



- Follow President Trump's Guidelines on Coronavirus
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KEEP AMERICA SAFE

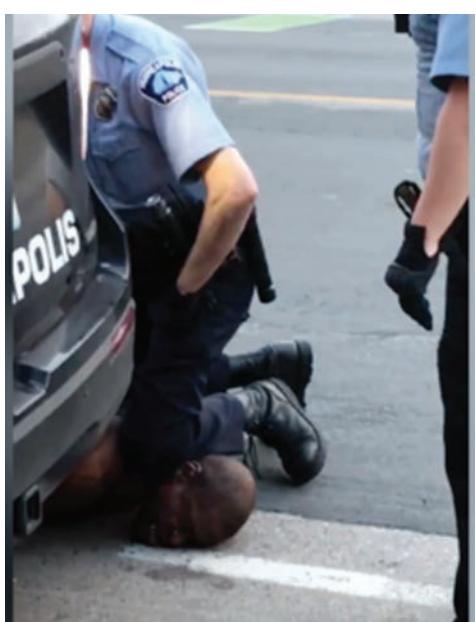
COVID-19 UPDATE, as of May 28, 2020

- More than 5.8 million cases confirmed worldwide and over 360,000 deaths, according to data from Johns Hopkins University.
- More than 1.7 million cases and more than 100,000 deaths from the disease in the United States, according to the midnight tallies from Johns Hopkins.
- At least 3,66,733 cases and at least 29, 529 deaths from COVID-19 in New York State, as of May 28, according to midnight tallies from Johns Hopkins.
- In New Jersey which ranks second to New York in COVID-19 cases, as of May 28, there are at least 157, 185 cases and 11,409 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins, at midnight.
- In India, there were 1,65,799 identified cases and 4706 confirmed deaths , as of May 28 midnight (ET)

Read related stories inside

COMMENT

Prof I.S.Saluja



Protests break out in Minneapolis and elsewhere in the U.S. over George Floyd's death in Police Custody

Mayor Frey calls for criminal charges to be brought against the officer who kept his knee on Floyd

MINNEAPOLIS, MN (TIP): Violent protests broke out in Minneapolis on May 27, 2020, two days after George Floyd, 46 years old black person died in police custody. A number of businesses and homes around Precinct 3 were damaged as the area has become the site of an ongoing protest after the police killing of George Floyd on May 25. Four Minneapolis police officers have been fired after a video (<https://youtu.be/ZWzkgKPZWcw>) taken by a bystander was posted on social media showing Floyd's neck being pinned to the ground by an officer as he repeatedly said, "I can't breathe". Floyd was later pronounced dead while in police custody after being transported to Hennepin County Medical Center.

contd on Page 32

A sea of angry protesters at Minneapolis, May 27. Inset George Floyd



Trump cracks whip on social media companies with executive order

Social activists condemned the order as unconstitutional

For both sides, freedom is in peril

WASHINGTON (TIP): President Donald Trump on Thursday, May 28, signed an executive order cracking down

on "censorship" by social media sites, a move widely seen by critics as retaliation against Twitter's decision to slap fact-checking labels on the president's tweets, says a CNBC report. The executive order targets companies granted liability protection through Section 230 of the Communications



Decency Act. Under the statute, large social media companies cannot be sued for much of the content posted by others using their sites.

Without congressional action, however, there are limits to what Trump can do with the executive order.

contd on page 32

For America to judge the murderers

Another sad day in America's history. The murder of a black person by a white police officer in Minneapolis, May 26, is another addition to a chain of such crimes by the police who are supposed to protect lives, not snuff them out.

The video (<https://youtu.be/ZWzkgKPZWcw>) shot by a bystander and in wide circulation on social media platforms clearly tells us who the murderer is. It is inhuman and barbaric of the police officer to kill the man. It is not an isolated case. The brutal murder of a black person by a white police officer reminds one of the murder on July 17, 2014, of a black Eric Garner in New York, who, too, was choked to death almost in the way as the black George Floyd (46) in this video. The repeated pleadings of Floyd to police officer to get off his neck and his cries that he was not able to breathe which continued until he could speak no more, reminds one of the similar cries of Garner who kept repeating he could not breathe until he fell silent.

Over the years we have seen a propensity among white police

officers to murder black persons. And, it happens all across America. Americans need to analyze why it happens. It is time to ensure we have in the police, people who harbor no racial or ethnic prejudices. People with prejudices are sure to harm the multicultural mosaic of America. Let politicians of all hues understand if they do not arrest the trend now, future generations will pay a heavy price for their indifference. Let there be no politics that divides the great nation that America is, and of which we all are so proud.

Founding fathers of America must be turning in their graves each time a racial killing born out of prejudice of a white guy against a black person takes place. This is not the America we want our children to inherit.

Stop it here. Stop it now.

The least that needs to be done is to charge the white officer with his left hand in his pocket relishing the slow death he was forcing on a pinned down Floyd, with manslaughter. No witnesses are required. The video alone is sufficient credible witness. Other colleagues of the murderer police officer are guilty of complicity. They need to be charged as conspirators in the murder of Floyd.

And remember, justice dispensers, justice delayed is justice denied. And, again, no presidential pardon for a murderer - police officer, please.

The picture shows the officer with his left hand in the pocket, pinning down with his knee George Floyd who in the video is heard pleading with the officer to get off his neck, as he was not able to breathe. The officer stayed in that position for a few minutes more after Floyd had gone motionless.

UK LAUNCHES 'TEST AND TRACE' SYSTEM

LONDON (TIP): A new test and trace service operated by the National Health Service (NHS) got underway in England and Scotland on Thursday as the next stage in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and bringing the UK out of lockdown in gradual steps.

The UK government said the new service would help identify, contain and control coronavirus and reduce the spread of the deadly virus, which has claimed over 37,000 lives in Britain.

Under the new system, anyone who tests positive for coronavirus will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace and will need to share information about their recent interactions. This could include household members, people with whom they have been in direct contact or within two metres for more than 15 minutes.

People identified as having been in close contact with someone who has a positive test must stay at home for 14 days, even if they do not have symptoms, to stop unknowingly spreading the virus.

"As we move to the next stage of our fight against coronavirus, we will be able to replace national lockdowns with individual isolation and, if necessary, local action where there are outbreaks," said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock.

"NHS Test and Trace will be vital to stopping the spread of the virus. It is how we will be able to protect our friends and family from infection, and protect our NHS. This new system will help us keep this virus under control while carefully and safely lifting the lockdown nationally," he said.

S Korea reports 40 new coronavirus cases, biggest jump in nearly 50 days



SEOUL (TIP): South Korea reported its biggest jump in coronavirus infections in seven weeks on Wednesday, driven by a fresh cluster at an e-commerce warehouse on Seoul's outskirts, as millions more pupils went back to school.

The country has been held up as a global model in how to curb the virus and has rushed to contain new infections as life returns to normal.

But officials announced 40 new cases Wednesday — taking its total to 11,265 — with most new infections from the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area.

It was the largest increase since 53 infections were announced on April 8.

An outbreak at a warehouse of e-commerce firm Coupang in Bucheon, west of Seoul, has seen 36 cases so far, the KCDC added.

Brazil surpasses US in daily coronavirus death toll

SAO PAULO (TIP): Brazil daily coronavirus deaths were higher than fatalities in the United States for the first time over the last 24 hours, according to the country's Health Ministry.

Brazil registered 807 deaths over the last 24 hours, whereas 620 died in the United States.

Brazil has the second worst outbreak in the world, with 374,898 cases, behind the U.S. with 1.637 million cases. Total deaths in the US has reached 97,971, according to Reuters tally compared with Brazil at 23,473.

Worldwide coronavirus cases cross 5.9 million mark

TRACKING THE VIRUS



GLOBAL

Cases **5,909,003** | Deaths **362,081**

INDIA

Cases **165,799** | Deaths **4,706**



Groups of six allowed to gather in England's eased lockdown from next week

LONDON (TIP): Groups of up to six people will be able to meet outside in England from next Monday, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced on Thursday as part of measures to gradually ease the UK's coronavirus lockdown.

From the June 1 mark, people can meet in gardens and private outdoor spaces, provided they keep two metres apart, he said.

The stay at home rules so far have allowed for people to interact with only one other member from outside their immediate household, which is set to be eased up from next week.

"These changes mean friends and family will start to meet loved ones in what would be a long awaited and joyful moment," Johnson said at the daily Downing Street briefing.

The devolved administration of Scotland has announced its own easing of movement, with people from different households allowed to meet maintaining a two-metre distance from Friday.

The regions of Wales and Northern Ireland are mostly keeping their stricter lockdown measures in place for now.



The easing comes as part of a wider test and trace system which launched in England and Scotland this week and Johnson said it had been made possible because the government's tests of falling death toll and infection rates were being met.

