

WE WISH OUR
READERS A
**HAPPY
VAISAKHI!**

Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu wins record fifth term in office: Reports



"It is a night of colossal victory," the 69-year-old Netanyahu told cheering supporters in a late-night speech at Likud headquarters. (File photo)

JERUSALEM (TIP): Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has won the Israeli national election, securing a record fifth term in office despite running neck in neck with his challenger Benny Gantz, the country's three main television channels said on Wednesday, April 10. *contd on Page 20*

India's poverty levels to be down to single digits

Jaitley tells investors in New York

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): India's poverty levels will be down to single digits in the next couple of years, claimed India's Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Arun Jaitley, addressing an interactive session jointly organized by industry chamber FICCI, the Indian Consulate in New York and the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum on April 10. *contd on Page 20*

Finance Minister of India Arun Jaitley (second from left) speaking at an interactive session organized by FICCI, the Indian Consulate in New York and the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum on April 10. Also seen in the picture is Master Card CEO Ajaypal Singh Banga, chairman of the U.S.-India Business Council (third from left).



India goes to polls- Voters cast vote in 91 Constituencies in the First Phase



Voters line up at a polling station

NEW DELHI (TIP): Polling for 91 constituencies was held in the first of the seven phases on April 11. The BJP is defending 32 seats. Of these, 16 were in the crucial Hindi heartland - Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Bihar - states that the saffron party swept in the 2014 elections, riding high on the Modi "wave". Political observers believe that the "situation as on date is

open-ended". In case the BSP-SP-RLD 'Mahagathbandhan' manages to upset the BJP applecart in the eight western UP seats of phase-1, it could cause serious damage to the party.

In Maharashtra which almost witnessed a one-sided contest in 2014 with the BJP and ally Shiv Sena sweeping it all,

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WIKILEAKS FOUNDER JULIAN ASSANGE CHARGED BY US IN COMPUTER HACKING CONSPIRACY



Julian Assange the founder of WikiLeaks, was arrested April 11 in the United Kingdom

LONDON (TIP): Julian P. Assange, 47, the founder of WikiLeaks, was arrested April 11 in the United Kingdom pursuant to the U.S./UK Extradition Treaty, in connection with a federal charge of conspiracy to commit computer intrusion for agreeing to break a password to a classified U.S. government computer. According to court documents unsealed April 11, the charge relates to Assange's alleged role in one of the largest compromises

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Losses more than \$1 bn in major US health fraud: Investigators

WASHINGTON (TIP): One of the largest healthcare frauds in American history caused more than USD 1 billion in losses after hundreds of thousands of patients were lured into the scheme, US investigators said on Tuesday, announcing charges against 24 people. The alleged scheme involved the provision of wrist, knee and other braces to

elderly and/or disabled patients who did not need them, but who were covered by the Medicare public insurance system.

They were lured by an international telemarketing network involving call centers in the Philippines and Latin America, the Department of Justice said.

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VAISAKHI: THE HARVEST FESTIVAL

The auspicious festival of Baisakhi or Vaisakhi is celebrated on first day of Vaisakh month (April-May) according to the Nanakshahi calendar. Hence, the festival of Baisakhi is also popularly known as Vaisakhi. According to Gregorian Calendar, Baisakhi falls on April 13 every year and on April 14 once in 36 years. This variation in date is due to the fact that date of Baisakhi is reckoned according to the Indian solar calendar and not the lunar calendar. This year, the festival falls on April 14.

Time for Harvest of Rabi Crop

Vaisakhi marks the beginning of the new spring year and the end of the harvest of rabi crop in India. The festival is celebrated with lot of enthusiasm in agriculture dominated state of Punjab and Haryana. Here, farmers thank God for the bountiful harvest and pray for prosperity in the coming year. To celebrate the day, people wake up early and take a dip in the holy rivers. Soon after, cries of "Jatta aai Baisakhi" rent the skies as the people of Punjab attired in their best clothes break into the Bhangra dance to express their joy.

Astrological Significance

The date of Baisakhi has major astrological significance as it marks the sun's entry into Mesh Rashi. Some people therefore know Baisakhi as Mesha Sankranti. The auspicious date of Baisakhi is celebrated as 'Rongali Bihu' in Assam, 'Naba Barsha' in Bengal, 'Puthandu' in Tamil Nadu, 'Pooram Vishu' in Kerala and 'Vaishakha' in Bihar.

Significance in Sikhism

Vaisakhi has a special meaning for the Sikhs. Vaisakhi Festival is celebrated as the Sikh New Year and the founding of the Khalsa Panth. On this day in 1699, their tenth Guru Gobind Singh organized the order of the Khalsa and administered amrit (nectar) to his first batch of five disciples making them Singhs, a martial community. Again, on this day in 1875, Swami Dayanand Saraswati founded the Arya Samaj-a reformed sect of Hindus who are devoted to the Vedas for spiritual guidance and have discarded idol worship. This day is once again of immense religious import to the Buddhists because Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment and Nirvana on this auspicious day.

Festival of Vaisakhi is celebrated as a Thanksgiving Day by the farmers. People wake up early on the day and take bath in rivers or pond water and pay a visit to the temple or gurdwara (Sikh worship place). Farmers thank god for the bountiful harvest and pray for prosperity in future also. Many people also perform charity on the day as a custom.

As the day progresses, loud cries of "Jatta aayi Vaisakhi" reverberate in the sky as men and women move towards the field to celebrate the harvest festival. As a tradition men dress up in colourful lungi, kurta and pagri while womenfolk clad themselves in salwar kameez or lehenga. They further adorn themselves with loads of jewellery.

Major attraction of Vaisakhi celebrations in villages is the performance of energetic bhangra and gidda dance by men and women respectively. This very popular traditional folk dance is performed in-groups on the fast beat of dhol. Dancers perform everyday farming scenes of sowing, harvesting, winnowing and gathering of crops through zestful movements of the body to the accompaniment of ballads.

Later during the day, people exchange greetings with friends, neighbours and dear ones and relish best of world famous Punjabi cuisine.

Vaisakhi Fairs

Colourful Vaisakhi Fairs are organized at several places in Punjab to mark the harvest festival of Vaisakhi. Performance of bhangra and gidda dance besides other recreational



activities make Vaisakhi melas a major crowd puller. People also indulge in shopping and eating spree in the numerous stalls set up in the fairs.

Legends of Vaisakhi

There are various legends associated with the colourful and vibrant festival of Vaisakhi. A study of these interesting legends of Vaisakhi reveal that the day of Vaisakhi is significant not just for Sikhs but also for Hindus and Buddhists alike. Besides, it is joyous to note that as a harvest festival, people of all communities in Punjab celebrate Vaisakhi in a harmonious manner.

Harvest Festival

Vaisakhi Festival marks the time for the harvest of Rabi crops and is therefore celebrated with utmost joy and enthusiasm in the state of Punjab where agriculture is the predominant occupation of the people. To celebrate the occasion, people dress themselves gaily and perform the joyful bhangra and gidda dance on the tune of the dhol. Farmers in Punjab celebrate Vaisakhi Festival to hilt by feasting and merrymaking before they hit on tiring but joyful task of harvesting from the next day.

As a harvest festival, Vaisakhi is also celebrated by different names and with different rituals in several regions of India. Regional celebrations of Vaisakhi are marked as Rongali Bihu in Assam, Naba Barsha in Bengal, Puthandu in Tamil Nadu, Vishu in Kerala and Vaishakha in Bihar.

According to a popular legend in Sikhism, it was on the day of Vaisakhi in 1567 that Guru Amar Das had first institutionalized Vaisakhi as one of the special days when all Sikhs would gather to receive the guru's blessings at Goindwal.

Foundation of Arya Samaj

The day of Vaisakhi Festival is also important for the Hindus as it on this day in



1875 that Swami Dayanand Saraswati founded the Arya Samaj - a reformed sect of Hindus who are devoted to the Vedas for spiritual guidance and have discarded idol worship.

For Buddhists

For the Buddhist, the day of Vaisakhi Festival is significant, as according to a popular legend it was on this auspicious day that Gautam Buddha attained enlightenment or Nirvana under the Mahabodhi tree in the town of Gaya. For this reason, the day of Vaisakhi is celebrated as Buddha Purnima in several parts of the country.

Vaisakhi Celebration in India

The auspicious day of Vaisakhi is celebrated all over India though under different names and with different set of rituals. People of Assam celebrate April 13 as Rongali Bihu, while those in West Bengal celebrate it as Naba Barsha. Bihar celebrates Vaisakhi as Vaishakha in honour of the Sun God, Surya while Kerala celebrates it as Vishu and Tamil Nadu as Puthandu.

In Kashmir, a ceremonial bath and general festivity mark Vaisakhi while in Himachal Pradesh devotees flock to the temple of Jwalamukhi and take a holy dip in the Hot Springs.

THE STORY OF THE BIRTH OF KHALSA

It was the Baisakhi. The year was 1699. As usual, Sikhs from far and near had gathered together at Anandpur to celebrate the New Year Festival. However, the gathering was a bit different that day. This year Guru Gobind Rai had sent a message that every Sikh who could afford to come, must come to the annual fair. They should come to Anandpur with their hair and beard uncut; and that they should wear turbans instead of caps or scarves.

By noon, well over twenty thousand Sikhs (eighty thousand by one estimate) had assembled in the fair ground at Anandpur to participate in the festivals of the Baisakhi Day. Everybody was excited and looked forward to meeting the Guru as if his unusual 'message' was especially sent for him. Also, there was a large and richly festooned tent pitched on a hillock overlooking the extensive fair grounds.

It was afternoon. Word went round that the Guru was in the marquee and he would be coming out soon to meet his Sikhs. All eyes were turned towards the tent and everyone was waiting patiently for Guru's Darshan (appearance) and to receive his blessings. But it took a little longer than expected.

At last their patience was rewarded. Guru Gobind came out of the tent clad in a strangely coloured uniform. It was saffron coloured from top to toe with a blue waist band. There was a long sword hanging from his left side. He walked briskly and came to a specially erected platform near the tent. The skies were clear and bright; and the Guru seemed to be standing so near, although he was actually at some distance from the people in the back. He had a strange smile on his face. Suddenly he stopped staring at the crowd, he pulled his sword out and raised it high with his right hand. There were a million voices and then a sudden hush.

Now, like a thunder, the Guru spoke, "My dear Sikhs, I am glad to see so many of you here today. Today I have planned to offer you something special. but for this I need your help. Indeed, I need your head. I need the head of a Sikh who claims his faith in me."

There was a deadly silence all around. Everybody was too stunned to walk away or even whisper. Then the Guru flashed his sword again, raised his voice and repeated, "My Sikhs, I want a head and nothing less than a head. If anyone among you claims to be a true Sikh, then come forward and prove it." He looked so fierce and blood thirsty.

Before he had finished his last sentence, a tall lean Sikh was already moving forward towards the Guru on the platform. His name was Daya Ram and he was from Lahore. Reaching the Guru, he folded his hands, bent his head forward and said, "O, Lord, the true Guru, I claim to be your humble Sikh. My head is ready for you. Please take it."

Hurriedly, the Guru held him by the arm and led him into the tent. Soon after the crowd inside heard the sound of a sword striking a body. They then heard a voice, Waheguru and then a loud thud. Then they saw the Guru coming out of the tent, looking even more fierce. Fresh blood dripped down his sword. The crowd was truly horrified. Nobody needed to be told what had happened inside the tent.

Once again the Guru stood on the platform. Once again he raised his sword and addressed the crowd, "Well, my Sikhs! I want a second Sikh who would willingly offer his head to me." This new demand made the people even more scared. But they dare not ask or challenge the Guru for his seemingly wrongful act. However, as he was repeating his strange call, another Sikh began to move forward. His name was Dharam Das, and he was from Delhi.

Dharam Das stood before the Guru and said in a humble voice, "O, my true king, I offer my head to you, please take it, it is yours." Now the Guru seemed pleased as he quickly took him inside the tent. This time again, the crowd heard a voice saying Waheguru and then a loud thud. Everyone gasped. They were sure



that Dharam Das, too, had been put to death.

Again the Guru emerged from the tent with a sword drenched in blood. He looked as fierce as before. With a terrifying look in his eyes he again shouted to the crowd, "Come, come my Sikhs, who comes next. I still want some more. Now I want a third head. I want a Sikh who has faith in me."

The people were terrified. They thought perhaps the Guru had gone mad. He was asking too much. Now they were no longer spell bound by the events which had taken place just before. They could think. They began to move; they whispered with each other. They began to slip away from the crowd. Some just fled for their lives.

In the mean time another Sikh named Mohkam Chand had reached the Guru on the platform. He was from Dwarka. With folded hands he requested the Guru to accept his head. The Guru did not wait or waste a minute, and did the same as he had done with the other two.

For the fourth time, the Guru stood before the crowd and repeated his demand for yet another head. Now the crowd was even more restless. Some people were slinking away but most stood their ground. They all were really scared, and it did not take long before they saw yet another Sikh on the platform offering his head to the Guru. His name was Sahib Chand and he was from Bihar. The Guru dealt with him in the same way as with the other three before him.

The crowd was getting thinner every moment. By the time the Guru came back and asked for a fifth head, only the very faithful had stayed behind. But there seemed to be no shortage of volunteers. Soon, another Sikh named Himmat Rai moved forward. He was, at once, led to the tent, but this time the Guru did not return quickly. The people outside began to wonder. Their horror began to change into hope. At least the Guru had stopped asking for more heads.



They waited nervously and prayed 'Waheguru'.

Then the Guru appeared. He was followed by five other men. They, too, were dressed in saffron colour, with blue scarves tied round their waists and turbans. They looked very much like the Guru himself. All stood on the platform facing the crowd. Their faces beamed with joy and satisfaction.

As soon as the people near them recognised that they were the same Sikhs who they thought had been killed by the Guru, they immediately started cheering them and saluted them with loud shouts of 'Sat Siri Akal!' Soon everybody joined in, and the whole atmosphere was vibrant with the deafening sounds Sat Siri Akal. Many people who had left the fair ground in fear and disappointment heard these cheers and rushed back to see what was happening. They could not believe their eyes. Everything had happened so fast. They could not understand. 'Had the dead been brought back to life?'

When the cheering crowd had stopped, the Guru spoke to the crowd, "My dear Sikhs; we

all remember that when Guru Nanak gave a test to his Sikhs only one passed it. His name was Lehna, who then became Guru Angad. Now two hundred years after the first test, I have given you another final test. However this test was not for Guruship, but for the 'nationhood'. I call it the Khalsa, the brotherhood of the pure at heart. You have witnessed the birth of the Khalsa. These Sikhs standing beside me are my Panj Piaray (five beloved ones). Each of them is a saint and a soldier in one. These five Sikhs are dedicated and daring enough to lead; and strong enough to support the edifice of the Khalsa."

Later the Guru introduced his Sikhs to a new kind of initiation ceremony called the Amrit (Baptism). First he Baptised the 'Panj Piaray' and gave them a new name - 'Singh'. Then he himself was baptised by 'the five' and called himself Gobind Singh. After this all Sikhs present at the fair ground were asked to receive Amrit. It was estimated that well over 20,000 Sikhs were baptised the same day.

GURU GOBIND SINGH, THE FOUNDER OF KHALSA

Guru Gobind Singh ji (1666 to 1708) was born “Gobind Rai” in Patna, Bihar in India and was the tenth and last of the ten human form Gurus of Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh became Guru on November 24, 1675 at the age of nine, following in the footsteps of his father Guru Teg Bahadur ji. He was the leader of the Sikh faith, a warrior, a poet, and a philosopher. In the Sikh society, Guru Gobind Singh is considered a perfect example of manhood; highly educated, skilled in horsemanship, armed combat, chivalrous, and generous in character.

Guru Gobind Singh was born as Gobind Rai in Patna to Guru Tegh Bahadur and his wife Mata Gujari. He was born while Guru Tegh Bahadur was touring Assam to spread his teachings.

It was here that Gobind Rai was born to Mata Gujri 1666. It is said that Pir Bhikan Shah approached the child and offered two bowls of milk and water, signifying both the great religions of Hinduism and Islam. The child smiled and placed his hands on both bowls. The Pir bowed in utter humility and reverence to the new Prophet of all humanity.

Guru Gobind Singh was born with a holy mission of which he tells us in his autobiography “Bachitar Natak” (Wonderous Drama). Guru Ji describes the purpose of his coming to this world and why he emerged from the Supreme Reality in human form to carry out his Creator’s command:

“For this purpose was I born, let all virtuous people understand. I was born to advance righteousness, to emancipate the good, and to destroy all evil-doers root and branch.”

When Guru Gobind Singh was stationed at Alamapur, Aurangzeb sent two of his knights, Paindekhan and Dinabeg, there with an army. Their policy was to avoid the battle in proper Alamapur as far as possible. All the Sikhs accosted Paindekhan on the way and started fighting with him with a vengeance. Guru Gobind Singh killed Paindekhan by shooting an arrow through his temple. Similarly, injured Dinabeg had to run away. As a last resort, Aurangzeb cut off the food supply to Alamapur from the Kings of Bhuta, Kulu, Kainthal, Chamba, Dadwal, and Shrinagar; but Sikhs fiercely resisted even this calamity. At last, this cold war ended with the meditation of King of Basali.

When Aurangzeb realised that Guru of Sikhs would not surrender, he dispatched a large army under the leadership of Vajir Khan to Anandpur. While fighting with him, many Sikhs got killed in the war. Sikhs also killed many Muslim soldiers. On that occasion, Sikhs had to beat a retreat against the might of Mughal army.

