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Facebook decides to take down Trump 2020 campaign's 'census' ads



WASHINGTON (TIP): The 2020 census became a political lightning rod when the Trump administration announced plans in 2018 to add a question asking respondents if they were U.S. citizens.

The ads, which come from the pages of the Republican president and Vice President Mike Pence, link to a survey on an official campaign website and then to a page asking for donations

Facebook Inc. on Thursday removed ads by President Donald Trump's re-election campaign that asked users to fill out an "Official 2020 Congressional District Census" because the ads violate the company's policy against misinformation on the government's census. "We need Patriotic Americans like YOU to respond to this census, so we can develop a winning strategy for YOUR STATE," the ad read.

The online newsletter Popular Information, which first reported on the ads, said Facebook had originally said they did not violate its policy.

Civil rights advocates said they pushed Facebook to remove the ads and Facebook confirmed it re-reviewed them.

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World Reels Under COVID-19: 100,000 Infections, nearly 3300 deaths

China, Italy, Iran are among the most impacted countries

290 million students out of school as global virus battle intensifies

I.S. SALUJA

WASHINGTON (TIP): Around 100,000 people have been infected and nearly 3300 have died worldwide from the virus, which has now reached some 80 countries and territories.

The vast majority of global deaths and infections are in China, where the virus first emerged late last year, prompting the country to quarantine entire cities, temporarily shut factories and close schools indefinitely. Coronavirus death toll in China has crossed 3,000 and number of confirmed cases has mounted to over 80,400.

As the virus spread, other countries have also implemented extraordinary measures, with UNESCO saying March 4 that 13 countries have closed schools, affecting 290.5 million children, while nine others have implemented localized closures.

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A woman walks past South Korean soldiers wearing hazmat suits as they spray disinfectant in Seoul on March 4. Photo courtesy / AFP

U.S. Presidential Election 2020

Mike Bloomberg and Elizabeth Warren End White House Bid after Super Tuesday Rout



I.S. SALUJA

Exit of Mike Bloomberg and Elizabeth Warren leaves out two finalists- Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders, notwithstanding that Tulsi Gabbard is still in the race. Screenshot MSNBC

NEW YORK (TIP): Billionaire Mike Bloomberg, a late entrant in the democratic race for the 2020 White House, decided to hang his boots March 4, but not without endorsing Joe Biden and announcing his resolve to work against Republican incumbent Donald Trump.

Trump was quick to take a dig at Mike Bloomberg. In a Tweet, he said, "Mini Mike Bloomberg just 'quit' the race for President.

contd on page 32

In India, Ex-MP's monthly pension costs exchequer Rs 70.50 crore (\$9557959)

Entitled to a monthly pension of Rs 25,000 (\$340) for 5-year term

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Government of India is spending a sum of Rs 70.50 crore on monthly pension being paid to former MPs, which includes film stars and renowned industrialists.



Information received under the Right to Information Act by PP Kapoor, an RTI activist from Samalkha (Panipat), reveals that actress Vjayanthimala gets Rs 39,000 and Rekha and Chiranjivi get Rs 27,000 each as monthly pension.

Industrialists Sanjay Dalmia and Rahul Bajaj get Rs 25000 each. R Sarathkumar, actor-turned-politician from Tamil Nadu, is the only former MP in the history of the country to have refused to accept the pension. Jailed ex-MPs Om Prakash Chautala and his son Ajay Singh Chautala get as pension Rs 20,000 and Rs 26,000, respectively. BSP supremo Mayawati gets Rs 47,000, Sitaram Yechuri Rs 39,000 and Mani Shankar Aiyer Rs 55,000.

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WHEN: March 21st-24th2020

WHERE: KHAJURAHO, Madhya Pradesh, India - A World Heritage Site

A MUST SEE DESTINATION

ABOUT THE EVENT:

HAPPY LIFE YOGA Khajuraho Festival 2020

Understand - Celebrate - Receive Blessings

A gathering of like-minded people

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The purpose of this Festival:

Happy Life Yoga Initiative

● Raise awareness about how to live life in balance

A Tribute to Khajuraho

● Celebrate and understand the importance, beauty, and history of Khajuraho

● Receive blessings and healing from temples representing Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu, Kamadeva and others

Hosted by The Indian Panorama, Indian American Forum, Tirlok Malik and the HAPPY LIFE YOGA team, & more

ABOUT HAPPY LIFE YOGA:

HAPPY LIFE YOGA is an educational platform offering a unique holistic approach to health and happiness using tools from Ayurveda, Indian Philosophy, and Yoga.

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Anjali Bhushan's 'My Home India' Screened at the Consulate General of India, New York

NEW YORK (TIP): "My Home India", a documentary directed by Anjali Bhushan traces Poland India connection during World War II.

Migration in the history of human existence is a powerful reminder that life connects all of us in ways unexplained and often unfathomable.

Taking out a slice from the history of World War II that affected millions of people then as well as the future generations is an enchanting new documentary entitled 'My Home India'.

Sandeep Chakravorty, Consul General of India in New York, hosted a screening of this important piece of history with a conversation with director Anjali Bhushan at the Indian mission on Feb 27.

'My Home India' is an important story that connects Poland to India during World War II. While historians have documented and how the war shaped the new world, Bhushan took out a little riveting detail from those times to document how a population from Poland managed to find its way to India and made India its new home. The screening at Indian Consulate General in New York was a well-attended event. The audience included diplomats and representatives from Pilsudski Institute of America as well as members of the Indian American as well as Polish American communities.

Both the audiences had enough to relate and connect with the strong story line that traversed across decades and generations to establish how human connects are formed to places and people during the toughest times.



A representative of Polish community gives his remarks. Seen in the picture, from L to R: Anjali Bhushan, Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty

After the screening, Bhushan had an engaging question and answer session with the audiences, who were impressed to see this important piece of history brought to life.

It is perhaps for the first time that this subject has been brought to the attention of people and outside of Poland, almost very little is known about the life and existence of those Poles who were able to escape the Soviet Siberian labor camps.

In an interesting analogy, that explains the Polish influence in some parts of India, the documentary shows how these Poles found their way to India.



A view of the distinguished gathering

The film also highlights an important Polish lady in the history of this ancient migration - Kira Banasinka. She was the wife of Eugene Banasinski, the first Polish Consul General of Poland in Bombay.

Intertwined within the story of how Kira and her husband, 18-years older to her found love and her life as a diplomat's wife that revolved around social engagements, is another powerful tale of how she ensured that hundreds of thousands of Poles found a safe passage to India.

The story is about one woman's will to provide safe space to thousands of Polish refugees of war.

(Source: Consulate General of India)

Dr. Raj Bhayani, President of AAPI-QLI Starts Jubilee Year, Raises \$100,000 For Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of America

NEW YORK (TIP): "American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin Queens Long Island Chapter (AAPI-QLI) has raised \$100,000 to support the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of America, during the Spring Governing Body meeting held from February 8th on Long Island, NY," Dr. Raj Bhayani, President of AAPI-QLI, who assumed charge of the Chapter in its Jubilee Year, announced here last week.

The Spring Governing Body Meeting was attended by members of AAPI's Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, Chairs of all the Standing Committees, Chairs of the Convention Committees.



Deputy Consul General of India, New York Shatrughna Sinha who was the chief guest, auctioned a cricket bat for AAPI's project.

Dr. Bhayani, Chairman of AAPI Governing Body Meeting, appreciated the efforts of Neelam Shah, granddaughter of Dr. Vinod Shah, a past President of AAPI, for her inspiring leadership for initiating the campaign, which has become an annual event benefitting millions of patients with this deadly illness.

"The donation was part of the campaign by AAPI against Leukemia and Lymphomas. The amount raised by AAPI includes matching funds and inspiration by Dr. Vinod Shah," Dr. Bhayani added.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Nirpal Singh Shergill's INDIANS ABROAD and PUNJAB IMPACT-2020 (Heritage Edition) Released at Punjabi University, Patiala



Release of 22nd international annual of Narpal Singh Shergill's INDIANS ABROAD and PUNJAB IMPACT-2020 (Heritage Edition), on 25-2-2020, at Punjabi University, Patiala by Vice Chancellor Dr B.S.Ghuman, Dr Bhiminder Singh Head of Literature Department, Dr Harjinder Singh Walia former Head of Media and Mass Communication department, Principal Dr Surjit Singh Bhatti and other distinguished guests.

Photo / Dr Harpreet Kaur Khalsa, Author of TOSHA KHANA

TANA Mourns death of Sri Voleti Madhusudan Rao

NEW YORK (TIP): In Sri Voleti Madhusudan Rao garu, Treasurer of TANA, the Telugu Association of North America (TANA) has lost one of its best leaders.

The association deeply mourns the loss of Sri Voleti Madhusudan Rao garu, Treasurer - TANA Foundation India, who passed away on Tuesday, March 3rd, 2020 in Eluru, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Sri Voleti Madhusudan Rao garu was TANA foundation India founding trustee and very instrumental in setting up TANA Foundation India. He worked more than 30 years as a faculty member in physics at Sir CRR College, Eluru. For over three decades. He has served the C.R. Reddy College in various capacities. Many of his students are well settled all over the world. He provided many services in ELURU and Meerjapuram in Krishna district. He is survived by his wife and daughter.

TANA offers its profound condolences to the Voleti family.



Sri Voleti Madhusudan Rao

Indian American Receives PEN/Robert J. Dau Short Story Prize for Emerging Writers



Mohit received his BA in Art History and Creative Writing from Princeton

NEW YORK (TIP): Mohit Manohar, a South Asian and Islamic Art student from Yale received PEN/Robert J. Dau Short Story Prize for Emerging Writers for his book "Summertime."

The award recognizes 12 emerging fiction writers each year for their debut short story published during a given calendar year in a literary magazine or cultural website and aims to support the launch of their careers as fiction writers.

Each of the 12 winning writers receives a cash prize of \$2,000. The independent book publisher Catapult will publish the 12 winning stories in an annual anthology entitled The PEN America Best Debut Short Stories. The literary magazines and websites where the stories were originally published will be acknowledged in the anthology.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Rutgers Student Awarded Luce Scholarships to Work in Asia



Shivram Viswanathan, a 2018 Rutgers-New Brunswick graduate who works at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, was selected as a Luce Scholar

NEW BRUNSWICK (TIP): Shivram Viswanathan, a 2018 Rutgers-New Brunswick graduate who works as a senior research analyst at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, is among 18 Luce Scholars selected out of 165 candidates, the nationally competitive fellowship program launched by the Henry Luce Foundation to enhance understanding of Asia.

Viswanathan, a graduate of the Rutgers-New Brunswick School of Arts and Sciences Honors Program who earned a degree in economics and mathematics, studies the health of the U.S. financial system through his job at the Federal Reserve Bank. He became interested in finance at 14 when his father lost his job as a software engineer and his family had to move from Ohio to West Windsor in Mercer County for work.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Duo Wins Grand Prize in First-ever NSF 2026 Idea Machine Competition

NEW YORK (TIP): A team of two Indian Americans Neel Joshi and Avinash Manjula-Basavanna along with Anna Duraj-Thatte from Harvard University is the winner of grand prize by The National Science Foundation (NSF) for their project 'Engineered Living Materials.'

The first-ever NSF 2026 Idea Machine prize competition encouraged individuals from all walks of life, age 14 or older, to submit pressing "grand challenges" requiring fundamental research in science, engineering, or STEM education in order to inform NSF's long-term planning. Approximately 800 entries were received from nearly every state in the U.S. and from established researchers, undergraduate and graduate students, teachers on behalf of their classes, and high school and middle school students. The submitted entries went through five selection stages, including a public



Neel S. Joshi is the Associate Professor, Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and Avinash Manjula Basavanna is the Wyss Institute Postdoctoral Fellow, Harvard University

comment phase. A blue-ribbon panel of 12 eminent, broad thinkers recommended seven ideas for the final prizes that were found to be exciting, ambitious, creative, and highly interdisciplinary. Each team winning a grand prize will receive

\$26,000.

Neel S. Joshi is the Associate Professor, Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences and Avinash Manjula Basavanna is the Wyss Institute Postdoctoral Fellow, Harvard University.

Indian American Seema Verma Added to Trump's Coronavirus Task Force

WASHINGTON (TIP): Vice President Mike Pence and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar on March 2 announced the addition of Indian American Seema Verma, Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, to the President's Coronavirus Task Force.

The Task Force is led by Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar and is coordinated through the National Security Council. It is composed of subject matter experts from the White House and several United States Government agencies, and it includes some of the Nation's foremost experts on infectious diseases. The Task Force will lead the Administration's efforts to monitor, contain, and mitigate the spread of the virus, while ensuring that the American people have the most accurate and up-to-date health and travel information.

President Trump nominated Seema Verma to be the Administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on November 29, 2016, and she was confirmed by the United States Senate on March 13, 2017. As Administrator of CMS, she oversees one of the largest federal agencies that administers vital healthcare programs to over 100 million Americans. Before becoming CMS Administrator, she was the President, CEO and founder of SVC, Inc., a national health policy consulting company. For over 20 years, Ms. Verma has worked extensively on a variety of policy and strategic projects involving Medicaid, insurance, and public health, working with Governor's offices, State Medicaid agencies, State Health Departments, State Departments of



President Trump nominated Seema Verma to be the Administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on November 29, 2016

Insurance, as well as the federal government, private companies and foundations.

Ms. Verma has extensive experience redesigning Medicaid programs in several states. Ms. Verma is the architect the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP), the Nation's first consumer-directed Medicaid program under Governor Mitch Daniels of Indiana and Governor Pence's HIP 2.0 waiver proposal. Ms. Verma has supported Indiana through development of the historic program since its inception in 2007, from development of the enabling legislation, negotiating the financing plan with the State's hospital association, developing the federal waiver, supporting federal negotiations and leading the implementation of the program, including the operational design.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Sri Preston Kulkarni Wins Democratic primary for Texas' 22nd Congressional District



If elected, Sri will be the first Indian American elected to Congress from Texas

HOUSTON (TIP): Indian origin Sri Preston Kulkarni, a former diplomat, won the Democratic primary for Texas' 22nd Congressional District on March 3. He defeated attorney Nyanza Davis Moore and former Pearland city council member Derrick Reed in the party election and will run in the November election against the winner of the May 26 Republican primary run off.

Sri earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Harvard, where he started an initiative called "Breaking Bread," aimed at reducing the partisan hostility and divisiveness afflicting our country.

Inspired by a calling to serve his country, Sri was commissioned as a United States Foreign Service Officer by Secretary of State Colin Powell. In the Foreign Service, Sri served tours overseas in Iraq, Israel, Russia, Taiwan, and Jamaica, promoting American values, such as women's rights, a free press, and religious tolerance. He speaks English, Spanish, Hebrew, Hindi, Russian, and Mandarin Chinese. If elected, he will become the first person of Hindu faith and first Asian American Member of Congress from Texas.



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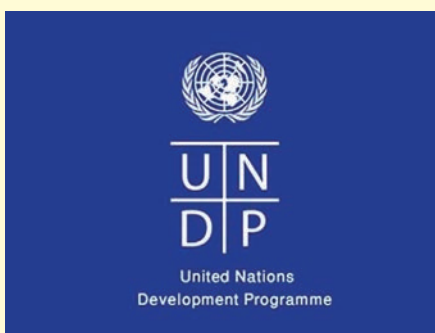
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Nearly everyone is biased against women, U.N. research finds

NEW YORK (TIP): Using data from more than 80% of the global population, the index found some progress, including an increase in girls enrolled in primary school and a drop in maternal deaths, but also deeply ingrained prejudices.

More than a quarter of men and women also think it is justified for a husband to beat his wife, found the Gender Social Norms Index by the UNDP

Nine in 10 people are prejudiced against women, such as thinking university education is more important for men or that men deserve jobs more if work is scarce, the United Nations said on Thursday.

More than a quarter of men and women also think it is justified for a husband to beat his wife, found the Gender Social Norms Index by the U.N. Development Program (UNDP), designed to measure how social beliefs obstruct gender equality.

"Today the fight about gender equality is a story of bias and prejudices," Pedro Conceicao, head of UNDP's Human Development Report Office, said in a statement ahead of International Women's Day on Sunday.

Using data from more than 80% of the global population, the index found some progress, including an increase in girls enrolled in primary school and a drop in maternal deaths, but also deeply ingrained prejudices.

It said 91% of men and 86% of women held at least one clear bias, such as thinking men make better political leaders or better business executives.

Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator, said tackling such biases was the next goal for equality advocates.

"The work that has been so effective in ensuring an end to gaps in health or education must now evolve to address something far more challenging: a deeply ingrained bias among both men and women - against genuine equality," he said in a statement.

The report was released ahead of Monday's meeting of the U.N.'s Commission on the Status of Women, which has been shortened to one day due to the spread of coronavirus.

Deeply held biases could be addressed through education, raised awareness and incentives such as tax structures that encourage equally shared childcare or by encouraging women to enter male-dominated job sectors, the UNDP said.

Declaration Of Goods Temporarily In Short Supply: Face Masks

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): New York City has made a declaration of goods in short supply and have called upon businesses to comply with the laws governing short supply of goods. Rule of the City of New York ("6 RCNY") Section 5-38 governs the sale of items which are temporarily in short supply because of extraordinary circumstances.

WHEREAS, Rule of the City of New York ("6 RCNY") Section 5-38 governs the sale of items which are temporarily in short supply because of extraordinary circumstances; and

WHEREAS, extraordinary circumstances can include exigencies which result in limited deliveries of items to New York City; and

WHEREAS, New York City is experiencing a shortage of face masks due to the demand created by an outbreak of COVID-19, a virus that may cause flu-like symptoms; and

WHEREAS, although health officials advise against the purchase of face masks, the shortage continues, making it difficult to maintain adequate quantities to meet other needs; and

WHEREAS, 6 RCNY § 5-38(b) authorizes the Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Affairs to declare items temporarily in short supply; and

WHEREAS, once so declared, a seller of items the Commissioner has declared in short supply may not engage in deceptive or unconscionable sales practices, as identified below:

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby declared that:

§1. Face masks of all variety are in short supply across the City of New York.



Lorelei Salas, commissioner of the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) announced March 4 that she is declaring face masks temporarily in short supply to prevent stores from overcharging New Yorkers

§2. It is an unconscionable sales practice for sellers of face masks to: (a) increase the prices of face masks in excess of amounts reflecting normal market fluctuations; (b) require consumers to purchase other items in order to get the face masks, if no additional purchase was required before the shortage; (c) require the purchase of a minimum quantity of face masks; and (d) fail to give all consumers an equal opportunity to purchase face masks (sellers may, however, give preference to a category of consumers having a special health or safety-related

need for face masks

§3. It is a deceptive sales practice for sellers of face masks to: (a) falsely represent that face masks are not available; and (b) fail to conspicuously disclose in a sign at the point of sale any limitations or conditions on sale of face masks.

§4. The prohibitions set forth above shall not apply to sellers of face masks who increase prices in excess of amounts reflecting normal market fluctuations who prove that additional costs have been incurred in providing the face masks, through no fault of the seller or as a result of the seller's attempt to give consumers additional opportunities to purchase face masks (for example, by increasing the hours during which an item can be purchased). Sellers claiming an exemption must keep records of the increased costs incurred for one year and make such records available upon demand to the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs. This exemption shall not apply when another law or regulation prohibits price increases.

§5. This Declaration shall take effect immediately upon publication in the City Record, and shall expire 30 days later, unless terminated sooner by declaration of the Commissioner. The Commissioner may renew this Declaration at the expiration of 30 days.

Counting Down the Days: Just 7 Days Left Until 2020 Census Begins

**New Yorkers urged to go online and fill out the 2020 Census at my2020census.gov on March 12, 2020
NYC Census 2020 announces that more than 6,000 New Yorkers have been recruited to volunteer for census-related efforts in the census citywide**

NEW YORK (TIP): Just one week before the 2020 Census becomes available online, Mayor Bill de Blasio, City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives J. Phillip Thompson, and NYC Census 2020 Director Julie Menin called upon New Yorkers to participate in the 2020 Census to ensure that New York City receives its fair share of hundreds of billions in federal funding for important programs and services, as well as its fair share of representation in Congress.

The more New Yorkers who fill out the census, the more money the city receives for public education, healthcare, housing, roads and bridges, and so much more. This year, the census will be



available online or via phone for the first time, making the census easier than ever to complete. Starting March 12, all New Yorkers will be able to fill out the census by visiting my2020census.gov or by calling 1-844-330-2020. From March 12 until mid-May, the census will be primarily conducted online and via phone, and all New Yorkers are very strongly encouraged to participate online or by phone in order to avoid a knock on their doors in the summer. The census is for everyone, no matter one's

immigration or citizenship status, or housing situation, and all New Yorkers -- no matter what language they speak or where or how they live -- must be counted.

"In a matter of days we need to make sure that every New Yorker is counted regardless of immigration status or where they live in any of the five boroughs," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "I encourage everybody to make their voices be heard sooner rather than later by filling out the census online or by phone. Our resources for a better future are at stake and we don't want to wait another 10 years for the next census."

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

New York City's COVID-19 Response Efforts

NEW YORK (TIP): Mayor Bill de Blasio on March 5 updated New Yorkers on the City's response efforts regarding COVID-19. As community transmission increases, the Mayor is reminding New Yorkers to take basic precautions while going about their lives: wash your hands, cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, stay home if you are sick and call your doctor if you experience the following symptoms: fever, cough and/or shortness of breath.

"As New York City continues to see more cases, I am reminding New Yorkers to remain vigilant, but not alarmed," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "We are continuing to do everything in our power to keep New Yorkers safe and healthy and are asking our federal partners to help us increase testing capacity so we can get the job done faster."

Travel, Testing and Self-Isolation:

The Department of Health is asking New Yorkers who return from the following countries to self-isolate for 14 days as a precaution: China, Iran, Italy, South Korea, and Japan.

In addition, the Health Commissioner has ordered any educator, healthcare worker, or first responder employed by the City of New York, New York City Department of Education, and the New York City Health + Hospitals Corporation who the Department determines presents a danger of infection to others, in accordance with accepted public health guidelines or information about the contagious period of COVID-19 shall submit to testing for COVID-19 by the Department or a medical professional. Criteria can be found here.

The Commissioner may order any educator, healthcare worker or first responder required to be tested by this order who declines to submit for such testing to self-quarantine at home, or such other location determined by the Department, until such date as the Department determines such person no longer presents a potential danger of infection to others, in accordance with accepted public health guidelines or information about the contagious period of COVID-19.