The new lifting of lockdown measures, however, remains "conditional" and will be monitored as the situation remains "fragile".

Johnson warned that "there will be further local outbreaks" and said the government "will put on the brakes" and measures of strict social distance will be re-imposed if required.

"We're still very much in a phase, where the disease is actually on the way up," said Ryan, pointing to South America, South Asia and other areas where infections are still on the rise.

India saw a record single-day jump in new

cases for the seventh straight day. It reported 6,535 new infections on Tuesday, raising its total to 145,380, including 4,167 deaths. The virus has taken hold in some of India's poorest, most densely populated areas,

underscoring challenges that the authorities face in curbing the spread of a virus for which a vaccine or cure isn't yet in sight.

Most of India's cases are concentrated in the western states of

Maharashtra, home to the financial hub of Mumbai and Gujarat. Infections have also climbed in the east as migrant workers stranded by lockdowns returned to their native villages from India's largest cities.



Supreme Court Orders States to provide free food, shelter and travel to migrant workers

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on Thursday, May 28, ordered states to provide free food and shelter to thousands of migrant workers stranded in various parts of the country due to COVID-19 lockdown.

A three-judge Bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan also ordered that no fare either by train or bus shall be charged for migrant workers and railway fare will have to be shared by states.

"All Migrant workers who are stranded at various places shall be provided food by the concerned state and UT at places which shall be publicized and notified to them for the period they are waiting for their turn to board a train or a bus, said the Bench -- which also included Justice SK Kaul and Justice MR Shah.

It said originating state shall provide meal and water at the station and during the journey, railways to provide meal and water to migrant workers.

It emphasized the need for coordinated



Thousands of migrant workers are stranded, waiting to return to their native places, and they are without shelter and food

efforts to deal with the crisis. "There are different mechanisms for different

states. How do you ensure that nobody asks the migrant to pay or troubles him? What we are saying is that the migrants should be least concerned with the means of payment," it said.

"The state shall oversee the registration of migrant workers and states to ensure that after registration, they are made to board the train or bus at an early date," the Bench said.

"We further direct that those migrant workers found walking on the roads, immediately be taken to shelters and provided food and all facilities should be provided to them," it said, adding, "As and when the state governments put in a request for trains, railways has to provide them."

"All necessary details regarding number of migrants, plan for transportation mechanism of registration and other details should be brought on record in the reply," the Bench said.

contd on page 32

Govt plans for third phase of 'Vande Bharat mission' as 300,000 Indians want to return

A total of 3,08,200 persons have registered with Indian missions abroad for repatriation on compelling grounds

NEW DELHI / NEW YORK (TIP): The government is planning for phase three of the 'Vande Bharat Mission' as over three hundred thousand stranded Indians have registered themselves with Indian missions abroad for evacuation on compelling grounds.

The first phase was a modest 64 flights and a couple of sorties by naval ships that brought back over 16,000 Indians. The ongoing second phase that will last till June 16, plans to bring back another one lakh Indians.

So far in phase two, over 45,000 Indians have returned, including about 8,000 migrant workers, 7,656 students and over 5,000 professionals. About 5,000 have returned through land border

immigration checkpoints from Nepal and Bangladesh.

"A total of 3,08,200 persons have registered with our missions abroad for repatriation to India on compelling grounds," said government sources. Unless international flights do not resume, the third phase will mean a logistical exercise that will dwarf phase two. In the current phase, 429 Air India flights from 60 countries will land in India. Besides, the Indian Navy will make four sorties to bring back returnees from Iran, Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

The government is also assisting in the return of stranded Indians from remote locations in Latin America and the

Caribbean, Africa and parts of Europe. This is being done by taking advantage of foreign carriers flying to India primarily for the evacuation of their nationals.

Recently, about 300 stranded Indians from Peru, Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Portugal and Netherlands were brought in. We will be exploring more such options, said government sources. Private airlines have now been included and chartered flights have also begun to operate. "The numbers are expected to go up in the coming days with the permission for chartered flights and more efficient use of quarantine



capacity," said the sources.

The Indian Panorama spoke with some of those returning to India about the air fare, the quarantine on arrival in India, and some other issues. Most passengers complained of excessive fares. On condition of anonymity, a lady said: "I feel cheated by the government of India. I am already passing through a difficult financial situation, having to stay back in the US and spending to support myself and two kids, and then I am asked to pay a much higher price for air tickets than the normal rates I know of.

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Indian American Professor Brinda Sarathy Receives ACLS Fellowship



Brinda Sarathy is a professor of Environmental Analysis and director of the Robert Redford Conservancy for Southern California Sustainability at Pitzer College

CLAREMONT, CA (TIP): Pitzer College Professor of Environmental Analysis and the Director of the Robert Redford Conservancy for Southern California Sustainability at Pitzer College Brinda Sarathy has received The American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) fellowship for her project on Laid to Waste: The Stringfellow Acid Pits and Making of Place in Southern California.

This project examines the history of the first Superfund site in California, the Stringfellow Acid Pits, to better understand how places are produced in the context of invisible flows: of toxics, of groundwater, and less told stories of social mobilization. Drawing on archival material and interviews with community activists and government officials, this research explores how hazardous wastes are understood, rationalized, and managed by scientific experts to justify dumping; why policy makers overlooked groundwater contamination in spite of prevailing scientific knowledge; and how to make sense of the often heterogeneous and contradictory nature of local resistance to, and mobilization against, contamination by industrial waste. Significantly, this work considers how institutions of expertise often exclude the experiences of those most exposed to harm and, despite deep and persistent uncertainties, authority figures have been called on to minimize concerns about hazardous substances, thus facilitating industrial, military, and economic expansion.

The ACLS Fellowship Program awards fellowships to individual scholars working in the humanities and related social sciences.

ATLANTA, GA (TIP): An Indian American led team has developed a low-cost, portable ventilator meant to help doctors around the world treat COVID-19 patients. Devesh Ranjan, a professor and associate chair in the prestigious Georgia Tech's George W Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering and his research team at the Georgia Institute of Technology has created a prototype for a low-cost, portable emergency ventilator that uses electronic sensors and computer control to manage key clinical parameters such as respiration rate, tidal volume (the amount of air moved into and out of the lungs during each cycle), inspiration and expiration ratio, and pressure on the lungs.

The Open-AirVentGT was designed to address acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS), a common complication for COVID-19 patients which causes their lungs to stiffen, requiring their breathing to be assisted by ventilators. Unlike many other emergency ventilators, the new Georgia Tech device endeavors to make breathing more natural by allowing patients to trigger their own breaths instead of relying on a respiration rate pre-set in the device.

The ventilator works by pneumatically



Georgia Tech Researchers Devesh Ranjan, Stephen Johnston, Prithayan Barua, and Gokul Pathikonda are shown with their Open-AirVentGT, a low-cost, portable emergency ventilator that uses electronic sensors and computer control to manage key clinical parameters.

Photo / Ben Wright, Georgia Tech

compressing a BVM (Bag Valve Mask) assembly of the kind used in hospitals and carried in ambulances as resuscitation devices. The ventilator is envisioned for use outside the United States in countries that do not have significant medical infrastructure in place, and is designed to be produced for around \$300.

A projected shortage of ventilators

prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic has led to development of makeshift ventilators, many of them based on differing mechanical strategies to compress BVM devices. Ranjan and his research team evaluated what others had done and sought input on clinician needs from critical care specialists at two Atlanta hospitals during the design of the Open-AirVentGT.

Indian Army officer Major Suman Gawani Wins UN Military Gender Award



Major Gawani - the first Indian peacekeeper to win the award - is a Military Observer, formerly deployed to the UN Mission in South Sudan

NEW YORK (TIP): For the first time, the UN Military Gender Advocate award has been awarded to two UN peacekeepers: Major Suman Gawani, of the Indian Army and Commander Carla Monteiro de Castro Araujo, a Brazilian Naval officer.

The award, created in 2016, recognizes the dedication and effort of individual military peacekeepers in promoting the UN principles on Women, Peace and Security in peace operations. Women peacekeepers are nominated by the heads and force commanders of peace

operations.

Major Gawani - the first Indian peacekeeper to win the award - is a Military Observer, formerly deployed to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), where she mentored over 230 UN Military Observers on conflict-related sexual violence, and ensured the presence of women military observers in each of the Mission's team sites. She also trained South Sudanese government forces, and helped them to launch their action plan on conflict-related sexual violence.

Expressing happiness at seeing her work recognized, Major Gawani noted that, "whatever our function, position or rank, it is our duty as peacekeepers to integrate an all-genders perspective into our daily work and own it, in our interactions with colleagues as well as with communities".

Commending the two women peacekeepers, UN chief António Guterres described them as powerful role models: "Through their work, they have brought new perspectives and have helped to build trust and confidence among the communities we serve", he said. "Through their commitment and innovative approaches, they embrace a standard of excellence that is an inspiration to all blue helmets everywhere. As we confront today's challenges, their work has never been more important or relevant."