Due to strict siege laid around Anandpur, the stock of food stored there started getting exhausted. Due to starvation, some good horses and a famous elephant, ‘Prasadi’ also died. Guru Gobind Singh and His family members were also compelled to endure starvation, but he was not ready to leave Anandpur. At last, Vajirkhan promised impunity to everyone in Anandpur on the orders of Aurangzeb. Guru Gobind Singh was aware that the promise made by Mughals was never kept. At last, He escaped the siege with His family members in the night of December 6, 1705. Before leaving, He destroyed as many goods as possible.



Mughal army chased Guru Gobind Singh, and first skirmish took place on the bank of river ‘Shirasa’. Famous knight Bhai Udaysingh was killed in the skirmish. On crossing the river ‘Shirasa’, Guru Gobind Singh reached Chhamkaur and took shelter along with His family members in the fort there. Mughal army also chased Him and laid siege to this fort. The situation became very serious. Guru Gobind Singh and His family members were unarmed. Similarly, there was an acute shortage of food items. His two elder sons, Ajit Singh and Zujar Singh were martyred in an effort to break the siege. Guru Gobind Singh escaped along with His 3 trusted Sikh colleagues, Bhai Dayasing,

Dharamsing, and Mansing. At the end, Guru Gobind Singh also got separated from these 3 Sikhs and was left alone. He had no army, body-guards, wealth, and friends with Him, but he did not desert His pride. He was held up in the forest of ‘Machhivara’. His clothes were torn, He had no footwear. He used to sleep with a flat stone as a pillow.

Nawab of Sirhand took the wife Mata Sahib Kaur and two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh into custody and gave them option either to get killed or converted. At that time, both the sons were younger than 10 years, but they flatly refused to get converted. Nawab Vajirkhan killed both the sons by entombing them live in the wall. The grandmother of the

boys died due to shock following this incident.

Due to death of all her four sons, mother Gujari became very sad. It is said that mother Gujari had asked Guru Gobind Singh, “Where are my sons?”. Guru Gobind Singh replied vividly while pointing out to all His Sikh disciples, “All these are your sons only!”

Mughals committed a horrendous act of killing Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh on 12.12.1705 by entombing them in a wall. Within a period of only 5 years, Banda Singh attacked Sirhand and on completely defeating Mughals, killed Vajirkhan. During the period of this war, Guru Gobind Singh had to sacrifice His entire family for independence.

The panj pyare

Guru Gobind Singh now clad his five volunteers in splendid garments. They had offered their heads to the Guru, and the Guru had now given them himself and his glory. When they were brought outside, they were in the most radiant form. Now people were sorry for not offering their heads.

Guru Gobind Singh put pure water into an iron vessel or Bowl (Batta of Sarbloh) and stirred it with a Khanda (two edged small sword). While stirring the water with Khanda, he recited Gurbani (Five Banis- Japji, Jaap Sahib, Anand Sahib, Swayas, and Chaupai). Sugar crystals called ‘Patasas’ which incidently the Guru’s wife, Mata Sahib Kaur, had brought at that moment, were mixed in the water.

Guru Gobind Singh then stood up with the sacred Amrit (nectar) prepared in the iron bowl. Each of the five faithful, by turn, each kneeling upon his left knee, looked up to the Master to receive the divine amrit. He gave five palmfuls of Amrit to each of them to drink and sprinkled it five times in the eyes, asking them to repeat aloud with each sprinkle, “Waheguru Ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh.” (This means: Khalsa belongs to God and all triumph be to His Name) Then he anointed with five sprinkles in the hair. In this way Amrit was administered to the five faithful from the same bowl. After that he asked them to sip Amrit from the same bowl to signify their initiation into the casteless fraternity of the Khalsa. All the five faithful were baptized in this way by the Guru who then called them the ‘PANJ PYARE’ or Five Beloved Ones.

Guru Gobind Singh gave them the appellation of SINGHS (Lions) and they were named from Daya Ram to Daya Singh, Dharam Das to Dharam Singh, Mohkam Chand to Mohkam Singh, Himmat Chand to Himmat Singh, and Sahib Chand to Sahib Singh. The Guru then addressed them as the supreme, the liberated ones, pure ones and he called them THE KHALSA.

He then ordained them to do the following: They must wear the following articles whose names begin with ‘K’:

KESH – unshorn hair. This represents the natural appearance of sainthood. This is the first token of Sikh faith.

KANGA – A comb to clean the hair.

KACHHA – An underwear to indicate virtuous character.

KARA – An Iron bracelet on the wrist, a symbol of dedication to the Divine Bridegroom.

KIRPAN – A sword symbolising dignity, power and unconquerable spirit.

A BLOODY VAISAKHI: APRIL 13, 1919

100 YEARS LATER: THE MANY MEANINGS OF JALLIANWALA BAGH

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, took place on 13 April 1919 (Baisakhi day) when troops of the British Indian Army under the command of Colonel Reginald Dyer fired rifles into a crowd of Indians, who had gathered in Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar, Punjab.

It has often been said that Britain lost its empire the day when, a hundred years ago, Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer, 55, commanding a regiment of 50 Gurkha and Baluchi riflemen, ordered firing without warning upon an unarmed crowd of over 15,000 Indians gathered at an enclosure called the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, a stone's throw from the Golden Temple.

Dyer had brought two armoured cars with mounted machine guns as well, but the entrance to the Bagh was too narrow to let them in. Perhaps to compensate for this shortcoming, Dyer directed his troops to fire wherever the crowd was densest. Dyer was not constrained by any conception of "the innocents": women, men, and children were all legitimate targets. And, at Dyer's directions, the troops deliberately aimed at those desperately seeking to clamber over the walls to safety. The firing ended only when the troops ran out of ammunition; most of the 1,650 rounds met their target, judging from the official tally of 379 dead and some 1,200 wounded. As the narrator Saleem in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* recalls, Dyer told his men: "Good shooting." The Sunday picnic was over, and the men could take pride in their training: "We have done a jolly good thing."

Spring was in the air: April 13 was Baisakhi, and crowds from the city and the adjoining countryside were milling around the Golden Temple and the vicinity. But the days immediately preceding had been taxing, ridden with uncertainty and violence. The end of World War I, to which, ironically, subjugated Indians had contributed with their own blood, brought forth not intimations of greater freedom but repression.

A committee appointed to inquire into alleged revolutionary conspiracies, headed by Justice Rowlatt, had effectively recommended the suspension of civil liberties. The British resort to preventive detention in an attempt to squelch nationalist agitation was captured in the headlines of one Lahore newspaper with the phrase, "no dalil, no vakeel, no appeal."

Mohandas Gandhi had returned to India four years ago after 20 years in South Africa. He responded to the Rowlatt Act with a call to the nation to observe a general hartal, with this launching himself into national politics. "The whole of India from one end to the other, towns as well as villages," wrote Gandhi in his autobiography, "observed a hartal on that day. It was a most wonderful spectacle."

In the Punjab, however, Lieutenant-Governor Sir Michael O'Dwyer did not take kindly to the slightest expression of defiance of colonial authority and saw the "spectacle" as anything but "wonderful". He fancied himself a great upholder of the 'Punjab tradition', or the idea that ordinary Punjabis were simple folk without any interest in politics, who had reposed their trust in the government and therefore deserved protection from corrupt urban-based nationalist Indians. The iron hand of the colonial state had saved the Punjab from the



"mutiny" of 1857-58 and its corrosive effects, and the peasantry of this State expected the government to preserve "law and order".

At a meeting of the Legislative Council in Lahore, O'Dwyer ridiculed the "recent puerile demonstrations against the Rowlatt Acts", describing them as indicative of "how easily the ignorant and credulous people, not one in a thousand of whom knows anything of the measure, can be misled." The agitators, he ominously warned, "have a day of reckoning in store for them."

What transpired in the days just before the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh need not be recounted at length. Deputy Commissioner Miles Irving betrayed the fact that truly stoked the anxiety of the British when, in a telegram to O'Dwyer on April 9, he described the Muslims and Hindus of Amritsar as having "united". The British responded to this wholly unwelcome show of solidarity with the arrest and expulsion of two local leaders, Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, precipitating large demonstrations. Twenty Indians died in police firings; British-owned banks were attacked by crowds.

Nothing infuriated the British more, however, than the assault on an Englishwoman, Marcia Sherwood: she was badly beaten but saved by other Indians. The white woman was nothing short of sacred, inviolable, 'untouchable' to the Indian. The men of the ruling colonial elite perceived the loss of her dignity as an affront to them.

A crawling lane

Their humiliation had to be avenged, and so

it was: the street where Miss Sherwood had been assaulted was sealed off and Indians had to crawl if they wished to make their way in or out of the lane. A flogging post was set up to whip sense and discipline into those Indians who might think otherwise. Gandhi would go on to describe "the crawling lane" as the site of a national humiliation.

When the firing at Jallianwala Bagh stopped, Dyer did not stop to render aid to the wounded. The city was under martial law, and what the British described as "disturbances" had rocked other parts of the Punjab. Demonstrators were strafed from the air; this initiated a new phase in colonial warfare, and George Orwell in a scintillating essay noted the corruption of the English language entailed in describing such brutal suppression as "pacification". O'Dwyer, who signalled his approval of the actions taken by Dyer in Amritsar, was quite certain that the Punjab had been saved from a dire situation that recalled the rebellion of 1857-58. Indeed, in the months ahead, the spectre of 1857 loomed over the debates that raged on the measures taken by the British to contain the disorder. 1919 was, however, not even remotely akin to 1857, if only because the Indian National Congress was now a formidable organisation and, moreover, the British had failed to fully comprehend that politics had entered into the phase of plebeian protest. Hundreds of people had been killed in cold blood, all because Dyer, by his own admission, had sought to "teach a lesson" to "wicked" Indians and create a "wide impression" of the costs of defying lawful authority.



Dyer directed his troops to fire wherever the crowd was densest. He was not constrained by any conception of "the innocents": women, men, and children were all legitimate targets.

The idea of "fairness" and the notion that the British had instituted a regime of "law and order" that offered Indians deliverance from "despotism" had long been the principal pillars of colonial rule, and an enquiry into a massacre that threatened to stain the good name of the British was all but inevitable. It came in the form of the Disorders Inquiry Commission, presided over by William Hunter of Scotland. Both O'Dwyer and Dyer chafed at the enquiry, and many Britishers in India resented the intrusion into Indian affairs from London. The theory of "the man on the spot" was one of the cornerstones of colonial governmentality. Dyer had been confronted with what he perceived to be a mutiny-like situation, and as the "man on the spot", he alone knew what was required to create a suitable effect. Armchair politicians in Britain had no business to impugn the judgement of experienced officers. *Source: The Hindu*

USCIS REACHES FY 2020 H-1B REGULAR CAP



WASHINGTON (TIP): The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) said it has received a sufficient number of petitions projected as needed to reach the congressionally-mandated 65,000 H-1B visa regular cap for fiscal year 2020. USCIS will next determine if we have received a sufficient number of petitions to meet the 20,000 H-1B visa U.S. advanced degree exemption, known as the master's cap.

The agency will reject and return filing fees for all unselected cap-subject petitions that are not prohibited multiple filings (PDF, 119 KB). USCIS has said that they will continue to accept and process petitions that are otherwise exempt from the cap. Petitions filed for current H-1B workers who have been counted previously against the cap, and who still retain their cap number, are exempt from the FY 2020 H-1B cap. USCIS will continue to accept and process petitions filed to:

- Extend the amount of time a current H-1B worker may remain in the United States;
- Change the terms of employment for current H-1B workers;
- Allow current H-1B workers to change employers; and
- Allow current H-1B workers to work concurrently in a second H-1B position.

INDIAN AMERICAN AMEYA PAWAR DEFEATED IN RUNOFF ELECTION FOR CHICAGO CITY TREASURER



Pawar was first elected to City Council in 2011 and re-elected in 2015

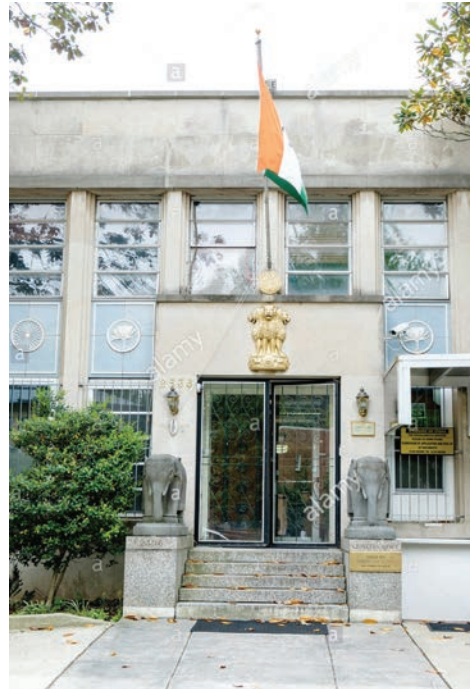
CHICAGO, IL (TIP): State Rep Melissa Conyears-Ervin defeated Indian American Ameya Pawar in the runoff election for Chicago treasurer earlier this month. Conyears-Ervin had 60 percent of the vote to 40 percent for outgoing 47th Ward alderman Pawar. The election was the first contested treasurer race since 1999.

Conyears-Ervin is currently an Illinois state representative, serving the 10th District since 2017. Pawar ran for a new office after vowing to only serve two terms on City Council. Meanwhile Matt Martin, a civil rights attorney at the Illinois Attorney General's office, decisively won 47thward race to succeed Pawar. *(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)*

Indian Embassy Issues Advisory for Indian Students before Seeking Submission in US Universities

WASHINGTON (TIP): The India Embassy in Washington DC has issued an advisory for Indian students who want to enroll in US universities 'to provide general guidance to the students in taking the right decision while seeking admission in US Universities.'

1. In recent years, instances of "fake" Universities set up by the US law enforcement agencies have come to light. According to the US law enforcement, these Universities are run by undercover law enforcement agents of the US, who pose as owners and employees of the University. The sole objective of such operations is to identify recruiters and entities engaged in immigration fraud in the US.
2. The most recent examples of such Universities are the University of Northern New Jersey set up in 2013 and of Farmington University established in 2015 by the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in the Department of Homeland Security of the United States. In both cases, a number of Indian students enrolled into these Universities, paid the requisite tuition fee and were granted F1 visa as well as Curricular Practical Training (CPT) permission.
3. These Indian students, many of whom claimed later that they were caught unawares, were subsequently detained by US law enforcement agencies and subjected to deportation



- proceedings. They were accused of having violated the US immigration laws and of knowingly remaining enrolled in a "fake" University for the sole purpose of continuing their stay in the United States without the intention of pursuing any academic activity.
4. In order to ensure that Indian students do not fall into such "traps", it is advised that due diligence be exercised while seeking admission in US Universities. The fact that a University is duly accredited by

relevant US authorities such as its inclusion in the Student and Exchange Visitor Programme (SEVIS), is not an assurance in itself about the bonafides of a University.

5. Before seeking admission in a University, students are advised to take into account several other factors, some of which are outlined below:
 - i. Does the University function from a campus or merely maintains a website and has administrative premises only? If not, such Universities are not to be regarded as a bonafide educational institution and admission into such Universities should be avoided.
 - ii. Does the University have a faculty and regular instructors/educators? If not, admissions to such Universities should be avoided. It may be noted that such Universities typically employ only administrative staff and their websites have no information in respect of faculty.
 - iii. Does the University have a proper curriculum, hold regular classes and actively implement academic or educational activity? If not, admissions to such Universities may be avoided. Students admitted to such Universities, even if in possession of regular student visa may be tried for violation of visa norms and subjected to detention and subsequent deportation from the US.

US threatens tariffs on \$11 bn of Europe goods

WASHINGTON (TIP): The US is threatening to impose tariffs on European goods worth billions of dollars, intensifying a long-running dispute over aircraft subsidies, media reported. The US Trade Representative proposed levies on hundreds of categories of exports on Tuesday in retaliation for the European Union allegedly providing subsidies to Airbus (EADS).

The goods range from Airbus jets and their components to European staples like wine, cheese and frozen fish, according to CNN. These exports are worth about \$11 billion every year to European countries, roughly equal to the damage the US believes the subsidies inflicts on Boeing (BA) and the US economy. "When the EU ends these harmful subsidies, the additional US duties imposed in response can be lifted," US Trade Representative Lighthizer said in the statement.

The proposed tariffs are subject to public consultation in the US and arbitration at the World Trade Organisation, which is expected to deliver its findings in the summer.

The dispute dates back to 2004, when EU authorities said Boeing received \$19



The goods range from Airbus jets and their components to European staples like wine, cheese and frozen fish, according to CNN.

billion in unfair subsidies from federal and state governments between 1989 and 2006. The US government filed a similar claim that year over European subsidies to Airbus. The World Trade Organisation has handed down favorable rulings to both sides, underscoring the complexity of the dispute.

The trade watchdog said last month that the US had failed to stop giving Boeing illegal tax subsidies in Washington State, but cleared it of other allegations.

It issued a similar ruling last year in the case brought by the US over Airbus. It said Europe had breached some rules on subsidies but dismissed other

allegations. The tariff threat issued by the US on Tuesday risks further escalation. "Our ultimate goal is to reach an agreement with the EU to end all WTO-inconsistent subsidies to large civil aircraft," Lighthizer said.

A spokesperson for the European Commission said on Tuesday that the bloc could soon launch its own retaliation tied to the Boeing case.

"The EU remains open for discussions with the US, provided these are without preconditions and aim at a fair outcome," the spokesperson added.

