities like Mumbai and New Delhi will get 30% share from the centre. Punjab's major cities like Ludhiana and Amritsar with population exceeding one million will get 40% central assistance. Below million population cities like Jalandhar would get 50% central share. The villages were offered 90% central share. The NRI dominated villages of Doaba, Amritsar, Ludhiana and Moga could benefit the most from

this scheme, because these districts are full of NRIs who are collectively capable of contributing the state's 10% share of expenditure. The rest would have come from the centre. Our governments miserably failed to utilize this largesse of the central government.

Gurdaspur, Pathankot, Amritsar and Tarntaran districts came to India's share from Lahore division. During its pre-1947 hey days, Amritsar was the biggest wholesale market of entire North Western India. Emperor Ranjit Singh developed Amritsar as a center of woolen and weapons industry. Wool used to come from Kashmir, but was processed in Amritsar by local weavers. The British also developed Dhariwal in Gurdaspur as a manufacturing centre for woolen textiles. The "My fair lady" knitting wool, India's finest tweed, suiting cloth and blazer cloth was manufactured in Dhariwal. India's best blankets were made in Dhariwal. This mill is closed now. No government has cared to revive it or to sell it to private sector. Some parasites are still on the government's roles in there, they do nothing and still get their pay cheques. Batala had India's biggest agricultural implements and foundry industry, all that has vanished for lack of the government's attention. Amritsar's textile industry has also totally collapsed over the past few decades.

This entire area can come alive, if it is brought, among other things, on the main line railway map of India. In 1947, Ferozepur's both major railway lines to Lahore and Amritsar got snapped. There is a small portion, about 15 miles between Patti and Ferozepur; if it is built, it will link Srinagar in Kashmir with Mumbai via Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Dhariwal, Batala, Amritsar, Tarntaran, Patti, Ferozepur, Fazilka, Abohar, Sri Ganganagar, several routes in Rajasthan and via Ahmedabad and Surat. From Mumbai, it can link all metropolitan cities in the South Indian Peninsula. This railway line will cut short the distance between Amritsar and Mumbai by 240 kilometers and between Srinagar and Mumbai by 270 kilometers. This thousand crore line was approved by Dr. Manmohan Singh, but the state has to acquire the land worth less than fifty crores for its new alignment. Our state governments have failed to acquire the land for the past several years. If this line gets built, Industry will again start coming to this area, now a backward border strip. Government is not serious about this railway line. This is not in their favorite area.

Another railway line awaiting the Punjab Government's land acquisition is the Mohali - Rajpura railway line. It will link Chandigarh and Shimla with Mumbai via Patiala, Bathinda, Rajasthan and Ahmedabad and Surat in Gujarat. It will introduce local trains between Patiala and Chandigarh.

Punjab has not been able to wean its farmers away from cultivation of rice paddy. Actually fresh vegetables can fetch more price, if there is a mechanism for their marketing in urban areas. I have seen potatoes selling for rupees 2 a kg. in the field and at rupees 6 in urban areas. Cauliflowers were selling for rupees one per Kg. in the field and at rupees 5 per Kg in the cities. The state, which was one of the most progressive ones in India, needs to appoint a commission of inquiry to identify as to who is primarily responsible for its crippling debt that hinders progress.

Still all is not gloomy under the circumstances. Amritsar's tourism industry is booming, but on its own due to the Golden Temple, Jallianwala Garden, Ram Tirath and the Retreat at Wagha. Mohali is doing fine due to its accounting related IT industry, which finds Chandigarh expensive.

(The author can be reached at [harjapauja@gmail.com](mailto:harjapauja@gmail.com))

CONCLUDED

# Why Canada's Trudeau is under fire over SNC-Lavalin case

**OTTAWA (TIP):** Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on March 7 denied interfering in Canada's judicial system as he sought to defuse a month-long crisis threatening his political future, but offered no apology, asserting only that lessons had been learned.

The crisis has prompted the resignations of former Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould, the Treasury Board president, Jane Philpott, and Trudeau's closest political aide, Gerald Butts. It also raised questions about Trudeau's handling of the affair and polls show his Liberals could lose an election this October.

## What are the allegations against Trudeau

Trudeau has been dogged by allegations that he and his officials improperly leaned on Wilson-Raybould to help construction firm SNC-Lavalin Group Inc avoid a criminal trial. Wilson-Raybould told the House of Commons justice committee last week that officials imposed "consistent and sustained pressure" on her from September to December last year to ensure SNC-Lavalin pay a large fine rather than go to trial.

## What is SNC-Lavalin's involvement?

Montreal-based construction and engineering firm SNC-Lavalin was charged in 2015 by the Public Prosecution Service of Canada with bribing Libyan officials to influence the awarding of contracts between 2001 and 2011.

The company had tried unsuccessfully to avoid trial, arguing instead for a negotiated settlement since it had cleaned shop by changing executives and overhauling its ethics and compliance systems in recent years. The preliminary hearings in the case are ongoing. The company has historically had close ties to the Liberals.

In 2016, SNC-Lavalin admitted that some former executives had illegally arranged donations of more than C\$80,000 to the Liberals from 2004 to 2011.

## Why is SNC-Lavalin critical to Trudeau and liberals?



SNC-Lavalin has about 9,000 employees in Canada, including about 3,400 in the predominantly French-speaking province of Quebec, which also includes Trudeau's parliamentary constituency. The Liberals say they need to pick up enough seats in Quebec in the October election to stand a chance of retaining a majority government.

Officials, citing conversations they said they had with the company, say they feared SNC-Lavalin would cut jobs or move its headquarters out of Quebec if found guilty. The company faces being barred from bidding on Canadian federal procurement contracts for 10 years, if found guilty. "We will not comment on this matter," SNC-Lavalin spokesman Nicolas Ryan said on Thursday when asked if the company had warned Trudeau of possible job losses in case of a guilty verdict.

## Why does crisis threaten Trudeau's political future?

Critics accuse Trudeau of double standards and breaking the promises he made to do politics differently. Trudeau, 47, came to power in November 2015 promising more accountability and a greater number of

women in the Cabinet. He now finds himself accused of trying to help arrange an old-style backroom deal with a major company as his officials leaned on a high-profile woman Cabinet minister. The departure of Philpott, another well-regarded minister and a close friend of Wilson-Raybould, has dented Trudeau's credibility.

No one inside the ruling Liberals has mounted an open challenge to Trudeau, since to do so would take time and open up splits inside the party. The heads of political parties in Canada are elected by party members at formal conventions and cannot be ousted after a snap vote by parliamentarians, as is the case in the UK and Australia. Opinion polls show the controversy is costing the Liberals.

A weekly tracking poll released by Nanos Research on Tuesday put the Conservatives at 35 per cent public support, with the Liberals at 34 per cent. A January 8 poll by the same firm had the Liberals at 39 per cent and the Conservatives at 33 per cent. Each poll was based on a random phone survey of 1,000 Canadians.

## What happens next?

Political analysts say Trudeau is safe for now, since he has made clear he wants to stay on and there are no challengers inside the party. The federal Parliament is not sitting next week, depriving the opposition of the chance to grill Trudeau, and the week after will see the release of the federal budget.

The two main opposition parties - the right-of-center Conservatives and the left-leaning New Democrats are demanding a public inquiry into the affair. But the Liberals oppose the idea, since probes take months to complete and are likely to trigger negative headlines. Wilson-Raybould said she did not consider officials had broken any laws, so a probe by police is unlikely. Canada's independent ethics commissioner is looking into the allegations, but past experience shows such investigations can take months to wrap up and there is no guarantee the results would be released before the vote in October. Reuters

## Investigations continue into murder of Indian Dentist in Sydney



Indian-origin dentist Preethi Reddy's body was found stuffed in a suitcase with multiple stab wounds

**SYDNEY (TIP):** Australian Detectives are continuing to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death of a missing Penrith woman of Indian origin whose body was located in Sydney's south-east overnight, according to New South Wales Police.

Preethi Reddy, aged 32, was reported missing by her family on Sunday (3 March 2019), after she failed to come home from a dental convention at St Leonards.

Police were told she last made contact with her family about 11am on Sunday, saying she planned to head home after having a late breakfast in Sydney.

Initial inquiries revealed she attended a fast food restaurant on George Street near King Street about 2.15am that day and appeared to leave alone, walking toward Market Street.

Officers from Sydney City Police Area Command established Strike Force Carlwood to investigate her disappearance, which included inquiries to locate her vehicle, a grey Volkswagen Golf.

Following an appeal for information to the community, Preethi's vehicle was located parked on Strachan Street, Kingsford, about 9.30pm yesterday (Tuesday 5 March 2019).

During a search of the vehicle, police located Preethi's body in a suitcase. She had been stabbed numerous times.

Further inquiries have established that Preethi attended a hotel on Market Street, Sydney CBD, on Sunday with a man known to her.

Strike Force Carlwood investigators have since been notified that the man died in a head-on collision on the New England Highway, Willow Tree, about 10pm on Monday (4 March 2019).

Detectives from Oxley Police Area Command are investigating the circumstances surrounding the collision, which is believed to be a deliberate act.

Investigations into the circumstances surrounding Preethi's murder are continuing with the assistance of the Homicide Squad.

## 25 killed as truck careens off road in Mexico

**MEXICO CIT (TIP):** A cargo truck without licence plates careened off a road in southern Mexico and turned over, killing at least 25 people inside, state officials said on March 7 night.

Nearly 30 people were reported injured in the accident involving an approximately three-ton Ford Super Duty pick-up truck attached to a cargo container, according to a statement from the Chiapas attorney general's office.

The crash happened around dusk on a highway about 25 miles (41 km) northeast of Tuxtla-Gutierrez, the capital of southern Chiapas state which borders Guatemala.

Officials did not give a breakdown of the victims' nationalities but said they were Central Americans. Chiapas is a major transit point for migrants, especially from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, as many trek through Mexico on their way to the US border.

Media reported that investigators are considering the possibility that the driver of the truck lost control due to a mechanical failure, citing other state authorities. Reuters

## N Korea airs documentary glorifying Kim's summit with Trump

**SEOUL (TIP):** North Korea's state TV has aired a documentary glorifying leader Kim Jong Un's recent visit to Vietnam that omitted the failed nuclear negotiations with President Donald Trump.

The documentary broadcast on Wednesday shows a smiling Kim talking with Trump while walking together inside a Hanoi hotel last week.

It also shows Kim's black limousine passing through a Hanoi street lined with residents waving flags.

The documentary cited Kim as saying North Korea and the US must put an end to their decades-long animosity and confrontation.

But it didn't mention about the lack of an agreement following the Kim-Trump summit.

The footage was released amid reports that North Korea is restoring some facilities at its long-range rocket launch site that it dismantled last year as part of disarmament steps. — AP

## President Bolsonaro shocks with Brazil 'golden shower' tweet

**RIO DE JANEIRO (TIP):** Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro has sparked shock and outrage by tweeting a video showing one man urinating on another during his country's massive annual street carnival.

"What is a golden shower?" Bolsonaro tweeted on Wednesday, a day after posting the video in which a barely dressed party-goer writhes atop a bus shelter, plays with his behind, and then bends over before another man urinates on his head.

"I do not feel comfortable showing this, but ... this is what many of the street parties in Brazil's carnival have turned into," Bolsonaro tweeted about the video, which local media said was filmed at a Sao Paulo street party, or bloco.

A former army captain, Bolsonaro was elected in 2018 as the head of a right-wing government after years of stirring controversy with homophobic, misogynistic and racist comments. It remains to be seen whether he will face consequences over the posts. Leftist lawmaker Paulo Teixeira said on Twitter he would ask prosecutors to investigate whether Bolsonaro had broken privacy laws. (Reuters)



## KANGANA GIFTS HERSELF 10 DAYS OF SILENCE AHEAD OF HER BIRTHDAY

**K**angana Ranaut, who is riding high on the success of her directorial debut *Manikarnika The Queen of Jhansi*, has decided to celebrate her birthday with 10 days of silence. Reports claim that she will head to Coimbatore for a 10-day wellness camp where she will meditate and perform yoga in complete silence, just ahead of her birthday on March 23.