2 Indian-origin men jailed for 'largest' bust with 20 million pounds of drugs in UK



Shakti Gupta, 34, from Birmingham and Baldev Singh Sahota, 54, from Oldbury in West Midlands. Photo / courtesy Facebook.

LONDON (TIP): Two Indian-origin men have been sentenced to a total of 34 years in what Scotland Yard described as one of its biggest drug busts in the UK, worth more than 20 million pounds.

Shakti Gupta, 34, from Birmingham and Baldev Singh Sahota, 54, from Oldbury in West Midlands was jailed for 18 years and 16 years respectively following a haul of 172 kg of cocaine, one of the largest land seizures of Class A or illegal drugs in the country.

"This operation has resulted in one of the largest land seizures of cocaine within the UK, ever," said Detective Superintendent Neil Ballard, from the Metropolitan Police Specialist Crime Command.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American IBM Scientist Rajiv Joshi Wins Inventor of the Year Award

NEW YORK (TIP): Indian-American scientist Rajiv Joshi has bagged the prestigious Inventor of the Year award in recognition of his pioneering work in advancing the electronic industry and improving artificial intelligence capabilities. Dr Joshi has more than 250 patented inventions in the US and works at the IBM Thomson Watson Research Center in New York.

He was presented with the prestigious annual award by the New York Intellectual Property Law Association earlier this month during a virtual awards ceremony.

Dr. Joshi received his B.Tech from I.I.T (Bombay, India) and his MS from M.I.T, is a prolific inventor with more than 250 US and more than 350 international patents. He is an IEEE Fellow and received the Industrial Pioneer Award from the IEEE Circuits and Systems Society in 2013. He is a key technical lead at IBM's T. J. Watson Research Center, focusing on the development of integrated circuits and memory chips.



Dr Joshi has more than 250 patented inventions in the US and works at the IBM Thomson Watson Research Center in New York

wearable technology. His inventions include fundamental interconnect process technology that helped in the achievement of Moore's scaling, which aides with computational performance and for memory bandwidth issues, which are much needed for AI.

Holding the IBM title of Master Inventor since 1997, Joshi has more than 200 publications including conferences and journals, and he has received scores of other accolades and awards including receiving the IBM's Corporate Patent Portfolio Award on three separate occasions. Among several honors, Joshi was inducted into the New Jersey Inventor Hall of Fame in 2014, received IEEE CAS Society's Industrial Pioneer Award, and the IEEE Daniel E. Noble Award for Emerging Technologies in 2018.

Joshi's successful tenure at IBM Research has been highlighted by breakthrough inventions that are prevalent to our everyday lives such as servers, medical devices, handheld devices, and

Indian American Princeton Student Wins Walter E. Hope Class of 1901 Medal



Princeton senior Preeti Iyer has been honored for her service to the Class of 2020 and to the University

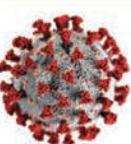
PRINCETON, NJ (TIP): Princeton senior Preeti Iyer has been honored for her service to the Class of 2020 and to the University. Iyer received the Walter E. Hope Class of 1901 Medal, which recognizes the senior who, in the judgment of the student's classmates, has done the most for Princeton.

Iyer, of Alpharetta, Georgia, is a computer science concentrator and a member of Forbes College. She has been involved in a wide range of activities across the University, ranging from advocacy to athletics and the arts.

She led the Princeton Menstrual Products Task Force for three years, successfully launching a University program to provide free menstrual products in Princeton restrooms, and has assisted over a dozen other universities in launching similar initiatives. She is also the founder and director of "Period Palooza: A Menstrual Equity and Innovation Conference," and previously served as a U-Councilor on the Undergraduate Student Government. Iyer co-founded Representable.org along with four other Princeton students. The crowdsourced redistricting tool helps combat gerrymandering and improves redistricting efforts across the county.

A member of the campus arts community, she performed with DiSiac Dance Company and Princeton Bhangra. During her first two years, she also competed as a member of Princeton Women's Rugby Team.

In addition, Iyer has held data science internships at Facebook, Tesla, and the Associate of American Medical Colleges.

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Consul General of India, New York
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Harinder S Panaser
Chairman, Global Indian Trade and Cultural Council, USA

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Justice for Sikh Student in New Jersey:Lawsuit Filed against Education Board

WOODBURY, NJ (TIP): Last week, the Sikh Coalition joined with co-counsel at the Law Offices of Brian M. Cige to file a complaint against the Gloucester County Special Services School District Board of Education, located in Sewell, New Jersey.

The complaint addresses the case of a Sikh student (who remains anonymous, because he is still a minor) who suffered under a pattern of bullying since 2018. Despite being subjected to racial epithets and instances of bullying and harassment to the point that they were pulled out of school, the student's pleas for help from the school district have been repeatedly brushed aside by educators and administrators.

"We are grateful that the Sikh Coalition and the Law Offices of Brian M. Cige have helped us to take this additional step in demanding accountability from the School Board," said the student's mother. "While the educational authorities in Gloucester County have made it clear that they are unwilling to help my child, I am hopeful that a civil court will recognize this clear case of bullying and take decisive action."

According to a press release by the Sikh Coalition, prior to the filing of this complaint, the Sikh Coalition worked with the family to formally appeal the negative finding of the school district's initial investigation. Unfortunately, both the first investigation and the appeal ended with the school board refusing to take corrective action; officials insisted on characterizing obviously bias-motivated attacks as 'nicknames,' and downplayed the extent of the bullying that the Sikh student experienced.

"Our top priority is ensuring a quick and safe path for this child to return to a healthy learning environment," said Giselle Klapper, Sikh Coalition Senior Staff Attorney. "However, it is also important that the school board recognize and remedy how their investigation failed to acknowledge let alone appropriately respond to the obvious bias driving this bullying behavior. We must protect all students from this kind of harassment moving forward."

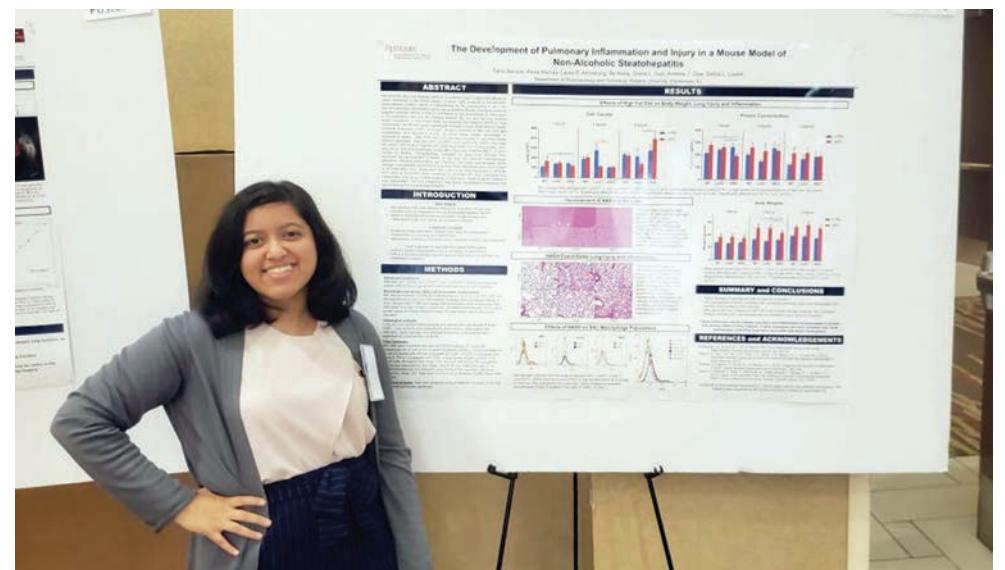
Indian American Rutgers Student Tanvi Banota Named 2020 Goldwater Scholar

NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ (TIP): Tanvi Banota, a rising junior majoring in cell biology and neuroscience at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, has been named a recipient of the prestigious Goldwater Scholarship for her academic excellence.

Considered the premier undergraduate award of its type in the fields of mathematics, natural sciences and engineering, the Goldwater Scholarship, which honors the late Sen. Barry Goldwater, is designed to encourage outstanding students to pursue careers in these fields. The scholarship awards up to \$7,500 to help cover costs associated with tuition, mandatory fees, books, and room and board.

Banota was chosen from a pool of more than 5,000 distinguished students submitted by 461 academic institutions for the 2020-21 academic year.

Banota has worked in the lab of Debra Laskin in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology since she was in high school (thanks to Liberty



Banota was chosen from a pool of more than 5,000 distinguished students submitted by 461 academic institutions for the 2020-21 academic year

Science Center's Partners in Science program). There, her research focuses on the mechanisms of inflammation as a response to pulmonary injuries. She has worked in the lab and done research

around this topic since 2017 and credits the continuity of that research and the many hours of experience she's gained in the lab as part of what earned her a Goldwater Scholarship.