The Department of Health is monitoring 2773 New Yorkers for home isolation, as of this morning.

The Mayor has called on the federal government to provide more test kits to increase the City's testing capacity and allow private companies to develop alternative, automated testing approaches for COVID-19.

Department of Education Updates:

The Department of Education has sent principals updated guidance regarding cleaning, travel, and symptomatic staff and student protocol. If a student is symptomatic while in school, they will be separated from other students and their parents will be notified to pick them up. If a staff member is symptomatic, they will be advised to leave work and go to the doctor. Additional guidance is being shared with schools including: ensuring adequate supplies via communication with building managers, daily announcements on PA systems for staff and students, identifying private rooms within schools to isolate staff or students who may present symptoms, and advising students and teachers to remain home and contact a doctor if sick.

Police Department Updates:

Four NYPD officers have self-isolated since returning from the following four countries: China,

Italy, Iran, and Japan. All four are asymptomatic and have not been back to their precincts since returning to the United States.

Fire Department Updates:

The FDNY Incident Management Team has been activated. IMTs are federally trained teams of first responders responsible for overseeing large-scale long-duration incidents and emergencies. The FDNY IMT consists of more than 180 FDNY members from all ranks in the Department with specialized training in incident command, rescue operations, logistics and planning.

One team will assist New York City Emergency Management with their creation of an Incident Action Plan regarding COVID-19. A second team will assist in the planning and development of a strategy associated with COVID-19 for the FDNY.

Department of Correction / Correctional Health Updates:

In order to protect the safety and wellbeing of all those living and working in DOC custody, DOC, in partnership with CHS, is proactively walking through various emergency scenarios designed to test our readiness, identify vulnerabilities, and remedy issues before they have a chance to occur.

All DOC housing units, dayrooms, and common spaces are cleaned and sanitized once per day with shower areas cleaned three times per day.

Transport buses will be cleaned and sanitized daily. Any transport bus that is transporting a person who is symptomatic of a respiratory illness will be sanitized immediately after transporting that individual. DOC's environmental health unit is providing additional sanitation and sanitization training to all institutional aids and sanitation work details.

Any uniformed staff member who shows up to work with respiratory ailments will be sent home and required to provide a doctor's note with clearance of COVID-19 or flu in order to return. Staff have also been instructed to refer any person in custody who is exhibiting respiratory symptoms to CHS for evaluation.

Administration for Children Services Updates:

ACS is revising and recirculating emergency protocols for each of the three ACS-operated congregate facilities (Children's Center, Crossroads Juvenile Center, Horizon Juvenile Center). ACS has developed and is implementing an infectious disease protocol for our three congregate care facilities. ACS has also disseminated DOHMH COVID-19 guidance to all 34 ACS borough locations and ensuring that these locations (including the three congregate care facilities) have adequate cleaning supplies and protective equipment.

Ferry Updates:

Staten Island Ferry:

Ferry crews are conforming to cleaning schedules similar to the MTA and ensure that each ferryboat is subject to deep cleaning of all surfaces and touch points once every 72 hours.

DOT ferry terminals are cleaned around the clock and we are preparing for supplemental cleaning on the boats throughout the day. In addition, they will continue with cleaning regime in all public areas of the terminals. DOT crews have also been handing out flyers at the Whitehall terminal to educate people on the virus.

NYC Ferry:



Mayor Bill de Blasio asks New Yorkers to take better precautions

NYC Ferry crews are cleaning and servicing each vessel daily and are performing hourly inspections of high use areas such as restrooms and concession areas. As an additional precautionary measure, crews will wipe down these high use areas regularly. In addition, graphics advising hand washing and cough covering will go up on the digital screens inside all NYC Ferry vessels, as well as messaging on social media.

Housing Preservation and Development / Housing Development Corporation Updates:

The City's housing agencies, Housing Preservation and Development and the Housing Development Corporation, have shared the most up-to-date information from the Department of Health with all of the buildings they touch through their many programs, including 1.5 million homes in privately owned housing, serving approximately 3.75 million New Yorkers.

Department for the Aging Updates:

DFTA has issued a third guidance to all City contracted and non-contracted senior providers on cleaning and readiness. DFTA is also developing a plan to visit over 600 senior congregate settings weekly to ensure implementation of congregate setting protocols. DOHMH, DFTA, NYCHA, HPD, HDC, NYCEM, and PEU are having daily meetings regarding the City's elderly population.

Human Resources Administration / Department of Homelessness Services Updates:

HRA distributed educational materials on safe hygiene practices to their community partner and provider network. DHS convened shelter medical directors to discuss homeless shelter guidance and protocols to inform planning for shelter preparedness.

If New Yorkers Experience Discrimination:

The City Commission on Human Rights is monitoring and responding to potential bias incidents due to fear and stigma around COVID-19 which may manifest themselves as harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, nation of origin, or other protected classes under the NYC Human Rights Law. The Commission has a dedicated East Asian Communities Liaison with strong community relationships who is in constant communication with community members across the city. If you experience any discrimination, dial 311 and ask for the Commission on Human Rights.



By G Parthasarathy

Months before the dates of President Trump's visit to India were announced, Trump had already had a taste of Indian political gatherings, at the 'Howdy, Modi!' event in Houston, hosted by the Indian diaspora. The 40,000-strong audience was a revelation to Trump, who had never witnessed such a gathering during his political travels across the US. Modi and Trump share a contempt for adherence to 'conventional wisdom'. Trump was determined to get rid of policies like 'globalization', which he thought had produced unsustainable trade imbalances, detrimental to US interests. He treated European allies with disdain. Modi, on the other hand, reached out to Islamic countries, while seeking friends and allies, to balance growing Chinese power.

During the Houston event, the New York Times, which has been traditionally hostile to India's nuclear and security policies, noted: 'Trump and Modi are both forceful, media-savvy politicians. But they are not alike. Modi, a self-made man from a poor family, is measured, ascetic and not driven by impulse. Trump was born on third base. He's erratic, guided by the devouring needs of his ego.' Despite these differences in their economic backgrounds, they both rose to the highest political levels in their respective countries.

Unlike virtually all his predecessors, Trump did not share the adversarial hostility of the US political, intelligence and military establishment towards Russia. Moreover, both Trump and Modi made efforts to befriend Chinese President Xi Jinping. They, however, found China uncompromising in its moves against its Pacific neighbors, some of whom are close US allies. Beijing is also determined to set its own rules, violating international law, in redefining its maritime boundaries. Trump has become uncompromising on bringing China to its knees by resorting to harsh trade sanctions.

Modi's personal interest in the hospitality extended to his American guest and his family paid rich dividends. The Trump family was bowled over by the rapturous reception they received

AS I SEE IT

Beyond the give and take: Trump's visit has been successful but serious differences may continue to crop up

from an over 1 lakh-strong crowd at the world's largest cricket stadium in Ahmedabad. They were also dazzled by the majesty of the Taj Mahal.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his team negotiated a joint declaration that signaled a new momentum to the India-US relationship, while also addressing differences on trade, investment and other economic issues.

Taking umbrage at India's relatively small trade surplus of \$24.3 billion in 2016, Trump had included India in a list of countries on whom he applied enhanced tariffs. He also withdrew tariff concessions for goods, which India was entitled to as a developing country. India retaliated by enhancing tariffs on a range of US agricultural products. India has imaginatively dealt with Trump's complaints about trade surplus. There are indications that Trump will act soon to end a number of tough measures taken against India's exports. China, with a huge trade surplus of \$345 billion with the US, was confronted by trade sanctions, which compelled it to agree to import a vast range of US products. But a number of sanctions on China's exports still remain.

Negotiations have also reached an advanced stage for the construction of six nuclear reactors by Westinghouse (US), in Andhra Pradesh. Moreover, following talks that Trump held with Indian business tycoons in New Delhi, JSW Steel has agreed to invest an additional \$500 million for upgrading a newly acquired steel plant in Ohio.

The document issued by Trump and Modi reaffirms India's status as a 'major strategic partner'. It pledges support to the transfer of advanced military technology and dwells on expanding cooperation in renewable energy projects. Geopolitically, it refers to a 'close partnership' for the development of a 'free, open, peaceful and inclusive Indo-Pacific Region'. Consultations are to be



It's official: The US has reaffirmed India's status as a major strategic partner.

Photo / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

enhanced through trilateral summit meetings of the US, India and Japan and meetings between the foreign and defense ministers of India and the US. These meetings are apart from 'Quad' consultations. The past policy of avoiding any reference to our growing strategic cooperation to avoid causing offence to China, now stands jettisoned, following China's enhanced support to Pakistan. Their military cooperation is also taking new dimensions.

The Trump visit has yielded positive results on economic and strategic cooperation. But it would be incorrect to ignore serious differences which would continue as the US approaches its presidential elections on November 3. The recent communal riots in Delhi, which took place when Trump was in New Delhi, have met with scathing criticism in the international media and from members of both Houses of the US Congress in Washington, cutting across party lines. Internal

developments in India, including those in J&K, involving the detention of Kashmiri political leaders, accompanied by the periodic cutting off, and partial restoration, of Internet facilities there, remain the focus of international attention and criticism. This will continue as the US heads for elections.

Leaders of friendly Islamic neighbors like Sheikh Hasina in Bangladesh and President Joko Widodo of Indonesia found it necessary to voice critical statements on communal violence in India. This is unprecedented. Global attention was diverted from well-merited praise for the grandeur and celebrations of a successful diplomatic effort during Trump's visit to the ugly communal violence and rioting in the nation's Capital.

(The author is Chancellor, Jammu Central University & former High Commissioner to Pakistan)

GUEST COMMENT

The laws of probability are tested all too often in world affairs. So, despite a once-inconceivable deal being signed between the US and the Taliban, no one is ready to label it as a 'peace' accord. The homecoming of American troops after a grinding 18-year conflict, the country's longest-ever, fits neatly into President Trump's re-election campaign, but the imponderables for the other stakeholders could increase, not decrease. The Taliban may have agreed to address the core issue of its links to al-Qaeda - the primary reason for the US invasion in 2001 - but the biggest challenge would be the separate 'intra-

Afghan' talks.

It would be wishful thinking to expect Taliban 2.0 to champion the cause of a democratic modern Afghanistan, shedding its vision of an 'Islamic emirate' and the frightening public display of its version of how life ought to be lived, particularly by women. If in the rush to exit, the US limited itself to initiating talks between the militant group and the Afghan government, without waiting for the conclusion even if it were middle-of-the-road, the

unsettling power play could result in greater unrest in the entire neighborhood. Already, New Delhi is pushing all diplomatic buttons as it confronts the dynamics of a new power arrangement in the war-torn country, with the prospect of minimal influence looming large. The imminent danger posed to India by the 'laid-off' hardened recruits of the Taliban terror factory is a cause for concern.

As the casualty figures in the bloody stalemate in Afghanistan mount by the

day, there has been a growing realization that neither the government backed by foreign troops, nor the Taliban is capable of an outright victory. For the Afghan people, who have suffered immeasurably for decades together, not giving peace a chance and a resultant reduction in violence would be a costly missed opportunity. To that end, the Doha pact does hold hope. The worry is what next if the deal were to fall through.

(Tribune, India)

US-Taliban deal: Challenges could mount, not reduce

A Plural Legacy More Vital Than Ever



By Mahesh Rangarajan



The coming of Independence to India in August 1947 and the formation of a democratic republic three years hence was no doubt a moment of historic import for the world at large. India like the United States was not a direct battle ground for the most part, save for Nagaland and Manipur in the course of the Second World War. But this was a country deeply involved in the great contest for world domination between the Axis and Allied powers.



We live in an avowedly post Nehru age. Few if any ills that afflict India today are not laid at his door. Debate and dialogue are more than welcome. To his credit as much as to other founders, India is a vibrant and live electoral democracy. But there is more to his legacy than this alone.

The coming of Independence to India in August 1947 and the formation of a democratic republic three years hence was no doubt a moment of historic import for the world at large. India like the United States was not a direct battle ground for the most part, save for Nagaland and Manipur in the course of the Second World War. But this was a country deeply involved in the great contest for world domination between the Axis and Allied powers.

At the heart of this war to end all wars were two critical ideas: whether a people had the right to rule themselves or not and also what mode of rule was best for the world.

How India chose it to be

It is a testament to history that India chose to follow the democratic path and while there were inclinations to socialism, these were strictly to be along lines of a plural democracy, allowing for checks and balances unknown in the only one party socialist state that then existed, the Soviet Union. But India was more than a country emerging from the shadow of British imperial rule: its path would be one of a plural democracy.

That differences could exist at the very apex of the leadership but be settled via dialogue, debate and consensus had long been clear. Speaking on January 25, 1942, Gandhiji had remarked that (though) Nehru had been resisting him ever since they had met, they stood as one in the face of odds. Dividing them was like dividing water by striking with a stick.

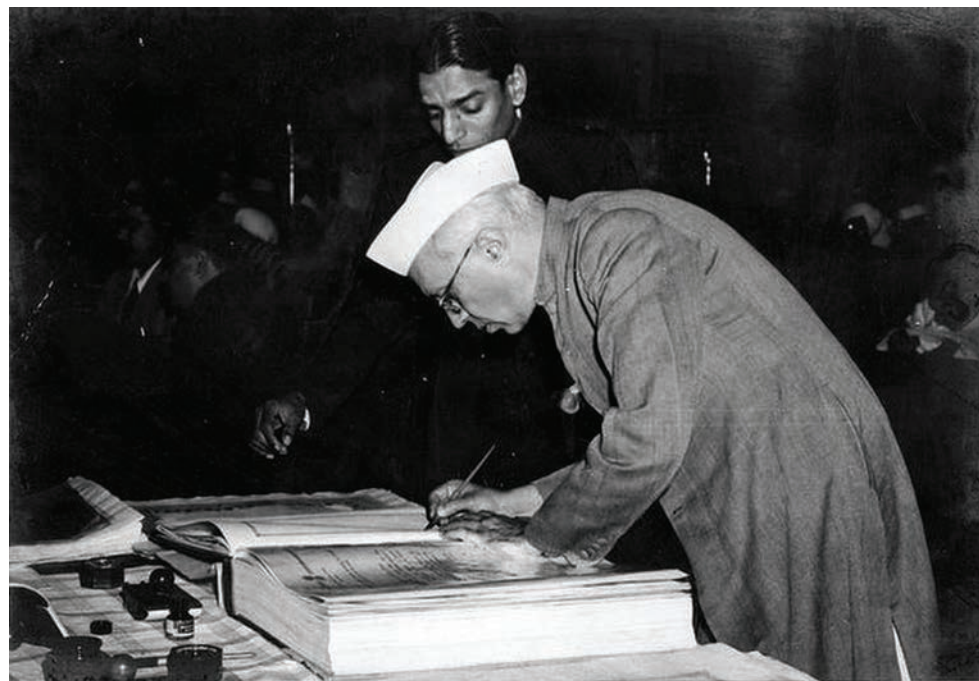
In his perhaps most clear endorsement of the man who he had mentored for more than two decades he said, "When I am gone, he will do what I am doing now. Then he will speak my language too." His reference was to the steadfastness of principle but also to the willingness to compromise. The leader had to bind over and rule, not divide and reign.

We do not know if this was on the mind of the Mahatma when he broke his last fast on January 18, 1948. His last message to the Prime Minister was on a post card. "Apna upvass chod do. Bharat ke Jawahar bane raho," it said. "End your fast. May you remain the jewel of India."

This was sent from Birla House where the fast for peace in the capital of the new India had brought together the very groups at the forefront of the riots. Unknown to most in India or the world at large, Nehru too was on fast in sympathy with his leader.

At stake were the life and liberty of Delhi's own inhabitants, most so Muslims who had opted to stay on after Partition. Twelve days later the assassin struck.

As Sardar Patel wrote in the Abhinandan Granth of October 1949, it was the untimely death of "the Great Master" that evoked in his associates a deeper sense of unity. Reminiscing about



Jawaharlal Nehru's deep sense of history, culture and context acquires more relevance in preserving the idea of India

his long association with Nehru, Patel was warm, appreciative, and open in his affections. Their very intimacy and closeness as co-workers made it, "difficult for me to sum him up for public appreciation."

The idea of a nation

There was and is more to democracy than the peaceful passage of power via the ballot box. Equally audacious was the idea of nation where all would be equal as citizens. This was all the more so given the rise of fascism in the 1930s.

The idea of a superior ruling race had been explicit in the case of the Axis powers. Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, and the violent campaigns of Nazi Germany and imperial Japan left scars among conquered peoples that were known to the world.

But even the most powerful of the Allies, the United States under Franklin Delano Roosevelt still practiced segregation on a third of its territory. The Soviet Union, committed to working class unity, acted like any imperial power in using the Red Army to impose its preferred regimes in much of east central Europe.

The idea of India was at odds with such notions of legally sanctioned inequality at home or colonialism abroad. Much more than that when Gandhiji spoke of "his language" it was one of the coexistence of faiths and cultures seeking peace and harmony.

No book illustrated this as well as one written during Nehru's longest ever jail term. He had been taken into custody on August 9, 1942 and stepped out of jail on June 15, 1945. This over 1,000-day-long prison term had enabled him to write a treatise of India's past and future, *The Discovery of India*.

The most recent edition runs to 642 pages but the original was longer still, written in long hand by a political prisoner on that most precious of rationed goods in war time: paper. It was here that Nehru wrote of India as akin to a palimpsest where one layer of newcomers could join another. Each layer

was added to the older one. This process had frictions, a fact he freely acknowledged, but the result was the composite fabric that was India. India's democratic sensibilities ran deeper than the Constitution. It was in contrast with Ceylon which after an election based on universal suffrage in 1948 stripped the Indian Tamil plantation workers of citizenship. Nor was it like Burma where Indians who had lived there for generations fled the advance of the Japanese armies, never to return. India was envisaged as inclusive, plural and democratic. The roots of this lay in the freedom struggle but was a conviction deepened by the years of the Second World War. This was as much the case with Nehru as his fellow inmates in Ahmednagar in the long night of 1942-45: Narendra Dev, Maulana Azad or Govind Ballabh Pant.

There is no doubt much of this dream was shaken to the core by Partition. But it did not lead India to ape other states narrowly based on faith, clan, lineage or language. The record was far from faultless but there is no doubt of the effort to move on.

There was and is much to dispute about Nehru's record and legacy. But it is astonishing how easy it is to take it for granted. A commitment to liberal democracy and a plural society was exceptional among Asia's leaders. He stood out in a continent where rival ideas of rule by one party or one ethnic group were vying for power.

This was a man with wider horizons but a deep sense of India's history, culture and context. In his testament he wrote of the Ganga as living entity. The river connects us to, "a memory of the past of India, running into the present, and flowing on to the ocean of the future".

A plural society has much to learn from Nehru's record. Critical engagement with his record is a must. An India sans Nehru's legacy of democratic values stands to lose far more than it will gain.

(The author teaches History and Environmental Studies at Ashoka University)

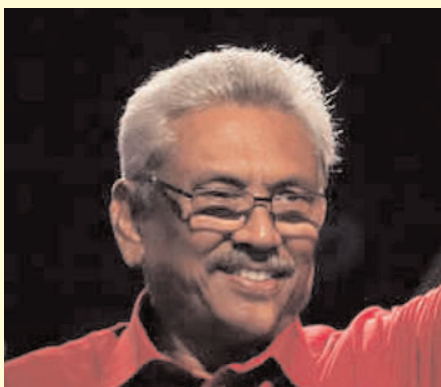


Nepal PM Oli hospitalised

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli has been admitted to a hospital in Kathmandu for his second kidney transplant after suffering from serious illness, hospital sources said on Tuesday.

Oli, 68, had his first kidney transplant some twelve years ago. He was admitted to the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital on Monday for the treatment. — PTI

Lanka Parliament dissolved, Prez calls for snap poll



COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Monday dissolved Parliament six months ahead of its schedule and called for a snap election on April 25.

He signed the gazette notification dissolving Parliament from midnight, the Government Printers Department said. The current Parliament was appointed on September 1, 2015. According to the notification, elections will be held on April 25 and the new Parliament will have its first session on May 14. Parties and independent candidates can file nominations between March 12 and 19. — PTI

Peshawar mosque opens doors for women after 25 years

PESHAWAR (TIP): Women in Peshawar will be able to offer Friday prayers in congregation after a 25-year hiatus as the law and order situation in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has improved significantly following the launch of successful military operations, a media report said. Until the mid 1990s, women would offer Friday prayers in congregation at Sunehri Masjid (Golden Mosque) situated in the Peshawar cantonment but the practice was abandoned after terrorism badly hit the provincial capital. IANS

Pakistan to request British govt for ex-PM Nawaz Sharif's deportation

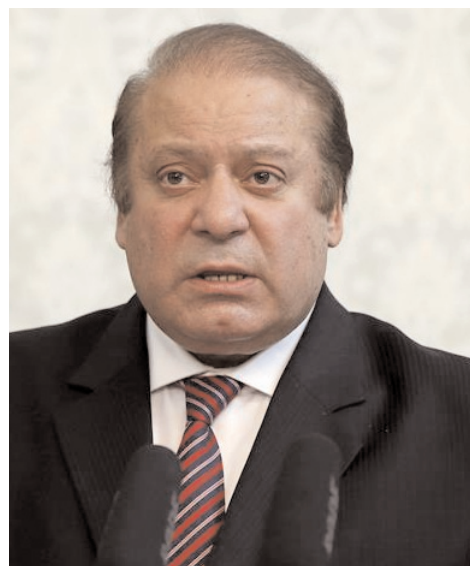
LAHORE (TIP): Pakistan has announced that it will request the British government to deport former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as he is an "absconder".

"The government has decided in principle to write a letter this week to the British government, seeking deportation of PML-N supreme leader Nawaz Sharif, as he is an absconder not fulfilling the terms and conditions of the bail granted to him on medical grounds," Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information Firdous Ashiq Awan told a press conference here on Sunday evening.

She said Sharif had gone to London on November 19 last year for his treatment but was yet to be admitted to a hospital there, indicating that "it was a fixed match played by him, his party and a section of the media on his health", paving the way for his departure to London.

Awan claimed that Sharif and his younger brother Shahbaz had gone to London to protect the businesses of their children.

"Nawaz faked his health condition," she alleged.