After the camp, she will head to her home in Manali, where she will usher in her birthday with her family. Last year also, Kangana had celebrated the day at her home in the hills and had planted 31 trees.

A Mumbai Mirror report quoted Kangana as saying, "I have been practising yoga since I was around 16-17. The programme I am about to attend is an advanced one. I had been meaning to do this for a while now. This year, it happened to all close to my birthday. Ten days of silence is a big commitment, but I wanted it to be a birthday present for myself."

She added that while staying away from the phone for 10 days and meditating for 10-15 hours a day is not going to be a cakewalk, the course requires six months of practice for the yoga postures and she is ready to take it up.

# SHRADDHA KAPOOR CUTS 4 CAKES ON HER BIRTHDAY, THANKS FANS FOR LOVE

**O**ne of the busiest actresses in the business currently, Shraddha Kapoor received a bounty of love and wishes on her birthday. Overwhelmed by the opulence, the actress expressed her gratitude on social media.

The much-loved actress was greeted with wishes from not just friends and family but the teams of her various films as well. However, the actress was most exhilarated by the tremendous showering of love by her fans. Showcasing her gratitude for excessive amount of love, Shraddha Kapoor took to social media to thank her fans and promised to interact with them via a live session soon.

The actress wrote on her Insta stories, "Its been 2 days since my birthday and finally, I was able to see the videos, read messages, and catch up on all your wishes and love. Words aren't enough to thank you all for your unconditional love and support. I'm so overwhelmed with all your love pouring in on my birthday. Will be trying to come on live here and chat with all of you soon. it's been such a long time and I really want to make it happen! Love you all too much!! Thank you".

Ring in her birthday in a flight after wrapping a schedule of *Street Dancer* in London, Shraddha Kapoor had a dreamy birthday celebration mid-air. Earlier, the team of the dance film cut a cake on sets marking her birthday. The actress was treated with another surprise as her fans greeted her with a cake at the airport. Heading directly to the shoot, Shraddha cut her next cake on the sets of *Chhichhore*.

On her way back home, the actress was showered with wishes beneath her building as she cut another cake on her birthday.



The team of her upcoming film *Saaho* also presented the actress with a birthday gift by unveiling the chapter two of *Shades of Saaho*, introducing insights into her character. In regard to the tremendous love, Shraddha Kapoor shared her heartfelt love for her fans and well-wishers.

Hopping from one set to another, Shraddha Kapoor had a working birthday as she shot for *Street Dancer* in London and *Chhichhore* in Mumbai. With a deep neck schedule, the actress will be seen in *Saaho*, *Chhichhore*, *Street Dancer*, and the recently announced *Baaghi 3*.

## Taapsee Pannu feels she doesn't qualify to be on Koffee With Karan



**A** recent tweet by actor Taapsee Pannu might contain a veiled dig at filmmaker Karan Johar, according to several Twitter users. Responding to a joke made by comedian Vir Das on the latest episode of *Koffee with Karan*, Taapsee might have hinted at the ongoing debate about nepotism in the industry.

In the episode, Vir joked that the set of the talk show was so pink that Taapsee Pannu might want to star in it. Taapsee, who starred in the courtroom drama *Pink*, along with Amitabh Bachchan, replied, "Hahahahaha nice one. Just that Taapsee still doesn't qualify to be there. I am looking forward to seeing this episode. All you guys are hilarious."

Taapsee's comment that she doesn't 'qualify' to be a guest on the show prompted several people on Twitter to wonder if it was a dig at Karan's 'clique' of industry

friends.

"Makers aren't secure enough to have a feisty, extremely talented female outsider, who speaks her mind, to be on their show," one person commented. "Love the subtle dig at @karanjohar," wrote another. "Girl do not join that gang..u r much better than this show," read a comment, while another person wrote, "Sorry That ur not a baby of a baby of an A lister star. You won't qualify."

Kangana had previously accused Karan of being the 'flagbearer of nepotism' in an appearance on the show. Her comments sparked off a controversy about nepotism in the industry. Karan is known for launching actors such as Janhvi Kapoor (daughter of Sridevi), Ananya Pandey (daughter of Chunky Pandey) and has launched Alia Bhatt, Varun Dhawan and Sidharth Malhotra in the past.



## Actress Amanda Bynes has entered a rehab facility following a relapse

Actress Amanda Bynes has entered a rehab facility following a relapse. According to reports, the 'Living Proof' actress is seeking treatment for drug addiction and mental health issues.

Bynes has been struggling since the end of last year, when she stepped back into the public eye and began pursuing work in Hollywood again, said sources.

Last year, Bynes opened up about her previous mental struggles when she spoke about how her use of drugs created multiple problems in her life. "I was high on marijuana when I saw that but for some reason, it really started to affect me. I don't know if it was a drug-induced psychosis or what, but it affected my brain in a different way than it affects other people. It absolutely changed my perception of things."

# JOE JONAS TO TIE THE KNOT WITH SOPHIE TURNER SOON

Even though it feels like we're still living in the never-ending wedding season of Nick Jonas and Priyanka Chopra, Joe Jonas and Sophie Turner are getting ready to shift the spotlight. The engaged couple has a wedding date set, and the Game of Thrones star's fiancé is finally ready to talk about it.

While stopping by The Late Late Show, the middle Jonas brother revealed when he and Turner will be saying "I do." Unlike his brothers, Jonas will be getting married over the summer, as in this summer. "We're getting married this year," he told James Corden. "We're going to have a summer wedding. I'm looking forward to it. It's going to be a lot of fun."

Jonas revealed other details about his upcoming wedding to Turner, which he says will be a blend of both of their backgrounds. Unlike Nick Jonas and Chopra's wedding, which managed to bring the couple's different cultures together in more than one ceremony and party, Jonas and Turner will be doing that in events leading up to their big day. Apparently, that will involve sports from both England and America. "You know, her family's all from England—I figured I'm marrying well," he said. "I thought for the first time I'd be marrying into a family where I'd become a



soccer fan, like, a football fan, like, find my allegiance for a team. So her whole family doesn't like football; they like rugby. So now I have to figure that out. We're going to have

a flag rugby game at the wedding and a flag football game. So if all the groomsmen show up with black eyes and broken arms, I'll be very proud."

## Brie Larson on training for Captain Marvel: Certain men felt threatened



Fans will get to experience a whole new world with 'Captain Marvel' releasing on March 8, Friday, and fans obviously cannot hold back the excitement. 'Captain Marvel' will see Academy Award winning-actress Brie Larson step into superhero shoes as this is Marvel's first stand-alone female superhero film. In a recent interview, Brie Larson opened up about playing 'Captain Marvel' and said that it was more important for her to feature in the movie than sporting a superhero costume and 'playing strong'.

The film will see Brie Larson playing the role of US Airforce pilot Carol Danvers, who transitions into one of the universe's most powerful heroes. The actress

underwent rigorous strength training routine in preparation for the role. She even did actual flight training which was quite intense. Brie also had to confront many gender norms while training to get into the role, revealed.

She said, "Certain men did not want to make a safe space for me because they felt threatened by the fact that I could lift more. I got tonnes of 'odd comments' at a time. There was one guy looking at me and was like 'Wow, I can't even lift that'. And I was like 'Ok, I'm taller than you.' I don't understand," Larson said in a group interview. The actor added that the society still needs to do a lot of rethink on gender stereotypes.



## JOHNNY DEPP SLAPS USD 50 MILLION DEFAMATION SUIT AGAINST EX-WIFE

Actor Johnny Depp has sued actress and former wife Amber Heard for defamation, seeking \$50 million. Depp's lawyers filed the defamation suit against Heard on Friday over her December 18, 2018 op-ed in The Washington Post in which she characterised herself as a domestic abuse victim, reports people.com.

Depp's lawsuit calls Heard's allegations of domestic violence against him a "hoax". Heard "purported to write from the perspective of 'a public figure representing domestic abuse' and claimed that she 'felt the full force of our culture's wrath for women who speak out' when she 'spoke up against sexual violence'," Depp's lawyers state in the lawsuit.

"The op-ed depended on the central premise that Heard was a domestic abuse victim and

that Depp perpetrated domestic violence against her. "Depp never abused Heard. Her allegations against him were false when they were made in 2016. They were part of an elaborate hoax to generate positive publicity for Heard and advance her career," Depp's lawyers say in the lawsuit.

In response, Heard's representative said: "This frivolous action is just the latest of Johnny Depp's repeated efforts to silence Amber Heard. She will not be silenced. Depp's actions prove he is unable to accept the truth of his ongoing abusive behaviour."

"But while he appears hell-bent on achieving self destruction, we will prevail in defeating this groundless lawsuit and ending the continued vile harassment of my client by Depp and his legal team."

## Quad grouping may be shelved for now

**SINGAPORE (TIP):** A US military commander suggested on March 7 that a loose security grouping of his country, Japan, Australia and India, also known as the quad, may be shelved for now. Admiral Phil Davidson, who heads the US Indo-Pacific Command, said he was on a panel with the other navy chiefs at the Raisina Dialogue, a multilateral conference in New Delhi in January.

Davidson said the issue came up "several times" but Indian navy chief Admiral Sunil Lanba "made it quite clear that there wasn't an immediate potential for a quad."

"That does not omit or prevent our ability to cooperate in crisis and conflict. And we continue collectively, all of us, to seek opportunities in which we might exercise and work together moving forward," he added.

Davidson was asked if the quad was relevant to his country's vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region, which was the central theme of his lecture in Singapore.

The US and the other three countries had come together to provide humanitarian assistance after the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe then suggested they form the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, which met three years later. PTI

## Pak seals JuD headquarters; detains more than 120 suspected militants

**LAHORE (TIP):** Pakistan authorities on March 7 sealed the Lahore headquarters of Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed-led Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and its charity wing Falah-i-Insaniyat Foundation (FIF) and detained over 120 suspected militants as part of an ongoing crackdown on banned groups.

"Under the National Action Plan (NAP), the government has taken complete control of the banned JuD and FIF headquarters in Lahore and Muridkey," said a statement issued by the Punjab Home Department on Thursday.

It said the government has been taking over the control of the mosques, seminaries and other institutions of the banned organisations in the province.

"We have intensified action against the banned organisations," it said.

A senior Punjab government official told PTI that the authorities have sealed the Jamia Masjid Qadsia, the Lahore headquarters of the JuD and FIF.

"At least six administrators of the Punjab government have been appointed at the Muridke headquarters of JuD and two in Lahore," the official said, adding that the Jamia Qadsia has been sealed and will be opened once the administrators take over the charge.

The official said the Punjab government has also taken over the complete control of the JuD headquarters in Muridke, some 40 km from Lahore. However, the home department did not confirm it. The official further said that Saeed and his supporters did not protest when the administration and police reached there to take over the control of the building. "Saeed along with his supporters left for his Jauhar Town residence," he said. His whereabouts was not immediately known. Saeed was listed under UN Security Council Resolution 1267 in December 2008. (PTI)

# Pak's Punjab minister sacked over his anti-Hindu remarks

**LAHORE (TIP):** Pakistan's Punjab province government on March 5 sacked its Information and Culture Minister Fayyazul Hassan Chohan over his anti-Hindu remarks that invited intense criticism from senior party leaders and the minority community.

Prime Minister Imran Khan took serious notice of Chohan's 'anti-Hindu' remarks and directed Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar to remove him forthwith, party sources said.