American threats to hit the European Union with tariffs come amid rising trade tensions between the bloc and President Donald Trump's White House.

Trump is considering whether to impose tariffs of up to 25 per cent on European vehicle imports, a threat that has unnerved automakers in the industrial powerhouse of Germany.

The US has already imposed tariffs on European steel and aluminum exports.

The European Union retaliated with tariffs on more than \$3 billion worth of American exports in June. The levies hit products such as motorcycles, orange juice, bourbon, peanut butter, cigarettes and denim. *(Source: IANS)*

BJP MP sues Rahul Gandhi for contempt over remarks on PM

NEW DELHI (TIP): BJP lawmaker Meenakshi Lekhi has filed a petition for criminal contempt against Congress president Rahul Gandhi in the Supreme Court over his comments welcoming the top court order in the Rafale case earlier this week. The order was seen as a setback to the government.

The BJP spokesperson accused Mr Gandhi of contempt of court and said he attributed the Supreme Court as saying "chowkidar chor hai (watchman is a thief)" in its order. The court will hear her request on Monday.

On Wednesday, rejecting the centre's argument that classified documents accessed by the media on the Rafale fighter jet deal can't be evidence, the Supreme Court said it would examine the documents while considering petitions asking for a review of its earlier order that gave the government a clean chit.

Welcoming the court order, Rahul Gandhi had said, "The entire country is saying that chowkidar has committed theft. It is a day of celebration that the Supreme Court has talked about justice".

Soon after his comments, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman hit back at Mr Gandhi and accused him of contempt of court, saying he had misquoted the top court. Ms Sitharaman said the court order was limited to whether it should consider the documents the government said were illegally obtained by petitioners. "Rahul Gandhi has completely showed his frustration by saying what the court had not said," Sitharaman said.

Election Commission bans Modi biopic during election period

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Election Commission on Wednesday banned the screening of the biopic on Prime Minister Narendra Modi during poll period, saying any such film that sub-served purpose of any political entity or individual should not be displayed in the electronic media.

The EC order came a day before the movie was to be released.

An official of the commission said the order also applies to airing the biopic on NaMo TV.

The official referred to a paragraph in the order that said: "Any poster or publicity material concerning any such certified content, which either depicts a candidate (including prospective) for the furtherance (or purported to further) of electoral prospects, directly or indirectly, shall not be put on display in electronic media in the area where MCC is in force".

Actor Vivek Oberoi, who plays Narendra Modi in the biopic, cancelled a press meet scheduled at Nagpur on Wednesday after the order came.



SC directs all political parties to furnish receipts of electoral bonds to poll panel

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on Friday directed all political parties to furnish receipts of electoral bonds and details of identity of donors in a sealed cover to the Election Commission.

In an interim order, the apex court also directed all political parties to provide details of the amount and bank account of donors by May 30 to the poll panel.

The order was pronounced by a bench comprising Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices Deepak Gupta and Sanjiv Khanna.

The order was passed on a plea of an NGO, which challenged the validity of the scheme and sought that either the issuance of electoral bonds be stayed or names of donors be made public to ensure transparency in the poll process.

The government had notified the Electoral Bond Scheme 2018 on January 2, 2018.

As per provisions of the scheme, electoral bonds may be purchased by a person, who is a citizen of India or incorporated or established in India. A person being an individual can buy



electoral bonds, either singly or jointly with other individuals.

Only political parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and which secured not less than one per cent of votes polled in the last

general election to the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of the State, shall be eligible to receive electoral bonds.

Electoral bonds shall be encashed by an eligible political party only through a bank account with authorized bank. *Source: PTI*

PM Modi can lose, don't forget 2004, says Sonia Gandhi

RAEBARELI (TIP): Senior Congress leader and UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Thursday filed her nomination from Raebareli in Uttar Pradesh. Prior to filing the nomination papers, Sonia performed a "havan" where her children Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi were also present.

Sonia later also held a roadshow before reaching the Collectorate office to file her nomination from the Lok Sabha seat.

Replying to a question on the invincibility of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sonia said, "Don't forget 2004, Vajpayee ji was invincible but we won".

Responding to the same question, Congress president Rahul Gandhi said, "There have been many people in Indian history who had the arrogance to believe that they're invincible and bigger than the people of India. Narendra Modi, for the last 5 years, has done nothing for the people of India. His invincibility will be in full view after election results".

Sonia, who has been representing the seat since 2004, is contesting against Dinesh Pratap Singh, who had recently joined the BJP after leaving the Congress.

Voting in Raebareli will take place on May 6 in the fifth phase of the General Elections. The SP-BSP-RLD alliance in Uttar Pradesh has not fielded any candidate from the constituency.

Sonia has emerged victorious four times from the seat since 2004. The Congress has won the seat 19 times since 1957 and lost only three times - 1977, 1996 and 1998. In 1977, Raj Narain of Bharatiya Lok Dal defeated the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. She got 526434 votes in 2014 Lok Sabha polls while her contender Ajay Agrawal secured 173721 votes.

There were 15.94 lakh voters in the constituency in 2014 and the poll percentage was 51.73.

The constituency has five assembly segments - Bachhrawan, Harchandpur, Rae Bareli, Sareni and Unchahar.

Veteran politicians like Feroze Gandhi, Indira Gandhi, Arun Nehru, Sheila Kaul and Satish Sharma represented the seat in the past.

"I'll Be Back, As Will Citizenship Bill": PM Modi

The BJP will focus on passing the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill once it returns to power after the Lok Sabha elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said today, indicating that the party has no plans to back off on an issue that spurred intense protests in the Northeast for months.

Addressing an election rally in Assam's Silchar, PM Modi said that the legislation - aimed at making it easier for non-Muslim immigrants



from neighbouring countries to obtain Indian citizenship - will be implemented after "proper consultations with all sections of society". He, however, assured the people of Assam that their language, culture and identity will be protected when the legislation is taken up for consideration again.

Although the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha on January 8, it could not be introduced in the upper house. Congress president Rahul Gandhi, who believes that the legislation is unabashedly communal, has vowed to prevent it from getting through the Rajya Sabha.

The Prime Minister, in his address, shredded the allegation that the legislation is founded on religious discrimination. "The Congress did not consider minorities in Pakistan while dividing the country during Independence. The fundamentalists tortured our brothers and sisters in Pakistan. Is Congress not responsible for this? People going to mandirs and gurudwaras in Bangladesh and Pakistan had to come to India," he said, adding that the "sins of the Congress turned such people into foreigners in their own land".

PM Modi also promised to do everything in his power to safeguard Muslim women from the "curse of triple talaq". "We will strongly try to pass the legislation after we come to power at the centre," he said. "Even if the Congress and other opposition parties try, they will not be able to do anything (to stop the legislation). Our daughters will get justice."



Prof I.S. Saluja

Rarely is found a person in the history of mankind who has left such a deep imprint on the life and character of people within a brief span of 42 years. More than three hundred years later he still continues to move millions of men and women not only in India, the great subcontinent of Asia but the entire world.

From the five beloveds he baptized in 1699 today he has a following of 25 million and growing with the religion he gave enjoying fifth position among the world's most favored religions.

Guru Gobind Singh, the man I am referring to, was a unique person. The image of God he portrayed is exactly the same as painted by Guru Nanak Dev, the First Master of the Sikhs. The Mool Mantra of Jaap Sahib (a poetic work of

Guru Gobind Singh) provides an interesting study from this point of view.

The Almighty of Guru Gobind Singh is the "True Lord of All, has neither distinguishing signs nor marks, no one can discern him, and beyond limitations and is manifested as the Light of the Spirit, the Lord God of a myriad Indras and is proclaimed the King of Kings, the Master of the three worlds, of gods, men and demons.

Guru Gobind Singh gave the message of equality and fraternity i.e. Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of mankind. He said, some are Hindus, some Turks, some are of Shia persuasion and some of Imam Shafai mankind is all of one race.

Eminent historian Cunningham states that though the last apostle of the Sikhs did not see his own ends accomplished, he effectively raised the dormant energy of a vanquished people and filled them with

Here's a Day to Celebrate

the lofty, although fitful, longing for social freedom and national ascendancy, the true adjunct of that purity of worship which had been preached by Guru Nanak.

Guru Gobind Singh not only patronized the Sikh institution of sacrifice, he actually sacrificed his whole family. Guru Gobind Singh is an ideal and should be an idol for the young generation of today. All pessimism will banish and instead a robust optimism will fill our youth should they imbibe the ideals and values of the Guru.

Let them give up their weakness for intoxicants and have faith in their innate energy to countenance any challenge and overcome any obstacle. Let them follow the Guru's progressive humanism empowered with spirituality and sacrifice. Let them derive strength and courage from the Tenth Guru who expressed all optimism and positive attitude for the

victory of the forces of righteousness over evil and repression.

Sikh culture and religion are a rich heritage to be protected and glorified. The mission of Guru Nanak-Guru Gobind Singh is cosmic. May the Almighty bestow His blessings on all human beings, particularly the young generation of the Sikhs and fill them with tremendous strength and will to establish the Kingdom of God on Earth. May the Lord Almighty rid the Sikh leaders of arrogance and drunkenness of power! May they learn to be meek, humble, caring, loving and giving, following the dictates of our Gurus!

Vaisakhi is a day to thank the Tenth Master for all His gifts to His Panth and also a day to dedicate ourselves to His mission. It is a day to celebrate the birth of the Khalsa, the pure, the beloved of the Guru.

AS I SEE IT



By Ven Parameswaran

Elections create mandate and opportunity for economic revolution

*India needs to emulate China for faster economic growth
Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, S.Korea are models of growth*

The USA has been the super economic power for more than 100 years by applying capitalism. At the end of World War II, Japan lost everything. However, Japan made obsolete the old economic theory that a country needs land, labor and capital. Within a decade after World War II, Japan managed to become the second global economic power. How did she do it? Japan followed the lead of the USA in capitalism and applied the latest technologies to manufacture cars, trucks, radio, t.v. and all kinds of electronic products for export. Alongside, the four tigers of Asia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and S.Korea joined the bandwagon and demonstrated economic prosperity. All these countries manufactured industrial and consumer goods for export.

CHINA: The Communist China was established by Mao-Tse-Tung in 1949. Chinese economy was far behind India. From 1949 to 1979, for 30 years, China experimented with the Soviet Union's socialism including 5-year plans. China got nowhere. In 1979, The US recognized China. Deng Xia Ping successor to Mao dynasty started new economic revolution for China by inviting the US and giving its business carte blanche to set up factories in China. China, though communist, was practical. China did not hesitate to apply capitalistic tools to attract foreign investment. China opened its economy and liberalized it to the maximum. China became the most comfortable country for foreigners to do business. With the help of the USA, China built its huge and modern infrastructure. China started manufacturing 100 million pieces of varieties of clothing for men and women for export. Because of huge comparative advantage, the USA closed many of its manufacturing and started importing from China. Pretty soon, in a few years,



almost everything in the USA was made in China. China's economic revolution has been highly successful in creating massive employment. Its GDP grew at an average of 10% for two decades and China became the second global economic power.

China's meteoric rise over the past half a century is one of the most striking examples of the impact of opening an economy up to global markets. Over the period the country has undergone a shift from a largely agrarian society to an industrial powerhouse. In the process it has seen sharp increases in productivity and wages that have allowed China to become the world's second largest economy. As of 2015, the manufacturing industrial sectors contribute 40% of China's GDP. The manufacturing sector produced 44.1% of the GDP in 2004 and accounts for 11.3 of total employment in 2006. China is the leading manufacturer of chemical fertilizers, cement and steel.

CHINA SHIFTS FROM PUBLIC TO PRIVATE OWNERSHIP: The high

“China's meteoric rise over the past half a century is one of the most striking examples of the impact of opening an economy up to global markets. Over the period the country has undergone a shift from a largely agrarian society to an industrial powerhouse. In the process it has seen sharp increases in productivity and wages that have allowed China to become the world's second largest economy.”

growth rates of the reform period were caused by the massive mobilization of resources, and the shift of control of those resources from PUBLIC to PRIVATE ownership which allowed the improved efficiency in the management of those resources.

AGENDA FOR THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA: The historical experience of the USA, Japan, the Four Tigers (Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, S.Korea), and China have amply demonstrated the advantages of Capitalism. Like China, India also made a mistake of following Socialism styled by the Soviet Union for almost 72 years. India is nowhere and still called a developing country. The No.1 issue for the elections is EMPLOYMENT. India cannot create massive employment unless India creates capability and capacity to manufacture industrial and consumer goods for export as all others did. India does not have to invent a new wheel. Japan, the Four Tigers, and China have given a clear road map for economic

advancement.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S OFFER OF 'CLOSEST ALLY' RELATIONSHIP TO INDIA HAS BIPARTISAN SUPPORT: Indian American Congressman Ami Bera of California has been aggressive in advocating that the new "USA-India Closest Ally" relationship should be institutionalized to enable India to benefit fully without any reservations. Indian American congressmen Krishnamoorthy of Illinois and Khanna of California have joined Ami Bera by supporting him. Never before India has received such a special treatment and support from the U.S.A. since India got independence in 1947.

IT IS UPTO INDIA TO CAPITALIZE ON THE 'CLOSE ALLY' relationship. Prime Minister of India has no choice but to launch an economic revolution that will create modern infrastructure, huge factories and massive employment.

Like China, India must rid of the Soviet style socialism and embark on capitalism. India must sell all its 46 Public Sector corporations and 245 Public Enterprises.

On May 23, the votes will be counted. As politics stand today, Modi is likely to be the leading winner and he will be asked to form the new government. It is hoped he will be successful in aligning with other partners. Because of America's "closest ally" relationship, India's security is also strengthened. India must focus on policies that will help India become a global economic power. India must fully open its economy to the world and liberalize it.

(The author, Chairman, Asian American Republican Committee was President & CEO, First Asian Securities Corporation, N.Y. He can be reached at vpwaren@gmail.com)

The Sword of Damocles hangs over Democracy in India



By George Abraham

“

That ideology is based on a common thread promoted by the Sangh Parivar organizations and is called the 'Hindu Nationalist agenda of BJP.' The ultimate goal of the agenda is to transform the pluralistic and democratic India to a Hindu nation where the majority religion will have the pre-eminence and minorities relegated to subservient role probably being denied equal protection or opportunities, that too, to a substantial segment of the population.

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For many people in India, democracy means a majoritarian rule. Once a party or a coalition is elected, it acts as if it has the moral and legal right to do what it pleases! That is the crossroad where India is today with Narendra Modi in power disregarding the aspirations of the minorities and diminishing the power structures that provided political and social equilibrium in the last 7 decades or more.

India has not only survived through the growing pains of a democratic experiment but prospered as a nation under a Nehruvian vision and the constitutional umbrella engineered by the great B.R. Ambedkar. Together, they have built Institutions that guaranteed life and property of every Citizen regardless of their background or circumstances and provided an opportunity to climb up the ladder of success and economic prosperity. What we should have witnessed is a continuum of those policies and practices resulting in more openness and tolerance, and yet the opposite seems to have taken place.

Many liberal critics of the Modi regime sincerely believe that his administration is run by a political dogma inspired by the RSS ideology. His long association with that organization and penchant for appointing many of the chief ministerial candidates from that feared cadre may have given such an impression to the public. It is suspected that many of his illiberal policies and reluctance to err on the side of liberty and justice may be the direct result of his commitment to that ideology.

That ideology is based on a common thread promoted by the Sangh Parivar organizations and is called the 'Hindu Nationalist agenda of BJP.' The ultimate goal of the agenda is to transform the pluralistic and democratic India to a Hindu nation where the majority religion will have the pre-eminence and minorities relegated to subservient role probably being denied equal protection or opportunities, that too, to a substantial segment of the population.

What is happening to the soul of Indian democracy? After five years of BJP rule, lynching has become the national pastime, and the mobocracy rules the day. Attacks on innocent civilians continued even after India's Supreme Court requested the government to enact new legislation to end an increase in mob violence and lynching that have reportedly killed over a hundred people accused of cattle theft or other bigoted reasoning.

For astute political observers, these are not isolated incidents, but rather a direct result of evolving national policies that have provided cover and credence to vicious gangs and thugs who are engaged in this type of violence in the name of religion. The mob is appeared to be succeeding every day in tearing up the secular fabric of a nation while the Government's own actions tend to weaken the Institutions of democracy at every juncture.

Let us take a look at some of these developments in the last five years under the Modi administration that is having a



transformational impact on the society and accomplishing their stated goals:

The weakening of Institutions:

1. Disrespecting Parliamentary Democracy:

The constitution framers created a democratic system wherein the legislature would make laws, the executive would implement laws and be accountable to parliament, and an independent judiciary would enforce and interpret the laws. They also put in systems of checks and balances among these three organs of the state. However, over the years, these three organs of the country have pushed the boundaries of their relationship with one another.

NDA has the majority in the Lok Sabha where they pass ordinary bills and then pass it on to Rajya Sabha as Money bills to circumvent their numerical impairment in that body. They also have shown utter disregard to deliberate on essential bills bypassing various parliamentary committees. It should also be noted that Lok Sabha passed the Finance bill of 2018 without even debate against the objections by the opposition.

2) Running interference with Law Enforcement :

Agencies such as India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Enforcement Directorate of the Finance Ministry, the Income Tax authorities and even local police forces are often accused of doing Government's bidding. The opposition has charged that their leaders have been frequently targeted for harassment which they consider as a political vendetta for expressing their opinions critical of the government.