Indian American Senate Candidate Announces Campaign to Label Drugs with Country of Origin



U.S. Senate hopeful Dr. Rik Mehta is a biotech entrepreneur, innovator, healthcare policy expert and a licensed pharmacist and attorney

TRENTON, NJ (TIP): Republican Senate candidate Rik Mehta, a pharmacist and former FDA consumer safety officer from New Jersey, announced a plan to force drug manufacturers to label their products' country of origin. Mehta is seeking to replace failed presidential candidate Cory Booker as Senator from New Jersey.

"Americans have a right to know where their medicine comes from especially when nearly all other products are labeled with the country it was

made in," Mehta, a pharmacist, said. "I can look at products on my body, like my shirt and shoes and know exactly where it was made, but the same doesn't hold true for things that go in our body, like our prescription drugs. That makes no sense."

Under current Food and Drug Administration regulations, the last place a given drug was manufactured is considered its place of origin.

"These bizarre and conflicting laws and regulations that govern how to label products with their country of origin has allowed companies to profit from foreign drug manufacturing while hiding their supply chain from the American people for too long," said Mehta. "American doctors and pharmacists should be able to inform patients on not only what ingredients are in their drugs, but where those ingredients were made."

In the public sector, Rik worked at the United States Food and Drug Administration as a Consumer Safety Officer to advance policies to expedite and increase access to quality, affordable drugs and health care. He also enforced against pharmaceutical companies taking millions of illegal prescription opioids off the market.

Indian Health Camp of New Jersey Continues to Provide Support during Pandemic

TRENTON, NJ (TIP): Indian Health Camp of New Jersey, a non-profit organization that hosts annual fairs at various locations 4-5 times per year to benefit needy people in the South Asian community, continues to provide services, support and education during this public health crisis and pandemic.

Due to current pandemic and social distancing recommendations, the IHCNJ may not be able to organize any health fairs this year. By keeping the public health and safety concerns in mind for the last few months, IHCNJ has been doing many activities virtually to include online interviews related to topics such as corona virus information and education, mental health and other chronic diseases education and awareness as part of their health promotion and disease prevention objectives.

In addition, the organization also donated personal protective equipment such as gloves and masks earlier in March and April when there was severe shortage and scarcity at the local hospitals in New Jersey. The donations were graciously accepted by Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in Somerset and Saint Peter's Medical Center in New Brunswick. As part of community outreach and efforts for healthier living, Indian Health Camp of New Jersey also committed to provide free COVID-19 FDA authorized antibody testing to 1,000 people in collaboration with Hematology & Oncology Care, Helping Hearts Foundation and Durham Pharmacy. The ultimate goal is to identify people with positive antibody to create a list of plasma donors to help people who are critically ill in the hospital to reduce the number of deaths in the state.

Besides antibody testing, Indian Health Camp of New Jersey in collaboration with Bayshore Homecare Pharmacy at their one of the four HealthMart locations in New Jersey are providing free COVID-19 antigen testing to detect corona virus infection without any waiting. For COVID-19 antigen testing, interested person or people who have symptoms of fever, cough, sore throat or body pains can visit the website at www.doinneedacovid19test.com to register for nasal swab testing. For antibody testing, interested individuals can call at 732-913-8500 to make an appointment for blood test. For additional information about IHCNJ services during the pandemic, call Dr. Tushar Patel at 848-391-0499 or e-mail tpatrick434@yahoo.com



Shouldn't Rush to Reopen, Cautions Governor Murphy as New Jersey Sees Slight Spike in Coronavirus Outbreak

TRENTON, NJ (TIP): New Jersey's total coronavirus cases has risen to 157,185, and 11,401 people have died in 12 weeks. Officials on May 28 announced the state's total number of patients being treated for the illness in the hospitals increased slightly for the second straight day.

Gov. Phil Murphy, speaking during a Thursday, May 28 news conference, said New Jersey had its highest daily hospitalization number in a week: 365. The number also was higher than the number of people leaving the hospital in one day: 287.

Murphy called the slight spike "troubling" and said that the increased activity in New Jersey - including the partial reopening of retail businesses and the beach restart on Memorial Day weekend - may explain it.

"We have expected this increase in new



hospitalizations given the holiday weekend, but we are going to watch these numbers closely over the coming days to see if there may be a deeper meaning to them," Murphy said.

"For everybody who says, 'Open the thing up tomorrow. Let's turn all the lights on. Let's get back to normal,' we had 365 folks go into the hospital," Murphy said. "We've got to make sure we're watching this like a hawk. We're still digging out of this."

Last week Murphy has reopened parts of the Garden State's economy. On May 26, he announced that school districts and colleges can hold outdoor, socially distanced live graduations beginning on July 6. On Wednesday, May 27, New Jersey released rules and guidelines for districts and colleges to follow for in-person graduations.

A Webinar on Augmenting US-India Healthcare Relations under Covid Challenge

NEW YORK (TIP): Global Indian Trade and Cultural Council, USA in collaboration with Consulate General of India, NY has started a Webinar series. The first webinar is scheduled for June 1st, 2020 on Augmenting US India Healthcare Relations under Covid Challenge. This will have professionals from Covid 19 vaccine manufacturing companies, IT company Birlasoft who specialize in healthcare software, distinguished Professors from Harvard, Johns Hopkins and Panjab University, Pharmaceutical Scientist from NIPER, India, Ex Director Organization of Pharmaceutical Products of India, Banker and Media professional, according to Mr. H.S. Panaser, Chair, Global Indian Trade and Culture, USA.

Speaking to The Indian Panorama on the need for series of webinars to deal with the subject of cooperation between the U.S. and India in the pharmaceutical sector, Mr. Panaser said: "The dependencies and inter-dependencies of globalization especially between US India, have been in headlines during the COVID-19 pandemic-and nowhere more so than in the Healthcare segment. More so, in pharmaceutical industry. We don't yet know how the medicine and vaccine challenge will end. Whether it be avipiravir, remdesivir or something else. It is unclear which drug, if any, will work. It may be an Indian company Bharat Biotech or American company or an Oxford lab that is hailed as a hero for a treatment or prevention, the task is not just about discovering a treatment or vaccine that works, but making it available to as many people as possible in

as short a time as possible. Successful accomplishment of that task-especially in the global south is difficult to envisage without Indian involvement. COVID-19 ignores borders and the solutions to address it will need to overcome them too.

"Therefore, there was a need for a school of thought to bring on a platform from the field of Academia, Industry and Government, Mr. Panaser said.

Mr. Panaser spoke at length about the Indian pharmaceutical scene and the healthcare sector. "The Indian healthcare sector is expected to reach Rs 19,56,920 crore (US\$ 280 billion) by 2020. Rising income level, greater health awareness, increased precedence of lifestyle diseases and improved access to insurance would be the key contributors to growth. Indian Pharmaceuticals is a sunrise industry with a competitive advantage for India globally. we should leverage India's position by unleashing entrepreneur spirit the bullish outlook for health care segment is now taking India in a forward momentum. The market size of India in Pharmaceuticals alone is estimated to be \$100 billion and medical devices is \$25 billion by 2025. Now with amendment in FDI policy where one can invest up to 100% specially if it is medical devices segment where India is importing 80% of medical devices", Mr. Panaser said.

"This webinar will discuss the US India Healthcare Relations to kickstart Exchange program of Student, research fellows in Universities, research institutes, Medical Colleges in the field of Pharmaceuticals, Medicine, Healthcare AI, MT by IT companies and Medical Devices.

'Such webinars will set a movement to spearhead collaborative mindset and a platform for FDI, mergers and joint ventures under Prime Minister Modi's \$13 billion for three pharmaceutical parks in India and up to 100% FDI in Medical devices. Covid 19 has been an Eye opener - the present Government has done more in last few weeks than what was done in years.

"Indian government has to make new policies for top Universities with research and institutes like National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research with top scientist to allow them collaboration with public private partnership and to have India's best leadership.

The following is the list of people who along with Ambassador Sandeep Chakravorty are on the panel.