"PTI Punjab government has removed Fayyaz Chohan from the post of Punjab Information Minister following derogatory remarks about the Hindu community," official twitter account of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf tweeted.

It further said: "Bashing someone's faith should not be a part of any narrative. Tolerance is the first & foremost pillar on which #Pakistan was built."

A spokesman for Punjab chief minister said Chohan submitted his resignation to the chief minister which was immediately accepted.

According to a senior government official, the chief minister had "forgiven" Chohan after he publicly apologised for his remarks, but the prime minister directed Buzdar to immediately remove him from the ministry.

Chohan had come under severe criticism from senior members of his party, ministers and social media users with #SackFayyazChohan trending on Twitter for his controversial remarks while addressing a gathering on February 24 in the aftermath of the Pulwama terror attack.

Earlier in the day, Chohan apologised for



his remarks following intense criticism.

"I was addressing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indian armed forces and their media not the Hindu community in Pakistan," he said.

"I apologise if my remarks hurt the Hindu community in Pakistan," Chohan said. "My remarks were in no way directed at Pakistan's Hindu community."

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government "will not tolerate this nonsense", party leader Naeemul Haque, who is special assistant to Prime Minister on Political Affairs, said Monday night in response to Chohan's remarks.

"The derogatory and insulting remarks against the Hindu community by Fayyaz Chohan the Punjab Info Minister demand strict action. PTI govt will not tolerate this nonsense from a senior member of the govt or

from anyone. Action will be taken after consulting the Chief Minister," Haque tweeted.

Haque's tweet was followed by condemnation from Shireen Mazari and Asad Umar, the federal ministers of human rights and finance, respectively.

"Absolutely condemn this. No one has the right to attack anyone else's religion. Our Hindu citizens have given sacrifices for their country," Mazari tweeted. "Our PM's msg is always of tolerance & respect & we cannot condone any form of bigotry or spread of religious hatred," she added.

Financer Minister Umar tweeted, "Hindus of Pakistan are as much a part of the fabric of the nation as I am. Remember the flag of Pakistan is not just green...its not complete without the white which represents the minorities."

Foreign Office spokesperson Mohammad Faisal also took to Twitter and said, "Pakistan proudly owns the white in the flag as much as the green, values contributions of the Hindu community and honours them as our own." Several members of the Hindu community in Pakistan also took to Twitter to condemn the minister's remarks.

Hindus form the biggest minority community in Pakistan.

According to official estimates, 75 lakh Hindus live in Pakistan. However, according to the community, over 90 lakh Hindus are living in the country.

Majority of Pakistan's Hindu population is settled in Sindh province where they share culture, traditions and language with their Muslim fellows. — PTI

## Nepalese lawmaker sentenced to life imprisonment in lynching case

**KATHMANDU (TIP):** A Nepalese parliamentarian was sentenced to life imprisonment by a district court on March 6 for his involvement in a gruesome incident in which eight police personnel and a toddler were lynched in 2015.

After a week-long hearing, Judge Parshuram Bhattarai sentenced Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal (RJP-N) lawmaker Resham Chaudhary and 10 other co-conspirators to life imprisonment.

The Kailali District Court also sentenced 15 persons to three-year jail term for their involvement in the Tikapur lynching case. Three people were acquitted.

Eight police personnel, including an officer, and a toddler were lynched on August 24, 2015, during a clash that erupted after key Madhesi parties protested against the promulgation of the Nepal's Constitution.

Chaudhary, who was absconding following the Tikapur incident, however, went on to contest and win the 2017 general election from Kailali constituency on RJP-Nepal ticket.

Upon Election Commission's refusal to grant him his winning certificate, he surrendered before the Kailali District Court on February 26, 2018. He was sworn in as House of Representatives (HoR) member on January 3 even as the case was sub judice.

Chaudhary remained in judicial custody and was not allowed to attend the House meeting even after being sworn in. Later he was housed in Dillibazar jail. — PTI

## Nepal to use Chinese gauge for its railway

**KATHMANDU (TIP):** Nepal has chosen a railway-track gauge used by China for its network and not the main one India uses citing lower costs, a minister said on Tuesday, a setback for India as it tries to limit Chinese involvement in the Himalayan country. Last year, India proposed laying a broad-gauge rail link from its border town of Raxaul to Kathmandu, spurred by China's plans to extend its standard gauge line from Tibet to the city. Reuters

## No clearance, cops foil Arundhati's Bangladesh event

**DHAKA (TIP):** The Bangladeshi authorities on March 5 barred Indian writer-activist Arundhati Roy for a second time from holding a discussion to be hosted by a government critic as the police withdrew the permission for the venue. The organisers of the talk title 'Utmost Everything' were informed at 10 pm on Monday that the permission for the author's talk at the Krishibid Institute Auditorium, one of the venues of the photography exhibition Chobi Mela, was cancelled due to "unavoidable circumstances". No further details were provided, the Chobi Mela Secretariat said. The venue for the talk, scheduled for Tuesday evening, was later shifted to Midas Centre in the Bangladesh capital, it said. The invited guests were asked to join the function at 5.30 pm but as they started arriving the venue, MIDAS staff informed them the programme was cancelled.

"MIDAS authorities just told us they could not allow us to stage the event due to lack of police clearance," said Shahidul Alam, an anti-government activist. Roy's session was to be moderated by Alam, a photojournalist and festival director. (PTI)

## Blast kills 17 near Jalalabad airport

**KABUL (TIP):** Militants in Afghanistan set off a suicide blast on Wednesday morning and stormed a construction company near the airport in Jalalabad, the capital of eastern Nangarhar province, killing at least 17 persons, officials said.

The dawn assault triggered an hours-long gunbattle with local guards, drawing in US forces to assist the Afghan troops in the shootout.

Among those killed were 16 employees of the Afghan construction company EBE and a military intelligence officer, said Attahullah Khogyani, the provincial governor's spokesman. He added that nine other persons were wounded in the attack, which lasted more than five hours. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but both the Taliban and the Islamic State group are active in eastern Afghanistan, especially in Nangarhar.

The two groups have been carrying out near-daily attacks across Afghanistan in recent years, mainly targeting the government and Afghan security forces. The attacks have continued despite stepped-up US efforts to find a negotiated resolution of the 17-year war, America's longest.

As the attack unfolded, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani arrived for a visit to neighbouring Kunar province to inaugurate an administrative health complex and to lay the cornerstone of a 200-bed hospital. — AP

# KAUSANI: SWITZERLAND OF INDIA

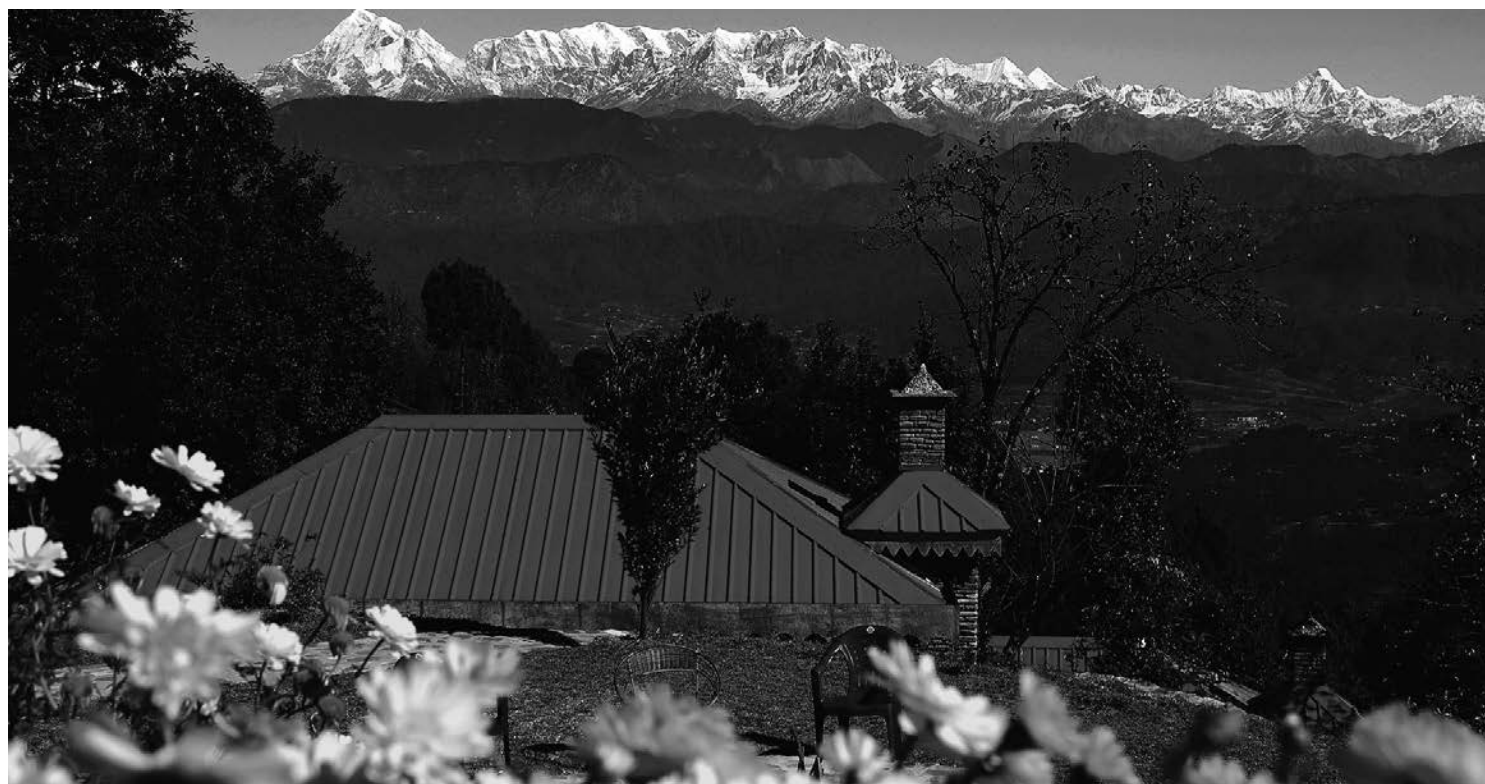
**K**ausani is a small Hill town in the Bageshwar District of the northern Indian state of Uttarkhand. The views from the Town is so beautiful, that once Mahatama Gandhi called the place "Switzerland of India" during his brief stay at the Town. The town is very peaceful and one can enjoy the beautiful view of the Himalayas from almost any part of the Town. The lower part of the town has the local market and the upper part of the Town, where the Gandhi Ashram is situated is the place where most of the better Hotels are situated. The temperature is pleasant in the summer months and extremely cold in the winter seasons. One can do trekking in the various surroundings around Kausani. The panoramic view of the Nanda Devi Biosphere from a distance of 300 kms away is simply breathtaking. Life is very slow in this small Hill Town and as a tourist it is advisable to stay within your Hotels after dark, because there is not much of night life. The weather is very unpredictable and carrying an umbrella is a must. The main activities of the villagers is Cultivation and Tourism holds a special place in the entire town's economy. The locals are very polite and helpful. An Indian Military Base is also situated in the uptown Kausani and the area is restricted to outsiders.

There are several ways to reach Kausani, One can go directly by road from Delhi to Kausani. If travelling by Train, you will have to get off at Kathgodam Station and hire a Tourist Taxi to take you to Kausani. Kathgodam station is connected to major cities of India. It takes around 5 hours by car from Kathgodam to Kausani along the beautiful roads and scenery of Uttarkhand. You can stop by at Almora enroute to Kausani. This is the best place to have some refreshments and head for Kausani. Raniket Express from Old Delhi station reaches Kathgodam at 6.30 a.m and you can reach Kausani by 12.00. The road condition is pretty good, but it is advisable to avoid the monsoon season.