Last week, the Punjab government had refused to extend Sharif's bail, declaring that it had found no "legal, moral or medical ground" necessitating an extension in his stay abroad.

The Lahore High Court had, in October last year, granted bail to Sharif on medical grounds for four weeks, allowing the Punjab government to extend it further in the light of his medical reports.

The Islamabad High Court had also granted bail to Sharif in the Al Azizia Mills corruption case, in which the former prime minister was serving a seven-year jail term, clearing his way to travel abroad for medical treatment.

PML-N secretary general Ahsan Iqbal said if Sharif decided to return to the country, the Imran Khan government will request him not to come.

He said the three-time premier will challenge the government's decision not to give him extension in his stay abroad in the court shortly.

PML-N Punjab information secretary Azma Bokhari told PTI that if Pakistan wrote to the British government for Sharif's deportation, the PML-N would also write to the US government seeking opening of a case against Prime Minister Imran Khan regarding his ("illegitimate") child.

She said Sharif was seriously ill and had heart-related complications, adding that the former prime minister was going to have a heart procedure shortly.

"Imran Khan and his team should stop playing on the health of Sharif and concentrate on governance matters instead," Bokhari said. PTI

The house that trash built: Myanmar start-up turns clutter to handicrafts

YANGON (TIP): From a distance, ChuChu Design, a single-storey building across the river from Myanmar's bustling commercial capital, looks like any other on the impoverished outskirts of the city.

But on closer inspection, the roof has been fashioned from old tyres, the walls are made of glass bottles and the lampshades from melted plastic, all items upcycled by the social enterprise as part of a mission to educate people about waste.

ChuChu—named after the Burmese for "plastic house"—sells handicrafts and fashion products recycled from the thousands of tonnes of trash dumped in Yangon every day. The design of the house is intended as a statement about waste, said 68-year-old Wendy Neampui, the managing director of the business, which she founded in 2014 with the help of Italian non-profit organisation Cesvi.

"I wanted to transform trash from an ugly landfill site into beautiful items," she said, as she stitched together plastic sheets to be ironed into a colourful patchwork bottle holder, a technique she learned from the internet.

Dozens of designers have been trained up and now work in the business, crafting everything from wallets made out of potato chip packets to laptop covers made from cement bags.

"Our project ... is not only to work on making beautiful things from trash, but also to educate people that trash can be a decoration in the home," she said.



The Southeast Asian city's government says more than 2,500 tonnes of trash are thrown out every day by the 5 million or so people living and working there.

Much of it ends up dumped on roads and in waterways, as city services struggle to keep pace with rapid urbanisation.

Many people burn their trash in the street, contributing to air pollution - the city's air quality is among the worst in the world. In Dala township, the suburb where ChuChu is located, the streets are littered with mountains of rotting garbage. It's a struggle to persuade people to buy products made from

scavenged items, Wendy Neampui said, so most of the items they make end up in souvenir shops targeting tourists.

The aim is that people buy not because the products are a curiosity but for their own value, said Friedor Jeske, a German waste management specialist who is also a managing director at ChuChu.

"That's a little bit of a tough goal," he said. "But we are getting there ... slowly."

Wendy Neampui said she had no illusions the enterprise would solve the city's trash problem. But it's a step in the right direction. "With this technique, I can help save the environment and earn a living," she said. "That is my ambition." Reuters

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Bloomberg to fund anti-Trump operation in 6 critical states



"I entered the race for president to defeat Donald Trump, and today I am leaving the race for the same reason, to defeat Donald Trump", Bloomberg tweeted after announcing end of bid for the White house.

WASHINGTON (TIP): Bloomberg will dip into his vast fortune to pay for field offices in Arizona, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, campaign aides said.

Mike Bloomberg is out of the Democratic presidential race, but he's not done trying to beat President Donald Trump. The billionaire businessman is funding an anti-Trump operation in six battleground states in an effort to oust the Republican president in November.

Bloomberg will dip into his vast fortune to pay for field offices in Arizona, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, campaign aides said on Thursday. It will be done through some type of independent expenditure committee that won't be able to coordinate with any campaign, though aides are still figuring out the legal details and what the name and budget of the organization will be.

Bloomberg, a former New York City mayor, exited the race on Wednesday after a dismal performance in the 14 Super Tuesday states. He immediately endorsed Joe Biden.

"We're not done with you yet, Donald," he tweeted Thursday along with an anti-Trump video that said "GoJoe" at the end.

It's unclear when Bloomberg's new operation will launch and how it will shift if Biden is not the party's nominee. Aides to Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who is battling Biden for the nomination, have said they do not want Bloomberg's money, and Bloomberg has said he may not spend to help him.

Bloomberg is worth an estimated \$61 billion and has already spent more than \$500 million on his own campaign. The 78-year-old head of Bloomberg LP, the financial data and media company, has been one of the biggest donors to Democratic campaigns as well as causes such as gun control and climate change in recent years.

Arizona, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are the six states that Bloomberg and his team believe will be pivotal in determining who wins the White House in November. Trump won all six in the 2016 election.

Although only one of those states, North Carolina, voted on Super Tuesday, Bloomberg's campaign had already built an extensive organization in the other five in anticipation of remaining in the race longer.

IRS Criminal Investigation veteran selected as new Fraud Enforcement Director

WASHINGTON (TIP): As part of a continuing focus on compliance issues, the Internal Revenue Service announced March 5 that Damon Rowe will serve as the agency's director of the newly created Fraud Enforcement Office beginning in mid-March.

Rowe and the new office will reside in the IRS Small Business/Self Employed Division and work on agency-wide compliance issues. He will serve as the principal advisor and consultant to IRS Division Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners on all issues involving Fraud Enforcement strategic plans, programs and policy.

A veteran of IRS Criminal Investigation, he will also provide agency-wide executive leadership and direction in the design, development and delivery of major activities within the Fraud Enforcement office in support of IRS efforts to detect and deter fraud while strengthening the National Fraud Program.

In addition to leveraging existing law enforcement relationships, Rowe will have a continued focus on unscrupulous activities of taxpayers and professional enablers that undermine our Federal Tax Laws in a manner that is consistent and fair to the American public. With additional training, resources and applied analytics, SBSE will thwart emerging threats as it relates to fraudulent filings and related activities.

"Our compliance and enforcement functions are working together to improve tax administration for everyone," said IRS Commissioner Chuck Rettig. "Every compliance employee has a commitment for a general awareness of tax fraud related issues, which is a priority for the agency.



A veteran of IRS Criminal Investigation, Damon Rowe will serve as IRS's director of the newly created Fraud Enforcement Office beginning in mid-March.

Damon's exceptional leadership skills, background and expertise will strongly support agency determinations regarding the existence of fraud, and, just as important, determinations where a fraud referral should not occur. We are proud to have Damon lead the coordination of our fraud enforcement efforts."

Eric Hylton, SBSE Commissioner, noted that Rowe will continue to strengthen the internal compliance relationships in the IRS between CI agents and civil-side revenue agents and revenue officers as well as work with external partners. In the past two years,

revenue officers have been the single largest supplier of criminal fraud and deterrence referrals and account for most accepted case referrals.

"Damon's selection to this new office will help strengthen our compliance work and is yet an additional opportunity to engineer partnerships with the tax professionals as well as strengthen our capacity and resolve across all business units with coordinated enforcement efforts," Hylton said. "Fraud Policy will be getting more attention this year to ensure it has the staff and resources it needs to expand detection and deterrence efforts of our campus and field employees across the IRS."

As the agency expands its enforcement presence, Rowe will also work with Brendan O'Dell, the new Promoter Investigation Coordinator, to pursue potential fraud referrals regarding abusive promoters.

Prior to this position, Rowe served as Executive Director of International Operations for Criminal Investigation (CI) where he was responsible for ensuring international law enforcement cooperation between foreign governments and CI field offices. Previously, he served as Special Agent in Charge of the Los Angeles and Dallas Field offices and Assistant Special Agent in Charge for the New Orleans Field Office.

Rowe began his IRS career as a special agent in 1998. He holds a Bachelor of Accounting degree from the University of Houston, a J.D. from Texas Southern University, and a Master of Legal Letters in Taxation from Southern Methodist University School of Law. Rowe is a member of the Texas Bar.

Judge cites Barr's 'misleading' statements in ordering review of Mueller report redactions

WASHINGTON (TIP): A federal judge in D.C. sharply criticized Attorney General William P. Barr on Thursday, March 5 for a "lack of candor," questioning the truthfulness of the nation's top law enforcement official in his handling of the report by special counsel Robert S. Mueller III.

U.S. District Court Judge Reggie Walton, overseeing a lawsuit brought by EPIC, a watchdog group, and BuzzFeed News, said he saw serious discrepancies between Barr's public statements last year about Mueller's findings and the public, partially redacted version of that report.

Because of those discrepancies, Walton ruled, the judge would review by himself an unredacted version of the Mueller report to see if the Justice Department's redactions were appropriate.

"In the Court's view, Attorney General Barr's representation that the Mueller



U.S. District Court Judge Reggie Walton, overseeing a lawsuit brought by EPIC, a watchdog group, and BuzzFeed News, said he saw serious discrepancies between Barr's public statements last year about Mueller's findings and the public, partially redacted version of that report.

Report would be 'subject only to those redactions required by law or by compelling law enforcement, national security, or personal privacy interests' cannot be credited without the Court's independent verification in light of Attorney General Barr's conduct and misleading public statements about the

findings in the Mueller Report," Walton wrote.

Mueller's lengthy, two-part report detailed the findings of his investigation into whether anyone on the Trump campaign conspired with Russia to interfere in the 2016 election, and whether President Trump tried to obstruct that investigation.

A spokeswoman for Barr declined to comment on the judge's ruling.

Walton's decision is another indication of the growing concern among federal judges in Washington about politicization at the Justice Department.

Last month, another federal judge in the same courthouse, Amy Berman Jackson, sentenced President Trump's longtime friend Roger Stone to more than three years in prison, following an internal fight between Barr, his deputies, and career prosecutors over what sentence to recommend in that case.

(Agencies)

Frisco ISD Students Launch Frisco Ignite STEAM Initiative

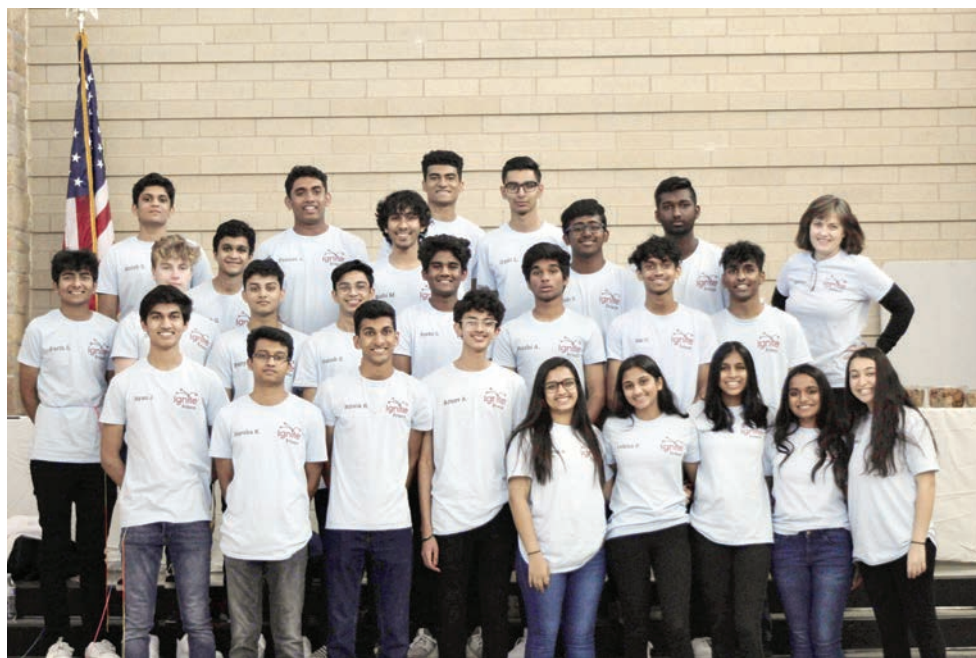
FRISCO, TX (TIP): Frisco Ignite is a completely high school run organization that hosts an annual event incorporating the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM). For founders Harsha Kolachina and Ritvik Ramakrishnan, moving to Frisco was a breath of fresh air: Frisco had tons of STEAM-related afterschool programs that they wish that they had back at their own homes; however, with Frisco being one of the fastest growing cities in the nation, new after-school activities would pop up left and right every other month.

"Whether families had just moved into Frisco or lived in Frisco for several years, because of the growing nature of the city, it is difficult for them to keep track of every resource available for their child," Ramakrishnan noted. "Especially as the oldest with three younger siblings, I wanted to explore potential ways for my family, along with other families, to learn more about each aspect of STEAM and become cognizant of all the opportunities in Frisco."

Harsha and Ritvik decided to spearhead Frisco Ignite: an initiative that brought together all of the STEAM opportunities in Frisco into one consolidated location. Frisco Ignite's motto is By the Students, For the Students, ensuring that the organization was run solely by high school students to empower the next generation of young innovators and thinkers. In doing so, students and parents would listen to a series of Ignite Talks (ignitetalks.io) while engaging with hands-on demonstrations and interactive demos at the Frisco Ignite STEAM Fair.

They started the organization in 2018, with an original 16-member team consisting of students from Lone Star High School and Memorial High School. The following year, their team expanded to 25 members representing all Frisco ISD high schools as well as The Hockaday School and Texas Academy of Mathematics & Science.

Within the last two years, Harsha and Ritvik were able to host two Frisco Ignite events. Their first event was a huge success. With coordination of lead organizer Arnav Amit during the 2020 Frisco Ignite STEAM Fair on Sunday, February 16th, 2020, the organization was able to produce an even more successful event, with dozens of



STEAM-related organizations in the DFW Metroplex.

"My experience in Frisco Ignite has been amazing. When we started this 2 years ago, I personally didn't think we would be this successful. But seeing how we were able to make an impact on our community not once, but twice really makes me happy," Kolachina stated, adding that Frisco Ignite is the most influential and largest student-run event organization in the DFW Metroplex. This is only the start: Frisco Ignite is projected to expand even faster moving forward.

The organization has not only impacted its community, but also its own team members. "Before Frisco Ignite, I was shy and introverted. But that experience of starting something innovative in Frisco and learning how to be a leader taught me so many life experiences that have not only changed me but will serve me well in my life. And I'm sure a lot of our members can attest to that personally," Kolachina said.

On a community standpoint, Frisco Ignite has empowered students to take a

deeper interest in their own learning and start their own STEAM-related initiatives to impact the next generation. Individuals like Harsha and Ritvik are prime examples of how students themselves can bring about change to the community around them. As Ramakrishnan stated, "It was honestly amazing to see how we were able to take one small idea and turn it into something big. I used to hear these kinds of stories on the news but seeing it happen in my life is just amazing and truly rewarding. After igniting the flame by helping others take a deeper interest in their own learning, it is now time to pass the torch down to the next generation."

The event was truly a testament that students can come together for a common purpose: to influence Frisco ISD students and encourage them to take a deeper interest in their own learning.

Learn more about friscoignite.org on their website or through Instagram or Twitter.

(Press Release)

USCIS Launches New Online Form for Reporting Fraud



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

WASHINGTON (TIP): U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services on March 3 launched a new online tip form to help the public provide the agency with information about immigration fraud. The new online form, available on the USCIS public website, prompts the form user for the information that the USCIS' fraud investigators need to investigate allegations of immigration benefit fraud or abuse.

"Safeguarding the integrity of our immigration system is top priority for the Trump administration and is central to the agency's mission," said Joseph Edlow, the USCIS deputy director for policy. "One way we protect our immigration system is by making it easy for the public to report immigration fraud and abuse. This new online tip form makes fraud reporting more efficient and robust, provides our agency with the information needed to investigate and address abuse of the system, and will help assist our federal partners in prosecuting immigration fraud."

The new online tip form collects information related to the relevant fraud, identifies the type of benefit in question and provides space for the form user to describe the alleged fraud or abuse in additional detail. This online form streamlines fraud reporting by replacing three email boxes USCIS now uses for fraud and abuse reporting. The tip form will make the tip process more effective and efficient. Every day, well-intentioned people try to report immigration fraud or abuse to us, but our own internal procedures did not allow for a consistent and timely way to respond. Some of the allegations are true while others are not, but USCIS needed a better way to collect information and make an assessment. USCIS will work on tips previously submitted by email to completion. It is not necessary to resubmit a tip via the online tip form if you previously submitted it via email. People who submit tips by email after USCIS closes the email boxes will receive a bounce-back message letting them know that USCIS has decommissioned the mailbox and giving them a link to the tip form.



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Take states consensus before enrolling NPR, Parliamentary panel tells Modi govt

NEW DELHI (TIP): Get a consensus of all state governments before rolling out the National Population Register (NPR) exercise.

This was suggested by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs to Centre on Thursday.

In its report submitted in the Rajya Sabha, the committee headed by Congress MP Anand Sharma said that MHA should explore the feasibility of using the Aadhaar metadata for the Census and updation of NPR in 2020-21 and all the States/UTs should be fully convinced on various issues pertaining to the NPR.

NPR exercise commences from April 2020.

"It is necessary to have a national consensus so that there is absolute clarity and no apprehension among remaining people across the country which will help in conducting these exercises in a smooth manner," the report said.

The recommendations made by the Parliamentary panel assumes significance as many of the states have opposed NPR.

The Committee has also recommended that the allocation under the Capital Head for the Union Territories (without legislature) should be increased for creation of assets particularly infrastructure and ensuring that the developmental projects of the UTs do not get hampered due to shortage of funds.

Sensex nosedives over 1,400 points amid coronavirus care; Nifty below 11,000

MUMBAI (TIP): Equity benchmark Sensex plummeted over 1,400 points in opening session on Friday led by massive selloff in global stocks as volatility peaked amid rising concerns over the economic strain of the coronavirus outbreak.

The rupee too depreciated 53 paise to 73.86 against the US dollar in morning session.

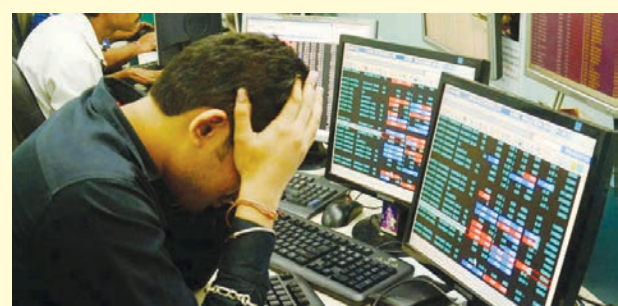
Incessant foreign fund outflow also spooked market participants, traders said.

After sinking 1,459.52 points in early trade, the 30-share index was down 1052.33 points, or 2.74 per cent, at 37,418.28, and the NSE Nifty plunged 318.30 points, or 2.82 per cent, to 10,950.70.

In the previous session, the 30-share BSE barometer settled 61.13 points or 0.16 per cent higher at 38,470.61, and the Nifty advanced 18 points or 0.16 per cent to finish at 11,269.

On a net basis, foreign institutional investors (FPIs) sold equities worth Rs 2,476.75 crore, while domestic institutional investors bought shares worth Rs 2,510.89 crore on Thursday, data available with stock exchanges showed.

Shares of Yes Bank tanked 25 per cent after the capital-starved lender was placed under a moratorium, with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) capping deposit withdrawals at Rs 50,000 per account for a month and superseding its board.



Seven Congress MPs suspended from Lok Sabha for disrupting proceedings

NEW DELHI (TIP): Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday suspended 7 Congress MPs -- Gaurav Gogoi, TN Prathapan, Manickam Tagore, Gurjeet Singh Aujla, Benny Behanan, Rajmohan Unnithan and Adv. Dean Kuriakose for disrupting the proceedings of the House for the rest of the Budget Session.

The motion was passed by a voice vote. The House was adjourned at 15:03 hours for the day to meet again tomorrow March 6 at 11:00 hours.

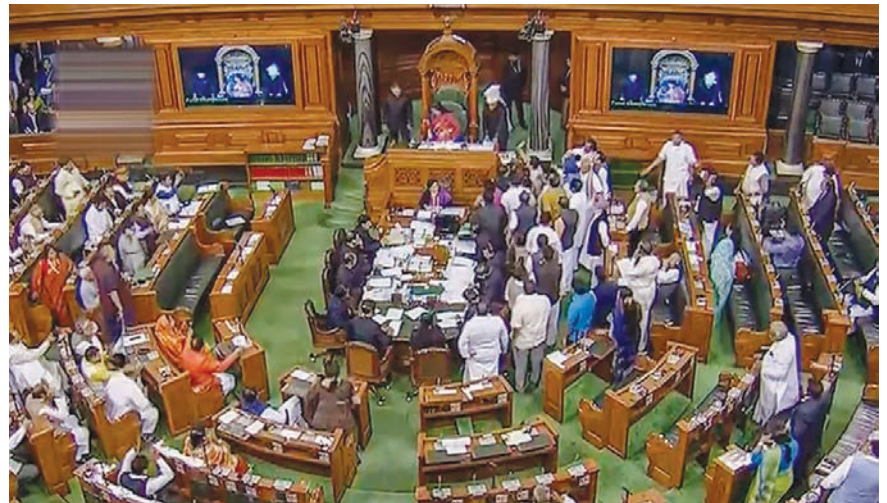
"Snatching papers from Speaker's table utmost disrespect to Chair, we condemn this. We have requested Speaker to set up panel to look into continuous indiscipline by Congress members," said Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi.

Congress leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chaudhary condemned the suspension of the MPs and said, "Is this a dictatorship? It seems the government doesn't want Delhi violence issue to be discussed in Parliament that is why this suspension. We strongly condemn this."

Lok Sabha proceedings were disrupted for the third day on Wednesday as Opposition parties created an uproar demanding immediate discussion on the Delhi violence.

The House was first adjourned soon after it met at 11 am, then at noon and finally for the day a little past 2 pm.

The Opposition parties were



demanding an immediate discussion on Delhi violence but Parliamentary affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said it can be taken up on March 11 in the Lower House and on March 12 in Rajya Sabha.

Not convinced, the Opposition continued the protest storming the well on several occasions. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla was not present during the day and the proceedings were chaired by presiding officers.

Amid din, the Direct Tax Vivaad Se Vishwas Bill was passed by the House.