1. Mr. T. Srinivas, CFO, Bharat Biotech, Hyderabad, India
2. Mr. Sai Prasad, President QC, Bharat Biotech, India
3. Mr. Roop Singh, Chief Business Officer, Birlasoft, USA
4. Prof. Charles N Pozner, MD, Emergency Medicine, Harvard University, USA
5. Prof. Subroto Chatterjee, John Hopkins University of Medicine, USA
6. Prof.(Dr) T.R. Bhardwaj , Vice Chancellor, Baddi University (Pharmaceuticals),India
7. Prof. (Dr) Pradeep Gupta, Burroughs Wellcome Professor of Pharmaceuticals, USciences, USA
8. Prof.(Dr) Saranjit Singh, Pharmaceutical Scientist, National Institute and Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Mohali, Punjab, India
9. Prof. (Dr) Kanwaljit Chopra, Chairperson, University Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India
10. Mr. Vivek Padgaonkar, Director-Project & Policy, OPPI (Organization of Pharmaceutical Producers of India)
11. Mr. Yash Dani, VP, Fulton Bank, NJ, USA
- 12 Prof. Indrajit Saluja, Editor, The Indian Panorama, NY, USA, Media Moderator: H S Panaser, Chair, Global Indian Trade and Culture, USA



Mr. H.S. Panaser, Chair, Global Indian Trade and Culture, USA is keen to promote cooperation between the U.S. and India in the pharmaceutical sector.



By Ven Parameswaran



Never has the stock market performed breaking all past records

The stock market is a leading indicator of American economy. After President Trump was elected in 2016, the Dow Jones Average has jumped from 18,000 to almost 30,000. Because of Coronavirus and subsequent locked-in, the market plunged back to 18,000 by March 23, 2020. From March 23, 2020 to May 27, 2020, the Dow Jones has recovered 7540 points in a matter of two short months. This kind of rapid recovery has been unprecedented in the history of the stock market. This is highly remarkable and a very significant factor to gauge future economy. The NASDAQ dominated by trillion-dollar technology companies (Microsoft, Apple, Amazon, Google) have performed even better than the Dow Jones. The Nasdaq is now only 5% from its all-time high reached in February before the Coronavirus.

Never before, the stock market has performed breaking all past records. President Trump and his policies have been credited by the investors and all Americans who have their pension funds invested in the market (401-K). Once the market performs, nobody can challenge because all Americans believe in higher wages and prosperity. Americans are wondering how the market could go up so big and so rapidly when the economy has been shut and the unemployment has exceeded historical record of over 20%. How can the market go up when the business of travel, restaurants, retail sales, manufacturing, and others have been stopped because of locked-ins?

The Federal Reserve cut the interest rate to zero per cent. The Federal Reserve is an independent agency. But President Trump pressured its Chairman Powell to lower the interest rate to zero. Now he has asked him to lower it further into negative interest rate so that it will grow the economy. The Federal Reserve has flooded the financial markets, commercial and investment banks, asset management firms, and large hedge funds with approximately 7 trillion dollars. What the Fed has done is unprecedented. Powell, the Fed Chairman has

AS I SEE IT

Future of U.S. Economy

"America's 20 trillion economy will rebound from third quarter and shock the world in the fourth quarter. The stock market will make a new high this year. Jamie Dimon, chairman of JP Morgan, a staunch Democrat, says U.S. economy will witness "quite rapid recovery" from Coronavirus pandemic", says the author.

assured the captains of the industry that the Fed will employ all tools available in its hand to help the economy grow. With generous tax cuts and heavy deregulations by President Trump, potential for corporate profits have expanded. In addition, President Trump's recommendation to the Congress to approve \$3 trillion in fiscal support to all Americans, small businesses, and other businesses in distress have helped enormously in recovery of the economy. Generous unemployment compensation of \$1200 per week has created unbelievable security and is perking the economy.

Americans received \$1200 each and the government postponed filing of tax returns to July from April 15. Proof of climbing retail sales is the result of President Trump's fiscal support. President Trump and the Congress are working on issuing second installment of \$2000 each to drum up the economy.



The combined support from the Fed Reserve and the Congress is equal to 50% of America's annual GDP of 20 trillion dollars. I would speculate that a substantial amount from this has gone into investing in stocks. Can we not ask how can the stocks skyrocket like this when the economy has been shut down and more than 40 million are unemployed? When the real economy is not generating any income based on productivity, how can the stock go up? President Trump has said that the economy he created is a solid and sound economy. Therefore, when the locked in is over, the economy will rebound and the stock market will go up like a rocket. Proof of the pudding lies in the eating of it. It appears now that President Trump's prophesies are coming true.

Has the Fed Chairman Powell succeeded in playing magic? Or, is this artificial? Who knows? Let me analyze the comments of some vehement Democrats,

economists, and industry captains.

JPMorgan Chairman, Jamie Dimon, a staunch Democrat and a candidate for the Secretary of the Treasury in Biden administration stated that the government has been pretty responsive, big companies have the means, hope we keep the small companies alive." "growing stocks" from the Fed Reserve had helped small business. He said the U.S. economy could see a rapid recovery in the 3rd quarter. He said: "you can already see the positive effects of the current opening, at least for the economy." The same Jamie Dimon has been highly critical of President Trump just for political purposes. But when his own company and stocks of major banks and financial firms go up, he cannot but tell the truth.

Michael Darda, MKM Partners Chief Market Strategist and Chief Economist said: "The market has been making a V-pattern upward and there has been a tremendous amount of skepticism around that but we are just starting now to see some evidence in the data turning some better than expected Housing numbers. As reopening gets underway, virtually all states now we are starting to see activity bounce off of very low levels."

On Wednesday, May 27, the Mortgage Bankers Association reported a sixth straight weekly rise in mortgage applications. Data released Tuesday showed NEW HOME SALES in April topped estimates. Sales of new U.S. SINGLE FAMILY HOMES increased by 623,000 in April, beating estimates of 490,000.

Wharton School of Business Professor Jeremy Siegel told that new stock market highs this year is a 'REAL POSSIBILITY'. Absent a second wave of Coronavirus later in the Fall, it is "even a likelihood that we will reach "fresh record highs." This kind of over optimism from conservative and liberal economists is unprecedented.

"One of the unfortunate things about the lockdown is we have actually improved the prospects of the very companies in the stock markets." Siegel added. "In fact, given no serious second wave, which could mean just effective therapeutics without even a universal vaccine, my feeling is it is even a likelihood that we will reach fresh record highs." Siegel said.

(The author is a former President & CEO, First Asian Securities Corporation, NYC. His successful trading strategies on the day of 1987 stock market crash was highlighted by the WSJ. He lives in Scarsdale, N.Y. He can be reached at vpwaren@gmail.com)

GUEST COMMENT

India must tone down rhetoric, build its capabilities silently

Chinese President Xi Jinping's call to the People's Liberation Army on Tuesday to think about worst-case scenarios and to scale up battle preparedness has come at an inopportune moment during a face-off between China and India in Ladakh. Coming as it does from the highest Chinese authority, the message is a riddle, as is often the case with Chinese military-diplomatic signals. It appears more as provocative muscle flexing

rather than a subtle attempt to make its neighbor strike a balance between its priorities, possibilities and vulnerabilities. The Chinese are clearly anxious about a new Cold War in the post-pandemic world and their foreign minister Wang Yi stated it in no uncertain terms, warning the US. In this context, any overture by India towards the US for a quasi-military alliance through the Quad will surely tilt the balance against China, militarily and economically.

But instead of offering India reasons to remain equivoiced, the Chinese are merely offending India by focusing on its vulnerabilities. Every small border

skirmish gets magnified and overstated in Indian media, particularly in the toxic electronic media with its hyperventilating, super-nationalist anchors. So, even if China is attempting to thwart India's border infrastructure construction in a benign stand-off, or it has grand plans to throttle India's new economic aspirations, it has done it the wrong way. A public opinion is getting created, which will force the government to strike a strong, muscular pose.

India, unfortunately, has not learnt from its own past follies or the history of its neighbor. The Chinese grew keeping their

DARING THE DRAGON

head low, turning the rhetoric down, avoiding bravado and working hard to get cats from all over to catch their mice, to quote Deng Xiaoping. So, instead of poking a creeping dragon with announcements that could be read as a statement of intent against Chinese imports, India ought to focus on building its economy. The government has so far done well to create capabilities on the LAC and to stand firm against Chinese incursions. India survived the last Cold War, despite being on the losing side; it should thrive during the next one with elastic diplomacy.

(Tribune, India)

Keeping Peace Alive: A Tribute to UN Peacekeepers



By Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji

The human cost of UN peacekeeping has been high. Deployed under the Blue Flag of the United Nations, UN peacekeepers have operated under volatile conditions. However, in recent years, these peacekeepers have themselves become victims of violence, making the supreme sacrifice to safeguard their mandate, and the principles of the UN Charter."

A total of 110,000 UN peacekeepers are currently deployed across the world in 13 missions, funded by a peacekeeping budget of \$6.5 billion."

India is justifiably proud of her contributions to UN peacekeeping. She has sent the largest number of troops for UN peacekeeping from among the 193 member-states of the United Nations, with more than 200,000 troops deployed in 49 out of the 71 peacekeeping operations mandated so far by the UNSC."

29 May 2020 is being commemorated as the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. It was on this day in 1948 that the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) attempted to innovate a mechanism to keep the peace by deploying a small number of UN military observers to monitor the Armistice Agreement between Israel and its Arab neighbors.