3) Assaulting on the Independence of Judiciary:

India has witnessed an extraordinary news conference by four members of the Collegium revealing the skew in the allocation of work and lack of transparency by Dipak Misra, a former Chief Justice of India. According to the retired Justice Jasti Chelameswar, the second senior most judge at the time, "we tried to persuade the CJI to take steps but failed. Unless the Institution of

Supreme Court is preserved, democracy won't survive in the country". There is indeed a cloud still casting a pall over the recent verdicts on Loya and Mecca Masjid cases.

4) Weakening of RTI:

Since the Narendra Modi government came to power, access to information through the Right to Information (RTI) Act has diminished greatly, according to the annual report of the Central Information Commission (CIC) for 2014-15. "Every Indian deserves to know the truth, and the BJP wants to hide the truth. The BJP believes the truth must be hidden from the people and they must not question people in power. The changes proposed to the RTI will make it a useless Act," Rahul Gandhi said that on Twitter.

5) Influencing the Election Commission:

Shiv Sena, a member of the NDA coalition, has dubbed the election commission as a 'Tawaif (Mistress) of a political party. Coming from an ally, it only amplifies the long-held suspicion by many that election commission has become a tool increasingly in the hands of the BJP government. "People are losing faith in the voting system," Shiv Sena spokesperson Sanjay Raut told ANI.

6. Muzzling of Freedom:

Freedom of Conscience is fundamental to all other liberties. It is innate and God-given. It is guaranteed under the Indian Constitution. However, it is open season on those who freely exercise it. President Ronald Reagan once spoke eloquently the importance of maintaining the freedom we all cherish. He said "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same".

a) Stifling of Individual thought and expression:

Professor M.M Kalburgi and Govind Pansare were active in combating the organized mysticism and cultures of gullibility widespread at the "popular" level.

contd on page 39

Indian American Researcher to Receive John Dirks Canada Gairdner Award for Global Health



Dr. Vikram Patel is the Pershing Square Professor of Global Health and Welcome Trust Principal Research Fellow at Harvard Medical School

NEW YORK (TIP): Dr Vikram Harshad Patel, whose research has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), will receive the John Dirks Canada Gairdner Award for Global Health. This honor recognizes the world's top scientists and their outstanding achievements in global health research. Dr. Patel will receive the award on October 24, 2019, in Toronto, Canada.

Dr. Vikram Patel is the Pershing Square Professor of Global Health and Welcome Trust Principal Research Fellow at Harvard Medical School. He is also a professor in the Department of Global Health and Population within the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, an adjunct professor of the Public Health Foundation of India, and co-founder of the Indian NGO, Sangath, where he conducts his NIMH-supported research.

Over the last decade, Dr. Patel has developed and evaluated ways to bridge the 'science to service' treatment gap in countries with limited resources. He focuses on mental health interventions that can be delivered by community health workers and lay counselors in low- and middle-income countries where there are typically too few specialized mental health care providers available.

"Dr. Patel's research has helped demonstrate the potential of these task-sharing, psychosocial interventions and how action can be taken to address mental disorders even in low-resource settings, said NIMH Director Joshua Gordon, M.D., Ph.D. "These projects can have an immediate public health impact, both locally where they are carried out and in the United States, where lessons learned can be applied to underserved populations."

Since its inception eight years ago, only one Canada Gairdner Global Health Award per year is bestowed upon a scientist whose advances have - or will potentially have - a significant impact on health outcomes in the developing world.

Indian American Computer Scientist Named Fellow of International Association of Cryptologic Research

NEW YORK (TIP): Amit Sahai, professor of computer science in the UCLA Samueli School of Engineering, was elected as a fellow of the International Association for Cryptologic Research. The association is an international organization that aims to enhance the security of computation and communications. Sahai was cited for "fundamental contributions, including to secure computation, zero knowledge, and functional encryption" and for service to the association.

Sahai is also the director of the Center for Encrypted Functionalities, a research center funded by the National Science Foundation. His research interests are in security and cryptography, and theoretical computer science more broadly. He is the co-inventor of attribute-based encryption, functional encryption and indistinguishability obfuscation.

Sahai is a Fellow of the ACM and a Fellow of the IACR. He received his



Sahai is a Fellow of the ACM and a Fellow of the IACR

Ph.D. in Computer Science from MIT in 2000. From 2000 to 2004, he was on the faculty at Princeton University; in 2004 he joined UCLA, where he currently holds the position of Professor of Computer Science. His research interests are in security and

cryptography, and theoretical computer science more broadly. He is the co-inventor of Attribute-Based Encryption, Functional Encryption, and Indistinguishability Obfuscation. He has published more than 100 original technical research papers at venues such as the ACM Symposium on Theory of Computing (STOC), CRYPTO, and the Journal of the ACM. He has given a number of invited talks at institutions such as MIT, Stanford, and Berkeley, including the 2004 Distinguished Cryptographer Lecture Series at NTT Labs, Japan. Professor Sahai is the recipient of numerous honors; he was named an Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Research Fellow in 2002, received an Okawa Research Grant Award in 2007, a Xerox Foundation Faculty Award in 2010, a Google Faculty Research Award in 2010, a 2012 Pazy Memorial Award, and a 2016 ACM CCS Test of Time Award. For his teaching, he was awarded the 2016 Lockheed Martin Excellence in Teaching Award.

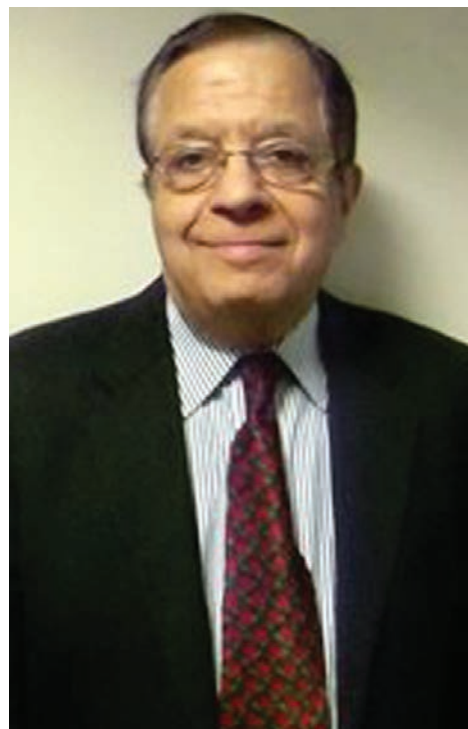
Indian American Optometrist Honored with NAP's Nicholas Andrew Cummings Award

NEW YORK (TIP): Dr. Satya Verma OD, FAAO, FNAP, Diplomate, director of Externship Programs for Salus University's Optometry program, was awarded National Academies of Practice (NAP) Nicholas Andrew Cummings Award during its recent forum in Pentagon City, VA last month. The award is given to a member of a NAP Academy who has demonstrated outstanding or extraordinary contributions to inter-professional healthcare.

"It was a great honor and I am proud of my involvement in the evolution of NAP," said Dr. Verma about winning the award. The award also marked the end of Dr. Verma's term as president of NAP.

In 1995, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Salus University's founding college, the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO), seventy-six people of note were awarded the President's Medal of Honor. On Friday, April 26, 2019, thirty-five additional notable individuals including DR Verma, will be awarded Presidential Medals to commemorate the 100th anniversary of PCO and the 10th anniversary of Salus.

Dr. Satya Verma had an optometric degree from India and completed some graduate work in the U.S. when he came to PCO to join the faculty in 1971; he subsequently also became a student pursuing his Doctor of Optometry degree. Forty-seven years later, Dr. Verma, an associate professor and director of the PCO Externship Program, now holds the distinction of being among the longest-serving PCO and Salus employee. Among his many



Dr. Verma has held numerous local, state and national leadership positions including serving as the 100th president of the POA

accomplishments at PCO and Salus is launching the low-vision clinic mobile clinic to serve the visual needs of home-bound patients.

Dr. Verma has held numerous local, state and national leadership positions including serving as the 100th president of the POA. It was during his tenure that the Pennsylvania Therapeutic Law was passed. He also formerly held positions as the secretary of the Indian Optometric Association; chair of Vision Care Section of APHA, chair of National

Council on Aging (NCOA); and chair of National Voluntary Organization for Independent Living for the Aging and Health Promotion Institute of NCOA. He was one of the longest serving board members of NCOA; a delegate for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at the 1995 White House conference on Aging; chair and co-chair of the National Academy of Practice in Optometry; and president of NAP. Dr. Verma has also served the AAO as chair of the Public Health and Environment Vision Section and the AOA as chair of Professional Relations Committee and currently serves on its Ethics and Values Committee. He helped to facilitate the passage of the Medicare Act, which allowed optometrists to be viewed as physicians.

Among Dr. Verma's many honors is the Optometrist of the Year Award (twice); George Gottschalk Award and Jerry Davidoff Award from the POA; Optometrist of the Year from the AOA; Carl Koch Award and Life Fellowship Award from the AAO; Distinguished Service Award from Prevent Blindness and Vision Care section of APHA; Geneva Mathiason Award from NCOA; Professional Excellence award from the Council Indian Organizations; James A Boucher Award from the National Academy of Practice in Optometry; and most recently the Nicholas A. Cummings Award from the National Academies of Practice. Dr. Verma was one of only four optometrists selected for the Health Policy Fellowship.

Will Overcome Effect Of Sanctions, Says North Korea's Kim Jong Un: Report

The remarks were Kim Jong Un's first official comment on the North's position since talks on denuclearisation with Washington broke down in Vietnam in February, in part over Pyongyang's demands for immediate sanctions relief.

SEOUL (TIP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has struck a defiant note over his failed summit with US President Donald Trump in Hanoi and insisted Pyongyang would overcome the effect of sanctions, state media reported on April 12.

The remarks were Kim's first official comment on the North's position since talks on denuclearisation with Washington broke down in Vietnam in February, in part over Pyongyang's demands for immediate sanctions relief.

Trump is set to host South Korean President Moon Jae-in at the White House later on Thursday, seeking to rekindle dialogue with the North.

Kim told top officials of the ruling Workers' Party on Wednesday to push ahead with "self-reliance" to undermine the sanctions, the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

He said developing the socialist economy would "deal a telling blow to the hostile forces who go with bloodshot eyes miscalculating that sanctions can bring the DPRK to its knees," the report said, using the acronym for the North's official name.

Kim made no mention of nuclear weapons, nor did he criticise his US



counterpart, according to KCNA.

Trump and Kim held their first landmark summit in Singapore last June, where the pair signed a vaguely-worded agreement on the "denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula". But the failure to reach agreement at their second summit in Hanoi -- which broke up without even a joint statement -- has raised questions over the future of the wider process.

Both sides expressed willingness to

talk further and Trump has repeatedly said since that he maintains good relations with his North Korean counterpart, boasting he had blocked new sanctions planned for Pyongyang.

North Korea has also been careful not to criticise Trump personally, while saying last month that sanctions against it were an "action against humanity to destroy modern civilisation and turn the society back in a mediaeval dark age".

(NDTV)

A new 'bomb cyclone' blizzard hits US plains, Midwest

DENVER (TIP): A "bomb cyclone" blizzard, the second in a month, hit the Rockies on April 10 and spun into the US Plains and Midwest, bringing fears of more flooding in areas still recovering from last month's deluge. Warm spring temperatures on April 10, upwards of 80 degrees Fahrenheit in Denver, gave way to frigid 20s, heavy snow, gale-force winds and life-threatening conditions, the National Weather Service said. "It is a bomb cyclone, the second we've had," said Brian Hurley, a meteorologist with the weather service's Weather Prediction Center in Maryland. "This is like a slow-moving snowstorm inside a hurricane. Reuters

Russia MPs approve controversial bill restricting internet

MOSCOW (TIP): Russian lawmakers on April 11 approved in a key second reading a controversial bill that would allow Moscow to cut off the country's internet traffic from foreign servers. Lawmakers in the State Duma, parliament's lower house, voted 320 to 15 to pass the proposed bill. It is set to take effect on November 1 once it formally becomes law. The proposed measures would create technology to monitor internet routing and steer Russian internet traffic away from foreign servers, ostensibly to prevent a foreign country from shutting it down. AFP

NZ House votes to ban weapons

WELLINGTON (TIP): New Zealand's Parliament on Wednesday passed sweeping gun laws that outlaw military style weapons, less than a month after mass shootings at two mosques in the city of Christchurch left 50 persons dead and dozens wounded. A Bill outlawing most automatic and semi-automatic weapons and banning components that modify existing weapons was passed by a vote of 119 to 1 in the House of Representatives after an accelerated process of debate and public submission. — AP

Canada set to make special visa scheme permanent, Indians likely to benefit

TORONTO / NEW DELHI (TIP): Indians who aspire to work and settle overseas, have a reason to cheer now. Canada is set to make the Global Talent Stream (GTS) programme, which offers a hassle-free and quick route to work in the country, a permanent scheme. Indians having a science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) background, are set to gain the most out of this, the Times of India said in a report. (TOI)

Five women nominated for Booker International Prize

LONDON (TIP): Polish novelist Olga Tokarczuk, who scooped last year's Booker International Prize for fiction, was named on April 10 among five female nominees for this year's prestigious literary award.

Six writers in total have been shortlisted for the British-based prize which celebrates the translated English-language versions of novels from around the world. Tokarczuk, who won the 2018 award with the translation of "Flights", is nominated this year for "Drive Your Plow Over The Bones Of The Dead".

She is nominated alongside Jokha Alharthi from Oman—the first shortlisted writer from the Gulf—France's Annie Ernaux, Marion Poschmann of Germany, Juan Gabriel Vasquez from Colombia and Chile's Alia Trabucco Zerán.

The winner is to be announced in London on May 21. The 50,000 pound (USD 65,000, 58,000 euro) prize is divided equally between the winning book's author and translator. "Wisdom in all its forms is here," said historian and author Bettany Hughes, who chairs the judging panel. "Unexpected and unpredictable narratives compelled us to choose this vigorous shortlist. Subversive and intellectually ambitious with welcome



flashes of wit, each book nourishes creative conversation.

"We were struck by the lucidity and supple strength of all the translations." The International Prize, which has been running since 2005, is the counterpart to the Booker Prize, which is awarded for books originally written in English.

The International Prize is open to books translated into English and published by British publishers between May 1, 2018 and April 30, 2019.

"Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead" by Tokarczuk, considered the most talented Polish novelist of her generation, starts with the disappearance of an eccentric woman's dogs. When two local hunters are murdered, she is drawn into the investigation.

Alharthi's "Celestial Bodies",

translated from Arabic, tells of Oman's transformation through the loves and losses of three sisters.

Ernaux's novel "The Years", originally written in French, is a narrative of France from 1941 to 2006, told through memory and impressions of the past.

"The Pine Islands" by Poschmann, who has won both of Germany's premier poetry prizes, is about a journeyman lecturer who flees his cheating wife for Japan and goes on a pilgrimage following the travel writings of a poet.

"The Shape of the Ruins" by Vasquez is a fictional account of his investigations into conspiracy theories surrounding the assassinations of Colombian politicians. z"The Remainder" by Trabucco, also translated from Spanish, tells the story of three children of ex-militants overcoming Chile's complex past.

The shortlist:

Jokha Alharthi (Oman): "Celestial Bodies"—Annie Ernaux (France): "The Years"—Marion Poschmann (Germany): "The Pine Islands"—Olga Tokarczuk (Poland): "Drive Your Plow Over The Bones Of The Dead"—Juan Gabriel Vasquez (Colombia): "The Shape Of The Ruins"—Alia Trabucco Zerán (Chile): "The Remainder". — AFP



ALIA BHATT OPENS UP ON CRITICISM FOR ROMANCING SALMAN KHAN IN INSHALLAH

When it was announced that Salman Khan and Alia Bhatt were all set to come together for the first time in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Inshallah*, fans were super-excited. However, some criticised the pairing, citing the age difference of 27 years between them.

Alia is completely unfazed by the detractors. In an interview with an entertainment website, she said, "I didn't get any criticism. I think I got a lot of excitement. I think speculation is also a form of excitement in a way and why shouldn't there be speculation? There should be and at least I am not bothered by that and I don't think Salman or Bhansali sir are bothered."

"I think this is a filmmaker who has given us very good films, he is someone who we all are very fond of and I think we should just trust him with his vision," she added.

Alia is extremely excited about being a part of *Inshallah* and revealed in a series of tweets that it has "been a long wait". "I was 9 when I first walked into Sanjay Leela Bhansali's office, all nervous and hoping and praying that I would be in his next film. It's been a long wait," she wrote.

"Dream with your eyes wide open, they say, and I did. Sanjay sir and Salman Khan are magical together and I can't wait to join them on this beautiful journey called *Inshallah*," the Raazi actress wrote in another tweet.

Salman and Sanjay will collaborate after two decades in *Inshallah*. They last worked together in the 1999 hit *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam* (not counting Salman's special appearance in *Saawariya*).

Inshallah is scheduled to open in theatres on Eid 2020.



JANHVI KAPOOR CONFESSES THAT SHE FLIRTS A LOT

Janhvi Kapoor was at her candid best on Anaita Shroff Adajania's chat show, on which she made quite a few interesting revelations. The episode ended with a bang, with her confessing that she was a huge flirt.

"I think I flirt a lot. Even when I don't intend to, even when I don't think I am, it just..." Janhvi revealed. When Anaita asked if it was just her body language, she replied in the negative.

"No! I think it's my curiosity to know people. I automatically start seeming interested, I guess. Even though I am really not," the *Dhadak* actress said.