Gandhi Ashram is the most sought after place by the tourists. This is the place where Mahatma Gandhi stayed briefly and written the 'Anashakti Yog'. The Ashram is situated on the upper part of the Town. Inside the Ashram, (Photography not allowed) consists of various pictures of the great leader in different phases of his life. The view of the Himalayas can be viewed from this Ashram also is quite splendid.

Bajjnath Temple, situated around 20 kms north from Kausani Town and is a series of small / big temples dedicated to Lord Shiva. Feeding the fishes just beside the temple is considered a ritual after offering your pujas.

If you have time in hand, half a day may be reserved for Rudradhari. It is 20 kms away from Kausani, and a unique experience of 1 Km trekking through the mountains and beautiful scenery to reach the century old Lord Shiva temple. The trekking is not that tough, but Senior Citizens should avoid going there. Guides are available (even though not required) but one can take their help if kids are accompanying you. One can enjoy the pure air and small springs all around, not to mention the beautiful small/big trees of different nature. If you are lucky, you can meet the Baba/priest and spend some time with him talking about Religion. He might also give you puffed rice as Prasad.



One can enjoy the majestic view of the Nanda Devi Biosphere spanning more than 300 kms away. Almost all Hotels are facing the Nanda Devi Range and one can just sit back and enjoy the panoramic view by sipping Coffee/Tea. There are various open restaurants, facing the Nanda Devi Range, and the best way to spend the evening is enjoy the view by having specially made Tea. Some of the famous peaks are Trishul, Nanda Devi etc. Just like any other small Indian Hill town, there is not much night life, but a camp fire can be arranged by the Hotel Staffs if requested.

Some of the places of interest are Gandhi Ashram, Shawl Factory - where one can witness how the famous Kausani Shawls are made and manufactured by using age old techniques. Just above the factory, a shop is also situated and those willing to buy shawls can do so. Kausani is also famous for Tea, and one can visit the Girihas Tea factory.



# STRONG SEXUAL DESIRES COMMON AMONG WOMEN TOO

What we think is abnormal sexual behaviour or impulse characterised by intense sexual fantasies and urges that keep coming back is actually fairly common among people, including women, reveals new research.

The findings showed that a number of legal sexual interests and behaviours considered anomalous are actually common in the general population.

In general, it is true that men are more interested in paraphilic behaviours than women. However, this doesn't mean that women don't have these interests at all. In fact, women who report an interest in sexual submission have more varied sexual interests and report greater satisfaction with their sex lives. Sexual submission is, therefore, not an abnormal interest.

Sexual interests fall into two categories: normal (normophilic) and anomalous (paraphilic).

Paraphilia is a condition in which a person's sexual arousal and gratification depend on fantasising about and engaging in sexual behaviour or objects as stimuli for sexual excitement.

Based on the phone and online survey, the researchers found that overall, nearly half (45.6 percent) of the sample subjects were interested in at least one type of sexual behaviour that is considered anomalous, whereas one third (33 percent) had experienced the behaviour at least once. These facts suggest that we need to know what normal sexual practices are before we label a legal sexual interest as anomalous. Some paraphilic interests are more common than people might think, not only in terms of fantasies but also in terms of desire and behaviour.

The main goal of the study was to determine normal sexual desires and experiences in a representative sample



of the general population.

The researchers also found a statistically significant relationship between an interest in sexual submission and an interest in other sexual activities, suggesting that the desire to engage in masochism is significantly associated with more diverse sexual interests.

Overall, the researcher stressed that a distinction must be made between paraphilic sexual behaviour, paraphilias and paraphilic disorders.

A paraphilic disorder refers to sexual acts that involve non-consenting partners or that cause suffering or confusion in the person who engages in the behaviour.

The paraphilia may be absolutely necessary in order for the person to achieve sexual satisfaction. A paraphilia is not a mental disorder but rather a sexual preference for non-normophilic behaviour, whereas paraphilic behaviour is non-preferential and only engaged in from time to time.

## Love hormone can make people sensitive towards spouse

Giving prescribed doses of "love hormone" oxytocin to men suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can instill empathy and compassion in them toward women, reveals a study.

The researchers hope that in the future, oxytocin may be used as a treatment option in couple therapy as it may increase positive communication behaviours among partners, particularly among those where the husband suffers from PTSD.

The study found that a single intranasal dose of oxytocin enhances compassion -- both in patients with PTSD and in healthy participants - but only toward women while it does not affect compassion toward men.

"This provides new evidence that oxytocin may be able to improve the social behaviour of these patients," said professor Simone Shamay-Tsoory from University of Haifa in Israel in a statement.

Professor Shamay-Tsoory and colleagues from Rambam Medical Center examined whether patients with PTSD suffer from deficits in compassion.

In addition, the researchers investigated whether intranasal oxytocin - a hormone that's known to modulate social behaviours - may enhance compassion in these patients.

The study included 32 patients with post-traumatic stress disorder and 30 healthy subjects with no history of psychiatric disorders.

All participants were randomly assigned to groups for the



administration of either oxytocin or placebo.

The results showed that patients with PTSD showed less compassion for other and were less talkative compared to healthy control participants.

### FOOD CORNER



## Gujiya

### Ingredients

Refined flour - 4 cup, Ghee - 1/2 cup, Cold Water to mix  
For the Filling  
Khoya - 200gms, Sugar - 1 cup, Green Cardamom - 1 tsp, powdered, Almonds - 1 tsp, finely chopped, Ghee for deep frying

### Method

- To make the dough, mix ghee and flour in a bowl.
- Add water and knead well to a stiff dough.
- Keep aside for 60 minutes.
- Saute the khoya till slightly fried and keep aside to cool.
- Add sugar, cardamom and almonds to the cooled khoya and mix well.
- Make balls of the dough and roll them into thick rounds.
- Place a tsp of the filling and fold. Seal the edges with wet fingers.
- Heat ghee in a pan over medium flame.
- Fry the gujyas till golden brown on all sides.
- Remove and serve.



## Thandai

### Ingredients

- Sugar - 3/4 cup, Full Cream Milk - 1/2 cup, Almonds - 2tsp, Poppy Seeds - 1/4 tbsps, Saunf - 1/4 tbsps, Pistachios - 1 tsp, Watermelon Seeds - 1/2 tbsps, dried, Cardamom Powder - 1/4 tsp, White Peppercorns - 1/2 tsp, Fresh or Dried Rose Petals - 2 tbsps, Saffron Strands - few

### Method

- Soak the almonds, poppy seeds, saunf, melon seeds and pistachios in water for a 30 minutes.
- Grind to a fine paste and keep aside.
- Boil the milk over medium flame.
- Add the saffron strands and mix well.
- Add the sugar and stir until fully melted.
- Grind the rose petals and peppercorns to a fine powder.
- Add to the milk along with cardamom powder.
- Mix well and simmer for 2 to 3 minutes.
- Add the ground paste and mix well.
- Remove and chill for at least 2 to 3 hours.
- Just before serving, garnish with chopped almonds and pistachios.
- Serve chilled.



Your metabolism determines your health status. It's the capability of body to break down molecules to produce energy. Many of us ignore our metabolism but it is very important to take care of it. Metabolism is the complex biochemical process that occurs inside the body, in which the calories are burnt through various chemical reactions and then energy is released. People think that eating less or cutting fats from the diet will help in reducing weight but on the contrary eating in small gaps and having the right amount of fat is very important. Not eating anything for longer periods will slow down your metabolism to conserve energy. Eating frequently reduces craving to eat more. It's time to check your system.

#### Irregular meal timing

Irregular meal timings confuse your body as it becomes tough to decipher when will be your next meal. Also in the long run it may increase the risk of cancer. It's important to have small and frequent meals with nearly similar timings everyday to keep metabolic rate high. People who work in shifts and with shifts varying frequently have a slow metabolism generally and Researches suggest that eating at the same times every day trains the body to burn more calories between meals.

#### Eating higher glycemic index foods

GI is the new way of analyzing food. It measures the Impact of each food on the blood sugar. Eating high glycemic index foods causes problems to the metabolism. Eat low glycemic index foods like whole wheat, whole grains, green vegetables, beans, whole fruits, poultry, lean meat, fish as they help in raising the metabolism rather than high glycemic index foods like fruit juices, refined flour, starchy foods like potatoes and sweets. She also adds that the body needs to work harder on digesting low GI food, and therefore it will burn more calories.

#### Eating less protein

Eating right amount of protein is very important. Including less protein in your diet will slow down your metabolism. Proteins increase lean body mass which in turn increases your metabolic rate.

## WHAT SLOWS DOWN YOUR METABOLISM



#### Lack of physical activity

Daily workout helps in speedy digestion. Any kind of physical activity is very important for our metabolism. Many people go for a walk after meals or also do Vajrasana for healthy digestion. Regularity in whichever physical activity you do is essential to keep your metabolic rate right. Lack of exercise reduces muscle mass and makes you put on fat which in turn reduces BMR. One hour walk can be split into 30-30 minute's brisk walk twice daily to improve metabolism. Sitting for long, even for more than 20 minutes, reduces metabolism.

#### Taking too much stress

Stress not only slows the metabolism but also causes a lot of other health problems. Some amount of stress is normal, but when there is stress for prolonged period of time, it does slow down the metabolism, due to which, digestion gets affected, efficiency to work slows down. Body produces more insulin and a stress hormone 'cortisol.' Both of these accelerate the fat storage and therefore weight gain.

#### Not getting enough sleep

Eight hours of sleep every day is an essential part of a healthy living.

Appropriate sleep is the top most priority. Erratic sleep pattern and lack of sound sleep makes your body sluggish due to reduction in resting metabolic rate. Sleep deprivation actually reduces the amount of energy your body uses at rest.

#### Not having enough fluids in the diet

Having food with high amount of fluids increases the metabolic rate of body. Having less fluid in diet slows the BMR. She says proper water intake and intake of fresh foods like salads or a fruit spread throughout the day helps. Water is essential for proper cell functioning hence lack of it reduces the metabolic rate.

#### Taking fewer meals

You should not starve for longer periods that slow down the metabolism. Eat 5-6 small meals a day. As I have mentioned, digestion requires energy and different amount of energy is required for digestion of different macronutrients. Eating three times a day does slow down the metabolism between each meal because the gaps are longer. On the other hand, eating after every 3 hours keeps your metabolism elevated.



## Anxiety leads to bad decisions, says study

Researchers have discovered why it is important to stay calm before taking any big decision in life. Anxiety disrupts brain activity that supports decision-making, says a study.

Anxiety disengages a region of the brain called the prefrontal cortex (PFC), which is critical for flexible decision making, the findings showed.

By monitoring the activity of neurons in the PFC while anxious rats had to make decisions about how to get a reward, the scientists made two observations.

First, anxiety leads to bad decisions when there are conflicting distractors present. Second, bad decisions under anxiety involve numbing of PFC neurons.

The data indicates that anxiety has an exquisitely selective effect on neuronal activity that supports decision making, said lead author of the study Bitu Moghaddam, professor at University of Pittsburgh in the US.

The researchers monitored the activity of a large number of neurons as rats made decisions about which choice was most optimal for receiving a reward.

They compared behavior and neuronal activity in two groups: one group that had a placebo injection and another that got a low dose of an anxiety-inducing drug.

As with many people who suffer from anxiety but go through day-to-day life and make decisions, the anxious rats completed the decision-making task and, actually, did not do too badly. But they made far more mistakes when the correct choice involved ignoring distracting information.

"A brain locus of vulnerability for these anxiety-induced mistakes was a group of cells in the PFC that specifically coded for choice. Anxiety weakened the coding power of these neurons," Moghaddam noted.

This better understanding of the brain mechanics behind anxiety and decision making could lead to better treatment of anxiety in people and, subsequently, better outcomes in the treatment of psychiatric disorders, she said.