Opposition parties continued to demand resignation of Home Minister Amit Shah and continued to chant slogans -- 'Modi Sarkar Shame Shame', 'Pradhan Mantri Jawab Do'.

Earlier, Congress members trooped into the Well shouting

slogans and some of them displayed placards, demanding resignation of Home Minister Amit Shah.

Nearly 30 members from the Congress were in the Well. Some of them were heard asking where was the Speaker and also shouted 'we want justice'.

Despite the din, two questions were taken up during the Question Hour. Supplementaries to a query related to coal production was answered by Joshi, who is also the Coal Minister.

Kirit Solanki, who was in the chair, told agitating members that Question Hour should continue.

As the ruckus continued, he adjourned proceedings till noon.

Both Houses have been witnessing disruptions over Delhi violence since the second leg of the Budget session began on March 2.

Delhi violence rocks House as Oppn repeats debate demand

NEW DELHI (TIP): The stalemate in Parliament continued on Wednesday as the opposition stuck to its demand for a discussion on the violence during the communal riots in Delhi last week while the government insisted that the debate on the issue could be held in both the Houses after Holi (March 10).

The government made the first direct attempt to break the logjam after its senior minister and Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha, Thawar Chand Gehlot, met Leader of the Opposition and Congress veteran, Ghulam Nabi Azad, in the morning to iron out the differences.

In the meeting, Gehlot sought the Opposition's cooperation to resume business and conveyed to Azad that the government was not averse to a discussion on the situation in Delhi where communal violence

The government made the first direct attempt to break the logjam after its senior minister and Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha, Thawar Chand Gehlot, met Leader of the Opposition and Congress veteran, Ghulam Nabi Azad

claimed 47 lives.

Soon after the meeting, Azad said the Congress will not budge from its position of not allowing any business until a discussion on the Delhi violence takes place.

"They [the government] said the discussion will be held after Holi [on March 10]. To that our answer is then suspend the business and resume it with the discussion after Holi," Azad said.

However, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader maintained on condition of anonymity that "efforts are underway" to end the impasse.

On Wednesday, the Rajya Sabha was adjourned for the day after the Congress said it will not let Parliament function till a debate on the Delhi riots is allowed. As soon as the Rajya Sabha convened and Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu announced that he had disallowed notices to suspend the business of the House to discuss the Delhi violence, the Opposition members protested with some Trinamool Congress members rushing to the Well.

Naidu said he will discuss the matter with Gehlot and Azad to finalise under which rule the debate should take place. "We will take it up on March 11th after Holi is over," he said.



Rahul likens govt's assurance on coronavirus to Titanic captain telling passengers not to panic

NEW DELHI(TIP): Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan assuring that the government has the coronavirus crisis under control is like the Titanic captain telling passengers not to panic as his ship was unsinkable, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said on Thursday.

Gandhi's remarks came after Vardhan's assurance in Parliament that the government is taking all necessary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus disease) in India.

"The health minister saying that the Indian government has the coronavirus crisis under control, is like the Captain of the Titanic telling passengers not to panic as his ship was unsinkable," Gandhi said in a tweet.

"It's time the government made public an action plan backed by solid resources to tackle this crisis," he said.

RMS Titanic was a British passenger liner that sank in the North Atlantic Ocean in the early morning hours of April 15, 1912, after striking an iceberg during her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York.

Gandhi has been raising concerns over the coronavirus infection since long. In a February 12 tweet, he had said coronavirus is an extremely serious threat to "our people and our economy".

"My sense is the government is not taking this threat seriously. Timely action is critical," he had said.

Earlier this week, Gandhi had hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the detection of fresh coronavirus cases in the country, saying he should quit wasting India's time "playing the clown" with his social media accounts when India is facing an emergency.

With the message of "Here's how it's done", Gandhi had also tweeted a video of Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong addressing Singaporeans on how to deal with the coronavirus.

Money-laundering: ED books ex-Jet Airways boss Naresh Goyal

MUMBAI (TIP): Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal and a few others have been booked by the ED in a money-laundering case even as the agency is conducting searches on his premises, officials said on Thursday.

They said a criminal case against the former chairman of the airlines had been filed under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after taking cognisance of a recent Mumbai Police FIR filed against him.

The Enforcement Directorate carried out raids at Goyal's premises in Mumbai on Wednesday and also questioned him after filing the case, they said.

The action is continuing, they added.

The Mumbai Police FIR pertains to charges of alleged fraud by Goyal and others against a Mumbai-based travel company.

Goyal has earlier been grilled by the central probe agency in a case filed under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) in September last year.

The agency had carried out similar raids, under the FEMA, in August last year against Goyal, his family and others.

Dec 16 gangrape convicts set to hang March 20

NEW DELHI (TIP): A Delhi court directed on Thursday that the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case "be hanged by the neck until they are dead on March 20 at 5.30 am".

Additional Sessions Judge Dharmendra Rana issued a fresh date for execution after being informed by the Delhi government that the convicts have exhausted all their legal remedies.

This is the fourth time that death warrants have been issued as the earlier three had to be deferred pending the exhaustion of legal remedies by the convicts.

The death row convicts are: Mukesh Kumar Singh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay Sharma (26) and Akshay Kumar Singh (31).

Their lawyer conceded before the court that there was no legal impediment for it in proceeding to fix the date of execution.

In its order, the court said: "It is fairly conceded at bar by counsel of convict as well as public prosecutor (appearing for the State) that as of now, there is statutory no bar in exercise of power under 413/414 (issuing death warrant) of the CrPC, rather it is obligatory on the part of the court to discharge the duties cast upon it under the relevant provisions.

"In view of the same, it is directed that convicts shall be hanged by the neck until they are dead on March 20 at 6 am."

During the hearing, advocate A P Singh, appearing for Akshay, Vinay and Pawan, told the court that he would be meeting Pawan in jail and,



thereafter, would exercise his legal remedies against the rejection of his mercy petition.

The jail official said that there was no official communication.

"As far as legal remedies are concerned, they have all been exhausted. The writ plea against the rejection of mercy petition is not a legal remedy," the prosecutor representing the jail said.

The Delhi government had on Wednesday moved court seeking fresh date for the execution hours after President Ram Nath Kovind rejected the mercy petition of Pawan.

The Delhi government had told the court that all legal remedies of the convicts have been exhausted and nothing survives now.

The lawyer for the prosecution also said no notice was required.

The court had on Monday deferred till further order the hanging the convicts that was

scheduled for Tuesday.

The execution of their death warrants has been deferred thrice so far due to delays by them in exhausting legal remedies. All the convicts in the case are to be hanged together.

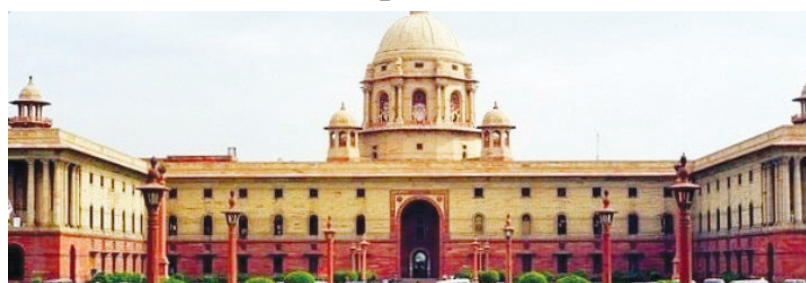
The President had already rejected the mercy petitions of Mukesh, Vinay and Akshay.

A 23-year-old physiotherapy intern, who came to be known as "Nirbhaya" (fearless), was gang raped and savagely assaulted in a moving bus in South Delhi on December 16, 2012. She had died after a fortnight.

Six people, including the four convicts and a juvenile, were named as accused. Ram Singh, the sixth accused, allegedly committed suicide in Tihar jail days after the trial began in the case.

The juvenile was released in 2015 after spending three years in a correctional home.

Steps to address shortcomings in trial of criminal cases submitted before Supreme Court



NEW DELHI (TIP): Three Supreme Court appointed Amici Curiae (friends of court) placed before the top court on Thursday, "Draft Rules of Criminal Practice, 2020", outlining measures aimed to address shortcomings in the trial of criminal cases and to bring about uniformity across the country in criminal probes and trials.

The measures suggested in the draft rules include steps to ensure independence of public prosecutors by appointing separate legal advisors to advise the investigators during the probe, and standard practices for recording evidence and writing judgments.

The three Amici Curiae, senior counsels R Basant and Siddharth Luthra and advocate K Parameshwar were appointed by the top court in November 2017 and February 2018 to assist the court after it noticed certain inadequacies in the procedure followed during the criminal trials across the country while hearing a criminal case. The court registered a suo motu case and took up the matter with a view to issuing guidelines regarding such deficiencies in criminal trials.

The bench, headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) SA Bobde on Thursday directed that he copy of the draft rules be supplied to all states and union territories.

EU-India meet delayed over coronavirus fears

NEW DELHI (TIP): India and the European Union (EU) on Thursday announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Brussels for a summit meeting, expected to be held next week, would be rescheduled in view of precautionary measures related to the Coronavirus outbreak.

Modi had been expected to visit Brussels for the India-EU Summit to be held on March 13. The announcement came a day after the European Defence Agency (EDA) confirmed that one of its staffers tested positive for the novel coronavirus and cancelled all meetings to be held at its premises until March 13.

The proposed summit was under a cloud because the European Parliament is expected to vote on a resolution critical of India's Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) later this month. The resolution was debated in January but a vote was deferred – a move that was seen as being aimed at allowing the summit to go ahead smoothly. External affairs ministry spokesperson Raveesh Kumar told a news briefing that India and the EU agreed "it would be wise to reschedule the summit to a later mutually convenient date" as health authorities had advised against travel between regions.

TRIBECA FILM FEST 2019

Revisited : Asian, Filmmakers of Color

By Mabel Pais



Producer Mose Mayer (front left), Writer-Director Phillip Youmans (front center), and Wendell Pierce (front right) on set of "Burning Cane."



"Superman" Bruce Franks Jr. in "St. Louis Superman."



Lima Das (front), Arghadeep Baruah in "Aamis."

Photos / Courtesy Tribeca Film Fest 2019.

"('Burning Cane') An extraordinary debut feature. Youmans' command of visual storytelling, down to the smallest nuance, is astonishing. This film has made me a believer in the boundless artistic potential of its creator."--Matt Fagerholm, RogerEbert.com

"It exerts the pull of a natural-born filmmaker's eye...every moment in "Burning Cane" is of consequence - the consequences of living and being."- Owen Gleiberman, Variety

At the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival, award-winning, nominee filmmakers of color or films of subjects of color: Asian and others, were among highlighted.

"BURNING CANE," US Narrative, English, 1h 18m

"Burning Cane," winner of three awards at the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival: Best Narrative Feature, Best Actor (Wendell Holmes), and Best Cinematography; and director nominated by Gotham Awards, Official Selection for BFI London Film Festival.

"An extraordinary debut feature. Youmans' command of visual storytelling, down to the smallest nuance, is astonishing. This film has made me a believer in the boundless artistic potential of its creator." - Matt Fagerholm, RogerEbert.com

A lyrical, stunningly assured debut from a 19-year-old New Orleans writer-director-cinematographer-editor, Phillip Youmans, currently studying at New York University. Youmans is the youngest filmmaker to have a film accepted at Tribeca and the first African American filmmaker to win Best Narrative Feature, nominated for a 2019 Gotham Award-Bingham Ray Breakthrough Director.

"BURNING CANE" tells the story of a deeply religious woman's (Karen Kaia Livers) struggle to reconcile her convictions of faith with the love she has for her alcoholic son (Dominique McClellan) and a troubled preacher (Wendell Pierce). Set in rural Louisiana, the film explores the relationships within a southern black protestant community, examining the roots of toxic masculinity, how manhood is defined and the dichotomous role of religion and faith.

Starring Wendell Pierce ("The Wire"), executive produced by Benh Zeitlin ("Beasts of the Southern Wild") and distributed by Ava DuVernay's Array Releasing. BURNING CANE is available on Netflix.

"THE APOLLO," US Documentary, English, 1h 38 m

Considered 'The Soul of American Culture,' "The Apollo" was the Opening Night and World Premiere film of the 2019 Tribeca Film Festival.

Helmed by Academy and Emmy Award-winning director and Tribeca alumnus Roger Ross Williams, The

Apollo chronicles the unique history and contemporary legacy of the internationally renowned New York City landmark, the Apollo Theater. The documentary covers the rich history of the storied performance space over its 85 years and follows a new production of Ta-Nehisi Coates' "Between the World and Me" as it comes to the theater's grand stage.

It is directed by Roger Ross Williams, written by Cassidy Hartmann, Jean Sien. Produced by Lisa Cortes, Nigel Sinclair, Jeanne Elfant Festa, Cassidy Hartmann, Roger Ross Williams.

The documentary weaves together archival footage, music, comedy and dance performances, and behind-the-scenes verité with the team that makes the theater run. The Apollo features interviews with artists including black artists like Patti LaBelle, Pharrell Williams, Smokey Robinson, and Jamie Foxx. The space has created opportunities for new talent to be seen and has served as a launchpad for a myriad of artists including Billie Holiday, Aretha Franklin, Ella Fitzgerald, Diana Ross & The Supremes, Stevie Wonder, The Jackson 5, Luther Vandross, Dave Chappelle, Lauryn Hill, Jimi Hendrix, and more. The creation of this vibrant multi-media stage show frames the way in which "The Apollo" explores the current struggle of black lives in America, the role that art plays in that struggle and the broad range of African American achievement that the Apollo Theater represents.

"The Apollo," directed by Academy Award-winning and Tribeca alumnus Roger Ross Williams (Music by Prudence; Life, Animated) and is produced by Lisa Cortés (Precious), White Horse's Nigel Sinclair (George Harrison: Living in the Material World; Undeclared), Jeanne Elfant Festa (Foo Fighters: Back and Forth, Pavarotti) and Cassidy Hartmann (The Beatles: Eight Days A Week, Pavarotti) along with Williams. THE APOLLO was later screened at various film festivals during the year and is now available at HBO.

"ST. LOUIS SUPERMAN", USA, English, New York Premiere, Documentary Short, 25m

"St. Louis Superman", nominated for Documentary (Short Subject) for The Academy Awards 2020.

Directed by Smriti Mundhra and Sami Khan.

Franks, Jr. a Ferguson activist and battle rapper who was elected to the overwhelmingly white and Republican Missouri House of Representatives, must overcome both personal trauma and political obstacles to pass a critical bill for his community.

Bruce Franks Jr. is a 34-year-old battle rapper, Ferguson activist and state representative from St. Louis, Missouri. Known as 'Superman' to his constituents, he is a political figure the likes of which you've never seen - full of contradictions and deep insights, who has overcome unspeakable loss to become

one of the most exciting and unapologetic young leaders in the country.

This short verité documentary follows Bruce at a critical juncture in his life, when he is forced to deal with the mental trauma he's been carrying for the nearly 30 years since his 9-year-old brother was shot and killed in front of him, in order to find peace and truly fulfill his destiny as a leader for his community.

"AAMIS" (Worldwide English Title: "Ravens") - India, World Premiere, Assamese (with English subs), 1h 48m

Directed and written by Bhaskar Hazarika. Produced by Poonam Deol, Shyam Bora (India). With Lima Das, Arghadeep Baruah, Neetali Das, Sagar Saurabh.

"Not for the faint-hearted or squeamish, Aamis is an unusual, brilliant film, and Bhaskar Hazarika one of India's most gifted filmmakers. I came away gobsmacked, in the best way possible." - The Indian Express

"Aamis" has been designed to provoke, not shock. Married Pediatrician Niri shares a forbidden passion with Sumon, who introduces her to a world of fresh, wild, meat-based delicacies. But as their unconsummated desire mounts, the two are pushed inexorably towards transgression and taboo.

"Love is one of the central pillars that hold up the experience of being human. Yet who or whom you can love is limited by a bewildering range of boundaries - of class, caste, religion, age, institutions, and even nationality and gender. Entire belief systems have been built around codifying and prescribing who can love whom. But, as the saying goes - "Love isn't something you find, it is something that finds you." Aamis tells the story of two people whom love finds, and yet, with too many boundaries between them for love to find fruition, it degenerates into self-destruction," Bhaskar Hazarika.

"ONE CHILD NATION" - China/USA; New York Premiere, Feature Documentary, 1h 28 m.

2019 Sundance U.S. Grand Jury Prize-winning documentary "One Child Nation." Chinese-born filmmakers Nanfu Wang (Hooligan Sparrow) and Jialing Zhang expose the devastating consequences of China's One-Child Policy through the stories of those who lived through it. A new mother returning to China reflects on the history of the country's One Child Policy - a national family planning program established to prevent overpopulation and tracks down both those who helped enforce and were affected by it, eliciting shocking testimonies. Release by Amazon studios.

Produced by Nanfu Wang, Jialing Zhang, Julie Goldman, Christoph Jorg, Christopher Clements, Carolyn Hepburn.

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

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NEENA GUPTA: I STILL HAVE A FEAR OF BEING OUT OF WORK

Veteran actress Neena Gupta has been a part of Indian cinema for over four decades. From her debut film "Adharshila" in 1982 to bagging the National Award for "Woh Chokri" in 1994, to becoming household name as actor and director with the TV series "Saans" in the late nineties, she has always entertained the audience.

Neena, who has often made heads turn with her irreverent lifestyle, shocked everyone in 2017 when she took to social media and confessed openly that she was out of work. A comeback for the talented actress happened soon, with "Veere Di Wedding" and "Badhaai Ho". Since then, she has had a busy second innings.

"Badhaai Ho" is a classic film. People can watch it 10 times. I feel fortunate to be part of that film. It changed my life a lot. The film became a hit. Neena told IANS.

KANGANA PUT ON 20 KILOS FOR THALAIVI, WILL LOSE IT ALL IN NEXT 2 MONTHS

Bollywood star Kangana Ranaut has completed one leg of shooting for her upcoming and ambitious project — Thalaivi. She has put on 20kg for the next leg. However, within two months, she will also have to lose all that weight to get into her characters for Dhaakad and Tejas. Kangana essays the role of former Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalithaa in Thalaivi.

Sharing pictures of Kangana from the film's sets, her sister Rangoli Chandel tweeted, "Only last schedule to go for #Thalaivi Kangana has gained 20 kgs weight, After 2 months she starts #Tejas & #Dhaakad... will she be able to shed that weight, let's see Face with tongue." While one picture shows Kangana in her Thalaivi get up, other two show her in glamorous poses. Rangoli also shared a picture of Jayalalithaa in a similar blue sari, as Kangana wears in one of the pictures.

The glamorous pictures of the 32-year-old actor show her modelling for a photo shoot holding a glass in her hand as she poses in her lean figure. In the last one, Kangana is seen posing, flaunting her super slim frame.

In a video, posted by the official Instagram page of Kangana's team, Kangan introduces her trainer Yogesh and says, "Hello everyone! We are resuming our workout after Thalaivi and ye hain mere trainer Yogesh." She then asks him to take a guess for the number of kilos she has put on. "My guess is 10, I used to be 52," she says and the trainer takes a guess that she must have put on "not less than 15."



KARTIK TO ATTEND AN EVENT POST SURGERY TO FULFILL WORK COMMITMENTS

Among the popular stars of the Gen-Z, Kartik Aaryan is an extremely busy actor with back to back line up of films. However, while promoting his last film, Love Aaj Kal, Kartik had injured his hand and was often seen sporting a bandage too. Post the promotions, Kartik jumped into the shoot of his next Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 and was spotted leaving for Jaipur. The handsome star even shared a photo while leaving in which we could see him flaunting his grey bandage.

However, the injury which did cause some pain to Kartik but he continued to shoot, turned out to be a ligament tear that needed surgery. Now, Pinkvilla has exclusively learned that Kartik had to be admitted to the hospital in Mumbai last night for the surgery of the same. However, the star had committed himself to attend an event on the same day as his surgery and hence, he decided to fulfill his word immediately post his surgery. Yes, Pinkvilla has exclusively learned that Kartik got his surgery done in the morning on Wednesday and will be attending the event in the afternoon, after which he will go back to the hospital for remaining treatment.

As per our source "Kartik is yet again collaborating with an award show this year and the date of the press conference for the actor coincides with his surgery date. Now he didn't want to delay the event or postpone it, as it would disrupt the entire event and also his other commitments and hence he decided to be admitted to the Hinduja hospital late last night. Today early morning he got done with his surgery and in the afternoon he will go to attend the conference from the hospital itself." Now that's some crazy personal schedule the young actor is leading with some high work-commitment-attitude.

Meanwhile, recently, Kartik returned to Mumbai after the shoot of Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 with Tabi and Kiara Advani. The horror-comedy shoot is still on and is being directed by Anees Bazmee. It is slated to be released on July 31, 2020.



THADAM HINDI REMAKE: SIDHARTH MALHOTRA TO PLAY DOUBLE ROLE

Sidharth Malhotra will play a double role in the Hindi remake of Thadam. The film is produced by Bhushan Kumar and Murad Khetani. It marks the directorial debut of Vardhan Ketkar and will hit the silver screens on November 20, 2020.

Sidharth, who was last seen in Marjaavaan, shared a picture with Bhushan Kumar and Murad Khetani on Twitter. He captioned the image as, "Double trouble! Excited to be a part of this ultimate entertaining thriller, in association with @itsbhushankumar, @MuradKhetani and #VardhanKetkar. See you at the movies on 20th November, 2020."

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NATACHA KARAM JOINS SYLVESTER STALLONE IN 'SAMARITAN'

Actor Natacha Karam, best known for '911: Lone Star', is set to share screen space with veteran action star Sylvester Stallone in 'Samaritan'. According to the reports, the superhero-based adventure drama hails from MGM and will be directed by 'Overlord' helmer Julius Avery.

Set 20 years after an epic battle that left a city's villain and hero missing or worse, the film will chronicle the story of a boy who tries to find the hero.

Stallone, 73, will essay the role of Stanley Kominski, a sanitation worker trying to live a normal life while harbouring a deep secret.

Karam, 26, will portray a dangerous and unpredictable henchperson to the story's antagonist.

'Samaritan' will also feature Javon Walton and Martin Starr.