Janhvi revealed that she was "flirty from a distance". "Like, 'What is the meaning of your life?' And then they would really think and they would be like, 'Oh my God, maybe she is the girl of my dreams.' Then I would be like, 'Adios!'" she said.

On the show, Janhvi also said that she believed in soulmates. "I don't understand the concept of friends with benefits at all. It's quite tragic, really," she said.



MALAIKA ARORA GIVES IT BACK TO HER AGE-SHAMING HATERS WITH A SUNNY NEW PIC IN A BIKINI

Television show host Malaika Arora knows how to give the most perfect replies to her haters. She has shared yet another hot new pic from her recent vacation in Maldives and this time, it is dedicated to all those who age shamed her.

The new pic shows her giving a cheeky wink to the camera. She is wearing a colourful bikini and posing on the sunny beaches of the tourist paradise. "Being happy is a choice .n I choose to be happy also I think happiness looks good on me..... so keep ur opinions n ur negativity to urself n spare me ur crap #notinterested #toobusybeinghappy #notimefornegativity #tuesdaythoughts #43nhappy," she captioned the picture. Malaika's friends and colleagues from Bollywood also loved her pic. Dia Mirza, Sophie Choudry, Bipasha Basu and more gave her big compliments.

Malaika is now back in Mumbai from her holiday and was spotted awith her sister Amrita at their gym on Tuesday. She was reportedly vacationing with rumoured boyfriend and actor Arjun Kapoor in Maldives last week. While they did not share any pictures with each other on their social media profile, they returned to Mumbai together. Arjun shared selfies from the vacation and Malaika shared pics from her swim in the pool or day spent out at the sea.

Malaika Arora has no time or thought to spare for her haters. So even as they shame her for her age, she is doing her own thing by sharing bright and stunning pictures from her Maldives vacation

Arjun and Malaika are rumoured to be planning their wedding. However, Arjun's father Boney Kapoor has refuted the rumours. Arjun himself has said that he will let people know about his plans when the time is right. Arjun said: "When there is something to talk about, you will all know." Asked if he was disturbed with the intrusion of privacy, he said, "Not really.. It is a very small price to pay. At the end of the day, for what I have gained out of being an actor, somebody who is known across the country and the world, it's a small price. And people like to know how we are. They like to be surprised how normal we are, they like to know our idiosyncrasies. It doesn't really bother me. If anyone says 'mujhe meri privacy chahiye (I want my privacy)' then you are in the wrong profession. Because you sell that the day you become recognisable."



Scarlett Johansson slams paparazzi for chase

Scarlett Johansson is calling on lawmakers to more strictly regulate paparazzi after being "pursued dangerously and stalked" Monday night.

After leaving a taping of "Jimmy Kimmel Live" that night, Johansson recounted in a statement to USA TODAY how she was followed by "five cars full of men with blacked-out windows who were running red lights and putting other drivers and pedestrians at risk so they could follow me to find out where I was staying and subsequently stalk me and my young daughter for the duration of my stay. ... All of this is perfectly legal."

Her car made a stop at the Hollywood police station where she alerted officers to the incident but did not file a police report, according to Los Angeles TV stations ABC7 and NBC4.

IS ANGELINA JOLIE SECRETLY DATING COLIN FARRELL?

A new report suggests that actor Angelina Jolie has secretly been dating Colin Farrell for two months. Jolie was spotted with four of her six children at the world premiere of the recent Disney film, *Dumbo*, starring Farrell.

Radar Online quotes an insider as saying that while Farrell has been dating model Kelly McNamara on and off for the past couple of years, Jolie, "usually gets what she wants and there's no denying they have a major chemistry."

The report also mentions that the actors had a brief romance while filming the 2004 historical epic, *Alexander*. "They've come such a long way since the wild old days when they last hooked up," the source continues, adding that Jolie is "determined to explore their connection further."

Jolie and her children - Zahara, 14, Shiloh, 12, and 10-year-old twins Vivienne and Knox - were seen at the recent premiere of Disney's *Dumbo*. Jolie stars as Maleficent for Disney, and will reprise her role in an upcoming sequel.

A report in *OK* magazine suggests that Jolie's ex-husband, Brad Pitt, is upset with Farrell (his friend) for dating her. He "isn't sure he wants his six children around any other men right now," the report says, adding, "His kids have had a rough time since the divorce, and he thinks they all need some time to heal."

Pitt and Jolie abruptly separated at the end of 2016, and have since been involved in a bitter custody dispute over the kids. They were spotted together for the first time recently, reportedly at a meeting about their children's custody.



Captain Marvel is first female superhero film to enter the \$1 billion league



Marvel Studios' first female-fronted film, *Captain Marvel* has crossed the USD 1 billion milestone at global box office. The Brie Larson-starrer, an origin story of Marvel superhero of the same name, raked in over USD 358 million in the US, while in the international territories, it amassed USD 645 million, Walt Disney, Marvel Studios' parent company, shared in a press release.

The film debuted with a bang after minting USD 455 million gross worldwide in its first week. In the US, *Captain Marvel* launched with USD 153 million, the seventh best of any in the 21-film old Marvel Cinematic Universe franchise.

The film also registered the second-

highest domestic opening weekend for a solo MCU character debut to last year's *Black Panther*. It also beat out its DC counterpart *Wonder Woman*, which had domestically earned over USD 100 million in its first weekend in June 2017.

The film, directed by Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck, features Larson as Captain Marvel aka Carol Danvers, a US Air Force pilot whose DNA is fused with that of an alien during an accident, which imbues her with the powers of superhuman strength, energy projection, and flight.

Also featuring Samuel L Jackson, Jude Law, Gemma Chan, Annette Bening and Ben Mendelsohn, *Captain Marvel* released worldwide on March 8.



I'M SHOCKINGLY AVAILABLE, SAYS CHARLIZE THERON

Charlize Theron has revealed that she is shockingly available but the actor said she needs a man to step up and ask her out.

The 43-year-old Oscar winner opened up about her love life in an interview with an American entertainment television newsmagazine while promoting her film *'Long Shot'* with co-star Seth Rogen.

"I've been single for 10 years, it's not a long

shot. Somebody just needs to grow a pair and step up. I'm shockingly available," Theron said.

Rogen echoed her sentiments, saying, "She's out there!", to which Theron said, "I've made it very clear." Theron previously dated actor Stuart Townsend and they split up in 2010. She was then in a relationship with actor Sean Penn and were engaged in 2014. But they separated in 2015.

EU: Thrash out Brexit in six months



LONDON (TIP): It is neither as short as British Prime Minister Theresa May had hoped for - until June 30, or as long as some EU leaders were in favour of, but after hours of deliberation in Brussels, the 28-member economic bloc gave the UK six more months to thrash out Brexit.

The latest extension, being dubbed a "Brextension" and also drawing inevitable Halloween analogies with the date coinciding with the festival celebrating scary and nightmare scenarios, comes just a day before the April 12 deadline from the first extension agreed by the European Union (EU) to the official Brexit Day of March 29. "Vitaly, the EU has agreed that the extension can be terminated when the Withdrawal Agreement has been ratified — which was my key request of my fellow leaders," May said in a statement on Thursday at the end of a European Council summit. "I know that there is huge frustration from many people that I had to request this extension. The UK should have left the EU by now and I sincerely regret the fact that I have not yet been able to persuade Parliament to approve a deal which would allow the UK to leave in a smooth and orderly way," she said. — PTI

She lived till 99 with most organs on wrong side of body

SALEM (OREGON) (TIP): Rose Marie Bentley was an avid swimmer, raised five kids, helped her husband run a feed store, and lived to the ripe age of 99. It was only after she died that medical students discovered that all her internal organs — except for her heart — were in the wrong place. AP

Greece opens shipwreck sites as underwater museums

STENI VALLA, GREECE (TIP): Near the northern Greek island of Alonissos lies a remarkable ancient shipwreck: the remains of a massive cargo ship that changed archaeologists' understanding of shipbuilding in antiquity. Now this spectacular find is to become the first ancient shipwreck to be made accessible to public in Greece, including to recreational divers. AP

Sudan's Bashir ousted by military, held

KHARTOUM (TIP): President Omar al-Bashir, who ruled Sudan with an iron fist for 30 years, was on April 11 overthrown in a coup by the armed forces, which announced a two-year period of military rule to be followed by elections.

In an address on state television, Defence Minister Awad Mohamed Ahmed Ibn Auf said Bashir (75), was under arrest in a "safe place" and a military council was now running the country. Seated on a gold-upholstered armchair, Auf announced a three-month state of emergency, a nationwide ceasefire and the suspension of the constitution. He also said Sudan's air space would be closed for 24 hours and border crossings shut until further notice. Sudanese sources said Bashir was at the presidential residence under "heavy guard". A son of Sadiq al-Mahdi, the head of the country's main opposition Umma Party, told al-Hadath TV that Bashir was being held with "a number of leaders of the terrorist Muslim Brotherhood group".

Bashir has been indicted by the International Criminal Court in The



Hague and is facing an arrest warrant over allegations of genocide in the Sudan's Darfur region during an insurgency that began in 2003 and led to death of an estimated 300,000 people. The

downfall of Bashir follows the toppling this month of Algerian strongman Abdelaziz Bouteflika, also following mass protests after three decades in power. — Agencies

Prince Harry, Meghan want baby's birth kept 'private'



LONDON (TIP): Britain's Prince Harry and his wife Meghan want to keep the arrival of their baby later this month "private", Buckingham Palace said in a statement on April 11.

This would contrast with the births of the three children of his brother Prince William and his wife Kate, immediately after which the babies were shown off by the couple in front of the world's media.

"The Duke and Duchess of Sussex are very grateful for the goodwill they have received from people throughout the United Kingdom and around the world as they prepare to welcome their baby," the statement said.

"Their Royal Highnesses have taken a personal decision to keep the plans around the arrival of their baby private.

"The Duke and Duchess look forward to sharing the exciting news with

everyone once they have had an opportunity to celebrate privately as a new family," it said.

Some British media have reported that the royal couple are considering a home birth, which would also break with the tradition followed by William and Kate of giving birth in the private wing of St Mary's Hospital in London.

A source quoted by The Sun said the couple wanted a "more private" setting.

"She just wants a normal, natural birth and to bond with her baby, without being primped and blow-dried to within an inch of her life just for the pictures," the source told the paper.

Harry and Meghan currently live on the grounds of Kensington Palace in London, the residence of William and Kate. They are planning to move to Frogmore Cottage in Windsor ahead of the birth, media reports said. AFP



CRASHED JAPANESE F-35 WRECKAGE FOUND IN PACIFIC; PILOT MISSING

TOKYO (TIP): Search and rescue teams found wreckage from a crashed Japanese F-35 stealth fighter in the Pacific Ocean close to northern Japan, as efforts to find the missing pilot continued, authorities said on April 10.

The aircraft, less than one-year-old, was the first F-35 to be assembled in Japan and was aloft for only 28 minutes on Tuesday before contact was lost, a defence official said. The plane had logged a total of 280 hours in the air since its first flight, he added.

It is only the second F-35 to crash in the two-decades it has been flying and could reignite concern about the F-35 having only one engine. The incident comes as Lockheed Martin, the F-35 manufacturer, competes for orders in Finland and Switzerland against the twin-engined Eurofighter Typhoon and Boeing F/A-18E/F jet.

The advanced, single-seat jet was flying in good weather about 135 km (84 miles) east of the Misawa air base in Aomori Prefecture at about 7.27pm on Tuesday when it disappeared from radar, the Air Self Defence Force said.

"We recovered the wreckage and determined it was from the F-35," a spokesman for the Air Self Defence Force (ASDF) said, adding that the pilot of the aircraft was still missing. — Reuters

EXPLORE THE UNEXPLORED SIDE OF GOA

Baga, Calangute, Tito's Bar, Panjim market, and Basilica of Bom Jesus – that's pretty much your itinerary every time you plan a trip to Goa. Little did we know that there are numerous hidden places in Goa that remain concealed in its hip streets and verdant naturescapes just waiting to be explored. If you wish to experience the untouched, unspoilt, rather pristine version of this coastal beauty, then you must head to these unexplored, yet outright divine places to visit in Goa on your next trip. Make sure you don't miss out on any!

Kakolem Beach

Also known as Tiger Beach, this tiny paradise is a little hard to find. But once you're here, you'll find your efforts were certainly worth it. One of the most picturesque hidden places in Goa, the beach is completely deserted and clean since it doesn't receive many visitors. You can either get there through the NH 66 while driving towards Cola Village, or via a boat.

Galgibaga Beach

Galgibaga boasts of being the cleanest beach in Goa, apart from being the seasonal nesting and hatching site for the endangered Olive Ridley turtle. It is one of those very few hidden beaches in Goa with crystal clear water and shimmering silver sands. And if you're lucky, you might also spot some turtle eggs or nests.

Hollant Beach

The curvy bay lined with rustic boats, the clean, golden sand, the colourful shacks on one side, and the mesmerising views of the sunset make this beach an absolute favourite for all photographers and artists who discover it. It is also a great place for swimming and wading since the beach is shallow due to the absence of currents.

Betul Beach

The quiet Betul beach is more of a typical coastal fishing village located 18 kms away from Margao. Apart from a quaint environment, the beach has a 17th century fort, a small lagoon and various shacks nearby serving lip-smacking seafood. One needs to take the Cavelossim-Assolna ferry across the Sal River in order to get here.

Harvalem Falls



Tucked away in lush jungles, Harvalem is amongst the most beautiful waterfalls in Goa with milky white water cascading down tough scenic boulders. And the best part – the waterfall remains concealed from the eyes of the world, which allows visitors complete privacy. While here, one can visit the Rudreshwar temple and the Arvalem caves nearby.

Bamanbudo Waterfalls

The Bamanbudo waterfall is a charming refreshment for those looking for peaceful and unexplored places in Goa to get away from this hippie town's maddening crowd. Though the waterfall is easily accessible and provides a fun spot for a rejuvenating dip, tourists still tend to miss it. One should not miss an excursion to this ecstatic tourist place in Goa.

Cabo De Rama

Located off the Mumbai Cochin highway in South Goa, this fort is one of the most relaxing secret places in Goa that offers

splendid views of the Cabo De Rama beach below it and the sea vanishing into the horizon beyond it. The fort houses ruins and old canons of the erstwhile Portuguese troops which makes the fort perfect for shoots and picnic with friends.

Fort Tiracol

Fort Tiracol is the most delightful fort in Goa due to its design and architecture. This 17th century Portuguese fort is located off a cliff overlooking the Indian Ocean and has seven rooms, each named after a day in the week. The day you visit, the room bearing that name will have the best view out of others. Fascinating, right? Though the fort has now been converted into a marvelous hotel, it remains as one of the most beautiful hidden places in Goa. One can visit via a ferry from Keri beach.

Sinquerim Fort

Thanks to its eye-catching Portuguese architecture and breathtaking views of the

sunset, Sinquerim fort is the favourite subject of every photographer who comes looking for unexplored places to visit in Goa. Other than that, the beach is also a pure delight. With soft sands and a cool breeze, Sinquerim beach serves as a superb place to relax and provides recreation opportunities like swimming, beach volleyball, scuba diving, water skiing, fishing and windsurfing to visitors. The entire area is well kept, pristine, and houses a number of luxury accommodations and budget eateries.

Arvalem Caves

Dating back to the 6th century, the Arvalem Caves or Pandava Caves have long been the centre of debate on account of their mixed form of architecture. Some say the caves were used by the Pandavas due to the presence of Shivlingas inside the compartments. Others argue the caves are Buddhist as there's a huge statue of Buddha near the place. But whatever be the origin, the cave's rock cut foundations, its mysterious aura, and its historic appeal never fails to charm visitors.



PEOPLE WITH MORAL VALUES TRUSTED MORE AS PARTNERS

How to determine that a person is trustworthy? According to researchers, people who hold onto moral absolutes are more trusted and more valued as social partners, suggesting that people gauge others' trustworthiness based on their moral judgments.

The findings help explain that snap judgements about morality tend to be based on a set of absolute moral rules even if a person makes different decisions when given more time.

"If people who stick to moral absolutes are preferred as social partners, expressing this view will reap benefits for oneself," said lead researcher Jim AC Everett from the University of Oxford.

The team used several variations of moral dilemmas where a person must decide whether or not to sacrifice an innocent person in order to save the lives of many others.

The results indicate that across nine experiments, more than 2,400 participants who took an absolute approach to the dilemmas (like refusing to kill an innocent person, even when this maximised the greater good) were seen as more trustworthy than those who advocated a more flexible approach.

When asked to entrust a person with a sum of money, participants handed over more money and were more confident of getting it back, when dealing with someone who refused to sacrifice one to save many.



"This explains why we appear to like people who stick to these intuitive moral rules -- not because they are sticklers for the letter of the law, but because the rules themselves tend to emphasize the absolute importance of respecting the wishes and desires of others," added

David Pizarro from Cornell University in the US.

Our day-to-day moral decisions don't fit into the neat categories defined by moral philosophers. Instead, real life morality is suited to the complexity of real life situations, the researchers suggested

HOME REMEDIES FOR DARK CIRCLES

Tired of dark circles and want to get rid of them. Avoid chemically induced serums and gels, by using these interesting remedies, which can be prepared easily at home, to reduce dark circles naturally. Just be careful and avoid getting them into the eyes when applying it.

Rose water

Soak two cotton balls in rose water and place them over the eyelids. Keep them for 10 minutes and then remove them.

Cucumber

It is a known fact that cucumber has skin-lightening properties and acts as a great astringent. Take a fresh green cucumber and cut it into thick slices. Chill them in the refrigerator. After half an hour, take them out and put them over closed eyes for 10 - 15 minutes. Wash off with normal water.