## Women experience more neck pain than men

Shedding new light on how differently men and women experience pain, researchers, including one of Indian-origin, have found that women are 1.38 times more likely than men to report neck pain due to cervical degenerative disc disease.

Cervical degenerative disc disease is a common cause of neck pain. Symptoms include stiff or inflexible neck, burning, tingling and numbness. Pain is most prevalent when the patient is upright or moving the head.

The study by Meda Raghavendra and Joseph Holtman from Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine included 3,337 patients who were treated at Loyola's Pain Management Centre.

The findings were presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Pain Medicine in Palm Springs, California, US.

The study adds to the growing body of research on the differences in which men and women experience pain.

Previous studies have found that females are more likely to be treated at pain clinics for chronic pain and that certain painful conditions, such as migraine headaches and fibromyalgia, are more common in women.



Various explanations have been proposed, including hormonal differences and the belief that men may be less willing to report pain.

Raghavendra and Holtman also conducted a similar study of patients who were treated at Loyola's Pain Management Centre for lumbosacral degenerative disc disease or lower back pain. The prevalence in females was slightly higher than the prevalence in males, but this difference was not statistically significant, the researchers said.

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## FACEBOOK TO BECOME 'PRIVACY-FOCUSED' LIKE WHATSAPP: ZUCKERBERG

Mired in several data breaches amid growing government hearings, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg on Thursday said he is working to make his social networking platform "privacy-focused" like WhatsApp.

Admitting that people want private, encrypted services, he said Facebook will become like the mobile messaging platform WhatsApp which is more secure with end-to-end encryption.

"We plan to build this the way we've developed WhatsApp: focus on the most fundamental and private use case—messaging—make it as secure as possible," he wrote in a lengthy 3,200-word post.

"Facebook will then build more ways for people to interact on top of that, including calls, video chats, groups, stories, businesses, payments, commerce, and ultimately a platform for many other kinds of private services," he added.

Zuckerberg said the "privacy-focused platform" will be built around principles like private interactions, encryption, reducing permanence, safety and interoperability.

"People should be able to use any of our apps to reach their friends, and they should be able to communicate across networks easily and securely," Zuckerberg said, hinting towards merging all his services like Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram into one which has created a furore among privacy advocacy groups and governments.

## Google launches 'Bolo' to tutor children to read Hindi, English

Tech giant Google on Wednesday unveiled a new app 'Bolo' that aims to help children in primary school learn to read in Hindi and English.

The free app, which is being launched in India first, uses Google's speech recognition and text-to-speech technology.

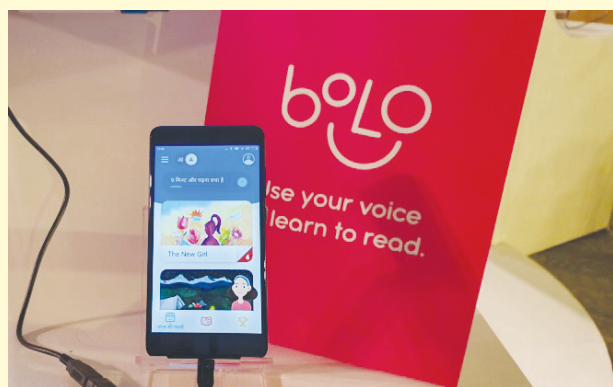
The app features an animated character 'Diya', who encourages children to read stories aloud and helps if the child is unable to pronounce a word. It also lauds the reader when he/she completes the reading.

"We have designed the app to work offline, so users need to just download the under 50MB app once and then they have access to close to 100 stories in Hindi and English that the children can read out loud and improve their reading skills," Google India Product Manager Nitin Kashyap told PTI.

Bolo will be available on Google Play Store in India for all smartphones running Android 4.4 (Kit Kat) and higher, he added.

Citing the annual ASER 2018 report, Kashyap said, it was found that only half of students enrolled in grade 5 in rural India can confidently read a grade 2 level textbook.

"Lack of reading ability can significantly impact further education, and ultimately children's ability to realise their full potential. Limited access to quality material, under-resourced infrastructure, and barriers to learning outside the classroom are some of the challenges that children often face," he added.



# NEW THEORY MAY SOLVE MYSTERY OF GREEN ICEBERGS

Scientists have explained why some Antarctic icebergs are emerald green in colour rather than the normal blue, potentially solving a decades-long scientific mystery.

The researchers at the University of Washington in the US noted that pure ice is blue because ice absorbs more red light than blue light.

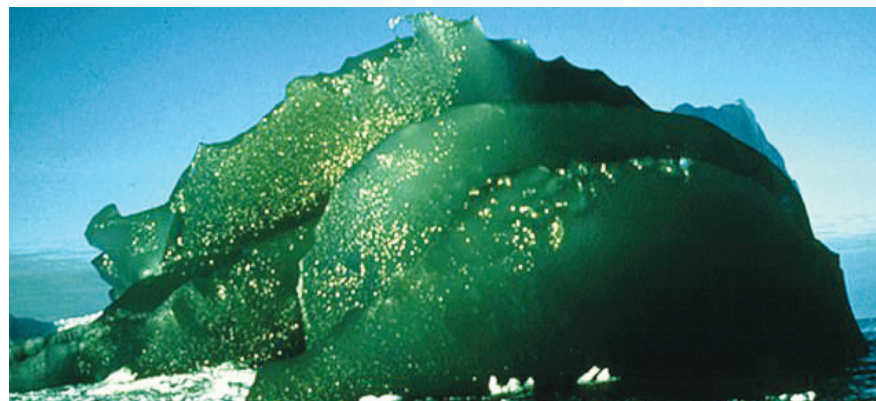
Most icebergs appear white or blue when floating in seawater, but since the early 1900s explorers and sailors have reported seeing peculiar green icebergs around certain parts of Antarctica.

The new study, published in the Journal of Geophysical Research: Oceans, suggests that iron oxides in rock dust from Antarctica's mainland are turning some icebergs green.

The team formulated the new theory after Australian researchers discovered large amounts of iron in East Antarctica's Amery Ice Shelf.

Iron is a key nutrient for phytoplankton, microscopic plants that form the base of the marine food web. However, iron is scarce in many areas of the ocean.

If experiments prove the new theory right, it would mean green icebergs are ferrying precious iron from Antarctica's mainland to the open sea when they break off, providing this key nutrient to the organisms that support nearly all marine life.



"It's like taking a package to the post office. The iceberg can deliver this iron out into the ocean far away, and then melt and deliver it to the phytoplankton that can use it as a nutrient," said Stephen Warren, a glaciologist at the University of Washington.

"We always thought green icebergs were just an exotic curiosity, but now we think they may actually be important," Warren said.

He started studying the phenomenon on an Australian expedition in 1988, when he took a core sample from a green iceberg near the Amery Ice Shelf on the coast of East Antarctica.

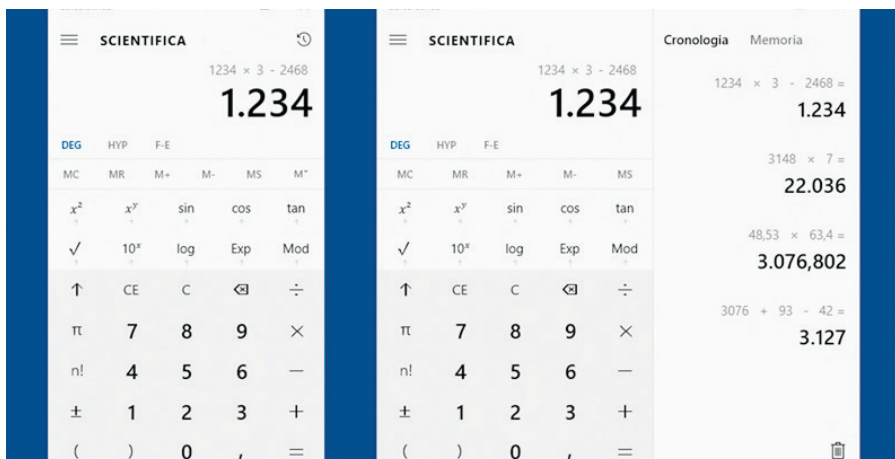
The green ice he saw was a deep emerald hue much darker and clearer than that of normal icebergs—a signal to scientists that green ice might be

different from regular iceberg ice.

"When we climbed up on that iceberg, the most amazing thing was actually not the colour but rather the clarity. This ice had no bubbles. It was obvious that it was not ordinary glacier ice," Warren said.

When the researchers analysed that iceberg and other green icebergs sampled by Australian expeditions in the 1980s, they found the green parts were made of marine ice and not glacier ice. They suspected an impurity in the ocean water underneath the Amery Ice Shelf was turning some marine ice green. Their first thought was that dissolved organic carbon, microscopic particles of long-dead marine plants and animals, was getting trapped in the ice as the water froze to the underside of the ice shelf.

## Microsoft's Windows Calculator is now open-source for developers



Microsoft is now making its Windows Calculator programme an open-source project on Github.

The move will allow developers around the world access to the high-end calculator application and also participate in reporting or even fixing issues. Developers can also use the open-source platform to create new design and customise the calculator. They can also integrate the app into their own application.

"Reviewing the Calculator code is a great way to learn about the latest Microsoft technologies like the Universal Windows Platform, XAML, and Azure Pipelines. Through this project, developers can learn from Microsoft's full development lifecycle, as well as reuse the

code to build their own experiences," said the company in a blog post.

"It's also a great example of Fluent app design. To make this even easier, we will be contributing custom controls and API extensions that we use in Calculator and other apps, to projects like the Windows Community Toolkit and the Windows UI Library," it added.

You can check out full documentation on open-source Calculator app on Github.

The Calculator is part of Microsoft's ongoing efforts to make its technology widely available, especially to third-party developers through open-source. Recently, the company made about 60,000 patents open-source for Linux. Microsoft last year launched open-source codes for its classic File Manager application, allowing it to run on modern Windows 10 software.

## Israeli spacecraft snaps ultimate selfie on way to Moon

An Israeli spacecraft has taken the ultimate selfie on its roundabout journey to the Moon. Organisers for the privately funded mission released the photo on Tuesday, 1 ½ weeks after its launch. It shows the spacecraft Beresheet, Hebrew for Genesis, orbiting some 23,300 miles (37,600 kilometers) away, with the entire Earth as the stunning Apollo-style backdrop. Australia easily stands out.

A plaque reads: "Small Country, Big Dreams" and "The people of Israel live." The spacecraft is shooting for a moon landing April 11. It rocketed from Cape Canaveral, Florida, on February 21 and has been circling Earth in ever bigger loops.

Despite some early problems, Beresheet should be close enough to enter lunar orbit in early April. A touchdown would make Israel the fourth country to pull off a moon landing.



# OIL PRICES DROP AS CHINA CUTS ECONOMIC GROWTH TARGET

**BEIJING (TIP):** Oil prices drifted lower on Tuesday as China cut its target for economic growth this year, denting prospects for fuel demand growth.

Global benchmark Brent crude fell 46 cents or 0.7 percent to \$65.21 per barrel, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil futures were down 0.65 percent at \$56.22 per barrel.

China lowered its economic growth target for 2019 to a range of 6.0 percent to 6.5 percent from the 2018 target of around 6.5 percent, citing challenges from rising debt and a trade dispute with the U.S.

To help spur growth, the Chinese government has unveiled plans to boost spending, increase foreign firms' access to its markets, and cut billions of dollars in taxes. Beijing also said it would continue to carry out a prudent monetary policy and use reserve requirements as policy tools.

On the trade front, Chinese Commerce Minister Zhong Shan has stated that trade



talks with the United States have been "extremely difficult and time-consuming" due to the large differences between the two countries. Crude oil prices have moved up significantly since the beginning of this year, riding on supply

cuts by OPEC and some non-OPEC members. According to a survey from Reuters, supply from OPEC dropped to a four-year low last month, thanks largely to a larger than originally agreed output reduction by Saudi Arabia.