Since then, UN peacekeeping has been used extensively by the UNSC over the past seven decades to provide stability in conflict situations for implementing peace agreements between member-states of the United Nations, and to stabilize conflict situations within the UN's member-states.

The human cost of UN peacekeeping has been high. Deployed under the Blue Flag of the United Nations, UN peacekeepers have operated under volatile conditions. However, in recent years, these peacekeepers have themselves become victims of violence, making the supreme sacrifice to safeguard their mandate, and the principles of the UN Charter.

India is justifiably proud of her contributions to UN peacekeeping. She has sent the largest number of troops for UN peacekeeping from among the 193 member-states of the United Nations, with more than 200,000 troops deployed in 49 out of the 71 peacekeeping operations mandated so far by the UNSC.

On the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, we remember with respect the supreme sacrifice made by 3925 troops from UN member-states.



General Rikhye (left) with UNSG Boutros Ghali in 1995. General Rikhye was the first Military Adviser of the UN Secretary General (1960-67) and was instrumental in establishing the International Peace Institute in New York

On the International Day of UN Peacekeepers, we remember with respect the supreme sacrifice made by 3925 troops from UN member-states.

India has suffered the largest number of casualties in UN peacekeeping among the troop-contributing member-states, with 170 fatalities in 25 peacekeeping missions. Of these, as many as 39 Indian UN peacekeepers were killed during their deployment in the Congo as part of ONUC in 1960-64.

At its 70th anniversary in 2015, the UN convened a Leaders' Summit on Peacekeeping to take stock of the contribution made by UN peacekeeping to maintaining international peace and security. Addressing the gathering of world leaders, India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi conveyed India's commitment to participate proactively in implementing the peacekeeping mandates given by the UNSC. He also referred to the UN General Assembly's unanimous decision to build a Commemorative Wall in honor of the fallen UN peacekeepers from all countries and said "it would be most fitting if the proposed memorial wall to the fallen peacekeepers is created quickly".

A total of 110,000 UN peacekeepers are currently deployed across the world in 13 missions, funded by a peacekeeping budget of \$6.5 billion. As many as 54,000 troops serve in just four peacekeeping missions in Africa - MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo (annual budget \$1.01 billion), UNMISS in South Sudan (annual budget \$1.18 billion), MINUSMA in Mali (annual budget \$1.13 billion) and MINUSCA in the Central African Republic (annual budget \$ 1.2 billion).

India is a major contributor to two of these four operations, with 1864 troops as part of the 16,215 military personnel deployed on the ground in MONUSCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo and 2343 troops on the ground as part of the 13,795 contingent troops in UNMISS in South Sudan.

The increasing challenges being faced by UN peacekeeping are compounded by



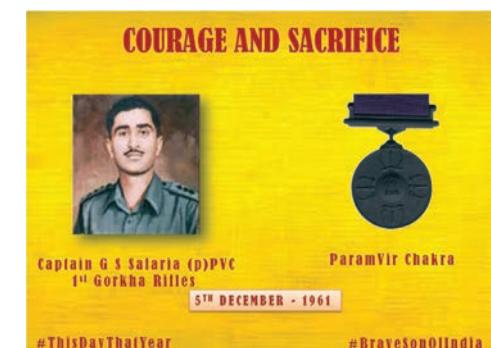
Indian women peacekeepers in Liberia from 2007 when they first landed there

the growing resistance of some major powers represented as permanent members in the UNSC to contribute financial resources to sustain UN peacekeeping operations. In April 2019, the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres had reported that over \$250 million were owed to troop contributing countries, among which India was owed \$38 million, the highest for any member-state.

As the United Nations prepares to mark its 75th anniversary later this year, it is time to look to the future of UN peacekeeping. Two issues are relevant in this context.

First, it is time to augment the effectiveness of UN peacekeeping by enhancing the role played by UN women peacekeepers. 2020 marks the 20th anniversary of the landmark UNSC resolution on "women, peace and security". India was the first UN member-state to deploy an all-women's peacekeeping unit in Liberia in 2007. The impact of UN women peacekeepers from India in performing their mandate, as well as acting as force multipliers to sustain the resilience of national governance structures during a period of volatile conflict, has been acknowledged by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, who was the first elected female head of state in Africa. Building on this experience, India has deployed her women UN peacekeepers as part of UNMISS in South Sudan, where the challenges posed by violent conflict (and their impact on women in particular) are greater.

It is a fitting tribute to India's women UN peacekeepers that the UN Military Gender Advocate Award for 2020 has been given to Major Suman Gawani of the Indian Army. The UN highlighted that Major Gawani mentored over 230 UN Military Observers on conflict-related sexual violence and ensured the presence of women military observers in each of UNMISS' team sites. She also



Captain G.S. Salaria (P) PVC 1st Gorkha Rifles
Param Vir Chakra
5TH DECEMBER - 1961
#ThisDayThatYear #BraveSonOfIndia



Major Suman Gawani of the Indian Army has been given the UN Military Gender Advocate Award for 2020

trained South Sudanese government forces.

The second issue is the long overdue reform of the decision-making process of the UNSC, which decides on the mandates to deploy UN peacekeepers. This reform, mandated by world leaders 15 years ago at the 60th anniversary Summit of the United Nations, must be completed urgently if the UN is to be seen as an effective multilateral institution for maintaining international peace and security. The unprecedented challenges facing the UN today due to the Covid-19 pandemic prioritize the need to break the current deadlock in inter-governmental negotiations in the UN General Assembly. Polarization among the permanent members of the UNSC and their resistance to UNSC reform cannot be allowed to paralyze or compromise the effectiveness of the Security Council, especially when millions of lives of people caught in conflicts where UN peacekeeping missions are deployed are at stake.

(The author is a former Indian diplomat and writer. He was Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations from April 2013 to December 2015. He can be reached at 1955pram@gmail.com)

Prisoner swap talks resumed in Kabul

KABUL (TIP): The Afghan government and the Taliban on Thursday resumed prisoner swap talks after weeks of deadly violence and an impasse that delayed the beginning of peace negotiations for nearly two months.

Over the next few days, they will discuss technicalities on the release of the remaining 6,000 prisoners to be released by both sides.

"A five-member technical delegation was sent to Kabul for registration and verification of prisoners. The team will help to solve the technical problems," Suhail Shaheen, a Taliban spokesperson said. — IANS

Four labourers dead, 15 missing as boat sinks in Bangladesh

DHAKA (TIP): At least four labourers were dead and 15 remained missing after a boat capsized in the river of Jamuna in Bangladesh's Sirajganj district, a senior police official said on Wednesday.

The district's police chief Hasibul Alam told Xinhua over phone that the boat carrying some 70 people, mostly day labourers, sank at about 11:30 a.m. (local time) on Tuesday amid inclement weather.

"The bodies of three labourers were recovered Tuesday night," he said.

Masud Parvez, officer-in-charge of Sirajganj's police station of Enayetur where the accident happened, said: "The body of another ill-fated labourer of the boat was recovered this (Wednesday) morning."

He said divers of the fire service and civil defence and local people resumed search and rescue operations from Wednesday morning.

"At least 15 people are still missing," he said. Officials said at least 50 people swam to shore as the boat capsized in a strong current and choppy river waters. They said rescuers have been struggling against a strong current and choppy waters of Jamuna, one of the three main rivers in Bangladesh. Parvez said the boat has not been salvaged and brought to shore yet. — IANS

Sri Lanka seeks USD 1.1 billion currency swap facility from India amidst depleting forex reserves

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has requested India to provide a special USD 1.1 billion currency swap facility to boost the country's draining foreign exchange reserves in view of the economic slowdown due to the coronavirus pandemic. Rajapaksa's office said that the new request is in addition to the USD 400 million amount Sri Lanka has sought from the Indian government under the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) framework.

PTI

Preliminary probe report on PIA plane crash to be presented before parliament on June 22: Minister

ISLAMABAD (TIP): The preliminary investigation report on the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane crash last week will be presented before parliament on June 22, the country's aviation minister said after Prime Minister Imran Khan expressed anger over the delay in the probe.

The domestic flight from Lahore to Karachi crashed in a residential area near the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi last Friday, killing 97 people on board. Two passengers miraculously survived the crash.

The Airbus A320 aircraft of the national carrier had 91 passengers and a crew of eight when it crashed into the Jinnah Garden area near Model Colony in Malir on Friday, minutes before its landing. Eleven people on the ground were also injured.

Aviation Minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan told the media in Islamabad that Prime Minister Khan during a meeting expressed anger over the delay in such probes and ordered to expedite it and share the findings with the people.

"We have decided that the preliminary report will be presented before parliament on June 22," the minister said.

He also stressed that the probe will be "free and fair" and nothing will be kept secret and anyone found guilty will be held accountable.