Tomato

Tomato too acts as a great skin lightening agent. Take one teaspoon of fresh tomato juice mix it with one teaspoon of lemon juice. Gently apply the mixture around your eyes on the dark circles. After keeping it for around 10 minutes, wash it off with cold water.

Potato slices

Peel and cut potato into thin slices. Immediately put them over closed eyes for 15-20 minutes. Wash off with normal water. Almond oil - Before going to bed every night, gently massage almond oil into the skin around your eyes.

Mint

Crush six to seven fresh mint leaves and apply them around



the eye. Keep it for around 10 - 15 minutes and then wash it off with cold water.

Silver spoon

Silver teaspoon is not only a beautiful and elegant kitchen accessory, you can also use it to get rid of dark circles under your eyes. Put a silver spoon in your fridge for 3 minutes and then, gently touch your under eye area with it (yes, only a gentle touch, no squeezing or pressing). Cold spoon will tone the skin under your eyes and the silver metal will help to get rid of under eye circles.

FOOD CORNER



Tawa chicken fry

A delicious lip-smacking dish, the Tawa Chicken Fry is easy to make and can be served as a starter or as an appetizer to a meal.

Ingredients

Chicken - 500 gms
Gram Flour - small handful
Juice of 1 Lemon
Ginger Garlic Paste - 2 tblsp
Turmeric Powder - 1/3 tsp
Coriander Powder - 1/3 tsp
Curry Leaves - few
Red Chilli Paste - 3 tsp
Saunf - 1/2 tsp
Cumin Seeds - 1/2 tsp
Salt as per taste
Oil as required

Method

- Clean, wash and dice the chicken into bite-sized pieces.
- Combine the gram flour, lemon juice, ginger garlic paste, turmeric powder, coriander powder, curry leaves, red chilli paste, saunf, cumin seeds and salt in a bowl.
- Mix well with a little water.
- Add the chicken pieces and mix until evenly coated.
- Keep aside for 45 to 75 minutes.
- Heat oil in a pan over medium flame.
- Fry the chicken pieces until golden brown and cooked.
- Remove and drain excess oil.
- Serve with mint chutney.

HANDI PANEER

Ingredients

200 gms paneer, 2 ginger, grated, 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1/2 tsp chilli powder, 1/2 tsp garam masala powder
1 tomato, 1/2 cup water, 2 stalks coriander leaves
2 pinches powdered black pepper, 4 tbsp refined oil
3 onion, chopped, 1/2 cup beaten curd

Method

- Put oil in a handi, stir fry the chopped onions on medium flame, when done, reduce the flame to low. Then add two pieces of grated ginger, turmeric powder, chilli powder, garam masala and mix well.
- Add the finely chopped tomato and green chilli, and cook on low flame for about 10 minutes.
- Add half cup beaten curd and cook till dry, before adding salt. Add half cup water and bring it to a boil.
- Mix in malai paneer and chopped coriander, cook till the masala dries.
- Add pepper and remove from the flame. Serve in a large bowl and sprinkle coriander leaves over the dish.



STOP SMOKING CIGARETTES BEFORE THEY MAKE YOU BLIND

Do you smoke cigarettes? Think twice before taking another drag as it may not only damage your heart or lungs but can also make you blind, experts say.

Smoking harms the retina—the light-sensing tissue in the back of the eyes, responsible for transmitting images to the brain.

"It's like a film of a camera which converts light rays into impulses which help us see," Raja Narayanan, Head of L.V. Prasad Eye Institute (LVPEI), Hyderabad told IANS.

"Smoking increases the chemical compounds in the bloodstream thereby reducing blood and oxygen flow to the retina. This makes smokers two times more susceptible to Age related Macular Degeneration (AMD)," Narayanan added.

A recent study, published in the journal Psychiatry Research, indicated significant changes in the smokers' red-green and blue-yellow colour vision, which suggested that consuming substances with neurotoxic chemicals, such as those in cigarettes, may cause overall colour vision loss.

Smoking is one of the largest preventable causes of various diseases and premature deaths worldwide.

India was among the top 10 countries together accounting for almost two-thirds of the world's smokers (63.6 per cent) in 2015, according to a Global Burden of Disease study published in The Lancet in 2017.

Smoking can further affect a bunch of eye diseases like cataract, glaucoma etc. While diseases related to the front of the eye are easily recognised, retinal diseases like AMD and Diabetic Macular Edema (DME) might develop silently and lead to progressive vision loss if not



treated on time.

"The vision loss caused by retinal diseases cannot be reversed. However, if the condition is diagnosed on time the disease can be managed effectively to prevent further loss of vision. Recognition of symptom is a key aspect for timely diagnosis," Ajay Dudani, Ophthalmologist/Eye and Vitreoretinal Surgeon, Mumbai Retina Centre, told IANS.

"The symptoms of these retinal diseases are often confused with those of old age or other eye disorders which leads to delayed diagnosis," he added.

People with diabetes need to be extra cautious of any vision changes and need to follow a healthy lifestyle as they are more susceptible to diabetic retinopathy.

"Today, there are treatment options available that can slow or halt disease progression. Some of the treatment options available in India include laser photocoagulation, anti-VEGF (Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor) injections and combination therapy which

includes laser and anti-VEGF treatment," Dudani asserted.

According to experts, owing to an unhealthy lifestyle, dietary habits and constant stress and exposure to digital screens, the incidence of retinal diseases and other eye disorders is rising amongst the working population.

They say that a cessation programme can help an individual quit smoking.

"It can be advised to consult an expert and take up a cessation programme to quit smoking. Other than this, maintaining a healthy lifestyle and including a range of brightly coloured fruits and vegetables, that have antioxidants can help maintain retinal health," Narayanan said.

"Dark, leafy greens such as kale, spinach, lettuce etc. have lutein and zeaxanthin—both important nutrients for eye health. Certain vitamins like vitamin C and vitamin A also help in overall eye health and help prevent the progression of AMD and DME," he noted.

Source: IANS



Whitening products may damage teeth

Teeth whitening products -- that promise to make your smile brighter -- may also be causing tooth damage, a study has found.

Scientists at Stockton University in the US found that hydrogen peroxide, the active ingredient in over-the-counter whitening strips, can damage the protein-rich dentin tissue found beneath the tooth's protective enamel.

The tooth is made of three layers: the outer tooth enamel, an underlying dentin layer and connective tissue that binds the roots to the gum.

Most studies of whitening strips have focused on tooth enamel, which contains very little protein.

The team focused on dentin, which makes up most of the tooth and has high levels of protein, most of which is collagen.

It is well established that hydrogen peroxide can penetrate the enamel and dentin. Previous work by the researchers showed that collagen in the dentin layer decreased when teeth were treated with whitening strips.

"We sought to further characterize what the hydrogen peroxide was doing to collagen. We used entire teeth for the studies and focused on the impact hydrogen peroxide has on the proteins," said Kelly Keenan, associate professor at Stockton University.

The researchers demonstrated that the major protein in the dentin is converted to smaller fragments when treated with hydrogen peroxide.

In additional experiments, they treated pure collagen with hydrogen peroxide and then analysed the protein using a gel electrophoresis laboratory technique that allows the protein to be visualised.

"Our results showed that treatment with hydrogen peroxide concentrations similar to those found in whitening strips is enough to make the original collagen protein disappear, which is presumably due to the formation of many smaller fragments," Keenan said in the statement.

The researchers point out that their experiments did not address whether collagen and other proteins in the teeth can be regenerated, so it is unknown if the tooth damage is permanent.

Next, they plan to further characterize the protein fragments released when collagen is treated with hydrogen peroxide and determine if hydrogen peroxide has the same impact on other proteins in the teeth.

Source: PTI

Vegetable oil doesn't guarantee a healthy heart

Vegetable fat isn't all that good as it is made out to be. According to a study published in the medical journal British Medical Journal (BMJ) replacing animal fat with vegetable oil may not lower heart risk. In fact, it might even increase it, challenging one of the most established dietary advice.

Switching from saturated to unsaturated Omega-6 fats did result in lower blood cholesterol in a trial with nearly 10,000 participants, it said, but not the expected reduction in heart disease deaths. In fact, those with a greater reduction in cholesterol "had a higher rather than a lower risk of death," according to the research published by BMJ.

For 50-odd years, animal fat in meat, butter, cheese and cream has been the bad boy of the diet world -- blamed for boosting artery-clogging cholesterol linked to heart disease and stroke.

In 1961, the American Heart Association recommended vegetable oils replace saturated fats -- a position it still holds even as some research has started to challenge that hypothesis.

The World Health Organization also advises that saturated fats should comprise less than 10 percent of total energy intake.

For decades now, the world has viewed full-fat milk and bacon with suspicion and replaced pork with chicken, and butter with plant-based margarines and cooking oils.

But in the past few years, researchers have started poking holes in the 'fat is bad' hypothesis.

The new study, led by Christopher Ramsden at the National



Institutes of Health, re-analysed data from a randomised controlled trial conducted 45 years ago with 9,423 residents of state mental hospitals and nursing home in Minnesota.

This is a type of experiment — generally considered highly reliable — in which people are randomly divided into groups to receive, or not, the treatment being studied.

Part of the Minnesota group had their intake of saturated fat replaced with corn oil, while the rest ate a diet high in animal fat.

"As expected, the diet enriched with linoleic acid (a fatty acid found in plant oils) lowered cholesterol levels," said a statement by The BMJ. But "this did not translate to improved survival. In fact, participants who had greater reduction in blood cholesterol had higher, rather than lower, risk of death.

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APPLE WATCH 4 GETS MORE COLOURFUL CUSTOMISATIONS

Adding more colourful customisation controls for Apple Watches, the iPhone-maker has released a video on YouTube, this time focusing on easy switch between bands on its Watch Series 4.

"Apple Watch Series 4 is completely redesigned. And now you can give it a fresh look with new bands in a variety of styles and colors," 9to5Mac quoted Apple as saying on Tuesday.

Apple released its spring collection of Apple Watch bands and iPhone cases last month with "Sport Loop" bands in Papaya, Cerulean, Spearmint and Lilac colours and the Nike bands in Spruce Fog, Teal Tint and Hyper Grape shades.

Titled "More Powerful, More Colourful", the 15-second long YouTube video quickly runs through various Apple Watch bands and casing options.

Earlier in March, the iPhone-maker shared five new Apple Watch "how-to videos" on YouTube, covering functionalities like changing Apple Watch videos, adjusting Move goals, using Siri, setting Run goals, viewing past activities and changing watch bands. *Source: IANS*

Alibaba creates 'video fingerprints' to fight piracy

In a bid to curb piracy, China's e-commerce giant Alibaba has come up with 'video fingerprints' technology that gives each original video a unique online identity.

Short videos have become a popular form of advertisement for sellers on Alibaba's e-commerce platforms Taobao and Tmall. But the videos are often left unpatented due to a cumbersome process, Xinhua news agency reported on Wednesday.

To curb this malpractice, Alibaba's security lab has created 'fingerprints' for all original videos on Taobao and Tmall, said He Yuan, a senior algorithm expert at the lab.

The fingerprints can be used to identify the video even if it is trimmed or its images modified, he added.

Businesses participating in the project can upload their videos and have 'fingerprints' generated automatically. Once qualified as an original video, any other videos with high similarity will be reported to the business owner.

After being online for about a month, more than 7,000 businesses have signed up to participate in the project, said Alibaba. *Source: IANS*



FIRST-EVER IMAGE OF A BLACK HOLE REVEALED

Astronomers on April 10 unveiled the first photo of a black hole, one of the star-devouring monsters scattered throughout the Universe and obscured by impenetrable shields of gravity. The image of a dark core encircled by a flame-orange halo of white-hot gas and plasma looks like any number of artists' renderings over the last 30 years.

But this time, it's the real deal.

Scientists have been puzzling over invisible "dark stars" since the 18th century, but never has one been spied by a telescope, much less photographed.

The supermassive black hole now immortalised by a far-flung network of radio telescopes is 50 million lightyears away in a galaxy known as M87.

"It's a distance that we could have barely imagined," Frederic Gueth, an astronomer at France's National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS) and co-author of studies detailing the findings, told AFP.

Most speculation had centred on the other candidate targeted by the Event Horizon Telescope — Sagittarius A*, the black hole at the centre of our own galaxy, the Milky Way.

By comparison, Sag A* is only 26,000 lightyears from Earth.

Locking down an image of M87's supermassive black hole at such



Scientists have captured the first-ever image of a black hole. It is outlined by emission from hot gas swirling around it under the influence of strong gravity.

distance is comparable to photographing a pebble on the Moon.

European Space Agency astrophysicist Paul McNamara called it an "outstanding technical achievement". It was also a team effort.

"Instead of constructing a giant telescope that would collapse under its own weight, we combined many observatories," Michael Bremer, an astronomer at the Institute for Millimetric Radio Astronomy (IRAM) in Grenoble, told AFP.

Over several days in April 2017, eight radio telescopes in Hawaii, Arizona, Spain, Mexico, Chile, and the South Pole zeroed in on Sag A* and M87.

Knit together "like fragments of a giant mirror", in Mr. Bremer's words, they formed a virtual observatory some 12,000 km across — roughly the diameter of Earth.

In the end, M87 was more photogenic. Like a fidgety child, Sag A* was too "active" to capture a clear picture, the researchers said. *Source: AFP*

How Google is turning its Maps service into major cash machine

Google became the world's most profitable internet company on the back of search advertising. Now, it's turning another popular web service into a major cash machine.

Google Maps is an indispensable part of life for more than 1 billion people, who use it to commute, explore new cities or find a hot new restaurant. The service has been mostly free, and free from ads, since it launched 14 years ago.

Interviews with Google executives and customers show this is changing as the internet giant increases the ways advertisers can reach Maps users, while raising prices for some businesses that use the underlying technology. The app now regularly highlights sponsored locations, and shows extra paid listings when people look for nearby gas stations, coffee shops or other businesses.

"There's a big opportunity for them to ramp up monetization," said Andy Taylor, associate director of research at digital marketing agency Merkle. "They've been slow-playing it."

The search business is still immensely profitable and growing, but that can't last forever. More people are searching via Amazon.com Inc. And on mobile devices, Google has already crammed the top of search results with ads, leaving less room for more commercial spots. In comparison, Maps feels like new territory primed for Google's ad systems to start pumping dollars from what is a giant, untapped data well.

"Sometimes I say the most under-monetized asset that I cover is Google Maps," Brian Nowak, an analyst at Morgan Stanley, said while interviewing Google's business chief Philipp Schindler at a recent conference. "It's almost like a utility where it's kind of waiting for you to flip the switch on."



This iPhone app cleans up your social media profiles

To prevent users from falling prey to the questionable privacy practices of tech giants, privacy assistant app "Jumbo" has started rolling out for iOS users and will soon be made available for Android users as well.

The privacy app comes with the capability to automatically adjust 30 Facebook privacy settings, delete old tweets after saving them on the phone and erase users' Google Search and Amazon Alexa history.

"Our privacy can only be protected when tools are designed with people in mind, and make this complex issue as simple as tapping a button. That's what we built Jumbo," Pierre Valade, CEO, Jumbo wrote in a blog post on Tuesday.

On Jumbo, clean-up features for frivolous apps like Instagram and Tinder are also in the works.

The US-based developer, Pierre Valade, is the former CEO of Sunrise Calendar, which was acquired by Microsoft in 2015. To ensure that Jumbo does not collect, save or breach their data, the app and its functionalities have been developed phone-based. "We never collect, store or process data you manage through Jumbo. In fact, we don't even know who you are," Pierre said.

Perhaps it's a bit of idealism to think these tech giants will permit Jumbo to run as intended, TechCrunch reported, since most of the social networking platforms collect user data for ad tacking and other purposes.

However, Valade says he hopes if there is enough user support, the privacy backlash would be too big if the tech giants blocked Jumbo.

"If the social network blocks us, we will disable the integration in Jumbo until we can find a solution to make them work again," TechCrunch quoted Pierre as saying.

Jumbo app comes with features to adjust Facebook privacy settings, and delete old tweets. Jumbo will integrate apps like Instagram and Tinder soon

AFTER ADB AND RBI, NOW IMF CUTS INDIA'S GROWTH FORECAST

NEW DELHI (TIP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cut India's growth forecast for the current fiscal, following similar action by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

"In India, growth is projected to pick up to 7.3% in 2019 (2019-20) and 7.5% in 2020, supported by the continued recovery of investment and robust consumption amid a more expansionary stance of monetary policy and some expected impetus from fiscal policy," IMF said in its World Economic Outlook (WEO) report released on Tuesday.

IMF's downward revisions in India's growth forecasts are 20 basis points (bps) each in 2019-20 and 2020-21 from its outlook released in January.

Both ADB and the RBI last week cut their 2019-20 growth projection for India to 7.2% from 7.4% earlier, blaming rising risks to global economic growth as well as weakening domestic investment activity.

The Indian economy grew 6.6% in the December quarter, the slowest in five quarters. That prompted the Central Statistics Office to trim its 2018-19 forecast to 7% in February from 7.2% estimated in the previous month.



With the Indian economy projected to slow down further in the fiscal fourth quarter, the central bank's focus has shifted from inflationary concerns to sustaining the growth momentum.

RBI effected two back-to-back rate cuts by 25bps each to boost growth.

Of the high-frequency indicators of industry, growth in the manufacturing component of the index of industrial

production (IIP) slowed to 1.3% in January.