## ASIA STILL LEADS THE WORLD WHEN IT COMES TO MINTING BILLIONAIRES

**HONG KONG (TIP):** Asia will see the fastest billionaire population growth in the world over the next four years, despite economic uncertainties in the region triggered by the China-US trade war.

The number of Asian billionaires will rise by 27 percent to 1,003 between 2018 and 2023, making up more than a third of the world's total billionaire population of 2,696, according to a report released Wednesday by Knight Frank LLP. The billionaire population growth rates for North America and Europe are 17 percent and 18 percent respectively.

Asia will also see the biggest increase in ultra-high net worth individuals (people with net assets of \$30 million or more). India leads the world with an expected 39 percent surge, followed by the Philippines and China.

But while the rich may be getting richer, they're also becoming more cautious. An increasing number of individuals in Asia plan to keep more of their wealth in cash and less in assets exposed to market cycles such as gold or bonds. Property remains a mainstay of their portfolios, the Knight Frank report found: real estate comprises around 23 percent, slightly higher than the global average.

"We are seeing a re-balancing of portfolios away from equities toward more defensive asset classes," said Nicholas Holt, Knight Frank Asia Pacific's head of research. "While cash, gold and private equity are likely to be increasingly targeted, investment-grade property with strong tenant covenants will also see significant interest over the next 12 months."

Investors in the Philippines were most likely to put more money into real estate, the survey found, while 40 percent of respondents in Australia, in the midst of a property-market downturn, expected allocations to real estate to decrease over the coming 12 months.

## US trade deficit with India dip by USD 1.6 billion in 2018



**WASHINGTON (TIP):** The trade deficit between India and the US decreased by USD 1.6 billion, almost seven per cent, in 2018 as compared to the previous year, according to the latest official figures.

India recorded a decrease in the deficit from USD 22.9 billion in 2017 to USD 21.3 billion in 2018, according to the latest figures revealed by the Bureau of Economy Analysis on Wednesday.

The US trade deficit in goods and services increased by USD 9.5 billion from USD 50.3 billion in November to USD 59.8 billion in December, according to the figures.

For 2018, the US goods and services deficit was USD 621.0 billion, up USD 68.8 billion from USD 552.3 billion in 2017. Exports were USD 2,500.0 billion in 2018, up USD 148.9 billion from 2017. Imports were USD 3,121.0 billion, up USD 217.7 billion from 2017, it said.

The figures showed that the goods deficit hit USD 891.3 billion in 2018, the largest in US history. America's goods deficit with China hit a record USD 419.2 billion last year.

Opposition Democratic party was quick in criticising US President Donald Trump.

"Today's announcement that the merchandise trade deficit for 2018 topped USD 891 billion shows that the President has flunked the test he set for himself," said House

Majority Leader Steny H Hoyer.

Alliance for American Manufacturing president Scott Paul in a statement criticised President Donald Trump for his policies that had resulted in a record trade deficit.

"Perhaps Donald Trump will now discover that tweets and bluster alone won't dramatically shrink the trade deficit," he said. "The selective interventions of the administration on trade have been helpful to key sectors, but these actions haven't put a dent in the massive deficit. The administration's fiscal policies have helped to boost the trade deficit, as has its reluctance to engage more actively in exchange rate misalignment," he said.

"While the trade deficit results from many factors, the staggering sum represents lost opportunities for American workers and businesses," Paul said.

"If the president wants to back his words with actions, any trade deal with China will insist on dramatic, structural changes in Beijing's state-led economy, which have contributed to massive industrial overcapacity in key sectors. The next few weeks of negotiations with China are critical to the future of American manufacturing. We can't afford a deal that doesn't deliver real and lasting change," Paul said. *Source: PTI*

## RELIANCE CAPITAL TO CUT DEBT BY RS 10K-12K

**MUMBAI (TIP):** The Anil Ambani-led Reliance Capital Ltd on Thursday said it will reduce its debt by approximately Rs 10,000 to 12,000 crore in the next three-four months by monetising its stakes in group companies and non-core investments.

In a statement issued here, the company said this substantial 50-60 per cent reduction in its debt will be achieved through monetising its 43 per cent stake in Reliance Nippon Life Asset Management (RNAM) and 49 per cent stake in Reliance General Insurance Company Ltd, along with several non-core investments.

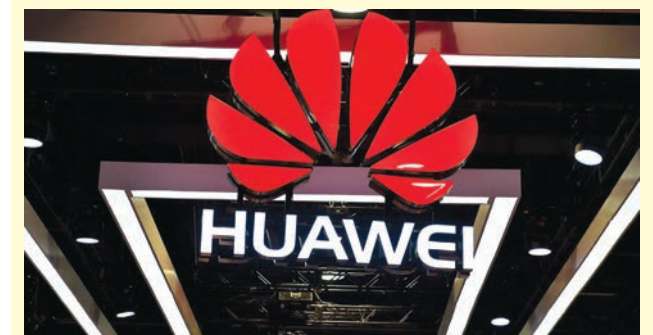
The completion of these transactions would be a major step forward in Reliance Capital's deleveraging strategy, it said.

Reliance Capital said its 43 per cent stake in RNAM is currently valued at over Rs 5,000 crore and the sale of controlling interests will be at a significant premium to the market.

The Reliance General Insurance has filed its draft red herring prospectus for an initial public offer with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).

The company is at an advanced stage of monetising several other non-core investments, including a strategic stake sale in Prime Focus Ltd and other media assets.

*Source: IANS*



## Huawei CFO sues Canada for alleged wrongful detention

**T**he Huawei Technologies Co. chief financial officer whose detention in Canada has sparked a diplomatic standoff has filed a civil lawsuit against Canadian authorities, alleging she was wrongfully detained and searched.

Meng Wanzhou claims that her constitutional rights were breached and is seeking damages for an ordeal she says amounted to "false imprisonment." The suit was filed March 1 in the Supreme Court of British Columbia against the Canadian Border Services Agency, a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer and the Canadian government.

The notice alleges that the police officer and several border guards detained, searched and interrogated Meng under the guise of a routine customs or immigration case, and used "that opportunity to unlawfully compel her to provide evidence and information." It alleges they did so without immediately arresting her under the warrant to avoid affording Meng her constitutional rights.

Instead, according to the complaint, the officers detained the Huawei CFO on the jetway Dec. 1 as she was getting off a flight, took away two phones, an iPad and a computer, then got her to surrender the passwords to those devices. She was formally arrested only about three hours after her initial detention, the claim says.

The claim was filed the same day Canada's government agreed to proceed to an extradition hearing at the request of the U.S., which alleges Meng lied to banks to trick them into processing transactions for Huawei that potentially violated Iran trade sanctions. The complaint comes as China's largest tech company is increasingly playing offense to counter accusations it aids Beijing in espionage -- something it's always denied. In recent weeks, senior executives have taken shots at America's own surveillance efforts, invited foreign media to speak with its reclusive founder, and even tweeted directly at Donald Trump.

contd from page 1

## Former Trump campaign...

Manafort has been jailed since June, so he will receive credit for the nine months he has already served. He still faces the possibility of additional time from his sentencing in a separate case in the District of Columbia, where he pleaded guilty to charges related to illegal lobbying.

Before Judge T.S. Ellis III imposed the sentence, Manafort told him that "saying I feel humiliated and ashamed would be a gross understatement." But he offered no explicit apology, something Judge Ellis noted before issuing his sentence. Manafort steered Donald Trump's election efforts during crucial months of the 2016 campaign as Russia sought to meddle in the election through hacking of Democratic email accounts. He was among the first of Mr. Trump's associates charged in the Mueller investigation and has been a high-profile defendant.

But the charges against Manafort were unrelated to his work on the campaign or the focus of Mr. Mueller's investigation- whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russians. A jury last year convicted Manafort on eight counts, concluding that he hid from the IRS millions of dollars he earned from his work in Ukraine.

Manafort's lawyers argued that their client had engaged in what amounted to a routine tax evasion case and cited numerous past sentences in which defendants had hidden millions from the IRS and served less than a year in prison. Prosecutors said Manafort's conduct was egregious, but Judge Ellis ultimately agreed more with defense attorneys. "These guidelines are quite high," Judge Ellis said.

Neither prosecutors nor defense attorneys had requested a particular sentence length in their sentencing memoranda, but prosecutors had urged a "significant" sentence. Outside court, Manafort's lawyer, Kevin Downing, said his client accepted responsibility for his conduct "and there was absolutely no evidence that Mr. Manafort was involved in any collusion with the government of Russia."

Though Manafort hasn't faced charges related to collusion, he has been seen as one of the most pivotal figures in the Mueller investigation. Prosecutors, for instance, have scrutinized his relationship with Konstantin Kilimnik, a business associate U.S. authority say is tied to Russian intelligence, and have described a furtive meeting the men had in August 2016 as cutting to the heart of the investigation. After pleading guilty in the D.C. case, Manafort met with investigators for more than 50 hours as part of a requirement to cooperate with the probe. But prosecutors reiterated at Thursday's hearing that they believe Manafort was evasive and untruthful in his testimony to a grand jury.

Manafort was wheeled into the courtroom about 3-45 p.m. in a green jumpsuit from the Alexandria jail, where he spent the last several months in solitary confinement. The jet-black hair he bore in 2016 when serving as campaign chairman was gone, replaced by a shaggy gray. He spent much of the hearing hunched at the shoulders, bearing what appeared to be an air of resignation. Defense lawyers had argued that Manafort would never have been charged if it were not for Mueller's probe. At the outset of the trial, even Judge Ellis agreed with that assessment, suggesting that Manafort was being prosecuted only to pressure him to "sing" against Mr. Trump. Prosecutors said the Manafort investigation preceded Mr. Mueller's appointment. The jury convicted Manafort on eight felonies related to tax and bank fraud charges for hiding foreign income from his work in Ukraine from the IRS and later inflating his income on bank loan applications. Prosecutors have said the work in Ukraine was on behalf of politicians who were closely aligned with Russia, though Manafort insisted his work helped those politicians distance themselves from Russia and align with the West.

In arguing for a significant sentence, prosecutor Greg Andres said Manafort still hasn't accepted responsibility for his misconduct. "His sentencing positions are replete with blaming others," Mr. Andres said. He also said Manafort still has not provided a full account of his finances for purposes of restitution, a particularly egregious omission given that his crime involved hiding more than \$55 million in overseas bank accounts to evade paying more than \$6 million in federal income taxes. The lack of certainty about Manafort's finances complicated the judge's efforts to impose restitution, but Ellis ultimately ordered that Manafort could be required to pay back up to \$24 million.

Freshman New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez slammed Paul Manafort's "little" jail sentence Thursday, saying it's proof

the US justice system is broken. "Paul Manafort getting such little jail time for such serious crimes lays out for the world how it's almost impossible for rich people to go to jail for the same amount of time as someone who is lower income," the Bronx-born congresswoman tweeted.

She added: "In our current broken system, 'justice' isn't blind. It's bought." Earlier Thursday, President Trump's former campaign chairman was sentenced to just under four years in prison for a massive fraud scheme tied to his work as a political consultant for Ukraine's pro-Russian government.

Sentencing guidelines recommended 19 1/2 to 24 years. But Judge T.S. Ellis III said that was "excessive." In the D.C. case, Manafort faces up to five years in prison on each of two counts to which he pleaded guilty. The judge will have the option to impose any sentence there concurrent or consecutive to the sentence imposed by Judge Ellis.

## US urges Pakistan to take...

a JeM terrorist camp in Balakot on February 26, has started taking actions against some of the terrorist outfits and their leaders over the past few days. In Islamabad, the Interior Ministry announced that a total of 121 members of the proscribed groups have so far been taken into "preventive detention" across Pakistan.