SARAH JESSICA PARKER SHARES EMOTIONAL MESSAGE AS SHE REFLECTS ON GRIEF

Sarah Jessica Parker shared an emotional message with her fans on social media, as she reflected on grief. The star shared a photograph of a group of people walking in a park, and wrote alongside it: "It's not his birthday. Or an anniversary of his passing. It turns out any old day of the week a friend is likely to be missing Sandy. I'm certainly not alone. X. SJ." The *Sex and the City* actress tagged Andy Cohen in the post, and while she didn't refer to who she was talking about, fans guessed that the message was dedicated to the late Sandy Gallin, who passed away on 21 April 2017 at the age of 76, following a battle with cancer. Sandy was Andy's former manager and was also good friends with Sarah.

Many of Sarah's followers were quick to relate to her post, with many sharing stories of their own experiences of loss. One wrote: "Five months into losing a loved one and I am trying to figure out how to navigate grief. Prayers to you." Another commented: "Grief can hit at the strangest times. Sometimes the memories can make your day in a good way, and others you just want to cry. What a world." A third added: "I'm so sorry for your loss. Thank you for sharing. The journey of loss and grief is something I wasn't prepared for at all. Trying to navigate it each day." Andy also responded to Sarah's



message, simply writing: "Me too babe."

Sarah is currently getting ready to star in Broadway alongside husband Matthew Broderick. The couple have been starring in *Plaza Suite* since the beginning of the year, with the tour starting in Boston, before heading to

their native New York. While they were away from their three children for a lot of the time during the show's Boston stint, the doting parents are now back at home in Manhattan with son James, 17, and twin daughters Marion and Tabitha, ten.

MANDY MOORE NEARLY QUIT HOLLYWOOD

Mandy Moore nearly quit the entertainment business in 2015. The 35-year-old star has revealed she was tempted to walk away from her career as her turbulent marriage to musician Ryan Adams collapsed.

Mandy - who was married to Ryan between 2009 and 2016 - shared: "I just felt like I was at a point in my life where I was the most comfortable making myself the least priority, and I made myself as small as possible in order to make someone else comfortable."

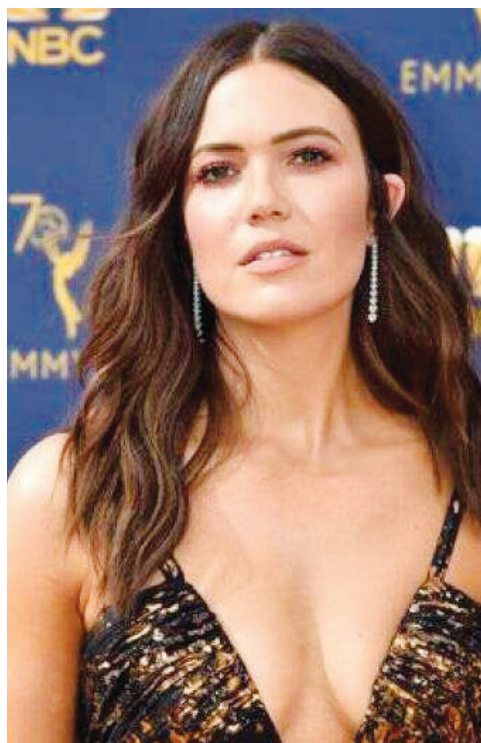
Mandy - who currently stars in the NBC series 'This Is Us' - filed for divorce in 2015, and at that stage, she was ready to turn her back on Hollywood.

The brunette beauty considered returning to Florida to study and eventually moving into another industry altogether.

Mandy - who has claimed her relationship with Ryan was toxic - told 'CBS Sunday Morning': "I had done four failed TV pilots. So, I was kind of at the point where I was like, 'Maybe this acting thing is done for me.'

"Like, 'Maybe I need to hang it up and go back to Florida, go to school, go try my hand at something else.'"

Mandy married singer Taylor Goldsmith in 2018, and the actress



previously admitted she was "very hungry" to tie the knot again following the end of her first marriage.

She said: "I was very hungry. I was not apprehensive at all to marry again."

NO TIME TO DIE: JAMES BOND FILM RELEASE PUSHED BACK 7 MONTHS DUE TO CORONAVIRUS

The release of the James Bond film *No Time To Die* has been pushed back several months because of global concerns about coronavirus.

MGM, Universal and producers Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli announced on Twitter Wednesday that the film would be pushed back from its April release to November 2020.

The announcement cited consideration of the global theatrical marketplace in the decision to delay the release of the film. *No Time To Die* will now hit theaters in the U.K. on Nov. 12 and worldwide on Nov. 25.

The Bond films make a significant portion of their profits from international markets. The last film, *Spectre*, made over \$679 million from overseas theaters in 2015 with over \$84 million of that total coming from China.

Concerns had already been brewing around the imminent release and the global outbreak. Publicity plans in China, Japan and South Korea had previously been canceled. And on Monday, the popular James Bond fan site MI6-HQ published an open letter to the producers urging them to delay the film's rollout.



It is time to put public health above marketing release schedules and the cost of canceling publicity events, the letter said.

Hollywood film release and production schedules have already been affected by the outbreak. Last week, Paramount Pictures halted production on the seventh *Mission: Impossible* film, which had been scheduled to shoot in Venice, Italy.

Award-winning Iran filmmaker gets one-year jail

TEHRAN (TIP): A lawyer for Iranian filmmaker Mohammad Rasoulof, who just won the Berlin Film Festival's Golden Bear, says he's been summoned to serve a one-year prison sentence. Nasser Zarafshan said on Wednesday that Rasoulof's sentence came from three films he made that authorities found to be "propaganda against the system". AP

Greta says EU 'pretending' to be leader on climate

BRUSSELS (TIP): Green activist Greta Thunberg on Wednesday said an EU proposal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 was deeply insufficient and that Europe should not make false claims to be a leader on climate. The EU must stop "pretending that you can be a climate leader and still go on building and subsidising new fossil fuel infrastructure," she said at European Parliament. AFP

'Europe must back Turkey in Syria to avoid migrant crisis'

ANKARA (TIP): European countries must support Turkey's "solutions" in Syria if they want to resolve the migration crisis, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Wednesday, accusing Europe of "trampling" on refugees' rights.

"If European countries want to resolve the issue, they must support Turkey's efforts for political and humanitarian solutions in Syria," Erdogan said in a televised speech.

"All European countries closing their borders to refugees today, trying to push them back by hitting them and sinking their boats, in fact even shooting at them, are trampling over the universal declaration of human rights," he said in Ankara. — AFP

IAEA chief demands 'clarifications' on Iran's nuclear programme

PARIS (TIP): The head of the UN's atomic watchdog on Tuesday sounded the alarm on Iran's cooperation with the agency and demanded "clarifications" over an undeclared site in Tehran where uranium particles were found late last year.

It comes on the same day as the IAEA issued two reports, one on Iran's current nuclear programme and the other detailing its denial of access to two sites the agency wanted to visit.

Rafael Grossi, the new head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who was in Paris to meet President Emmanuel Macron, told AFP: "Iran must decide to cooperate in a clearer manner with the agency to give the necessary clarifications". "The fact that we found traces (of uranium) is very important. AFP

Venezuelan President Maduro urges all women to have 6 children

CARACAS (TIP): President Nicolás Maduro wants Venezuelan women to have many children as a way to boost the country, which has seen millions of people flee in recent years to escape its economic crisis.

Maduro made the exhortation during a televised event Tuesday evening for a government program promoting various birth methods.

"God bless you for giving the country six little boys and girls," the socialist president told a woman at the event. "To give birth, then, to give birth, all women to have six children, all. Let the homeland grow!" The comments drew criticism from human rights activists and others who noted Venezuelans already are struggling to provide food, clothes and health care for their families.

"It is irresponsible, on the part of a president of the Republic, to encourage women to have six children simply to make a homeland, when there is a homeland that does not guarantee children their lives," said Oscar Misle, founder of CECODAP, a group that defends the rights of young people.

The country's economic collapse, coupled with its deep political divisions, led more than 4.5 million Venezuelans to emigrate since 2015, according to the United Nations.

The U.N. World Food Program also recently said that 9.3 million people — nearly one-third of Venezuela's



population — are unable to meet their basic dietary needs.

"You have to be very cynical to ask that we have six children," said Magdalena de Machado, a housewife picking through scraggly vegetables at a street market in the center of Caracas for making soup for her sons, ages 2 and 4.

"Only two days a week we can serve some meat and chicken. For years we were late having children. We had them when we thought we were better off, but in the last year we've been buying less and less food," she said.

De Machado and others also questioned how women could be expected to increase births amid the deterioration in the country's health care, both for adults and children.

A report by Human Rights Watch in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health concluded last year that the health system in Venezuela has "totally collapsed." Among other problems, it cited rising levels of maternal and child mortality as well as the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases. — AP

Saudi Arabia suspends Umrah pilgrimage for Saudi citizens and residents

DUBAI (TIP): Saudi Arabia suspended Umrah pilgrimages to the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina for Saudi citizens and the kingdom's other residents due to coronavirus concerns, state news agency SPA reported on Wednesday.

Saudi Arabia reported its first case of the new coronavirus on Monday from an individual who had not disclosed his visit to Iran when entering Saudi Arabia.

"Based on the recommendations of the committee appointed to monitor coronavirus...it has been decided to suspend Umrah for citizens and residents in the kingdom," SPA said, citing an official source in the Saudi interior ministry.

The decision will be reviewed regularly and reversed when the situation changes, it added.

Saudi Arabia last week halted Umrah visas for foreigners and banned Gulf citizens from visiting the two cities because of the virus.

It also banned tourists from at least 25 countries where the virus has been found, and on Tuesday it limited arrivals of travelers from the Gulf



Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

Pilgrimage is big business for Saudi Arabia and is the backbone of plans to develop tourism under Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's ambitious economic reform agenda.

Visits by pilgrims accelerate during the holy fasting month of Ramadan, beginning this year in late April. In late July, some 2 million pilgrims are expected for the week-long haj, the world's largest annual gathering of Muslims, which has a separate visa regime. Reuters

Netanyahu leads in Israel election, but lacks majority

JERUSALEM (TIP): Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu led on Tuesday in Israel's third national election in less than a year but was short of a governing majority, nearly complete results showed. Netanyahu claimed victory in Monday's vote over his main challenger, former armed forces chief Benny Gantz of the centrist Blue and White party, after exit polls projected the right-wing leader's Likud party had come out on top.

"We turned lemons into lemonade," he told a cheering crowd at Likud's election headquarters as exit polls were released.

But Gantz stopped short of conceding defeat, saying the election could result in another deadlock and he understood and shared his supporters' "feeling of disappointment and pain".

With some 90 per cent of the votes counted, Netanyahu, who has the pledged support of right-wing and religious parties for a coalition government, appeared to control 59 seats in parliament, two short of a ruling majority.

The gap made former defence minister Avigdor Lieberman's far-right Yisrael Beiteinu party a potential kingmaker after remaining on the sidelines in inconclusive ballots in April and September. Reuters

TURKEY, RUSSIA AGREE TO CEASE FIRE IN SYRIA

MOSCOW (TIP): Turkey and Russia reached agreement on a ceasefire in Syria's northwestern Idlib province to take effect at midnight, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Thursday.

"At 00.01 tonight, as in, from midnight, the ceasefire will be put in place," Erdogan said, following talks with his counterpart Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan began talks in Moscow on Thursday aimed at defusing the crisis in Syria's northwestern province of Idlib.

"The situation... in Idlib has become so aggravated that it requires us to have a direct personal conversation," Putin said at the start of the meeting. The two Presidents were meeting after a surge in fighting in Syria raised fears of their armies clashing and launched a new migrant crisis.

"The entire world has its eyes fixed on us," Erdogan told Putin. "The measures and appropriate decisions we will take here will calm the region and our two countries." Erdogan said before arriving in Moscow that he would be looking for



Putin to agree to a rapid ceasefire in Idlib, where Ankara is battling Moscow-backed regime forces.

Putin expressed his condolences for the deaths of Turkish soldiers in Syria, where dozens have been killed in recent

weeks as Ankara for the first time launched a direct offensive against President Bashar al-Assad's regime. But he also pointed out that the Syrian army had "unfortunately... suffered serious losses". — AFP

Russian strikes kill 15 civilians in Syria

MAARET MISRIN (SYRIA) (TIP): Russian air strikes on Thursday killed at least 15 civilians, including a child, in the last major opposition bastion of Idlib in northwestern Syria, a Britain-based war monitor said. The strikes after midnight targeted an area where displaced Syrians had gathered outside the town of Maaret Misrin in Idlib province, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. AFP

Coronavirus death toll in China crosses 3,000; confirmed cases mounts to over 80,400

BEIJING (TIP): The death toll of coronavirus in China has crossed 3,000 with 31 new fatalities and the total number of confirmed cases jumped to over 80,400, while Chinese President Xi Jinping has called for "undiminished vigilance", saying the situation in virus-hit Wuhan still remained severe despite positive progress.

China's National Health Commission said on Thursday that it received reports of 139 new confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus infection and 31 deaths on Wednesday on the Chinese mainland.

All the deaths were in the epicentre of the virus, Hubei Province and its capital Wuhan, which continued to be ground zero of the COVID-19.

Also on Wednesday, 143 new suspected cases were reported while the number of severe cases decreased by 464 to 5,952, the NHC said, adding that 522 people were still suspected of being infected with the virus.

The overall confirmed cases on the Chinese mainland have reached 80,409 by the end of Wednesday.

This included 3,012 people who have died of the disease, 25,352 patients still undergoing treatment and 52,045 patients who have been discharged.

Also on Wednesday, two "imported cases" (people arriving from abroad) of the novel coronavirus infection were reported on the mainland, all of which were in Zhejiang Province.

By the end of Wednesday, 20 imported cases had been reported, the commission said.

By the end of Wednesday, 104 confirmed cases, including two deaths had been reported in Hong Kong, 10 confirmed cases in Macao and 42 in Taiwan, including one death, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Forty-three patients in Hong Kong, nine in Macao and 12 in Taiwan have been discharged from hospital after recovery.

In Hubei province, from where the COVID-19 originated in December reported 134 new confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus infection and 31 new deaths on Wednesday, the local health commission said.

The latest report brought the total confirmed cases in the hard-hit province to 67,466 and that of total deaths to 2,902, which included 2,305 fatalities in Wuhan. PTI

German industry fears 'longest recession' since reunification

BERLIN (TIP): The economic upheaval caused by the fast-spreading coronavirus threatens to plunge Germany's crucial industrial sector into "the longest recession since reunification", a powerful industry body said Thursday.

Germany's export-reliant industrial sector is already in the midst of a recession, with car manufacturers especially feeling the pain from months of China-US trade tensions and Brexit uncertainty.

As the deadly coronavirus wreaks havoc on international supply chains and saps consumer demand, Germany's BDI industry federation said worse was to come.

"German industry is facing the longest recession since reunification" of the country in 1990, BDI said in a quarterly report.

The sector, a key growth driver in Europe's top economy, has already seen six consecutive quarters of shrinkage.

In the final quarter of 2019, German industrial production fell by 5.7 per cent year-on-year.

The BDI said the combined effects of weak global growth, increased uncertainty and factory disruptions were having "a negative effect" on companies' willingness to spend money and invest.

The industry body now expects the German economy as a whole to grow by just 0.5 per cent in 2020, compared to 1.1 per cent growth forecast by the government in January before the virus



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spread across the world.

The BDI urged the German government to use its fat budget surpluses to support affected industries and encourage investment.

Berlin must "swiftly" take action "to

adequately respond to the crisis", it said.

It added that it welcomed recent indications from Berlin suggesting that Chancellor Angela Merkel's government stood ready to support the German economy.

Finance Minister Olaf Scholz last week said the government had the means to "launch a fiscal stimulus package" if the situation worsened.

Highlighting the bleak outlook, German car parts maker Continental on Thursday said it expected car production worldwide to fall by two to five percent in 2020, partly because of the huge impact of the coronavirus on China. — AFP

HOLI: LET THE COLOR SHOWER JOY

Holi is considered as one of the most revered and celebrated festivals of India and it is celebrated in almost every part of the country. It is also sometimes called as the "festival of love" as on this day people get to unite together forgetting all resentments and all types of bad feeling towards each other. The great Indian festival lasts for a day and a night, which starts in the evening of Purnima or the Full Moon Day in the month of Falgun. It is celebrated with the name Holika Dahan or Choti Holi on first evening of the festival and the following day is called Holi. In different parts of the country it is known with different names.

The vibrancy of colors is something that brings in a lot of positivity in our lives and Holi being the festival of colours is actually a day worth rejoicing. Holi is a famous Hindu festival that is celebrated in every part of India with utmost joy and enthusiasm. The ritual starts by lighting up the bonfire one day before the day of Holi and this process symbolizes the triumph of good over the bad. On the day of Holi people play with colours with their friends and families and in evening they show love and respect to their close ones with Abeer.

History of Holi

Holi is an ancient festival of India and was originally known as 'Holika'. The festival finds a detailed description in early religious works such as Jaimini's Purvamimamsa-Sutras and Kathaka-Gryha-Sutras. Historians also believe that Holi was celebrated by all Aryans but more so in the Eastern part of India.

It is said that Holi existed several centuries before Christ. However, the meaning of the festival is believed to have changed over the years. Earlier it was a special rite performed by married women for the happiness and well-being of their families and the full moon (Raka) was worshiped.

Legends and Mythology

In some parts of India, specially in Bengal and Orissa, Holi Purnima is also celebrated as the birthday of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu (A.D. 1486-1533). However, the literal meaning of the word 'Holi' is 'burning'. There are various legends to explain the meaning of this word, most prominent of all is the legend associated with demon king Hiranyakashyap.

Hiranyakashyap wanted everybody in his kingdom to worship only him but to his great disappointment, his son, Prahlad became an ardent devotee of Lord Naarayana. Hiranyakashyap commanded his sister, Holika to enter a blazing fire with Prahlad in her lap. Holika had a boon whereby she could enter fire without any damage on herself. However, she was not aware that the boon worked only when she enters the fire alone. As a result she paid a price for her sinister desires, while Prahlad was saved by the grace of the god for his extreme devotion. The festival, therefore, celebrates the victory of good over evil and also the triumph of devotion.

Significance of Holi

In spite of being such a colourful and gay festival, there are various aspects of Holi which makes it so significant for our lives. Though they might not be so apparent but a closer look and a little thought will reveal the significance of Holi in more ways than meets the eyes.



Ranging from socio-cultural, religious to biological there is every reason why we must heartily enjoy the festival and cherish the reasons for its celebrations.

So when, its time for Holi, please don't hold yourself back and enjoy the festival to the hilt by participating with full enthusiasm in every small tradition related to the festival.

Mythological Significance

Holi gets us close to our religion and our mythology as it is essentially the celebration of various legends associated with the festival.

Foremost is the legend of Prahlad and Hiranyakashyap. The legend says there once lived a devil and powerful king, Hiranyakashyap who considered himself a god and wanted everybody to worship him. To his great ire, his son, Prahlad began to worship, Lord Vishnu. To get rid of his son, Hiranyakashyap asked his sister, Holika to enter a blazing fire with Prahlad in her lap, as she had a boon to enter fire unscathed. Legend has it that Prahlad was saved for his extreme devotion for the lord while Holika paid a price for her sinister desire. The tradition of burning Holika or the 'Holika dahan' comes mainly from this legend.

Holi also celebrates the legend of Radha and Krishna which describes the extreme delight, Krishna took in applying colour on Radha and other gopis. This prank of Krishna later, became a trend and a part of the Holi festivities.

Mythology also states that Holi is the celebration of death of Ogress Pootana who tried to kill infant, Krishna by feeding poisonous milk to it.

Another legend of Holi which is extremely popular in Southern India is that of Lord Shiva and Kaamadeva. According to the legend, people in south celebrate the sacrifice of Lord of Passion Kaamadeva who risked his life to revoke Lord Shiva from meditation and save the world.

Also, popular is the legend of Ogress

Dhundhi who used to trouble children in the kingdom of Raghu and was ultimately chased away by the pranks of the children on the day of Holi. Showing their belief in the legend, children till date play pranks and hurl abuses at the time of Holika Dahan.

Cultural Significance

Celebration of the various legends associated with Holi reassure the people of the power of the truth as the moral of all these legends is the ultimate victory of good over evil. The legend of Hiranyakashyap and Prahlad also points to the fact that extreme devotion to god pays as god always takes his true devotee in his shelter.

All these legends help the people to follow a good conduct in their lives and believe in the virtue of being truthful. This is extremely important in the modern day society when so many people resort to evil practices for small gains and torture one who is honest. Holi helps the people to believe in the virtue of being truthful and honest and also to fight away the evil.

Besides, holi is celebrated at a time of the year when the fields are in full bloom and people are expecting a good harvest. This gives a people a good reason to rejoice, make merry and submerge themselves in the spirit of Holi.

Social Significance

Holi helps to bring the society together and strengthen the secular fabric of our country. For, the festival is celebrated by non-Hindus also as everybody like to be a part of such a colourful and joyous festival. Also, the tradition of the Holi is that even the enemies turn friends on Holi and forget any feeling of hardship that may be present. Besides, on this day people do not differentiate between the rich and poor and everybody celebrate the festival together with a spirit of bonhomie and brotherhood.

In the evening people visit friends and relatives and exchange gifts, sweets and greetings. This helps in revitalising relationships and strengthening emotional bonds between people.

HOLA MOHALLA - SIKH FESTIVAL OF BROTHERHOOD AND BRAVERY

Hola Mohalla is a famous and colourful 3-day Sikh festival celebrated during spring. It takes place on the second day of the lunar month of Chett which is the first month of the Nanakshahi calendar used by Sikhs. This procession takes place in Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib in Anandpur, the Rupnagar district of Punjab, which is one of the 5 Sikh takhts holding special historical significance. It is home to the birth of Khalsa Panth and has real artefacts from those days.

While Hola means the charge of an army, Mohalla means an organised procession. Initiated by the tenth Guru of Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Hola Mohalla is the gathering of Sikhs to exhibit their martial arts, swordsmanship and horse-riding skills, the expertise of which was with Guru Gobind Singh Ji himself, for he was known to be a great fighter and leader of the Sikhs against Aurangzeb and the Mughals dynasty. He also fought against the Hill Rajputs, protecting the poor and helpless. It was he who felt that Holi had lost its meaning of brotherhood and coming together in the community, so he started the festival of Hola Mohalla, making it a similar celebration, but honouring the Khalsa custom.