The growth of eight core industries remained sluggish in February at 2.1%. Data released by Society of Indian Automobiles Manufacturers (SIAM) on Monday signalled a slowdown in urban demand as car sales grew 2.4% in 2018-19, the worst performance in 14 years.

Source: HT

India highest recipient of remittances at \$79 billion in 2018: World Bank

WASHINGTON (TIP): India retained its position as the world's top recipient of remittances with its diaspora sending a whopping USD 79 billion back home in 2018, the World Bank said in a report.

India was followed by China (USD 67 billion), Mexico (USD 36 billion), the Philippines (USD 34 billion), and Egypt (USD 29 billion), the global lender said.

With this, India has retained its top spot on remittances, according to the latest edition of the World Bank's Migration and Development Brief. Over the last three years, India has registered a significant flow of remittances from USD 62.7 billion in 2016 to USD 65.3 billion in 2017.

"Remittances grew by more than 14 percent in India, where a flooding disaster in Kerala likely boosted the financial help that migrants sent to families," the Bank said.

In Pakistan, remittance growth was moderate (seven per cent), due to significant declines in inflows from Saudi Arabia, its largest remittance source. In Bangladesh, remittances showed a brisk uptick in 2018 (15 per cent).

According to the report, remittances to low-and middle-income countries reached a record high of USD 529 billion in 2018, an increase of 9.6 per cent over the previous record high of USD 483 billion in 2017.

Source: PTI



Debt-laden Jet Airways lenders plan to sell up to 75% stake



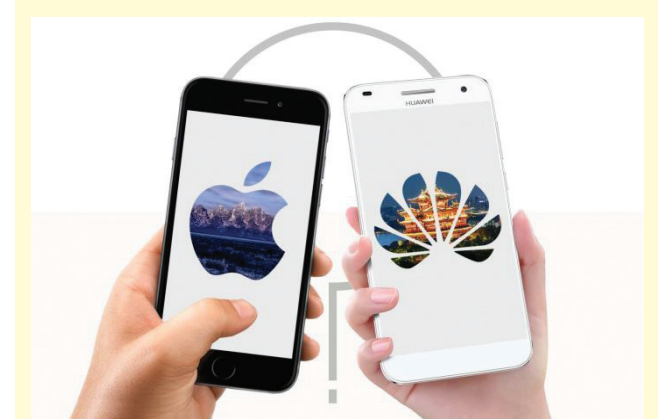
MUMBAI (TIP): Jet Airways India Ltd.'s lenders invited initial bids to buy as much as 75 percent of the debt-laden carrier, starting a process that will determine the future of India's oldest surviving private airline.

Potential buyers must submit their interest by April 10, State Bank of India Ltd., the lead creditor, said in a document Monday. A strategic bidder should have a net worth of at least 10 billion rupees (\$144 million) in the preceding financial year, or at least three years of experience in the airline business.

The airline is credited with successfully breaking the monopoly of state-run Air India Ltd. and was once India's second-biggest carrier, but its fleet has dwindled to 26 planes from 124 as recently as January. Accumulated losses in nine of the past 11 years have caused Jet Airways to delay payments to banks, lessors and employees, while its founder Naresh Goyal was forced to cede control of the carrier.

Shares of Jet Airways fell 1.5 percent to 252.30 rupees as of 9:42 a.m. in Mumbai, extending this year's losses to 9.1 percent. The stock dropped 67 percent last year.

Jet Airways, part-owned by Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways PJSC, needs 85 billion rupees to get back on its feet after a fare war by budget airlines wiped out profits and it racked up debt of more than \$1 billion. The fate of Jet Airways is crucial to the legacy of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he faces an election that begins April 11 after holding power for the last five years.



Huawei 'open' to selling 5G technology to Apple

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): Chinese smartphone-maker Huawei could be considering selling its high-powered 5G-enabled modems and chipsets to Apple, according to media reports.

Launched in January, Huawei's modem "5G Balong 5000" was introduced as the world's most powerful 5G modem and the first that fully supports both, Non-Standalone (NSA) and Standalone (SA) 5G network architectures.

"Huawei's surprising change of heart only really matters because Apple appears to be in a tough spot with its sole modem supplier, Intel. The chipmaker currently provides the wireless modems that go into all current iPhones and iPads and it said late last year that its 5G-ready 'XMM 8160' modems would be available for its customers in the second half of 2019," the report said.

However, citing an anonymous source, recent media reports claimed that Apple has "lost confidence" in Intel after the chipmaker failed to meet certain development deadlines.

Besides, Apple's ongoing legal battles with US-based chipmaker Qualcomm also gives Huawei the edge to sell its technologies to the iPhone-maker without having to face tough competition.

Source: IANS

Egypt to slash fuel subsidies as it nears end of IMF programme

CAIRO (TIP): Egypt will remove subsidies on most energy products by June 15, it told the International Monetary Fund in a January letter released by the IMF on Saturday as part of a review of Cairo's three-year, \$12 billion loan programme with the lender.

This will mean increasing the price to consumers of gasoline, diesel, kerosene and fuel oil, which are now at 85-90 percent of their international cost, said the letter, which is dated Jan. 27.

The letter from Egypt's finance minister and central bank governor was included in an IMF staff report dated Jan. 28 and published following the disbursement in February of the fifth out of six tranches of the loan.

The loan programme began in 2016 and is tied to reforms that have included a sharp devaluation of the Egyptian pound and the introduction of a value-added tax. They have helped steady Egypt's economy but also put millions of Egyptians under increased economic strain.

Fuel prices have increased steadily over the past three years. LPG and fuel oil used for electricity generation and bakeries are not included in the commitment to reaching full cost recovery through subsidy cuts, the letter said.

Sensex rises over 100 pts ahead of TCS, Infy earnings

MUMBAI (TIP): Domestic equity benchmark BSE Sensex rose over 100 points on Friday ahead of the release of key macroeconomic data and quarterly results of IT bellwethers TCS and Infosys.

The 30-share index was trading 106.69 points or 0.28 per cent higher at 38,713.70. The gauge had ended 21.66 points, or 0.06 per cent, higher at 38,607.01 in its previous session.

The NSE Nifty was trading 21.75 points, or 0.19 per cent, up at 11,618.45 in early session.

Shares of Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) were trading up to 0.81 per cent higher ahead of their quarterly earnings, scheduled for release later in the day.

Other gainers in the Sensex pack include Asian Paints, Bharti Airtel, Tata Steel, Yes Bank, Sun Pharma, RIL, HCL Tech and Maruti, rising up to 1.04 per cent.

While Tata Motors, L&T, HDFC, Bajaj Auto, NTPC, SBI, Coal India and ITC shed up to 0.50 per cent.

contd from page 1

India's poverty levels to be...

Jaitley spoke on various issues concerning reforms and economic outlook. "Getting bank accounts for all, providing 99% of population with access to toilets, modern approach of cooking, rural road connectivity, houses for all were part of the efforts towards social reforms. When we do reforms, we have to make sure that benefit reaches last man in the queue", Jaitley said.

"Over next 5 years, reducing poverty, providing best infrastructure, new cities to manage migration, increasing participation of women, will be the focus", he added. Earlier US-India Business Council (USIBC), industry chamber CII, and US stock exchange Nasdaqhosted a roundtable discussion with Arun Jaitley on "India's Reforms & Economic Outlook" on April 9. Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg also attended the round-table meet. "@USIBC continues the conversation on financial markets and foreign investment today with @IndiainNewYork and @SecretaryDEA Subhash Chandra Garg." Tweeted USIBC. Jaitley is currently visiting the US to attend the IMF-World Bank meeting in Washington from April 12 to 14.

India goes to polls- Voters...

the saffron party in Phase 1 polling defended five seats. However, a reverse situation in states like West Bengal and Odisha - where the BJP is hoping to strike gains to offset expected losses from the Hindi heartland - can help it consolidate gains from these uncharted terrains. The general belief is that polling trends and feedback from phase-1 will be carried forward, setting the tone in other phases. This may happen not just in that particular state but adjoining areas as well.

Notably, all political parties and independent observers collect and analyses trends after the polling gets over, for their reference. In addition to the three of the 42 seats it currently holds in Telangana and Andhra, the BJP was defending 29 out of the remaining 49 seats, the majority being in Bihar, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. In 2014, the BJP scored a perfect five in Uttarakhand. On the other hand, the Congress hoped for winds of change to blow and for history to repeat itself.

The Congress for its part does not have much to defend in the first phase of elections except seven Lok Sabha segments - two in Telangana, one each in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram. But the party is hoping for the grand alliance of BSP-SP and RLD to make gains in the politically significant western UP belt where the BJP holds all eight seats that went to polls in the first phase today.

"The BJP is in for surprises," said a senior Congress leader hoping that the less than impressive poll percentages today could cut any which way. "This could be the result of voter disenchantment. The PM had issued multiple appeals for people to turn out and vote in large numbers. The percentages so far look fair, not extraordinary," said a Congress leader. The party hopes to improve its electoral base in Andhra Pradesh where it drew a blank in the last Lok Sabha elections. Of the 25 Andhra parliamentary seats, the TDP holds 17, the Congress none. Along with LS, Andhra Assembly polls also took place today with the Congress hoping for a presence in the Assembly. The party has still not recovered from the post Andhra Pradesh bifurcation shock which decimated it in both Andhra and newly created Telangana.

"We hope to make gains now considering this election has taken place for the first time since reorganization and Congress president is committed to a special category status to Andhra as promised by the former PM

Manmohan Singh," says MM Pallam Raju, Congress leader in Andhra. The Congress may also look for seats that witnessed polls in Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya and west UP today. In Uttarakhand, all five LS seats are with the BJP and the lone Chhattisgarh seat of Bastar where polling concluded today is also with the BJP.

Congress hopes that BJP's losses in today's polls will translate into direct or indirect gains for the Opposition. That explains Sonia Gandhi's 2004 pitch when the coalition of anti-BJP parties she stitched successfully formed a government at the Centre as the BJP harped in "India Shining". (Source: The Tribune, Chandigarh)

Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu...

With 97 percent of the votes counted, neither of the candidates' parties had captured a ruling majority, but Netanyahu was clearly in a strong position to form a coalition government with other right-wing factions that have backed him. The closely contested race was widely seen in Israel as a referendum on Netanyahu's character and record in the face of corruption allegations. He faces possible indictment in three graft cases and has denied wrongdoing in all of them.

The veteran right-wing leader's Likud party and Gantz's new centrist Blue and White party both won 35 seats, according to the Knesset website and the Israeli TV channels. That would mean a five-seat gain for Likud. "It is a night of colossal victory," the 69-year-old Netanyahu told cheering supporters in a late-night speech at Likud headquarters, while cautioning that a "long night and possibly day" lay ahead awaiting official results. Rival Gantz, 59, earlier had also claimed victory, citing preliminary exit polls that were published soon after voting ended on Tuesday showed his party had won more seats than Likud. "We are the victors," said Gantz, a former military chief fighting his first election. "We want to thank Benjamin Netanyahu for his service to the nation." Despite both men claiming victory on Tuesday night, a clearer picture emerged by Wednesday morning as the results began streaming in, painting Netanyahu as the winner.

NETANYAHU HIGHLIGHTS TRUMP TIES: During the campaign, the rival parties accused each other of corruption, fostering bigotry and being soft on security. Netanyahu highlighted his close relationship with US President Donald Trump, who delighted Israelis and angered Palestinians by recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital in 2017 and moving the American Embassy to the holy city last May.

Two weeks before the election, Trump signed a proclamation, with Netanyahu at his side at the White House, recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights captured from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war. In a rare turn during the race towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Netanyahu further alarmed Palestinians by promising to annex Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank if re-elected. Palestinians seek a state there and in the Gaza Strip, with East Jerusalem as its capital. During the campaign, Gantz said a government under his stewardship would pursue peace but stopped short of committing to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Commenting on the election, Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat said: "Israelis have voted to preserve the status quo. They have said no to peace and yes to the occupation". The last round of U.S.-brokered peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians collapsed in 2014. Trump is expected to release his administration's long-awaited Middle East peace plan after the election. If it includes Israeli concessions to the Palestinians, Netanyahu's probable far-right coalition allies will likely object. A close result in the election would put smaller parties in a powerful position, turning marginal political

figures into kingmakers. Once the votes are tallied, President Reuven Rivlin will ask parties that have won parliamentary seats who they support for prime minister. He will then pick a party leader to try to form a coalition, giving the candidate 28 days to do so, with a two-week extension if needed. (Source: Agencies)

Losses more than \$1 bn in...

They were lured by an international telemarketing network involving call centers in the Philippines and Latin America, the Department of Justice said. The defendants allegedly paid doctors to prescribe the braces without meeting patients.

Those charged in the multi-state operation included CEOs and other executives with telemedicine companies, the owners of dozens of medical equipment firms, and doctors. DOJ said the schemes involved "more than USD 1.2 billion in loss." Administrative penalties were also issued against 130 orthopedic equipment suppliers, DOJ said.

"Today, one of the largest healthcare fraud schemes in US history came to an end," said Robert Johnson, assistant director of the FBI, one of several agencies involved. US Attorney Sherri Lydon, of South Carolina, added that white collar crime is not victimless. "All taxpayers will endure the rising cost of healthcare premiums and out-of-pocket costs as a result of fraud on our Medicare system," Lydon said.

The Medicare system was created in the 1960s to provide public health insurance for Americans older than 65. It has been extended to the poorest, disabled, children, and military veterans, now covering 112 million people. But the system is regularly defrauded.

The Medicare Fraud Strike Force, created in 2007, has charged nearly 4,000 people related to billings of more than USD 14 billion in total, DOJ said (Source: Agencies)

WikiLeaks Founder Julian...

of classified information in the history of the United States. The indictment alleges that in March 2010, Assange engaged in a conspiracy with Chelsea Manning, a former intelligence analyst in the U.S. Army, to assist Manning in cracking a password stored on U.S. Department of Defense computers connected to the Secret Internet Protocol Network (SIPRNet), a U.S. government network used for classified documents and communications. Manning, who had access to the computers in connection with her duties as an intelligence analyst, was using the computers to download classified records to transmit to WikiLeaks. Cracking the password would have allowed Manning to log on to the computers under a username that did not belong to her. Such a deceptive measure would have made it more difficult for investigators to determine the source of the illegal disclosures.

During the conspiracy, Manning and Assange engaged in real-time discussions regarding Manning's transmission of classified records to Assange. The discussions also reflect Assange actively encouraging Manning to provide more information. During an exchange, Manning told Assange that "after this upload, that's all I really have got left." To which Assange replied, "curious eyes never run dry in my experience."

Assange is charged with conspiracy to commit computer intrusion and is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. He faces a maximum penalty of five years in prison if convicted. Actual sentences for federal crimes are typically less than the maximum penalties. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after taking into account the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The Department of Justice's Office of International Affairs will handle the extradition. (Agencies)

THE INDIAN PANORAMA

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RAM NAVAMI: THE BIRTH OF LORD RAMA

Ram Navami is a spring Hindu festival that celebrates the birthday of Lord Rama. He is particularly important to the Vaishnavism tradition of Hinduism, as the seventh avatar of Vishnu.

Ram Navami is a religious and traditional festival, celebrated every year with great enthusiasm by the people of Hindu religion. It is celebrated to remember the birthday of the Lord Rama, son of the King Dasharatha and Queen Kausalya, of the Ayodhya kingdom. Lord Rama was the 7th avatar from the Dashavatar of the Lord Vishnu, a Hindu God. According to the Hindu calendar, this festival falls every year in the Shukla Paksha at 9th day in the month of Chaitra. Ram Navami is also called as the Chaitra Masa Suklapaksha Navami which ends as nine-day long Chaitra-Navratri celebrations.

Hindu people celebrate it as a 9 days festival by organizing the Akhand Paath of the Ramacharitanamas, religious bhajan, havan, ritual kirtan and distribution of prasada after the puja and Aarti at 9th day. Devotees make the statue of the Lord Rama in infant form and make prayer in front of the God. As Lord Rama was the 7th avatar of the Vishnu born among common people to remove their problems, people decorate temples and other religious places to make the traditional prayers and offerings of fruits flowers in order to get their problems removed and lot of prosperity and success. They get together at this day to chant Vedic mantras, Aarti and lots of religious songs.

Most of the devotees celebrate this festival by making fast for whole nine days or first and last day of the Navratri to get the full blessings. South Indians celebrate this festival as a wedding anniversary of the Lord Rama from Mata Sita. All the temples get decorated throughout the south region to celebrate the Navratri. However, people in the Mithila and Ayodhya celebrate the wedding anniversary at Vivaha Panchami according to the Valmiki Ramayana. A grand celebration of the Ram Navami takes place by the thousands of devotees in the Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh; Sitamarhi, Bihar; Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, Bhadrachalam, Andhra Pradesh and etc. At some places (like Ayodhya, Varanasi and etc), the Rathayatra means the chariot procession (Shobha yatra) of the Lord Rama, Mata Sita, Lakshman and God Hanuman is carried out by the thousands of people after taking a holy dip in the sacred river, Sarayu or Ganga.

Ram Navami History

Ramayana is the great and religious Epic of the Hindu religion, tells the history of King Dasharatha and his son Rama of the Ayodhya. Once, there was an emperor in the Treta Yuga called King Dasharatha who had three wives (Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi). He had no children and was very sorry for a future emperor of the Ayodhya. One day he was suggested by the great Rishi named Vasistha to perform the Puthra Kamesti Yagna to fulfill his desire for a child.