State Department Deputy Spokesperson Robert Palladino told reporters at his biweekly news conference on Thursday, March 8, "I would say that we, the United States notes these steps and we continue to urge Pakistan to take sustained, irreversible actions against terrorist groups that will prevent future attacks and promote regional stability". "We reiterate our call for Pakistan to abide by its United Nations Security Council obligations to deny terrorists safe haven and block their entry to funds," he said.

Questions on United Nations sanctions committee deliberations are confidential and as such it is not something that the State Department is going to be able to comment on specific matters in that regard, he said. "But we will continue to work with the sanctions committee to ensure that the list is updated and that it is accurate," Mr. Palladino said.

At the US Capitol, India's ambassador to the US Harsh Vardhan Shringla met Kevin McCarthy, the Republican leader in the House of Representatives. "We must stand strong against acts of terrorism and work together to improve trade between our nations," the top Republican leader said after the meeting. Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated after a suicide bomber of Pakistan-based terror group JeM killed 40 CRPF personnel in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district in February 14. India launched a counter-terror operation in Balakot. The next day, Pakistan Air Force retaliated and downed a MiG-21 in an aerial combat and captured its pilot, who was handed over to India on March 1. (Source:PTI)

## China steps up diplomacy to...

Kong Xuanyou was already in Islamabad to establish an "enabling atmosphere" that would help Pakistan to cooperate with "other parties". Mr. Lu said Mr. Kong's mission was to "promote dialogue" between India and Pakistan by persuading both sides to exercise flexibility. "I hope the two sides can show some goodwill, embrace each other halfway, properly resolve their differences through dialogue. China will play a constructive role to promote dialogue between them."

India has made it plain that it would start a dialogue only if Pakistan takes visible and verifiable steps to eliminate terrorism that targets India from its soil. "In fact, Pakistan has been making efforts and exercised policies to combat terrorism. We think we should encourage this," Mr. Lu said. Without referring to the Kashmir issue, Mr. Lu said that both 'symptom' and 'root cause' of terrorism should be addressed. Asked to comment on the understanding reached between the Foreign Ministers of Russia, India and China (RIC) during their February 27 meeting in Wuzhen, the spokesperson said: "As to counter terrorism issue in the trilateral meeting, I shall say a key point is that terrorism is a complex issue. We should address the symptom and the root causes of terrorism that is the premise for what was proposed by Foreign Ministers of the three countries." Asked to comment on China's stand on the resolution proposed in the UNSC 1267 committee to list Azhar as a global terrorist, Mr. Lu said China would take a "conducive decision" to resolve the differences. "China will have discussion with relevant bodies" as listing of terrorists "is a very serious issue", he said.

## India excluded again from...

Among the new countries to which the "streamlined documentary requirements" apply are Peru, Kazakhstan, Mauritius and Oman. "This change will not only benefit students, who will be able to apply for visas through a more streamlined process, but also help to ensure that the U.K.'s world-leading education institutions remain competitive internationally," the Home Office said.

"This adds insult to injury," said Lord Karan Bilimoria, a cross-bench member of the House of Lords who has been critical of the government's approach to immigration, particularly relating to students. "It is incredible to think that Britain still has the audacity to talk of a trade deal with India, while this is its approach."

The changes are part of a wider update to Britain's immigration system that will introduce two new visa routes for setting up businesses in the U.K. - including a "start-up" route and an equivalent one for more seasoned business people. In both cases, business experts will be involved in assessing the merits of the business ideas. "This will make sure that the routes are focused on only the most innovative, viable and scalable businesses," said the Home Office.

The government has also updated its rules governing a fast-track visa scheme for wealthy investors - which has been used by many Indians. The scheme, which is open to those who invest at least £2 million in U.K. government, shares or businesses, offers a faster route to settlement in the country. Eighty-two Indian nationals applied for an investor visa through this route between 2008 and March 2018, according to Transparency International. However, amid concerns that the route has been abused for illicit money flows, the government has been under pressure to either scrap or reform the system. Now, applicants will be "required to prove that they have had control of the required £2 million for at least two years, rather than 90 days, or provide evidence of the source of those funds", the Home Office said. (Source: *The Hindu*)

## Musharraf calls Jaish-e...

In a telephonic interview to Pakistani journalist Nadeem Malik of Hum News in his talk show, Gen. Musharraf, 75, who is currently in Dubai, welcomed the action against the JeM. He said it had tried to assassinate him twice in December 2003, as per a video clip shared on the journalist's Facebook and Twitter page. The JeM has claimed responsibility for the February 14 Pulwama attack that left 40 CRPF personnel dead.

Last month, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in an interview with CNN said Azhar was in Pakistan, but the government could act against him only if India presented "solid" and "inalienable" evidence that could stand in a court of law. The Pakistan military, however, has denied the terror group's presence in the country. Amid mounting international pressure after the Pulwama attack, Pakistan on March 5 detained 44 members of the banned militant outfits, including Azhar's son and brother.

Gen. Musharraf said, "This is a good move. I have always said that the JeM is a terrorist organization and they only had carried out a suicide attack in an attempt to assassinate me. Action should be taken against them." Gen. Musharraf, who also served as Pakistan's army chief, said action against the JeM should have been taken earlier: "Those times were different"

When asked why he had not taken action against the organization during his stint in power, he claimed those times were "different". Both India and Pakistan were involved in a clandestine struggle, "carrying out bombings in each other's territory", he said, adding his country's intelligence agencies were engaged in it. Amid all this, not much action was taken against the Jaish, he said, adding that he had also not insisted.

Gen. Musharraf, who ruled Pakistan from 1999 to 2008, is facing the treason case for suspending the Constitution in 2007, a punishable offence for which he was indicted in 2014. He has been living in Dubai since March 2016. (Source: PTI)

## Soumya Swaminathan is WHO...

Previously, she was one of the three Deputy Director-Generals supporting the Director-General in overseeing all programs. She was the first Indian to hold the post. WHO said in a statement: "the world has changed, which is why we have articulated a new mission statement."

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# THE TEMPLES OF PATTADAKAL

The history of Pattadakal goes back to a time when it was called Kisuvolal, a valley of red soil. It even found a mention in Ptolemy's Geography in the 2nd century CE. Presently Pattadakal is located in the district of Bagalkot, state of Karnataka, India. The Chalukyas of Badami (ancient Vatapi) or Early Chalukyas (543-753 CE) built a large complex of temples for royal commemoration and coronation in Pattadakal. This complex is on the left bank of the Malaprabha River which runs further north to meet the river Krishna. It was accorded World Heritage Status by UNESCO in 1987.

Pattadakal literally means 'coronation stone' and bears testimony to the later phase of evolution of the distinctive Early Chalukyan architecture. The gestation phase of this development which took place in Aihole, Badami (the ancient capital), Alampur, and Mahakuta finds its culmination here. It is in the last few decades, during the successive reigns of Vijayaditya (696-733 CE), Vikramaditya II (733-746 CE) and Kirtivarman II (746-753 CE), that several temples were gradually constructed in this fertile valley. A Jain shrine was constructed much later, after the collapse of the empire by their successor Rashtrakuta dynasty (6th-10th centuries CE) in the 9th century CE.

## TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE

The basic plan of a temple runs thus: the garbha griha (sanctum sanctorum) opens to an antarala (vestibule) and houses the murti (enshrined image) on a pitha (pedestal). An expansive pillared mandapa (hall) adjoins the antarala. A shikhara (superstructure) rises on top of the garbha griha and contains an amalaka (a ribbed stone) with a kalash (pot with mango leaves and a coconut) at its finial. The vimana then comprises both the garbha griha and shikhara.

Temples built here are all dedicated to Shiva and face east. However, depiction of religious motifs through free-standing sculptures and reliefs is not limited to Shaivism but recruits images generously from the Hindu pantheon. Other than the nine Shaiva temples in the compound, there is one Jain temple located almost a kilometre to the west dedicated to the 23rd Tirthankar, Parsvanatha.

## VIRUPAKSHA TEMPLE

The epigraphy reveals this to have been built by Queen Loka Mahadevi (originally named as Lokeshwara) after the successful military campaigns of King Vikramaditya II against the Pallavas (4th-9th centuries CE). In ground plan it resembles the Kailasnatha temple of Kanchipuram, citadel of the Pallavas, but in stone it is a realisation of the fully mature Early Chalukyan architecture in all its glory.

A square garbha griha, with an ambulatory path surrounding it, is connected to the antarala. Two small shrines are laterally placed to the antarala, one for Ganesha and the other for Mahisasurmardini. Three porches from the east, north and south open up to an expansive mandapa. Further east, a separate Nandi mandapa is placed on a plinth. The whole temple is surrounded by prakara (enclosure) walls that are provided with subsidiary shrines on its inner side. Only a handful of these remain out of the original 32. The magnificently built Dravida shikhara with a well-preserved sukanasa ('nose,' arched projection) on the front is one of the hallmarks of the temple. The superstructure is three-storied and topped by a four-sided amalaka with a kalash at its finial.

The temple walls are divided into



projections and recesses. Sculptures of Harihara, Narasimha, Bhairava, Lakulisha adorn the Devakoshtas (niches) on sanctum walls. Recesses have filigree windows. The temple interior is covered with friezes depicting stories of the abduction of Sita, Bhishma lying on a bed of arrows and Krishna lifting the Govardhan Mountain among other narratives from ancient texts. Many inscriptions have been found engraved in different parts of the temple, some of which also name the architect(s) involved in building the structure.

## MALLIKARJUNA TEMPLE

It was originally called the Trailokeshwara temple in honour of the Queen Trailokya Mahadevi. Almost like a twin, the Mallikarjuna temple was built for the same purpose, at the same time as Virupaksha temple which stands beside it. There are only a few noticeable differences between these two, one of them being a hemispherical amalaka as opposed to a four-sided one, and a parapet devoid of certain architectural elements such as kuta (square), sala (oblong) etc. that correspond to the projections and recesses below.

The shrines, lateral to the antarala, are sadly missing the images of their respective deities. Prakara (walls) too are largely destroyed. Tales from the puranas (religious texts) and epics carved inside the temple include sculptures of Mahisasurmardini, samudra manthan, Narasimha fighting Hiranyakashipu, the slaying of Mareecha etc. The niches on temple walls are also gracefully decorated.

## SANGAMESWARA TEMPLE

This temple was built in 720 CE by Vijayaditya and originally named as the Vijayeshwara temple. The garbha griha typically houses a lingum (phallus symbol) and there are sub-shrines on either side of the antarala. To the east of the mandapa, an image of the bull Nandi (vahana or 'mount' of Shiva) is supported on a small plinth.

The temple itself is built on a high plinth consisting of five mouldings decorated with animal and floral motifs. On the temple walls, niches bearing sculptures of different avatars of Vishnu and Shiva alternate with beautifully designed windows. Below the kapota (eave), a row of wonderfully carved round-bodied figures are placed as if the whole load of the roof above is being held by them. The shikhara is two-tiered and topped by a four-sided amalaka with a kalash.

## KADASIDDHESWARA TEMPLE

This modest structure was constructed sometime during the middle to late 7th century CE. It attests to the still evolving Early Chalukyan architecture with its shikhara being developed along the northern style (rekha nagara) of curvilinear profile and a simple sukanasa projecting from the superstructure at the front, above the antarala. The sukanasa depicts an image of a dancing Shiva with Parvati as a shallow relief



chaitya (prayer hall) arch. The Devakoshtas houses images of Ardhanariswar, Harihara and Shiva on the north, west, and south sides respectively. The rectangular mandapa might have had a mukha mandapa (porch) at the front as suggested by the plinth, with usual decorative moulds. The figures of Shiva and Parvati grace the lintel of the door to the garbha griha with carvings of Brahma and Vishnu on either side.