Hola Mohalla has, thus, been known to mean fun and a jubilant procession of people, with people playing Gatka, a form of martial arts, enjoying the plethora of food which is served at various food stalls, and listening to soothing hymns, reciting the name of God.

Date of Hola Mohalla

It usually falls on the second day of the lunar month of Chett which is the first month of the Nanakshahi calendar used by Sikhs. Hola Mohalla is celebrated a day after the Hindu festival of Holi, but at times it takes place on the same day as Holi.

In 2020, it will be held from 10 March to 12 March.

Hola Mohalla Venue

This procession takes place in Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib in Anandpur, the Rupnagar district of Punjab, which is one of the 5 Sikh takhts holding special historical significance. It is home to the birth of Khalsa Panth and has real artefacts from those days.

How is Hola Mohalla Celebrated

1. The festival commences with early morning prayers. The Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the last and the only Guru that the Sikhs worship now, is given a holy bath with milk and water before keeping it at the podium and reading it.

2. Akhand Path, a continuous reading of Guru Granth Sahib Ji, takes place. It is an uninterrupted affair with people usually taking turns to complete the reading.

3. A number of celebrations take place simultaneously. The festival is also celebrated in other parts of India and around the world where there are proper Sikh communities. They gather, serving and enjoying delicious food, listening to Guru's sermons and reciting the lives of all the Sikh Gurus. While there is community langar being served for everyone at one place, there are a number of stalls serving food to the visitors. Karha prasad is also served.

4. People from nearby villages donate raw materials like flour, sugar, wheat, etc. for preparation of the food.

5. All these services are provided by people free of any cost, of their own accord, as volunteers. People from all faiths and religions are welcome to do Seva, and the doors to the Gurdwara are open to everyone.

6. Unlike Holi, people don't play with colours to celebrate Hola Mohalla. Instead, Nihang Jatthas, or Warrior Groups of Sikhs, come here to display their



amazing and impressive martial arts skills. The martial arts skills are portrayed by various individuals and groups of people throughout the procession. In the evening, the main attractions happen in an open ground with thousands of spectators. Mock duels and fights take place.

7. The most anticipated and jaw-dropping stunts are with individuals riding astride not 1, not 2, but 3 or 4 horses. It is a sight to behold. The command and mastery on the horses is commendable.

8. Poetry competitions are also held, where people sing soulful hymns and enrapture the crowd with their voice and skills on the tabla, harmonium or any such instrument.

Delicacies During Hola Mohalla

The entire town of Anandpur is lit with merry smiles and heartfelt gratitude towards everyone. There is service of all kinds of vegetarian food from various stalls, and drinks such as Roohafza milk, buttermilk, juices, etc. People from far off places flock to the city to be a part of this celebration. The community food service of langar is also served to everyone.

History of Hola Mohalla

The festival was founded by the 10th Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. In 1699, on the day of Vaisakhi (or Baisakhi), the annual harvest festival of Sikhs which is celebrated in Punjab, Guru Ji asked the Sikhs to gather in Anandpur Sahib where he appointed the Panj Pyaras, the Beloved Five. In 1701, Guru Ji felt that the Hindu festival of Holi has been losing its meaning over the years, and so he instituted Hola Mohalla, a festival for people to come together, rejoice and marvel at the talent and bravery of Nihang Jatthas, or Warrior Sikh Groups, and other individuals, who celebrate the legacy of the Guru himself.

The experience of visiting Anandpur during Hola Mohalla is an extremely enriching one. If you are a visitor to this place during that time, you will feel a



high level of camaraderie with and amongst the people here as every volunteer would want to serve you and stuff your belly with delicious and mouth-watering food. The performances are world-class and will leave you awed at their precision, technique and valour.

It is a time for Sikhs around the world to come together and celebrate their faith and the sacrifices of their brave warrior Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Sikhs are an inclusive community, with most of their Gurdwaras having 4 entries from all sides, representing how they are open to all people, regardless of their caste, colour or creed. It is celebrated by other communities as well, with people being selfless and doing Seva, enjoying the congregation of different faiths amongst the positive and infectious spirit of everyone.

COMPLIMENTS STRONG COUPLES GIVE EACH OTHER

Telling your spouse or partner that you love them is special, for sure. But there are other compliments that mean just as much, if not more. Knowing that you support their efforts at work and at home (giving a shout-out for cleaning up is always appreciated) can do wonders when it comes to building a healthy relationship. Click through this gallery for more compliments that strong couples give each other.

The 'good parenting' compliment

Being a parent is a challenge, even with the easiest of kids. Nobody feels as if they're getting it right. So, when you notice your spouse or partner winning at parenting, tell them. They might not know, and your opinion means everything.

Lookin' good!

He's been getting up early for spin class. She's been training for a marathon. The results are in. Your partner's bod is looking better than ever. Take note and throw a compliment their way. It's hard work getting in shape!

Great balance

Your spouse is doing it all — balancing work, home, friends, and family. Give him or her a compliment for doing so. And help out. Sounds like he or she could use it.

Nice hair!

It may seem trivial, but if she told you she's going to get her hair done, compliment her on it when she returns. A haircut isn't just haircut to most women. Her hair represents so much more, so take note. She



paid a lot for that look, and she wants you approval! Go on.

Never hurts to say, 'I love you'

Most couples think it, but don't always remember to say, "I love you." Truth is, you can't say it enough. And strong couples say it — and mean it — all the time.

Express gratitude

There's nothing worse than feeling unappreciated by one's partner. A simple way to avoid that is to express gratitude toward your partner and all he or she does for you. It may not seem like a compliment. But when you're on the

receiving end, it sure does.

Home sweet home

Chances are, one person in your relationship takes care of the house more than the other does. That's cool, but make sure to compliment that person on making your house a home. Chances are she or he put a lot of love into making your living space spectacular.

Best friends forever

You may be in love, but your partner also wants to know that you're best friends. So even though you've got your bros from college or your gaggle of gals you call BFFs, your partner wants to know he or she is your best friend forever.

FOOD CORNER



PANEER LABABDAR

- Take 1.5 cups chopped tomatoes, 10 to 12 cashews, ½ inch chopped ginger, 2 to 3 garlic (chopped), 1 green cardamom, 2 cloves and ½ cup water in a small pan. Use tomatoes which are not too tangy or sour.
- Switch on the flame and simmer this mixture on a low flame. Cook till the tomatoes are softened. If the water dries up and the tomatoes are not softened, then add about 2 to 3 tbsp water and continue to cook. When I cooked, almost all the water was evaporated.
- Allow this mixture to become warm or cool completely and add to a grinder or blender jar. Grind to a smooth paste. There should not be any cashews or tomato chunks in the paste. You may add some water if required while grinding. Keep this ground tomato-cashew-spices paste aside.
- Heat 2 tbsp butter in pan or kadai or wok. Add 1 tej patta (Indian bay leaf) and saute for a couple of seconds. Add ½ cup finely chopped onions.
- Then continue to saute as well as stir and cook till the onions become light golden or golden. Then add the tomato-cashew-spices paste. The mixture will splutter if there is water in it, so be careful.
- Add ½ tsp cumin powder, ½ tsp coriander powder (ground coriander) and ½ tsp red chili powder. Then add 1 cup water. Add 1 or 2 slit green chilies. Stir and allow the gravy to come to a simmer. 20. Then season with salt. Add sugar. I added ½ tsp of sugar but you can add as per your taste.
- Add 200 grams paneer which has been cut into cubes or squares. Also add 2 tbsp grated paneer. Here I used fresh homemade paneer. If using frozen paneer, then keep it in warm water for some minutes and then slice as well as grate.
- Then sprinkle 1 tsp kasuri methi (dry fenugreek leaves) which has been crushed along with ¼ tsp garam masala powder.

YOUR PARTNER'S OPTIMISM CAN HELP KEEP YOUR MIND HEALTHY

Want to stay in the pink of health? Look to your partner. Science says that being in the presence of an optimistic partner can give a boost to your mental health and make your mind sharp. Also, it can help prevent cognitive decline as you begin to age.

According to a recent study conducted by the researchers at the Michigan State University, those who have an optimistic outlook in life, tend to display healthier behaviours that are associated with a better cognitive function. As such, they may influence and encourage their partners to follow suit. In fact, this shift in mental gear can also benefit a person with their cognitive functions as they begin to age, the study reveals.

It is an established fact that mental health is dependent on a variety of factors, and what happens inside the mind eventually affects the rest of the body, too. As we begin to age, there is a



natural decline in our cognitive abilities. But even otherwise, there are some lifestyle factors that can impact

mental health, namely diet and physical activities (or lack thereof).

Science says that people who have a

positive outlook in life and are generally optimistic, eat healthy. They also try to stay more physically active and believe in preventive healthcare. These healthy behaviours can keep the brain healthy for the longest time, thereby reducing the risk of a cognitive decline.

Which is why experts concur with the aforementioned study that being in a romantic relationship with an optimistic person, or better yet, being married to them may set a healthy example for you to follow their footsteps.

The study also highlighted the fact that the optimism can — to a great extent — help prevent Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

Besides learning from your partner, you can cultivate some of your positivity by engaging in healthy daily activities like physical fitness, social engagements, good communication, among others.

CORONAVIRUS: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Distress syndrome.

Whenever you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing it's important to seek medical attention promptly as this may be due to a bacterial infection, viral infection, allergy or some serious respiratory infection. If you or your known has a travel history to China and you have above symptoms 2019-nCoV could be one of the causes.

Common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

Where do coronaviruses come from?

A novel Coronavirus is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans and has been reported from December 31, initially from Wuhan in China and is spreading worldwide now. How humans acquired this virus is not confirmed as yet. Some studies indicate that it would have come from bats, others indicate some other animals like cats, camels or even snakes being the animal source.

How it spreads?

Coronaviruses are zoonotic viruses, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people. Several known coronaviruses are circulating in



animals that have not yet infected humans. Hence, hand hygiene is a very essential component of preventing the infection.

Maintain at least a metre (three feet) distance between yourself and other people, particularly those who are coughing, sneezing and have a fever.

Protect yourself

Washing your hands with an antiseptic hand wash like Savlon and water kills the virus if it is on your hands. Hands come in contact with various surfaces and if we touch that hand on face or bring it close to nose we can acquire the virus. Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illnesses such as coughing and sneezing. When someone coughs or sneezes they secrete small droplets containing the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the virus.

Hence, the distance can help your

chance of acquiring and avoiding public places. Hands touch many surfaces which can be contaminated with the virus. If you touch your eyes, nose or mouth with your contaminated hands, you can transfer the virus from the surface to yourself.

Standard recommendations to prevent infection spread include regular hand washing, covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing, and thoroughly cooking meat and eggs.

As with other respiratory illnesses, infection with 2019-nCoV can cause mild symptoms, including runny nose, sore throat, cough, and fever. It can be more severe for some people and can lead to pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal. Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as, diabetes and heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus.



PREBIOTICS MAY HELP PREVENT SLEEP DISORDERS

Specific fibers known as prebiotics can improve sleep and boost stress resilience by influencing gut bacteria and their biologically active molecules, according to a study in rats that may lead to new dietary recommendations for sleep disorders.

The researchers, including those from the University of Colorado at Boulder in the US, explained that prebiotics are dietary compounds which humans cannot digest but serve as nourishment for the trillions of bacteria residing within—the microbiome.

“The biggest takeaway here is that this type of fiber is not just there to bulk up the stool and pass through the digestive system. It is feeding the bugs that live in our gut and creating a symbiotic relationship with us that has powerful effects on our brain and behaviour,” said Robert Thompson, a co-author of the study from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

In the study, published in the journal *Scientific Reports*, the scientists fed adolescent male rats a diet of either standard chow, or chow infused with prebiotics, and tracked physiological measures in the rodents before and after they were stressed.

Novel low-cost blood test may help predict Alzheimer's

Scientists have developed a simple blood test that may help diagnose Alzheimer's disease in people with memory issues, an advance that provides a less invasive and low-cost alternative for brain imaging and spinal fluid tests.

The blood test, described in the journal *Nature Medicine*, detects the abnormal accumulation of a form of protein known as phosphorylated-tau-181 (ptau181), which is a biomarker that suggests brain changes due to Alzheimer's.

Over the past 15 years, research advances in the development of biomarkers like tau protein have enabled researchers to more accurately diagnose Alzheimer's disease, select research participants, and measure response to investigational therapies.

Tau and other biomarkers can be detected with PET scans of the brain and lab tests of spinal fluid, according to the researchers led by Adam Boxer at the University of California, San Francisco in the US.

However, PET imaging is expensive and involves radioactive agents, and spinal fluid tests require spinal taps, which are invasive, complex and time-consuming, they said.

First baby can spark jealousy among anxious partners: Study

The first child can spark feelings of jealousy in people who already fear being abandoned by their partner, according to a study.

The research, published in the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, found that partners who showed signs of relationship anxiety before the birth of their first child were more likely to be jealous of the child after it was born.

“You might think, who could be jealous of a baby? But if you already have fears of rejection, it may be scary to see how much attention your partner showers on your new child,” said study lead author Anna Olsavsky, from The Ohio State University in the US.

This jealousy can make an already difficult period for couples' relationships even more stressful, the researchers said.

They found that when either partner was jealous of the baby,



couples experienced a decline in their satisfaction with their relationship after becoming parents.

“This jealousy can erode a couple's relationship,” said Sarah Schoppe-Sullivan, a professor at Ohio State University.

The researchers used data from

the New Parents Project, a long-term study investigating how dual-earner couples adjust to becoming parents for the first time.

As many as 182 couples, most of whom were married, participated in the study.

During the third trimester of pregnancy, mothers and fathers completed a variety of questionnaires, including one that examined “attachment anxiety”.

They were asked how much they agreed with statements like “I'm afraid that I will lose my partner's love” and “I worry about being abandoned”.

Three months after their baby was born, the couples completed a measure of jealousy of the partner-infant relationship, the researchers said.

They found that people with relationship anxiety before the child's birth were more jealous of the child three months after arrival.

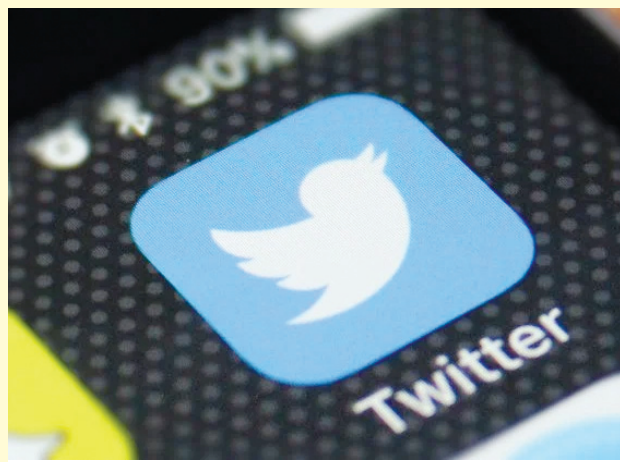
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TWITTER BANS DEHUMANISING POSTS ON AGE, DISABILITY, DISEASE

Twitter has expanded its rules around hate speech to include language that dehumanises people on the basis of their age, disability or disease.

Last year, the micro-blogging platform updated its 'Hateful Conduct' policy to address dehumanising speech, starting with one protected category: religious groups.

"Our primary focus is on addressing the risks of offline harm, and research shows that dehumanising language increases that risk. As a result, we expanded our rules against hateful conduct to include language that dehumanises others on the basis of religion.

"Today, we are further expanding this rule to include language that dehumanizes on the basis of age, disability or disease," Twitter said in a statement on Thursday.

Disease is important as the novel coronavirus is spreading across the globe and people are sharing all kinds of information, including jokes, videos, memes and GIFs related to certain communities which can hurt their sentiments.

"Tweets that break this rule pertaining to age, disease and/or disability, sent before today will need to be deleted, but will not directly result in any account suspensions because they were Tweeted before the rule was in place," said the company.

HALF OF WORLD'S BEACHES COULD VANISH BY 2100

Climate change and sea level rise are currently on track to wipe out half the world's sandy beaches by 2100, researchers have warned.

Even if humanity sharply reduces the fossil fuel pollution that drives global warming, more than a third of the planet's sandy shorelines could disappear by then, crippling coastal tourism in countries large and small, they reported in the journal *Nature Climate Change*.

"Apart from tourism, sandy beaches often act as the first line of defence from coastal storms and flooding, and without them impacts of extreme weather events will probably be higher," lead author Michalis Voudoukas, a researcher at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre, told AFP.

Some countries, such as the United States, are already planning extensive defence systems, but in most nations such massive engineering schemes will be unfeasible, unaffordable or both.

Australia could be hit hardest, according to the findings, with nearly 15,000 kilometres (more than 9,000 miles) of white-beach coastline washed away over the next 80 years, followed by Canada, Chile and the United States.

The 10 countries that stand to lose the most sandy shoreline also include Mexico, China, Russia, Argentina, India and Brazil.



Sandy beaches occupy more than a third of the global coastline, often in highly populated areas.

But new construction, sea level rise, storm surge from hurricanes or typhoons, and reduced sediment from dammed rivers are all eroding these shorelines, threatening livelihoods and infrastructure.

To assess how quickly and by how much beaches might disappear, Voudoukas and colleagues plotted trend lines across three decades of satellite imagery dating back to 1984. From there, they projected future erosion under two climate change scenarios.

The "worst case" RCP8.5 pathway assumes carbon

emissions will continue unabated, or that Earth itself will begin to boost atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations—from, for example, permafrost—independent of human action.

A less dire scenario, called RCP4.5, would see humanity cap global warming at about three degrees Celsius, which is still far more than the "well below 2°C" limit called for in the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Under RCP8.5, the world will lose 49.5 per cent of its sandy beaches by 2100 -- nearly 132,000 kilometres of coastline.

Even by mid-century, the loss would be more than 40,000 kilometres.

Tropical forests are losing the ability to suck up carbon dioxide

Tropical forests are losing the ability to suck up carbon dioxide decades earlier than expected as climate change slows growth and kills trees, a study has found.

Traditionally, these forests have served as a crucial global carbon store, or 'sink', helping to mitigate emissions from activities such as burning fossil fuels.

However, experts led from the University of Leeds found that drought and higher temperatures are reducing the amount of carbon dioxide being stored in trees.

The findings make efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions and curb rising global temperatures even more urgent, the researchers said.

Climate models have typically predicted that forests will help compensate for humanity's greenhouse gas emissions for decades to come.

However, the researchers suggest that tropical forests have already begun to switch from being a carbon sink to being a source of extra carbon dioxide, putting out more of the gas from the death of trees than their living counterparts absorb.

The team monitored around 300,000 trees in Africa and the Amazon for over 30 years — finding that the overall uptake of carbon by intact tropical forests appears to have peaked in the 1990s.

By the 2010s, the ability of these forests to absorb carbon dioxide had declined by around a third on average.

The boost to plant growth that extra carbon dioxide provides is increasingly being countered by the higher temperatures and droughts that slow growth and can kill trees, causing carbon losses, the researchers said.

The land area covered by intact forests also declined by



19 per cent as a result of deforestation over those two decades — with levels of man-made carbon dioxide emissions increasing by 46 per cent across the same period.

As a result, intact forests removed 17 per cent of the carbon emissions caused by humans in the 1990s, but only 6 per cent by the 2010s.

Overall, undisturbed tropical forests removed around 46 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide in the 1990s but only 25 billion tonnes by the 2010s.

As climate models appear to have been overestimating the amount of carbon tropical forest will absorb in the future, we will have to drive down emissions faster and reach 'net zero' greenhouse gases earlier, the experts warn.

New model may lead to better quake prediction

Researchers have developed a new model to explain how earthquakes produce seismic waves with a range of frequencies, an advance that may help estimate the vibration patterns made by some quakes, and lead to better prediction of the natural disaster.

According to the study, published in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*, collisions of structures as they attempt to slide past each other during an earthquake may also create jerky ground motion seen during the quakes.

"The way we normally think of earthquakes is that stress builds up on a fault until it eventually fails, the two sides slip against each other, and that slip alone is what causes all the ground motions we observe," said Victor Tsai, study co-author from Brown University in the US.

In the study, the researchers developed a new model that predicts the potential effects of rock collisions in fault zones, which are regions of discontinuity in a volume of rock across which there has been significant displacement due to rock-mass movement. "The idea of this paper is to evaluate whether there's something other than just slip. The basic question is: If you have objects colliding inside the fault zone as it slips, what physics could result from that?" Tsai said.

The model suggested that collisions between rocks sliding past each other could be the principal driver of high-frequency vibrations.

According to the scientists, combining the collision model with more traditional frictional models offers reasonable explanations for earthquake observations that don't quite fit the traditional theory alone.

RBI imposes moratorium on Yes Bank, caps withdrawals at Rs 50,000

NEW DELHI (TIP): Yes Bank customers will be able to withdraw only Rs 50,000 from their accounts till further orders by the Reserve Bank of India. The central bank has imposed a moratorium on capital-starved Yes Bank.

RBI, in a notification, has said, that the financial position of Yes Bank has undergone a steady decline due to the inability to raise capital to address potential loan losses and resultant downgrades.

"The bank has experienced serious governance issues and practices. RBI made all efforts to facilitate the restructuring and exploring opportunities to infuse capital to the bank which did not materialise," it said.

The central bank has appointed ex DMD and CFO of public-lender State Bank of India Prashant Kumar as an administrator.

The board of the bank has been superseded for a period of 30 days.

The decision comes shortly after the news agency PTI reported that State Bank of India, LIC and a few other private banks are likely to come together to rescue the bank.

Yes Bank crisis

The city-headquartered Yes Bank, once the darling of investors, has been facing difficulties ever since new chief executive Ravneet Gill took charge last March and revealed massive stress in the loan book. It had to provide against the stress and was also forced to go slow on fresh loans.

Yes Bank has been struggling to



raise USD 2 billion in equity for the last few months. Many proposals came up for discussions, but none fructified.

Reports have pointed out to difficulties on the capital position at Yes Bank, speculating if it can meet the minimum thresholds by March in the absence of an infusion.

Significantly, public sector lender SBI along with some other financial institutions have come forward to bail out capital-starved Yes Bank, PTI reported quoting sources. There were reports that LIC has been asked to team up with the public sector bank for the stake buy. Together, their holding has been pegged at 49 per cent. LIC already owns 8 per cent of the crisis-hit Yes Bank.