He was suggested to specially invite the Maharshi Rishyasringa in order to perform yagna. After performing the yagna, he was given a bowl of the divine Kheer by the Yagneshwara. He was requested to offer that bowl of Kheer to his all three wives. Some days after eating that Kheer, all his wives get conceived. At the day of Navami (at 9th day) in the Chaitra month at noon Kausalya gave birth to Rama, Kaikeyi to Bharata and Sumitra to twin boys named Lakshmana and Shatrughna.

Kausalya's son Rama was the 7th avatar of the Lord Vishnu who took birth to come to the Earth to finish Adharma and maintain the Dharma. Lord Rama had protected his devotees from the attack of rascals. He had vanquished Adharma from the earth and maintained the Dharma all over the earth by destroying all the Asura including Ravana. People of the Ayodhya were very happy from his new King Rama and started celebrating



his birthday every year with big joy and enthusiasm as Ram Navami which is still traditionally and religiously celebrated all over the India by the people of Hindu religion.

Ram Navami Celebrations

People of the Hindu religion located in the South region of the India generally perform the Kalyanotsavam means marriage celebration of the Lord Rama. They celebrate it at the day of Navami having the statue of Hindu deities called Rama and Sita in their houses. They perform a procession on the streets taking statues of the deities at the end of day to celebrate the Ram Navami. It is celebrated by different names at different place such as in the Maharashtra it is celebrated by the name Chaitra Navratri, in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka or Tamil Nadu it is celebrated by the name Vasanthotsava and etc.

People celebrate this festival by decorating the statues of the Lord Rama, Lakshman, Mata Sita and Lord Hanuman. They prepare the sweets, sweet drinks, prasada to perform the puja, they invite Pandit Ji to perform havan and katha, they read religious songs, mantras and Aarti at the end of puja to remove the bad powers from their houses and

Rama and Sita to get the peace and happiness in their life. They offer Morning Prayer to the Hindu God, Surya Dev after having a holy bath in the early morning. People offer puja to the Lakshman, Mata Sita and God Hanuman with the Lord Rama as all of them were devoted heartily to each other.

Significance of Ram Navami

Ram Navami festival is the festival of great importance for the people of Hindu religion. Celebrating the festival of Ram Navami on the 9th day of Chaitra month indicates the removal of bad powers and entrance of divine power on the earth. To remove the Asura power on the earth in order to maintain the Dharma, Lord Vishnu had to born on the earth as a son of the Ayodhya King Dasharatha. Ram Navami is a ritual celebration for the people of Hindu religion which they celebrate enthusiastically for their soul and body purification. Lord Rama came to the earth to perform a special responsibility means to destroy the demon Ravana in order to maintain the Dharma.

This festival celebration indicates the victory of goodness and defeat of evil power and establishment of the Dharma after removal of Adharma. Ram Navami festival celebration starts with the Jal offering in the early morning to the Hindu God, Sun to get blessings from the supreme power as people beliefs the God Sun as an ancestor of the Lord Rama. People involve in singing the devotional songs for whole day as well as listening the recitations from the various Hindu religious books. Vedic mantras are chanted by the religious people of the community at this occasion.

Keeping fast at this day has another significance of getting body and mind purified. At some place, people perform a religious and cultural event called Ramlila to reveal the history of Ram Navami in front of people. People play the whole history of the life of Lord Rama through their dramatic performances. Chariot processing is a grand and ritual event of the Ram Navami festival to show the peaceful Ram Rajya in which people decorate the statues of the Rama, Sita, Lakshman and Hanuman in a well manner to start processing on the streets. Generally, people like to have a holy bath in the Sarayu River of the Ayodhya in the belief of the complete purification of the body and soul. South Indian people celebrate this occasion as a wedding anniversary of the Rama and Sita which symbolizes enhancing the love bondage between husband and wife.

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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."

CSK clinch last-over thriller against Rajasthan Royals

JAIPUR (TIP): Chennai Super Kings clinched a thrilling last-ball victory over Rajasthan Royals as a fuming MS Dhoni was left grinning as he completed his 100th IPL victory as captain at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur on Thursday.

Chasing Rajasthan Royals' challenging total of 151/7, achieved thanks to some lusty hitting by Shreyas Gopal at the end that cost pacer Shardul Thakur 18 runs in the 20th over, Dhoni (58) and Ambati Rayudu (57) rescued the champions from 24/4.

The visitors still needed 18 off the final over, bowled by Ben Stokes. Controversy broke when the umpire at the non-striker's end (Ulhas Gandhe) first indicated no-ball for a waist-high full toss and then quickly reversed it as the batsman – Mitchell Santner – was well outside the crease.

Dhoni stormed to the pitch to remonstrate with the umpires before leaving in a huff. With six needed off the last two, and four off the last ball, Santner launched the final delivery for a match-winning six. CSK finished on 155/6, winning by four wickets.

Dhoni had to come even before the powerplay overs could finish after the early loss of wickets. Some inspired bowling and fielding by Rajasthan Royals put CSK on the backfoot. Dhawal Kulkarni gave the team a bright start, dismissing Shane Watson in the first over. Jofra Archer removed Suresh Raina with a direct hit and Jaydev Unadkat accounted for Faf du Plessis. Ben Stokes took a stunning catch at



Chennai Super Kings' Ravindra Jadeja, right, and Mitchell Santner celebrate their victory.

backward point to remove Kedar Jadhav.

Dhoni and Rayudu played cautiously before the CSK skipper cut loose. At 88/4 in 14 overs, CSK's innings seemed to have steadied with skipper in command.

Rajasthan Royals though missed the chance to put up a bigger total. At 53/2 after five overs, they couldn't take off as poor shot selection pegged them back.

Jos Buttler attacked pacer Deepak Chahar in the first over and Rahane hit three boundaries in succession; a backfoot punch off in-form Chahar stood out. But Chahar trapped Rahane leg before, and Buttler, who smashed Thakur for three successive fours, fell immediately after that.

Rajasthan hopes rested on Sanju Samson and Steve Smith, but both were out playing sweep shots. Samson, who struck the first century of the season but missed two matches due to injury, top-edged left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner to substitute Dhruv Shorey.

Ravindra Jadeja then accounted for Rahul Tripathi and Smith. The strategy of playing two left-arm spinners worked perfectly for CSK.

Smith's dismissal hurt Rajasthan the most. Together with Ben Stokes, he was focused on working the ball around and keeping the scorecard moving. However, he fell playing a slog sweep. Stokes scored 28 off 26.



Chennai Super Kings cricketer and team captain MS Dhoni speaks with match empires during the match, as Rajasthan Royals team captain Ajinkya Rahane looks on during the 2019 Indian Premier League (IPL) Twenty20 cricket match between Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur on April 11, 2019.

DHONI LET OFF WITH 50 PC FINE AFTER ANGRY REACTION TO UMPIRE'S CALL

JAIPUR (TIP): Chennai Super Kings captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni escaped a ban and was let off with a 50 per cent fine on his match fee for an unprecedented confrontation with the on-field umpire during the IPL encounter against Rajasthan Royals here.

In a rare instance, Dhoni, who was not even meant to be on the field of play, lost his cool and rushed out of the dug-out to challenge umpire Ulhas Gandhe after he flip-flopped on a no ball on Thursday night.

"MS Dhoni, the Chennai Super Kings captain, was fined 50 percent of his match fees for breaching the VIVO Indian Premier League's (IPL) Code of Conduct during his team's match against Rajasthan Royals at Jaipur," the BCCI stated.

Gandhe had tried to rule a waist high full toss as no ball by RR all-rounder Ben Stokes. But he reversed his decision after square leg umpire Bruce Oxenford did not signal for it.

"Dhoni admitted to the Level 2 offence 2.20 of the IPL's Code of Conduct and accepted the sanction," it further stated.

As it is the case with IPL teams, it's the franchise that will pay the fine on the player's behalf. Dhoni was seen angrily gesturing at Gandhe for backtracking after initially signalling a no ball.

It took some convincing from Oxenford for Dhoni to head back to the dugout even though he seemed far from convinced.

But the confusion and the ensuing confrontation did not have a bearing on CSK's fortunes.

Stokes failed in the final over and Mitchell Santner finished the match with a six to take his team to a four-wicket win in a chase of 152.

According to the ICC Code of Conduct, which governs the IPL, showing serious dissent at an umpire's decision by words or action can lead to a maximum punishment of one-Test or two-ODI ban.

Source: PTI

SINGAPORE OPEN

Sindhu, Saina enter quarters

SINGAPORE (TIP): PV Sindhu, Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth continued their impressive run, progressing to the singles quarterfinals of the \$355,000 Singapore Open.

The fourth-seeded Sindhu took 39 minutes to get the better of world No. 22 Mia Blichfeldt 21-13 21-19, her second straight win over the Danish shuttler. World No. 6 Sindhu will next face China's Cai Yanyan, a 2017 BWF Junior World Championships bronze medallist.

Sixth seed Srikanth survived a scare in the second game before overcoming Denmark's Hans-Kristian Solberg Vittinghus 21-12 23-21, setting up a meeting with top seed Kento Momota of Japan. Momota ended HS Prannoy's campaign with a straight-game (21-11 21-11) victory.

Sixth seed Saina had to work hard as she attempted to avenge her Malaysia Open first-round loss to Pornpawee Chochuwong. Eventually, Saina pulled off a thrilling 21-16 18-21 21-19 win over the Thai shuttler. The London Olympics bronze medallist will next face Japan's Nozomi Okuhara, the second seed.

Virat Kohli named Wisden's 'Leading Cricketer' for third straight year

Virat Kohli's reputation as the outstanding cricketer of his generation has been further enhanced by a brace of accolades in the 2019 edition of Wisden Cricketers' Almanack.

Kohli, who will lead India's World Cup campaign in England later this year, has been named as the Leading Cricketer in the World for an unprecedented third year in a row.

He has also achieved one of the few accolades to have eluded him in his career so far, by being named as one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year, the oldest individual award in the sport.

Jos Buttler and Sam Curran were also named among the five cricketers, following their key roles in England's summer campaigns, alongside Rory Burns, Surrey's championship-winning captain, and Tammy Beaumont, the outstanding player in another successful year for England's women.

Kohli's fellow Indian, Smriti Mandhana, is the Leading Cricketer in the women's game, after racking up 1291 runs across limited-overs formats, including 13 half-centuries, while Rashid Khan, the Afghanistan legspinner, is the Leading Twenty20 Cricketer for the second year in a row.

Kohli, however, was the sport's



dominant figure in 2018, making 2735 international runs at 68.37 across all formats, more than 700 more than his nearest challenger, England's Joe Root.

In that time, he scored a remarkable 11 centuries in 37 innings, seven of which came on India's tours of South Africa, England and Australia, traditionally three of toughest venues for overseas batsmen.

His form on the Test tour of England was particularly outstanding - although India slipped to a 4-1 series defeat, Kohli himself made 593 runs in the five Tests at 59.30, including hundreds at Edgbaston and Trent Bridge.

And, as a consequence of making such a big impact on the English season, he was finally named as one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Year, an honour that dates back to 1889.

Wisden states that "excellence in, or influence on, the previous English summer are the major criteria for inclusion as a Cricketer of the Year", and seeing as Kohli had managed just 134 runs at 13.40 on his previous Test tour in 2014, this was his first real opportunity to claim an exclusive honour that - unlike the Leading Cricketer award - can only be achieved once in any player's career.

Pentagon defends India's ASAT test, says country is concerned over 'threats'

WASHINGTON (TIP): India is concerned about the "threats" it faces in space, the Pentagon has said, defending the country for acquiring anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test capabilities.

On March 27, India achieved a historic feat by shooting down its own low-orbit satellite with a ground-to-space missile, making the country a space power.

The test made India the fourth country in the world after the US, Russia and China to have the ASAT capabilities.

"The first lesson from the Indian ASAT is just the simple question of why did they do that. And the answer should be, I think to all the committee looking at it, is that they did that because they are concerned about threats to their nation from space," US Strategic Command Commander General John E Hyten told members of the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday.

"And therefore, they feel they have to have a capability to defend themselves in space," Hyten told Senate Armed Services Committee while responding to a question from Senators on the need for India to do anti-satellite missile test, and the debris it generated in the space.

After India's test, NASA termed as a "terrible thing" the country's shooting down of one of its satellites, saying it created about 400 pieces of orbital debris, endangering the International Space Station (ISS).

NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine had said about 60 pieces were tracked and out of which 24 are going above the apogee of the ISS.

Hyten advocated for the development of some kind of international norms of



behaviour in space.

"And where those norms of behaviour should begin, from my opinion, is with debris, because as the combatant commander responsible for space today, I don't want more debris," said the top Pentagon commander.

Raising the issue, Senator Tim Kaine said India announced last month that it had successfully conducted a test of an anti-satellite weapon. "So, they had something in low earth orbit. They used an anti-satellite weapon to down, and it resulted in—the estimate's right now 400 pieces of debris, 24 of which are large enough to potentially pose a threat to the International Space Station," he said. "There have been other instances like this. There was a Chinese—a similar effort in 2007 that led to the catalogued 100,000 pieces of debris, many of which are still observing in debris fields that pose danger to other assets

in space," he said.

There was a collision in '09 between a working US satellite and a sort of defunct Soviet era satellite that—kind of a fender bender that produced debris. Then this debris causes challenges, he added.

"If we think that space is going to be more of a traffic jam, more satellites for all kinds of purposes up there, what should we be thinking about as a Senate in this committee or in Foreign Relations about sort of the rules?" he asked.

"What should the rules of environment be, and what should we be doing to try to promote rules? India is an ally. We're not talking about an adversary doing something. We're talking about them testing some capacity, but then that creates challenges for all kinds of uses of space. How should we be solving problems like that?" Kaine asked. *Source: PTI*

Agusta case: After charge sheet row, ED submits report

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday submitted a status report in a Delhi court on the alleged leak of a supplementary charge sheet filed in the AgustaWestland VVIP chopper scam.

The central agency also submitted in a sealed cover a pen drive containing a video of the person who allegedly leaked the charge sheet to media.

"It contains video footage and also discloses the source (of leak)," special public prosecutor for ED, DP Singh told the court of special judge Arvind Kumar.

The report was submitted in response to an application filed by Christian Michel, alleged middleman arrested in the case, seeking a "free and fair trial".

The application filed on April 5 had also alleged that the ED "clandestinely" leaked the charge sheet to media before the court could take cognisance of it, to "sensationalise the issue".

The court had, during last hearing, sought response of the agency on the application.

The agency has contended that Michel's plea is not maintainable. In its supplementary charge sheet filed last week, it alleged that Michel admitted to paying kickbacks to the politicians, civil servants and defence officials to secure the deal. The central agency has claimed, it has established the money trail of 70-million euro bribes, which were paid over the years using a circuitous route and shell companies, to swing the deal in favour of Anglo-Italian firm, AgustaWestland.

Pak pilots 'training' on Rafale, India edgy

NEW DELHI (TIP): A report in a US-based website about Pakistani pilots being trained on Rafale jets in France today led to the IAF seeking "additional information" on the matter even as the French Ambassador to India Alexandre Zeigler claimed it was a fake news.

The US website, 'AINonline', by the evening removed the reference to the Pakistan air force.

Separately, a spokesperson of the Embassy while responding to a query by The Tribune said "it (the news) is untrue". The website, in its report on February 13, reported about the handing over of the first Rafale fighter jet to Qatar and said "the first batch of pilots trained for Qatar in November 2017 were Pakistani exchange officers".

This had raised hackles in India as the news had been picked up by several social media handles in Pakistan and India. The website has dropped the reference to Pakistan since.



New Delhi's IGI Airport 12th busiest in the world; overtakes Frankfurt, Guangzhou airports: Report

NEW DELHI (TIP): New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) has now become the world's 12th busiest airport, moving up four places from the 16th spot in 2017. According to the preliminary world airport traffic rankings for 2018 released by the Airports Council International (ACI), it overtook mega-hubs like Frankfurt, Dallas Fort Worth, Guangzhou and Istanbul Ataturk airports. The four airports above the IGI Airport are Amsterdam Schiphol, Paris-Charles de Gaulle, Shanghai Pudong and Hong Kong, managing over 46 lakh passengers more than IGIA.

"India became the world's third-largest aviation market in terms of passenger throughput, behind the US and China, in 2018. India's move towards a more liberalised aviation market and the nation's strengthening economic fundamentals have helped it become one of the fastest-growing markets with its traffic growing rapidly in a relatively short time," read the statement by ACI.

The ACI's World Airport Traffic Forecasts also predicts the country will represent the third largest aviation market in terms of passenger throughput after the US and China by 2020.

As per the rankings released by the ACI, the GMR-group-run airport has solidified its status as one of the fastest growing airports in



the world for passenger traffic. Only Seoul's Incheon International with 10 per cent point growth was close to Delhi in terms of passenger growth. The Incheon International airport has secured the 16th place in 2018.

The ACI report said the IGI airport saw 69 million domestic and international flyers in 2018, which is 10.2 per cent points higher than the combined passengers of 2017. Passenger traffic in advanced economies grew 5.2 per cent while in emerging economies it rose 10.3 per cent in 2017.

ACI World Director General-Angela Gittens said while strong competitive forces continue

to drive innovation and improvements in efficiency and service for passengers, airports face the challenges of meeting the continuing global growth in demand for air services.

The ACI- Founded in 1991- is the trade association of the world's airports, currently serving 641 members operating from 1,953 airports across 176 countries.

"It is expected that rising incomes in emerging markets will help propel global traffic to new heights in the coming decades as new aviation hubs begin to overtake the more mature markets of Western Europe and North America," ACI said in a release.

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