His comments came as a team of foreign experts on Thursday recovered the missing cockpit voice recorder from the debris of the crashed plane.



The minister said 12 air crashes occurred in Pakistan since independence, involving PIA planes in 10 of them while two planes belonged to private AirBlue and Bhoja Airline respectively.

He said that their inquiry reports were not made public and it was decided by the government to release all those reports by presenting them in the parliament.

The minister said that the flight data recorder of the crashed plane and the cockpit voice recorder have been recovered and handed over to French authorities to decode them.

He said a French team on behalf of

Airbus was also in Pakistan since May 26 for collecting evidence for its own independent probe.

The minister said that 51 bodies have been recognised and handed over to relatives while the process of identifying others through DNA was going on.

He said it was a "million-dollar question" why the pilot touched down and hit the runway thrice before lifting up the plane.

It was reported earlier that the plane had some problem with landing gear but the minister refused to speculate about the technical issues until the probe is completed. PTI

176 Pakistanis return home from India via Wagah Border amidst travel ban

Over 200 Indian nationals are reportedly stranded in Pakistan. They are awaiting their repatriation

LAHORE (TIP): A group of 176 Pakistani nationals, including women and children, stranded in India due to the coronavirus-induced global travel restrictions returned home via the Wagah Border on Wednesday, officials said. With the arrival of 176 people, a total of 400 Pakistanis have so far been repatriated from India via the Attari-Wagah border since March 20, 2020.

The Pakistani Rangers received them from the Border Security Force (BSF).

They were stranded in different parts of India for about three months due to the lockdowns and travel restrictions put in place by the government to contain the raging coronavirus disease.

"Upon their arrival, the Pakistani citizens including women and children were screened and transferred to quarantine centres in Lahore where they will stay for 72 hours," Mohammad Younis of Edhi Foundation told PTI.

"If their corona test comes in negative,

they will be allowed to go home after 72 hours otherwise they will be quarantined for 14 days," he said.

The relatives of those repatriated from India were not allowed to enter the Wagah Border to meet them.

They were stuck in Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Delhi due to the extended lockdown and the closure of the Attari-Wagah border following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mahesh Kumar, a stranded Pakistani national, said that had gone to India

early in March on a religious pilgrimage.

"Owing to the coronavirus lockdown, I was stuck there. I am happy to return to my country," said Kumar, a resident of Sindh. Those who returned were reportedly quarantined in India as well.

They were screened at Attari, the Indian side of the border, before crossing over to Pakistan. The purpose of their trip to India pertained to visiting family, seeking medical treatment and attending religious ceremonies. On Tuesday, Pakistan's Foreign Office said in a statement that for the safe and smooth repatriation of stranded Pakistanis, the High Commission of Pakistan in New Delhi remained in close contact with the Indian authorities.

The Pakistani mission also facilitated and coordinated their transfer to Attari from more than 20 Indian cities.

Over 200 Indian nationals are reportedly stranded in Pakistan. They are awaiting their repatriation. PTI

Indian American Nayan Parikh named a member of de Blasio's real estate reopening council

30 members of the panel named by the mayor to guide the industry's economic reboot

NEW YORK (TIP): Indian American Nayan Parikh, owner of Ashnu International, Inc. an award winning, premier/MWBE Construction and Management provider to host of Federal, State and City Agencies, Corporations and other industries, is one of the 30 New Yorkers named on Mayor de Blasio's real estate reopening council. The panel will guide the industry's economic reboot.

Nayan Parikh has, over the past fifteen years, continued hard to establish his name within the corridors of Government Agencies and has continued to build his reputation to his expertise in bringing excellent performance to the projects undertaken by his company. He has been the champion in leading many professional and community organizations and continues to give back to the society in many different ways. He has brought new ideas to fruition, both for profit and non-

profit organizations. After graduation from college, Nayan began his career as a Civil Engineer in India, before migrating to the USA. In his new homeland, he began his career as an estimator in a small construction company, before quickly finding his own strength to become the founder and Managing Director of Ashnu International, Inc.

Parikh's vision, entrepreneurial aptitude, civil engineering background and broad range of expertise have made AIC a name to be envied within the construction industry. His company has credit to many well-known projects including Sandy Repair work at Coney Island, Rockaway Beach, multiple schools renovation for New York City School Construction Authority and Signal Modification at 71st Continental Ave with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Serving the community comes

naturally to Parikh. From his first days of being a new immigrant to this country till now, he has been involved and giving his time, knowledge and wisdom to non-profit organizations, both within the community and professional. Although he is a part of many organizations and affiliations, he takes pride in each and every one and maintains an active leadership role in these organizations. Currently he is the president of the NAMC NY Tri-State Chapter; during his term he would like to bring more project procurement to his local chapter members. From humble beginnings and a minority himself, he understands the struggle to make to make the right connections or get that big break. Parikh isn't afraid to reach out to make the necessary connection, which is one of his many strengths. Because of this, his network of associations varies in



Indian American Nayan Parikh is a construction and management expert

different influencers, who hold his opinion in high regards and has created a foray into creating an outreach program for his chapter members.

NASSAU COUNTY REOPENS: PHASE 1 BEGINS MAY 27

Construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and retail (with sales limited to curbside or in-store pickup and drop off only) to resume

MINEOLA, NY (TIP): Long Island officially entered Phase One of the state's plan to reopen, May 27. And as some areas start to transition, Nassau County Executive Laura Curran is looking to the future and the next steps in a return to normalcy, though it is going to take time, subject to a continued improvement in the situation.

Long Island was one of the last areas of the state to enter Phase One of the reopening plan. A continued increase of daily deaths held off Long Island's reopening, as did the need to hire dozens of contact tracers to help stymie future cases. As of today, Long Island can resume construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and retail (with sales limited to curbside or in-store pickup and drop off only).

"The goal of reopening, of course, is to do this in a way that mitigates the spread of coronavirus," Curran said. "We want to make sure we're doing it safely, because the last thing any of us want to do is backtrack on the process we're making."

Long Island must stay in Phase One for two weeks before moving to Phase Two. If there isn't a spike in cases of the virus during that time, Long Island can move on to the next phase. There is a two-week period between each phase.

Though Nassau County is starting to reopen, the virus has still taken a staggering toll on the area. As of May 26, the county recorded 40,043 positive cases



As Long Island begins its Phase One reopening, Nassau County Executive Laura Curran is already looking toward Phase Two

of the virus, hitting a new milestone. There have also been 2,111 deaths caused by the disease. The first deaths were reported on March 16 and grew steeply through the month of April before tapering off in May.

As the area progresses through the phases more and more services will resume. Phase Two includes professional services, administrative support, real estate services and more retail. Curran said she is also trying to get Gov. Andrew Cuomo to include barber shops and beauty salons in the professional services category.

Despite the fact that the area is beginning to reopen, not all businesses are fully on board yet. "I'm getting feedback from some of our business owners that they're not ready to open yet, that they're not comfortable reopening," said Curran.

In order to help businesses with the transition, the county created an online resource to help business owners figure out which phase of reopening they would be in, and what they need to do in order to open. That resource can be found here.

"I am confident that by reopening smartly, our region can continue on to Phase Two," Curran said.

(Source: Patch)

Mayor De Blasio Outlines Plan For Phase One Of New York City's Reopening

NEW YORK (TIP): Mayor Bill de Blasio, May 28, outlined additional guidance and support for the industries permitted to restart in phase one of the City's reopening. With the Test and Trace Corps set to launch June 1, and the number of positive cases, hospitalizations, and cases in the ICU in continuous decline, New York City is moving closer to the day when construction, manufacturing, wholesale suppliers, and non-essential retail including clothing and electronics stores can reopen with some restrictions.

"New Yorkers have worked so hard for this progress, but we must remain vigilant in this fight. I know we are all eager to return to normal, and the guidelines for phase one are the first step on that path," said Mayor Bill de Blasio. "We will support business so they can reopen while staying safe."

SAFETY REGULATIONS: During phase one, the City estimates 200,000 to 400,000 employees may return to work. To ensure this is done safely and without causing a resurgence of this virus, all businesses must adhere to specific hygiene, distancing, and health protocols. Full guidance can be found here.