Such a deal, if it happens, will also be significant because it will be the first time in many years that a state-run entity has rescued a

private sector universal bank.

Following the 2008 financial crisis, there was a huge outcry in the developed markets like the US for public money being used to bail out erring private entities.

Sources, quoted by the PTI said the government has cleared a plan for the SBI-led consortium to acquire a controlling stake in Yes Bank.

There was a discussion on the issue at SBI's board meet in Mumbai, but it was not immediately clear if any decision was made.

Action is likely to shift to the national capital from here on, because picking up a stake in any bank may require changes in the State Bank of India Act as well, sources said.

The ongoing Budget session of Parliament offers the government a window to ensure that needful amendments are passed, they said.



40 ASSETS OF NIRAV MODI AUCTIONED FOR RS 51 CRORE

MUMBAI (TIP): A Rolls Royce car, paintings of famous artists M F Hussain and Amrita Sher-Gil, designer handbags and other luxury items belonging to fugitive diamond jeweller Nirav Modi garnered over Rs 51 crore in the second auction conducted on Thursday.

Husain's 1972 work, titled, 'Battle of Ganga and Jamuna: Mahabharata 12' sold for Rs 13.44 crore at the auction.

A total of 40 lots — 15 artworks, a 2010 Rolls Royce Ghost and a selection of limited-edition and luxury handbags and watches -- were sold at the auction. Artist Arpita Singh's 'Twenty-Seven Ducks of Memory' fetched a price below its lower limit of Rs 1.2 crore, which was the only item among all that were put up on sale.

The work of art that fetched the highest price was the 1935 Amrita Sher-Gil painting, titled, 'Boys With Lemons', which sold for rs 15.68 crore, which was in line with its estimated range. According to the Artery India Price Databank, this is Sher-Gil's fifth-highest selling work. This was followed by the Husain and VS Gaitonde's untitled work from 1972, which sold for Rs 9.52 crore, just above its higher estimate.

Coronavirus: Chinese car cos consider pay cut to stay 'healthy'

BEIJING (TIP): Coronavirus threatens to have a deep impact on several industries across the globe and its deepest impact may be felt by the Chinese automotive sector. The world's largest car market has suffered from factory closures and production suspensions in the past several weeks since coronavirus outbreak occurred and some local players are now reportedly cutting employee salaries to cut back on losses suffered.

According to Chinese state-run media outlet Global Times, Shanghai-based SAIC Motor - parent company of MG Motor - has reportedly started cutting salaries. Sources have been quoted as saying that 'ineffectiveness' is the reason assigned for pay cuts but no other detail has been given.

Other companies are also taking precautionary measures even if the drastic step of cutting salaries has been kept at bay for now.

Chinese automotive industry has suffered drastically since coronavirus - officially called Covid-19 - outbreak. Some estimates suggest that vehicle sales in the country have crashed by as much as 80%. There was a general slump in the sector for two years even before the outbreak but the deadly virus has come as the deafening blow after the punch. Footfall in showrooms have become scarce and car makers - both local as well as international players - are increasingly looking at targeting online platforms to reach out to prospective buyers. "Dealers returned to work gradually in the first three weeks of February and their showroom traffic is very low," China Passenger Car Association (CPCA) was quoted as saying by news agency Reuters.

All of this, quite understandably, has had an impact on the global automotive sector as a whole. Supply of crucial parts for companies like GM and Tesla have received a jolt. Ford has banned business trips after two of its employees contracted coronavirus. Even in India, companies like Tata Motors and Mahindra have predicted troubled times ahead.

Bank mergers to come into effect from April 1, says Sitharaman

NEW DELHI (TIP): Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said the exercise of consolidation of 10 public sector banks (PSBs) into four is on course and the merger will come into effect from April 1, 2020.

The Union Cabinet, she said, has given a go-ahead for the merger proposal and the government has been in regular touch with these banks. There will be no regulatory issues, she said.

"The banks' merger is on course and decisions have already been taken by the respective bank boards," she told reporters here.

The mergers are aimed at creating global sized banks in India. In the biggest consolidation exercise in the banking space, the government in August 2019 had announced four major mergers of public sector banks, bringing down their total number to 12 from 27 in 2017, a move aimed at making state-owned lenders global sized banks.

United Bank of India and Oriental Bank of Commerce will be merged with Punjab National Bank; Syndicate Bank will be merged with Canara Bank; Allahabad Bank will be amalgamated with Indian Bank; and Andhra Bank and Corporation Bank will be consolidated with Union Bank of India. Last year, Dena Bank and Vijaya Bank were merged with Bank of Baroda. Prior to this, the government had merged five associate banks of SBI and Bharatiya Mahila Bank with the State Bank of India.

IMF PLEDGES \$50 BILLION, WARNS OF GROWTH PLUNGE

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has announced a \$50-billion support for the developing countries grappling with the coronavirus outbreak and warned that the epidemic could drive down 2020 global economic growth to the worst level since the 2008 financial crisis.

In a late-night statement on Wednesday, the multilateral body pledged to make the funds available to help poor and middle-income countries where healthcare system remains inadequate to deal with such an epidemic.

With this, the IMF joined governments, central banks and multilateral bodies globally to firm up steps to deal with the epidemic that has spread to over 70 countries, with its epicentre in China.

The World Bank this week announced \$12 billion to support poor and developing countries to deal with the coronavirus threat.



GARUDA: THE DIVINE VAHANA OF LORD VISHNU

Garuda was said to be the king of birds, and the Vahana of Lord Vishnu. In Hinduism, Vahana has a great significance as the Vehicles of Gods and Goddesses. Garuda was immensely powerful, and was so huge that he could even block the sun. He resembled a bird with the head, wings, talons and beak of an eagle and the body of a man.

Garuda was the eternal enemies of the nagas, or serpents, and used to kill them and eat them. Garuda's image is often used as a charm to protect a person from snakes or snake bites, as it was thought that snakes were afraid of him, and did not harm his devotees. Garudi Vidya is a hymn used to cure all kinds of snake poison and remove all evil from this world.

He is known by various names, like Chirada, Gaganeshvara, Kamayusha, Kashyapi, among others. There is an Upanishad in his name, the Garudopanishad, and a Purana, the Garuda Purana is sang in his devotion. The earliest mention of Garuda is in the Vedas, by the name Syena. It is written that the mighty bird was responsible for bringing nectar to earth from heaven.

One of the five faces of Panchmukhi Hanuman is that of Garuda's, which points towards the west. He is known to have powers that can heal any kind of poison from a person's body. Garuda wears the serpent Adisesha on his left toenail and Gulika on his right cerebral vortex. His sacred thread is formed by the great snake Vasuki. The belt of his hip is formed by the dreaded cobra Takshaka. He wears Karkotaka as a necklace around his neck.

The snakes Padma and Mahapadma are his earrings. He wears the snake Shankachuda in his divine hair. He is often accompanied by his two wives, Rudra and Sukrithi. These are all mentioned in Vedanta Desika's Garuda Panchashath. Garuda also represents the five Vayu in us, prana, apana, vyana, udana and samana by the five forms that he takes of Satya, Suparna, Garuda, Tarkshya, and Vihageshwara.

Garuda, being the eternal devotee of Lord Vishnu, plays a major role in the Dwapar Yuga when Lord Krishna, Vishu's avatar, and Satyabhama ride on Garuda to kill Narakasura. Lord Hari rides on Garuda to save the great devotee elephant Gajendra in another instance. According to legend, Garuda's wings chant the vedas when he is flying and they are in motion.

Garuda was born to the great rishi Kashyapa and Vinata. It is said, that when Garuda was born, he appeared as a raging inferno capable of destroying the whole universe. The gods pleaded to him and asked him to stop causing so much of destruction. He heard to their prayers and reduced his size and intensity greatly.

Garuda's father, Sage Kashyapa, had two wives, Vinata and Kadru, who were the daughters of Prajapati Daksha. The wives wanted two wishes from their husband, and sage Kashyapa granted them with two wishes. Vinata wished to have two sons, and Kadru wished to have a thousand snakes as sons. Both of them laid eggs.

Kadru's eggs hatched early and the thousand snakes came out. But, Vinata's eggs took a lot of time to hatch. Impatient, Vinata tried to break open one egg. Aruna, the red rays of the Sun, was thus born, with



amrita was in possession of the gods who guarded it very seriously, as it was the source of their immortality. They had kept the amrita amidst a great fire that covered the sky. They had also stationed two deadly poisonous snakes as the guardians of the elixir, and also set up many death traps all around it.

Garuda fought with all the gods and defeated them. To extinguish the fire, he took waters from all the rivers and poured it on the fire that was burning around the elixir. He also managed to kill the two deadly snakes who were guarding the elixir. Then, he carried the amrita to the serpents in his mouth, without swallowing it. He met Lord Indra on the way. He promised Indra that once he gave the amrita to the serpents and released his mother, he would get it back to the gods. In return, Indra promised him the serpents as his food.

He went to the serpents and gave them the elixir. They released his mother in return. He then asked them to go cleanse themselves before consuming the nectar. As the serpents left for cleaning themselves, Garuda carried the amrita in his talons all the way to heaven. He had dropped a few of the elixir, which was licked by the serpents. It led to their tongue being split into two. From that day on, Garuda became an ally of the gods, and the sworn enemy of snakes.

Garuda had six sons, Sumukha, Suvarna, Subala, Sunaama, Sunethra, and Suvarchas. From them, a warrior race of birds descended. This race of birds was very powerful, and fought against evil in the world. They were protected by Lord Vishnu, and were the main enemies of nagas. They often battled these nagas and stopped them from causing chaos and brought order to the world.

Garuda was also one of the most beloved and devoted followers of Lord Vishnu. He was the mount, or vahana of Lord Vishnu. The story goes, that when Garuda hatched from his egg, he was very hungry. He went to his father to ask for food, and his father told him to feed on the cattle of a village. Being new born, he did not know the difference between cattle and human beings, and tried to eat the villagers.

the upper body of a human. Aruna cursed Vinata that she would be a slave to her sister Kadru, and only her second son who would hatch out of the egg be able to save her.

When the second egg hatched, Garuda was born. He radiated of brilliant energy and was of immense size and proportions. He went on to become the king of birds, and the sworn enemy of serpents, his brothers and the sons of Kadru around the world. When he came to know of his mother's curse, he wanted to save her at any costs. So, he approached the serpents, and asked them what they wanted in return of his mother.

The serpents told him to bring the elixir of immortality, amrita in return for his mother. At that time, the

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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."



Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



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

The Indian Panorama brings you Weekly and Birthday Horoscope from the World's most trusted astrologer Bejan Daruwalla. Latest correct prediction: Modi's historic victory

Weekly Horoscope March 9 - March 15, 2020

ARIES: Ganesha says it is not really disruptive, but it can get out of hand if you don't keep a close watch over it. You need to get more secure in who you are and what you are doing. Then there won't be this crazed need to break free and take ill-considered actions. You may still feel like doing something that is significantly different from your normal routine.

TAURUS: You have a great desire to buck the trend. The family is fine and work continues as usual. But you need to get a hold on your mood swings. Ganesha is with you despite it all. Your thought processes are in turmoil. You live in the mind now and there is a hint of chaos. There are inflated expectations, excessive and impractical idealism and sudden disappointments.

GEMINI: You need to make a concerted effort to keep your feet on the ground. You are also ego driven and ready to take foolish risks. But this is certainly no time for any form of speculation or gambling. You should avoid any sort of overconfidence that could possibly trip you. You will make money and new investments but do not overextend yourself financially.

CANCER: Ganesha admits that despite all this, you work hard and achieve a lot. There will be vigorous growth in job prospects and you will be happy in the end. All's well that ends well. A very practical phase sets in and you count pennies. Your intrinsic idealism is also aroused. You feel that the world should be a better place and you may get involved with some extreme religious, spiritual or mystical sect.

LEO: You must learn to cope without props. You look for freedom but you first have to define the word in your context and then find fitting solutions. You are looking for profound answers to life's disturbing questions. The answers will come in due course, says Ganesha. Don't be in a hurry as everything has a time and a plan. Learn to be calm and patient.

VIRGO: There are many expenses and travel is also on the cards. You are firing away on all cylinders and making waves. Your heartstrings are also pulled. You are filled with compassion for others. You want to help people, particularly the less fortunate, and share whatever good fortune you have. But make sure that the people you are assisting will get some real benefit as you are very likely to be preyed on by people who want to take advantage of your generosity.

LIBRA: This is an intense phase and you fall madly in love. There is a new partner in your life and you spend quality time with this person who has emerged out of the blue. This distracts you tremendously and throws routine into the bin. There may also be sudden, unexpected events that will test your ability to withstand change. You ask yourself searching questions. Your work and life is under a cloud.

SCORPIO: You wonder if your romantic escapade is just that - an escapade. There are challenges from the outside world and even from psychological forces within. Despite the questions and self-doubts, there is travel on the cards and many collaborations. This new relationship may also give you luck. It may be worth investing in. Let it flow and reach its natural conclusion. Ganesha promises you good times.

SAGITTARIUS: You get very sensitive and emotional and your soul is cut into several slices. You may need to make many changes in your life. It may be necessary to break free from circumstances that you encounter in your work. There may even be limiting circumstances in your persona life. There are several obstacles preventing you from doing what you have to do and you rebel.

CAPRICORN: There is expansion at work but your mind is torn and you cannot focus. There may be illness in the family and court cases. You may lose money and your life could be in some disarray. It is by no means a dangerous period, but it can be very stressful. Hold tight, says Ganesha. You are busy with new travel plans. There are meetings and new sponsors for your ideas. But your mind needs to be sorted out before you zoom ahead.

AQUARIUS: Your job could be progressing perfectly well and your personal life may be fulfilling, but there could be some unexpected incident that forces you to analyse your life and work. You may have to re-evaluate your relationships to the various groups you belong to and to the workplace and, most importantly, to the person who loves you. You risk losing recently found stability.

PISCES: You are torn by emotions. You can't think straight and your mind is a swamp. You are on edge. You look for new openings and are fickle and fastidious. You also find deficiencies in your mate / spouse / partner and there could be unhappy times because of this. You seem to be on a fault-finding spree with everything. This mood is contagious and your colleagues and family don't like it one bit. You stick to nothing; commitment seems such an alien word right now.

Birthday Horoscope March 9 - March 15, 2020

March 9: Ganesha says you could meet someone who will propose a monetary venture or make some other sort of proposition. It would be a good idea to be a bit cautious and let intuition be your guide.

March 10: Though the facts and logic are reassuring and offer reliable support, something doesn't feel quite right. It might simply be that some aren't in the mood to share or cooperate.

March 11: Be careful about being compassionate towards those who don't deserve it. Your sympathies may be too easily exploited or misplaced.

March 12: Logic and intuition pair up, one complementing the other and being extra helpful to creative people. Follow instincts regarding money, too.

March 13: If picking the right time to follow up on a business hunch will put success within

your reach, you've got the green light now.

March 14: When big promises are given, especially in response to pressure or out of a desire to please, keep in mind that they may fall flat.

March 15: The social theme brightens the day. Group as well as one-on-one activities are highlighted. You can make new friends, receive invitations.

USCIS Clarifies Effect of Breaks in Continuity of Residence on Eligibility for Naturalization



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

WASHINGTON (TIP): USCIS announced an update to the USCIS Policy Manual to align USCIS practice with congressional intent and existing regulations by clarifying requirements surrounding naturalization applicants' absences from the United States. This update concerns absences of more than six months but less than one year during the statutorily required continuous residence period.

This update clarifies the following requirements for naturalization:

- An applicant who has been absent from the United States for more than six months but less than a year must overcome the presumption that they have broken the continuity of their residence in the United States; and
- An applicant who has broken the continuity of residence in the United States must establish a new period of continuous residence, the length of which depends on the basis for naturalizing.

An applicant filing under the general naturalization provision is not eligible until they have reached the required period of continuous residence as a lawful permanent resident. Under the law, an absence from the United States for more than six months but less than one year during the statutory period triggers a presumption of a break in the continuity of such residence. USCIS adjudicators have always been required to determine whether naturalization applicants have broken their continuous residence when evaluating naturalization applications.

Indian American Doctor Pleads Guilty to Illegal Distribution of Adderall, Oxycodone

ALEXANDRIA, VA. (TIP): Dr. Gurpreet Singh Bajwa, a Fairfax medical doctor pleaded guilty March 4 to illegally diverting Adderall and oxycodone to six different patients, including a patient who suffered from opioid addiction and later died of a drug overdose.

According to court documents, Dr. Bajwa, 49, temporarily lost his medical license in 2012 following an investigation by the Virginia Department of Health Professions (DHP) into his prescription practices.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher's Bill to Honor Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal One Step Closer to Passing House of Representatives

WASHINGTON (TIP): Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher (TX-07) announced March 5 that her legislation to honor Harris County Sheriff's Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal, H.R. 5317, the Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal Post Office Act, has unanimously passed the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. This legislation is now one step closer to final passage in the House of Representatives.

The bill provides that the post office located at 315 Addicks Howell Road will be named the "Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal Post Office."

"Deputy Dhaliwal represented the very best of our community: he worked for equality, connection, and community through his life of service to others," said Congresswoman Fletcher. "The Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal Post Office will serve as a permanent reminder of his service, his sacrifice, and his example for us all. I am glad that my legislation to honor his memory is one step closer to final passage."

In 2015, Lt. Dhaliwal became the first Sikh American in Texas to receive a policy accommodation to serve while wearing his articles of faith, including his turban and beard. He was the first Sikh police officer to serve in the Harris County Sheriff's Office and was seen as a role model and a trailblazer for Sikh Americans and religious minorities that sought to serve in law enforcement.

On September 27, 2019, Deputy Dhaliwal was killed in the line of duty. In October, Congresswoman Fletcher led the entire Houston delegation in introducing H. Res. 616, a resolution to honor the life and mourn the loss of Deputy



Harris County Sheriff's Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal was killed in the line of duty and spoke on the House floor.

No Religious or Political Justification Possible for Delhi's Communal Violence: Hindu American Foundation

WASHINGTON (TIP): Condemning ongoing communal violence in New Delhi which has claimed more than 40 lives, The Hindu American Foundation (HAF) has said that the perpetrators should be arrested and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

"We strongly condemn the violence, loss of life, and destruction of places of worship in India this week. There is no religious, historical, or political justification possible for what is happening in New Delhi. Hindu Americans stand for peace, pluralism, democracy, equal rights, and the rule of law here at home in the United States, in India, and anywhere in the world", HAF Executive Director Suhag Shukla said in a statement.

"Those people battling in the streets - throwing stones, acid, brandishing firearms, setting fire to businesses and places of worship - are all violating the law. The perpetrators, no matter the religious community to which they belong, should be arrested and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. We urge Indian law enforcement



officers to uphold their duty to protect the public and better maintain law and order. And we urge all those making inflammatory statements to take stock of the destructive impact of their words and cease" she said.

"The protests and violence in India over the last few weeks have triggered a renewed need for greater understanding and dialogue among religious

community leaders, civil society, and Indian government officials, consistent with India's long tradition of dialogue and pluralism. Media, non-governmental organizations, and observers from all communities must understand their role and duty in informing rather than inciting the citizenry, in defusing this tragic situation" she further added.

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CONTD FROM PAGE 1**World Reels Under COVID...**

Almost 300 million students worldwide faced weeks at home on Thursday with Italy the latest country to shut schools over the deadly new coronavirus, as the IMF urged an all-out, global offensive against the epidemic.

While temporary school closures during crises are not new, UNESCO chief Audrey Azoulay said, "the global scale and speed of the current educational disruption is unparalleled and, if prolonged, could threaten the right to education." Italy on March 4 ordered schools and universities shuttered until March 15, ramping up its response as the national death toll rose to 107, the deadliest outbreak outside China.

South Korea-the country with the largest number of cases outside China with nearly 6,000-has postponed the start of the current term until March 23.

In Japan, nearly all schools are closed after Prime Minister Shinzo Abe called for classes to be cancelled through March and spring break, slated for late March through early April.

Some 120 schools closed in France this week in areas with the largest numbers of infections.

The German health minister said the outbreak was now a "global pandemic"-a term the World Health Organisation has stopped short of using, meaning the virus is spreading in several regions through local transmission.

Infections are now rising faster abroad than they are in China, where 31 more deaths and 139 new cases were reported on March 5

China's death toll now stands at 3,012, with over 80,000 infections.

In India, fifteen Italian tourists, including the wife of an infected Italian, and eight Indians have tested positive for coronavirus on March 4, taking the number of cases to 29 in the country.

Two cases with a high viral load were detected in Telangana. A Paytm employee tested positive in Gurgaon. The company said in a statement that the person had travel history to Italy. The Health Ministry also confirmed the case which came to light in the evening.

From western Europe to eastern Asia, supermarket shelves have been stripped of supplies in recent weeks, including toilet paper and hand sanitizer. In Dallas, Texas, Lovlien Kaurr who went to a Walmart store in Fort Worth to buy sanitizers, found the shelves were empty. When she asked a store employee when she could expect to get sanitizer bottles, she was told there was no certainty since goods came from China and the imports from China for now were affected. Similarly, Harry Singh Panesar from New Jersey reported face masks, sanitizers, toilet paper and paper rolls were not easily available. Most stores reported the stuff was out of stock.

American businesses are increasingly concerned over access to goods and the overall economic outlook is more uncertain, the US Federal Reserve said in its beige book survey released on March 4.

With the US toll rising to 11 on Wednesday, March 4, lawmakers in Congress reached a deal to provide more than USD 8 billion to fight the outbreak.

The virus impact has spread beyond supply chains-stock markets have rumbled as warnings from financial bodies mount that countries could be pushed into recession. The IMF said the epidemic posed a "serious threat" and would slow global growth to below last year's 2.9 per cent.

(Read full story on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Facebook decides to take down...

The social media company, which has come under fire for allowing politicians to run misleading advertisements, said in December it would ban ads that aim to limit participation in the U.S. census, which officials and lawmakers fear could be targeted by disinformation aiming to disrupt the count.

"There are policies in place to prevent confusion around the official U.S. Census and this is an example of those being enforced," Facebook spokesman Andy Stone said in a statement.

Earlier on Thursday, U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a Democrat, slammed Facebook before it decided to remove the ads.

"I know the profit motive is their business model. But it should not come at the cost of counting who is in our country, so that we can provide the services and the rest, said Pelosi, speaking at a press conference.