## JAMBULINGESWARA TEMPLE

Its ground plan and period of construction are both comparable to the Kadasiddheswara temple mentioned before. The square garbha griha houses a lingum on a pitha and opens to the antarala at front which further expands to a mandapa. A sukanasa projects from the

sikhara (built in northern style in three diminishing stages) at the front. The small Nandi mandapa to the east is in a ruinous state with the crouching image of Nandi all but destroyed. A minutely detailed frieze of swans runs below the cornice of the temple wall all along. The moulded plinth is decorated with figures of Kudu, birds and other ornamental elements.

## GALAGANATHA TEMPLE

This temple, one of the last to be built at the site around 750 CE, possesses an exquisitely developed superstructure in the northern style as adopted by Early Chalukyan architects. It has been largely preserved with the amalaka and kalash at the top save for the partially damaged sukanasa at the front.

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**"If Hindus don't maintain Hinduism, who shall save it?"**

**"If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard it?"**

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

# India eye series win in Dhoni's last match at Ranchi

**RANCHI (TIP):** Mahendra Singh Dhoni's final homecoming forms a poignant subplot of an utterly dominant Indian team's quest for an unassailable 3-0 lead in the third ODI against Australia in Ranchi on Friday.

A 3-0 lead in the five-match series will be a perfect parting gift for Ranchi's favourite son, who, in all likelihood, will be seen wearing the India Blues for the last time at his home ground.

There has been a sense of déjà vu every time Dhoni has stepped on to the field in the ongoing series.

It reminded many of Tendulkar's penultimate Test series against Australia in 2013, when the cheer from the stands would amplify with each passing match.

Something similar has been happening at every ground in this series, with the fans possibly beginning to realise that the legend may not be around when India next play at home.

Amidst the emotional side story, the Indian team is grappling with a few teething issues regarding its top-order batting, especially senior opener Shikhar Dhawan's poor form, which has affected India's starts of late.

Despite Dhawan having gone off the boil with only two half-centuries in the last 15 ODIs, India are unlikely to tinker with the winning combination of the first two encounters.

K.L. Rahul, who is back in form, may have to wait till India clinch the series, but the team management could well try him out at the No. 3 position.

The two victories by six wickets and eight runs weren't exactly convincing but pulling off close matches under pressure will certainly add to the confidence.

"Just coming through these kinds of games gives us confidence. It's important to look ugly at times, and come through and win. We might get these low-scoring



games in the World Cup as well," Kohli had said after the second game.

The bowling has been superb in both games with Australia failing to reach 250, but save Virat Kohli, who stamped his class with another hundred on a slow Jamtha track, none of the other batsmen have looked the part so far.

Vice-captain Rohit Sharma, the second most consistent player in this line-up, looked good in the first game before he got out.

Kedar Jadhav and Dhoni shepherded India in the first match and didn't trouble the scorers in the next.

Ambati Rayudu, whose only significant knock was the 90 against New Zealand in the last away series, has also been inconsistent and can be replaced with Rahul.

Rayudu, who has retired from first-class cricket, has found it difficult and his primary problem has been not being able to rotate the strike.

If Dhawan is persisted with, the best way to give Rahul at least three games is to bring him at No. 3 and the skipper

coming at No 4 in place of Rayudu.

There are no such worries about Indian bowling as they have performed as a unit. The biggest gain in the second game has been Kedar Jadhav and Vijay Shankar performing their combined role of a fifth bowler to perfection.

Shankar's two wickets while bowling the final over will also instil confidence in his captain that in case Hardik Pandya has a breakdown, he has a fallback option in the Tamil Nadu all-rounder.

However, he is still not somebody who can bowl six to seven overs consistently in each game.

Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah have been outstanding in the two games so far. If Shami was lethal during the opening spell of the first game, Bumrah set it up with another incredible effort at the death in the second.

One who is quietly inching towards a slot in the World Cup-bound squad is Ravindra Jadeja, who has bowled brilliantly in those middle overs in tandem with Kuldeep Yadav.



## SINDHU KNOCKED OUT OF ALL ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP

**BIRMINGHAM (TIP):** A profligate P.V. Sindhu was knocked out of the All England Championship by an industrious Sung Ji Hyun of Korea in the women's singles opening round here on Wednesday.

In men's singles, 2017 Singapore Open champion B. Sai Praneeth defeated compatriot H.S. Prannoy 21-19 21-19 in a pulsating contest.

Fifth-seeded Sindhu, who was beaten by Sung Ji twice in last three meetings, lost 16-21 22-20 18-21, despite saving as many as eight match points in the second and third game.

Sindhu went into the opener with an overall record of a 8-6 against Sung Ji but the Korean once again troubled the Indian in the 81-minute thrilling clash which went down to the wire.

Sindhu showed grit in the closing moments of the second and third game but also committed too many unforced errors during the match.

The Indian saved three match points at 17-20 in the second game to take the match to the decider, during which she saved five match points before suffering her fourth first-round loss at the USD 1 million event.

Sung Ji will face Hong Kong's Cheung Ngan Yi in the second round.

"I think I could have not given her big lead at the starting. It was too many points and it was difficult to cover," Sindhu said after the loss.

"It was my bad luck probably as my mid court smashes were going to net. I was just hitting out but overall it was good match and she played well. She has good anticipations and there were long rallies.

"I had trained enough but it was just not my day. Such matches keep happening and I have to take it as a challenge and come back stronger."

# Boxing: Vijender Singh to make US debut on April 12

Indian boxing star Vijender Singh will make his debut in the American professional circuit on April 12 against a yet-to-be-decided opponent and is currently training under Hall of Famer Freddie Roach, who shaped the likes of Manny Pacquiao and Mike Tyson.

Vijender, unbeaten in his 10-bout pro career, will make his US debut at Staples Center on the Vasilij Lomachenko-Anthony Crolla undercard. It will be an eight-round contest and his opponent will be announced later.

The 33-year-old Vijender recently relocated his training base to Los Angeles where he is training at the 'The Wild Card Boxing Club' under Roach, a 2012 International Boxing Hall of Fame (IBHOF) inductee, his India promoters IOS Boxing Promotions said in a press release.

In his 32 years as a trainer, Roach is widely regarded as one of the best boxing coaches of all time.

Roach has been mentor to 36 world champions including the likes of Tyson, eight-division world champion Manny Pacquiao, five-time and four-division world champion Miguel Cotto and multiple world champion Oscar de La Hoya. He has also trained former

junior welterweight champion Amir Khan.

Vijender's April 12 bout will stream live in the United States.

"I am thrilled to start my training under such a legendary figure in world boxing," Vijender said.

"Professional boxing in United States is of the highest level, and I believe Freddie is the right guy to bring the best out of me. I look forward to showing the boxing fans a new and improved Vijender Singh," he added.

Roach feels India's first Olympic medallist in boxing has what it takes to be a world champion in the highly competitive US circuit.

"I believe Vijender has the talent and the dedication to become a world champion," Roach said.

"He has a great amateur background, a style that will give any super middle-weight in the world problems, and power in both hands," he added.

Commenting on this new association, Promoter of IOS Boxing Promotions Neerav Tomar, said "...we hope together with Freddie, Vijender will be able to script history. We at IOS are thrilled the association."

Source: PTI





### Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



**Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at [info@bejandaruwalla.com](mailto:info@bejandaruwalla.com) and on phone **011-91-8141234275** [www.bejandaruwalla.com](http://www.bejandaruwalla.com)**

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE MARCH 11 - MARCH 17, 2019

### Aries:

Ganesha says there could be a divorce, separation, out-of-court settlements, the breakdown of relationships. You may move home, change jobs, and children may leave for higher studies overseas. There will be a lot of chipping, chopping and several changes in your life. There are expenses too; it is a powerful emotional need. By mid-period, you are in soul - searching mode.

### Taurus:

Your moods change like a chameleon, surprising not only others but yourself too. There is idealism coursing through your veins and you look at philanthropy with serious eyes. Mid-period sees new intensity pushing you. You want to make miracles happen. There are also maudlin moments rocking your calm. If there are habits and thought processes that have outlived their utility, you need to junk them. As the period ends, your monkey mind is everywhere.

### Gemini:

Whatever you embark on now will lead to success. You may change residence, switch jobs, or move in an entirely new direction. You are looking for personal satisfaction and that is your guiding star. An inheritance will have to be worked out; there could be separations and a divorce; there could also be an addition to the family, even a new love. You want time specially to sort out your life and center yourself.

### Cancer:

You have an optimistic outlook on life and can be very effective in contractual negotiations, conferences, planning sessions and discussions. There could be foreign travel too, as new vistas open. You are hungry for success. You want money, fame and power. Someone from another culture will make a profound impact on you. As the period ends, you burn the candle at both ends. Take time off, take a break, and see where your life is headed.

### Leo:

There are several domestic issues that you need to grapple with. You may need a medical check-up; a chronic illness could resurface or turn flagrant. You should also be wary of deceit. There are maudlin moments and you spend a lot of time on soul-searching. There are quarrels and squabbles, also windfall profits at work. Mid-period sees stability and hard work. You make rapid growth. This is a powerful period.

### Virgo:

There is physical travel, hectic social networking and several very intense emotional experiences. You feel a churning as energies surface from the deepest part of your psyche. Relations with women, regardless of your gender, will be unusually powerful. Ego drives are low and it is obvious that you need others for self-validation. If you haven't come to terms with yourself, or become friends with your core, loneliness of any kind can be destructive and demeaning. You need to extract yourself from the maze before it swallows you.

### Libra:

This is a very stimulating period. Your intuition is powerful and you could make some magical moves. On the flip side, the softer side of you emerges and you gain new sensitivity to others' issues. There are many subconscious influences at play, illusions, delusions, snares and snafus. Your critical faculties are sharp and you will not compromise on ethics or quality. This is a great period for important business negotiations. You make an awesome team leader and team player.

### Scorpio:

This is a fantastic period. Make the most of it. Your confidence is at an all-time high. You take risks and they pay off. There are money and honey as new vistas open dramatically in your life. You are on a bull run. You move decisively, like a knife through butter. You move down the opposition and clear all roadblocks with ease. You rewrite the rules of the game. The luck of the draw is with you. You sign big deals and laugh all the way to the bank.

### Sagittarius:

You interact with the best in your field and network furiously. There could be international travel and you may be asked to chair high-level meetings. There is peer group approval and you may be quoted in the most respected journals. You ride high. This is also your birth period and the energies are powerful. You take undue risks. Watch out for accidents. This is a great period for teachers, counsellors and analysts.

### Capricorn:

You have a period of beauty and bounty. Children bring joy. There are festivities and celebrations, possibly a marriage, engagement or an addition to the family. You may also travel to an exotic locale and bask in the lap of love, affection and bonhomie. There are accolades from the peer group and you win awards. There are new collaborations, ventures, research and new discoveries. The period is a great period for important negotiations and business transactions. There are also love, longing, laughter and lust.

### Aquarius:

You are expansive, verbose, flamboyant and fashionable. There are expenses and indulgences. Your mood is cheerful and optimistic. There are hope, joy and positivity in all your dealings. You go inwards, into the recesses of your soul, and comb the truth. This is a significant phase. You emerge from this period as a person of consequence. You want a break from work. You will return refreshed and rejuvenated. There is love too, as you play with the heart strings of your admirers.

### Pisces:

There are beautiful moments with the family. Children bring joy and elders need special attention. There could also be family outings and fun times as friends and loved ones join in. This is not a great time for hard, sustained work. You want to have fun and let your hair down. There are inheritances and family affairs to sort out. Old loves walk out of the woodwork and mingle with new loves. The end period sees you rejuvenated, relaxed, refreshed, recharged and reborn.

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