The Trump campaign and the Census Bureau did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

The 2020 census became a political lightning rod when the Trump administration announced plans in 2018 to add a question asking respondents if they were U.S. citizens. The move, which was blocked by the U.S. Supreme Court, was criticized by some states and civil liberties groups who said the question was meant to deter immigrants from participating and help Republicans gain seats in the U.S. Congress.

Members of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform wrote a letter to the Republican National Committee on Thursday, requesting that it stop sending communications that resemble official census documents, citing news reports of fundraising mailers sent by the RNC that say "2020 Congressional District Census" and include questionnaires.

These mailers are fully compliant with the law, clearly marked as a fundraising solicitation from the Republican National Committee, and in no way resemble the official government census. We are adding language to future mailers to make it even more obvious, said an RNC spokeswoman.

The count, which takes place once a decade, is expected to be filled out largely online for the first time in 2020. Census officials have been concerned that the census, whose data is used to allocate seats in the U.S. Congress and state legislatures, and to guide the federal government in allocating \$1.5 trillion a year in aid, could be a target for disinformation.

The Census Bureau has purchased dozens of web addresses with "census" or other keywords in the title, to make it harder for potential imposter sites to operate, and held numerous meetings with Twitter, Facebook and other social media sites, in hopes of getting some help monitoring for bad actors.

Mike Bloomberg and Elizabeth...

I could have told him long ago that he didn't have what it takes, and he would have saved himself a billion dollars, the real cost. Now he will pour money into Sleepy Joe's campaign, hoping to save face. It won't work!"

Mike Bloomberg, on ending his campaign said: "I entered the race for president to defeat Donald Trump, and today I am leaving the race for the same reason, to defeat Donald Trump. Defeating Trump starts with uniting behind the candidate with the best shot to do it. It's clear that it is my friend and a great American @JoeBiden".

Trump foresaw the next move of Mike Bloomberg which he mentioned in his above Tweet. Michael Bloomberg has announced now that he will fund anti-

Trump operation in 6 critical states. He will pay for field offices in Arizona, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, his campaign aides said.

As was apparent and expected, Elizabeth Warren who started off her campaign with early show of strength but failed to keep up the momentum, announced her end of the race March 5. However, she put of an endorsement.

Despite Ms. Warren's disappointing finish, she offers the potential of a coveted endorsement to Mr. Sanders and Mr. Biden, who are effectively the last candidates in the Democratic contest. She spoke with both men on March 4, according to their campaigns. She hasn't made a decision and is assessing who would best uphold her agenda, according to a person familiar with her deliberations who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss private conversations.

In an interview after Ms. Warren's departure was announced, Toni Van Pelt, the president of the National Organization for Women, urged her not to back Mr. Sanders.

"She has a lot of leverage right now. We do trust her to make the right decisions on how to proceed. But we'd like her not to rush into this," Ms. Van Pelt said. "We think that our constituents, our members, will not necessarily think of Sanders as the best choice. We wouldn't have the Violence Against Women Act if it wasn't for Biden's leadership. So, we know that he's performed. Sanders doesn't have a record. He's really, as far as we know, done next to nothing for women and for our issues and for the things that are our priorities."

Ms. Warren couldn't consolidate the support of the Democratic Party's most liberal wing against Mr. Sanders. Both supported universal, government-sponsored health care under a "Medicare for All" program, tuition-free public college and aggressive climate change fighting measures as part of the "Green New Deal" while forgoing big fundraisers in favor of small donations fueled by the internet.

Ms. Warren's poll numbers began to slip after a series of debates in which she repeatedly refused to answer direct questions about if she'd have to raise taxes on the middle class to pay for Medicare for All. Her top advisers were slow to catch on that not providing more details looked to voters like a major oversight for a candidate who proudly had so many other policy plans.

The once crowded Democratic field is now left with Joe Biden, Bernie Sanders and Tulsi Gabbard, who obviously has no chance in the race. All eyes are now on Elizabeth Warren who has to announce her endorsement. Ideologically closer to Bernie Sanders, she may not endorse him. We will know soon.

(With inputs from Agencies)

In India, Ex-MPs monthly...

The pension amount being paid to former MPs has increased from Rs 58.02 crore in 2017-18 to Rs 70.50 crore in 2018-19, an increase of 21.5 per cent, according to the information received by Kapoor.

"While the number of ex-MP pensioners put up by Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha secretariats is 4,796, the Central Pension Accounting Office's figure is 1,470 only," said Kapoor.

According to information provided by K Sona, Deputy Secretary, Lok Sabha secretariat, 3,580 ex-MPs are getting pension, while 268 dependents of the deceased ex-MPs are getting family pension. P Narayanan from Rajya Sabha secretariat, in his reply, said 508 former MPs are getting monthly pension and 219 dependents family pension.

(Source: Tribune India)

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JAISALMER



Beyond the dazzling royal cities of Rajasthan lies Jaisalmer— the gateway to the Thar Desert and a popular tourist destination in India that is notable for its incredible yellow stone architecture, the Jaisalmer Fort, also known as ‘Sonar Quila’. Jaisalmer is one of the most visited places in Rajasthan during the peak tourist season that commences from October and continues till February. The city, also dubbed the “Golden City”, was established in the mid 12th century by Rawal Jaisal and today with many artistic structures, monuments of local historical importance and abandoned villages, Jaisalmer has emerged as a slice of royal heritage from incredible Rajasthan. So before you pack your bags for a trip to Jaisalmer.

JAISALMER FORT

Perched on top of a small hill, this large fort makes for a mesmerising sight. Also known as the Golden Fort, it is surrounded by a 30 foot high wall, and has over 99 bastions and some imposing gateways or pols. It has been inhabited for centuries, and encloses houses, handicraft shops, palaces, temples, hotels and restaurants, connected by cobble stone paths.

The main square here is called the Dussehra Chowk, while the main palace is the Rajmahal. This seven-storey building was the residence of the former rulers. Its façade is embellished with stone carvings, while its interior houses the Jaisalmer Fort Palace Museum and Heritage Centre. The rooftop offers panoramic views of the city.

JAIN TEMPLES

This set of seven Jain temples lies inside the walls of the Jaisalmer Fort. They are connected to each other, and are all adorned with intricate carvings of mythological and dancing figures. These yellow sandstone temples were built between the 12th and the 16th centuries. They are dedicated to various tirthankaras. The largest of them, the Parsvanath Temple, is dedicated to the 22nd tirthankara.

PATWON-KI-HAVELI

This ornate haveli is among the most splendid in Jaisalmer. It consists of a set of five houses, which were built by five Jain merchant brothers in the 19th century. Their exterior is covered with



intricate carvings. Inside, some of the walls are decorated with paintings and mirror work. The buildings comprise of a set of rooms, constructed around a central courtyard. There’s also a shop selling embroidered textiles and brocades.

SAND DUNES

These shifting white sand dunes, located close to the village Sam, are a great way to explore the Thar desert. They are

located 45 kilometres from Jaisalmer. The best way to explore the desert is through camel rides. The dunes look especially picturesque at sunset and sunrise.

You can also stay here overnight to enjoy the campfires and folk music and dance performances held every evening. Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation runs the Sam Dhani Resort on a hillock in front of the dunes. It has cottages and tents, which are perfect for a peaceful retreat.

SALIM SINGH-KI-HAVELI

This haveli was built by Salim Singh, the prime minister of Jaisalmer in the 19th century. Its most eye-catching feature is its beautiful arched roof with carved brackets shaped like peacocks, and pretty balconies below it. The haveli is also distinct because it’s been constructed entirely of stone, without the use of cement or mortar. A part of the haveli is still occupied, but it’s worth a visit primarily for its exquisitely designed exterior.

BADA BAGH

This garden, located on the outskirts of Jaisalmer, contains the cenotaphs of the Rajpur rulers. These are pyramidal and domed in shape, and have beautiful carved ceilings and equestrian statues of the rulers. Each chhatri also has inscribed tablets recording the death of the Maharawals. There’s also a set of windmills nearby, which make for a picturesque sight. There are several other attractions close to Bada Bagh. Amar Sagar consists of a beautifully-carved Jain temple located on the banks of a water reservoir. Lodhurva, the former capital of the Bhatti Rajputs, is now in ruins but it still has magnificent Jain temples with a gorgeous gateway. The main temple contains several beautiful sculptures and a silver image of Parsvanath, the 23rd tirthankara.

GADSI SAR LAKE

The beautiful rainwater lake is surrounded by numerous temples and pavilions, and offers magnificent views of Jaisalmer Fort. It was built by Maharawal Gadsai in the 14th century, and used to be the major source of drinking water for the city of Jaisalmer. It attracts water birds in winter and is a popular spot for bird watching, picnics and boating. There’s a lovely gateway called Tillon ki prol near the lake, built by a royal courtesan named Tillon.

NATHMAL-JI-KI-HAVELI

This 19th century haveli was built by two architect brothers, who designed their sections independently but with remarkable harmony. It has a beautifully carved exterior, while the interior is decorated with miniature paintings. Two yellow sandstone elephant figures guard the entrance to the haveli. There is no entry fee, but the family living here sells paintings and knick-knacks to tourists.

WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

India qualify for maiden final after semi-final washout vs England

SYDNEY (TIP): India qualified for their maiden final at the Women's T20 World Cup on Thursday after their semi-final against England got washed out without a ball being bowled at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

India made it through after entering the knockouts as the Group A toppers with four wins out of four games. England on the other hand, had a better net run-rate than India but the loss against South Africa in their opening game proved to be the decisive factor as they crashed out after having won three out of the four games in the group stage.

"Frustrating, didn't want the World Cup to end this way but not much you can do about this. Would have been good to have a reserve day perhaps. That loss to South Africa cost us. Not really, we expected to reach the semi-finals and that we did. Undone by the weather," England captain Heather Knight said after the game was called off.

"It is unfortunate not to get a game due to the weather. But that's how the rules go. In future, it would be nice to have a reserve day. From day one, we knew that we have to win all the games because if in case we don't get any play in the semifinals, it will be hard for us," India captain Harmanpreet Kaur said.



India had defeated Australia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and New Zealand in the group stage thanks to some excellent individual performances from opener Shafali Verma, and spinners Poonam Yadav, Rajeshwari Gaekwad, Radha Yadav and Deepti Sharma.

They will now face the winners of the second semi-final between South Africa and Australia, which will be played at the same venue from 13.30 PM IST.

But rain is forecast throughout the day in Sydney where the second semi-final between South Africa

and Australia is to be played from 7 PM local time.

With no reserve day scheduled, South Africa would go through to the final at the expense of the defending champions and hosts after winning Group B if the match was not completed.

That means the Women's T20 World Cup will see two first-time finalists vie for a maiden world title in limited-overs cricket. The final takes place at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Sunday with organizers hoping for a crowd in excess of 90,000.

Teen sensation Shafali Verma becomes World No. 1 T20I batswoman

SYDNEY (TIP): India opener Shafali Verma and England spinner Sophie Ecclestone go into the semi-finals of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020 as the top ranked batswoman and bowler in the ICC Women's T20I Player Rankings.

Verma's explosive batting at the top of the order saw her score 161 runs in four innings including knocks of 47 and 46 against Sri Lanka and New Zealand, which helped her become only the second India batswoman after Mithali Raj to top the Women's T20I batting rankings.

Verma, 16, takes over from New Zealand's Suzie Bates, who had been the top batter since October 2018 after wresting the spot from West Indies captain Stafanie Taylor. Ecclestone, who took eight wickets in four matches including a best of three for seven against the West Indies, is the first England bowler to be number one since Anya Shrubsole in April 2016 and the first England spinner at the top since Danni Hazell in August 2015.

Some fine performances across teams saw a number of batters and bowlers move up the rankings including those who could not make it to the knockout-stage of the 10-team tournament. Some valiant performances from Sri Lanka skipper Chamari Athapaththu see her move from 18th to 14th spot for batswoman. England's Nat Sciver is again in the top 10 and captain Heather Knight in the top 15 for the first time, South Africa opener Laura Wolvaardt has advanced 23 places to 44th, Pakistan's Aliya Riaz has gained 24 places and is 48th



while New Zealand's Maddy Green is in the top 100 after advancing 28 slots.

In the bowlers' list, leg-spinners Amelia Kerr of New Zealand (up two places to fourth), India's Poonam Yadav (up four places to eighth) and Australia's Georgia Wareham (up nine places to 10th) have all made significant gains in the latest rankings update.

Other bowlers to advance include new-ball bowler Diana Baig of Pakistan (up 34 places to 13th), Shashikala Siriwardena of Sri Lanka (up seven places to 14th), Anya Shrubsole of England (up five places to 17th), Dane van Niekerk of South Africa (up 12 places to joint-22nd) and Shikha Pandey of India (up 23 places to joint-22nd).



Hockey India nominates Manpreet and Rani for Player of the Year award

NEW DELHI (TIP): Hockey captains Manpreet Singh and Rani Rampal were on Tuesday nominated for Dhruv Batra Player of the Year award in male and female category respectively by Hockey India for its third Annual Awards scheduled on March 8.

A total prize money of Rs 1.30 crore along with trophies will be awarded to hockey stars as the national federation on Tuesday released the list of nominations for the awards, given in recognition of excellence in performance for the year 2019 and overall contribution to the game.

Manpreet, who became the first Indian to win the FIH Best Player of the Year award earlier this month, was nominated for guiding the team to Tokyo Olympic berth. He was named alongside Harmanpreet Singh, Mandeep Singh and Surender Kumar for the award which carries a prize money of Rs 25 lakh.

India's women team captain Rani, who became the first-ever hockey player to win the prestigious World Games Athlete of the year award last month, was nominated for along with Deep Grace Ekka, Gurjit Kaur and Savita.

Teenager Vivek Sagar Prasad, who had won the FIH Men's Rising Star of the Year, was nominated for Jugraj Singh Upcoming Player of the Year 2019 (Men-Under 21) along with Dilpreet Singh, Gursahibjit Singh and Mandeep Mor. The award carries a prize money of Rs 10 lakh.

Mashrafe Mortaza steps down as Bangladesh ODI captain

SYLHET (TIP): Bangladesh pace bowler Mashrafe Mortaza, one of the country's biggest sports stars, stepped down Thursday as captain of the national one-day side, possibly ending his international career.

Friday's 50-over game against Zimbabwe in Sylhet will be his last as captain, said the 36-year-old, who already has a new career as a member of parliament.

Mashrafe said he would remain available for selection as a player, but selectors are under pressure to bring in fresh blood ahead of the 2023 World Cup in India.

"I would like to thank Bangladesh Cricket Board for keeping confidence in me for such a long period," said Mashrafe.

"I will try to give my best as a player if I get the opportunity."

Mashrafe had not played any one-day internationals since last year's World Cup until the current Zimbabwe series. He claimed three wickets in the first two matches.

Bangladesh won both to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series.

Mashrafe, who withdrew from a lucrative national team contract in January, said the decision to rebuild the team for the next World Cup had convinced him to step down.

"Until yesterday I was undecided, but this morning I thought 'that's enough'," he said.

Mashrafe, who has had seven operations on his knees, acknowledged that he had been lucky to play so long.



A World Without Childhood Blindness

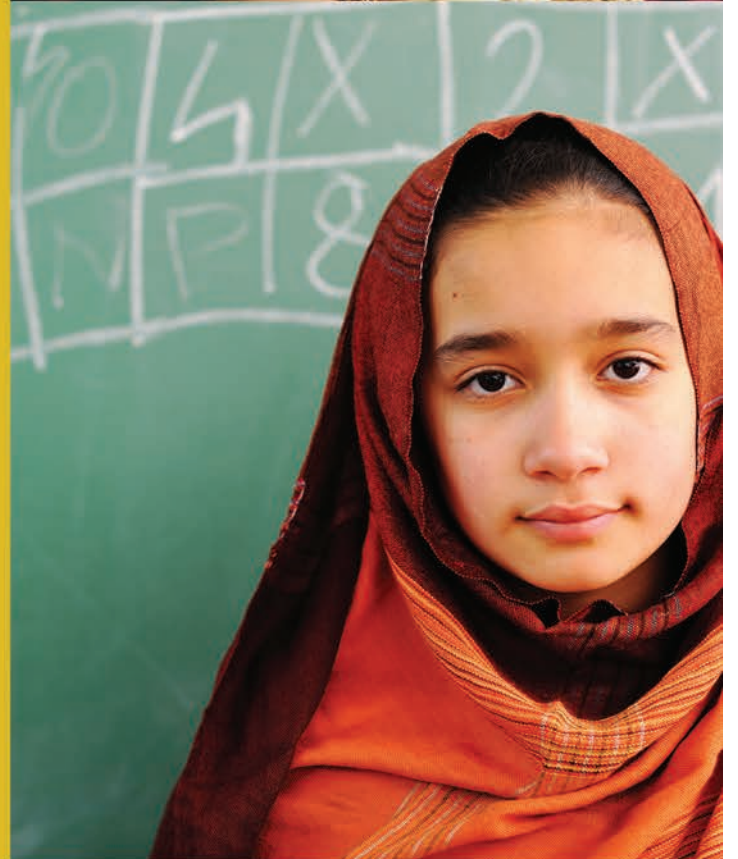
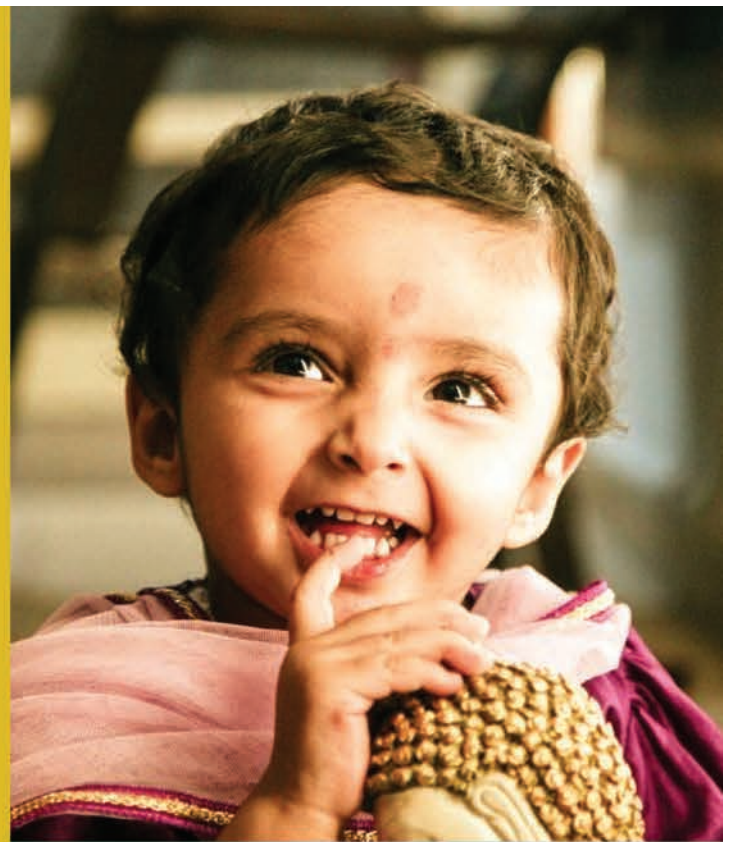
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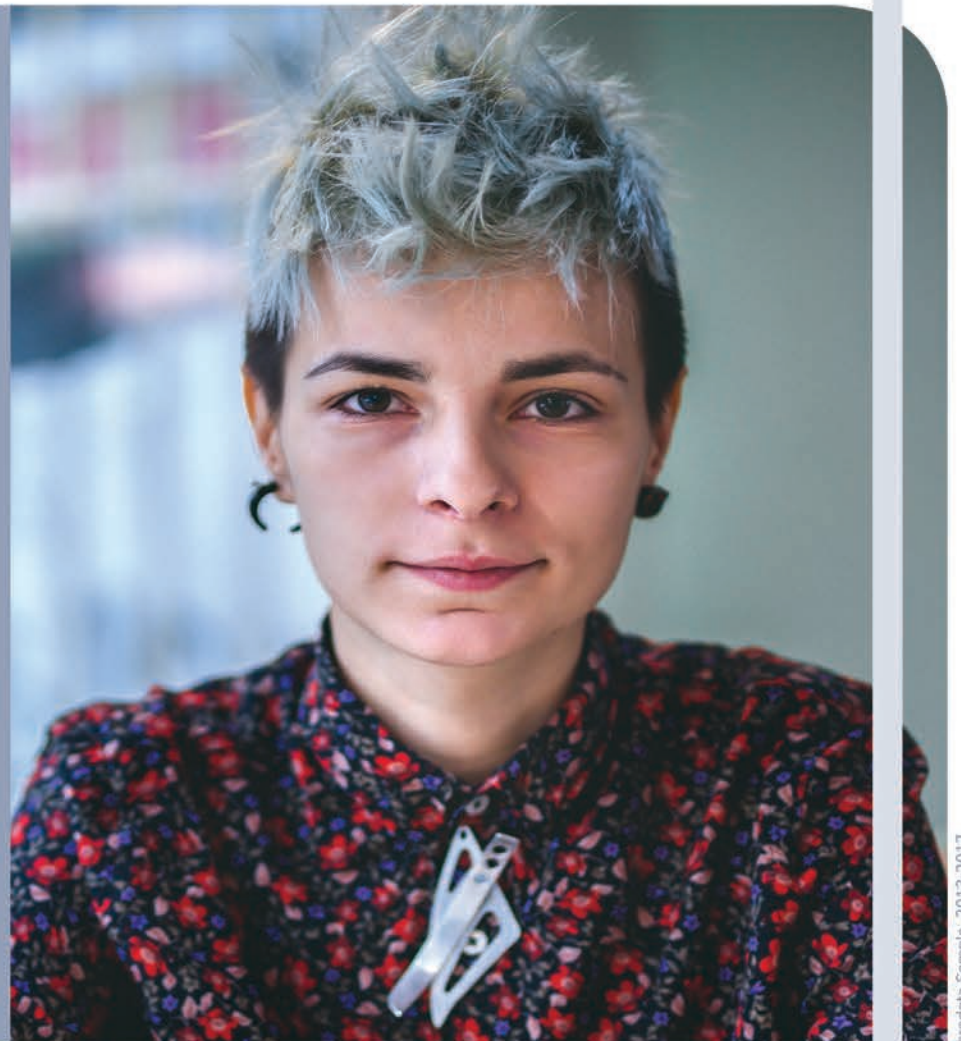
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