Basic rules for all sectors include:

Hygiene Ensure frequent cleaning and disinfecting of any shared surfaces

Health Screenings - Implement mandatory health screenings for employees, such as questionnaires and temperature checks

Communication - Create distance markers and post signage throughout the workplace reminding personnel to adhere to phase one guidance and rules

- Employers must conspicuously post completed business safety plans on site

Social Distancing

- Require six feet



Mayor de Blasio outlined guidance with regard to phase 1 of reopening of economy. (File photo)

of distance between people unless safety or core function of the work activity requires less

- Tightly confined spaces must reduce occupancy to under 50% of maximum capacity with all employees wearing face coverings

- Limit occurrence of all in-person gatherings and meetings, and only hold them in large, well-ventilated areas with social distancing and a maximum of ten people

Personal Protective Equipment - Provide employees with free clean face coverings and, if the nature of the work requires, stricter personal protective equipment like face shields

- Encourage the use of face coverings at all times and require them if employees cannot keep 6 feet of distance due to safety or core work function

EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT The Department of Buildings, Department of Consumer and Worker Protection and Small Business Services will educate and conduct outreach to businesses as they reopen for phase one. To support businesses and workers through this transition, the City will:

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

USCIS Preparing to Resume Public Services on June 4

WASHINGTON (TIP): U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is preparing some domestic offices to reopen and resume non-emergency public services on or after June 4. On March 18, USCIS temporarily suspended routine in-person services at its field offices, asylum offices and application support centers (ASCs) to help slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). USCIS is following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines to protect our workforce and the public.

While certain offices are temporarily closed, USCIS continues to provide limited emergency in-person services. Please call the USCIS Contact Center for assistance with emergency services.

As services begin to reopen, offices will reduce the number of appointments and interviews to ensure social distancing, allow time for cleaning and reduce waiting room occupancy. Appointment notices will contain information on safety precautions that visitors to USCIS facilities must follow.

If you are feeling sick, please do not go to your appointment. Follow the instructions on your appointment notice to reschedule your appointment for when you are healthy. There is no penalty for rescheduling your appointment if you are sick.

Asylum Offices

USCIS asylum offices will automatically reschedule asylum interviews that were cancelled during the temporary closures. When USCIS reschedules the



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

interview, asylum applicants will receive a new interview notice with the new time, date and location for the interview and information about safety precautions.

In accordance with social distancing guidelines, and due to the length of asylum interviews, asylum offices expect to conduct video-facilitated asylum interviews, where the applicants sit in one room and the interviewing officer sits in another room. Asylum offices will use available technology, including mobile devices provided by the agency, to ensure that the officer, applicant, interpreter and representative can fully and safely participate in the interview while maintaining social distancing.

For affirmative asylum interviews, applicants must bring all immediate family members listed as dependents on the application and an interpreter, if the applicant does not speak English. Additionally, a representative, witness, individual providing disability accommodations or "trusted adult" if an applicant is a minor, may attend the interview.

For non-detained credible or reasonable fear interviews, individuals must bring any family

members listed on the interview notice. Representatives may attend credible and reasonable fear interviews but are encouraged to participate telephonically. USCIS will provide contracted, professional interpreters for credible and reasonable fear interviews.

Naturalization Ceremonies

USCIS will send notices to applicants to reschedule postponed naturalization ceremonies. The ceremonies may be shorter to limit exposure to those in attendance. Instead of playing videos during naturalization ceremonies, attendees will receive a flyer with information and links directing them to the videos on the USCIS website. Under the shortened format, all legally required portions of the ceremony will take place.

Attendance is limited to the naturalization candidate and individuals providing assistance to disabled persons.

Interviews and Appointments

USCIS will send notices to applicants and petitioners with previously scheduled appointments and interviews. Those attending appointments should follow the safety guidelines outlined below.

Those who had other appointments must reschedule through the USCIS Contact Center once field offices are open to the public. *(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)*

Economic Impact Payments being sent by prepaid debit cards, arrive in plain envelope; IRS.gov answers frequently asked questions



WASHINGTON (TIP): As Economic Impact Payments continue to be successfully delivered, the Internal Revenue Service today reminds taxpayers that some payments are being sent by prepaid debit card. The debit cards arrive in a plain envelope from "Money Network Cardholder Services."

Nearly 4 million people are being sent their Economic Impact Payment by prepaid debit card, instead of paper check. The determination of which taxpayers received a debit card was made by the Bureau of the Fiscal Service, a part of the Treasury Department that works with the IRS to handle distribution of the payments.

Those who receive their Economic Impact Payment by prepaid debit card can do the following without any fees.

- Make purchases online and at any retail location where Visa is accepted
- Get cash from in-network ATMs
- Transfer funds to their personal bank account
- Check their card balance online, by mobile app or by phone

This free, prepaid card also provides consumer protections available to traditional bank account owners, including protection against fraud, loss and other errors.

Frequently asked questions continually updated on IRS.gov

The IRS has two sets of frequently asked questions to help Americans get answers about their Economic Impact Payments, including those arriving on prepaid debit card. These FAQs include answers to eligibility and other many common questions, including help to use two Economic Impact Payment tools.

Get My Payment, an IRS online tool, shows the projected date when a direct deposit has been scheduled or date when the payment will be mailed by check or prepaid debit card. The Non-Filers Enter Payment Info tool helps taxpayers successfully submit basic information to receive Economic Impact Payments quickly.

The IRS regularly updates the Economic Impact Payment and the Get My Payment frequently asked questions pages on IRS.gov as more information becomes available. Taxpayers should check the FAQs often for the latest additions.

Here are answers to some of the top questions people are asking about the prepaid debit cards:

Can I have my economic impact payment sent to my prepaid debit card?

Maybe. It depends on your prepaid card and whether your payment has already been scheduled. Many reloadable prepaid cards have account and routing numbers that you could provide to the IRS through the Get My Payment application or Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info Here tool. You would need to check with the financial

institution to ensure your card can be re-used and to obtain the routing number and account number, which may be different from the card number. If you obtained your prepaid debit card through the filing of a federal tax return, you must contact the financial institution that issued your prepaid debit card to get the correct routing number and account number. Do not use the routing number and account number shown on your copy of the tax return filed. When providing this information to the IRS, you should indicate that the account and routing number provided are for a checking account unless your financial institution indicates otherwise.

Will IRS be sending prepaid debit cards?

Some payments may be sent on a prepaid debit card known as The Economic Impact Payment Card. The Economic Impact Payment Card is sponsored by the Treasury Department's Bureau of the Fiscal Service, managed by Money Network Financial, LLC and issued by Treasury's financial agent, MetaBank®, N.A.

If you receive an Economic Impact Payment Card, it will arrive in a plain envelope from "Money Network Cardholder Services." The Visa name will appear on the front of the Card; the back of the Card has the name of the issuing bank, MetaBank®, N.A. Information included with the Card will explain that the card is your Economic Impact Payment Card. Please go to EIPcard.com for more information.

Can I specifically ask the IRS to

send the Economic Impact Payment to me as a debit card?

Not at this time. For those who don't receive their Economic Impact Payment by direct deposit, they will receive their payment by paper check, and, in a few cases, by debit card. The determination of which taxpayers receive a debit card will be made by the Bureau of the Fiscal Service (BFS), another part of the Treasury Department that works with the IRS to handle distribution of the payments. BFS is sending nearly 4 million debit cards to taxpayers starting in mid-May. At this time, taxpayers cannot make a selection to receive a debit card. Please go to EIPcard.com for more information.

Watch out for scams related to Economic Impact Payments

The IRS urges taxpayers to be on the lookout for scams related to the Economic Impact Payments. To use the new app or get information, taxpayers should visit IRS.gov. People should watch out for scams using email, phone calls or texts related to the payments. Be careful and cautious: The IRS will not send unsolicited electronic communications asking people to open attachments, visit a website or share personal or financial information. Remember, go directly and solely to IRS.gov for official information.

Quick links to the Frequently Asked Questions on IRS.gov

Economic Impact Payments:
www.irs.gov/eipfaq

Get My Payment tool:
www.irs.gov/getmypaymentfaq

Please go to EIPcard.com for more information about prepaid debit cards.

Indian Embassy Advisory for Vande Bharat Mission

WASHINGTON (TIP): Embassy of India in Washington issued, May 26, an advisory for the ongoing second phase of Vande Bharat Mission. It is an advisory for Indian nationals/ permitted categories of Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) card holders travelling to India by non-scheduled commercial flights-Additional flights in Phase II.

The Government of India has decided to operate additional Air India non-scheduled commercial flights in the ongoing second phase of operations from the U.S. to various cities in India. The updated schedule of flights is as under:

	Date	Flight No	Origin	Dep. Time	Destination
1	28 May 2020	AI 104	Washington DC	23:15	Bengaluru & Ahmedabad
2	28 May 2020	AI 126	Chicago	23:25	Delhi & Bhubaneshwar
3	29 May 2020	AI 126	Chicago	23:25	Ahmedabad & Hyderabad
4	6 June 2020	AI 126	Chicago	23:25	Bengaluru
5	7 June 2020	AI 144	Newark	23:55	Ahmedabad
6	8 June 2020	AI 102	New York	11:00	Kolkata
7	8 June 2020	AI 104	Washington DC	23:15	Delhi
8	10 June 2020	AI 126	Chicago	23:25	Hyderabad
9	11 June 2020	AI 174	San Francisco	23:00	Bengaluru
10	12 June 2020	AI 102	New York	11:00	Chennai
11	15 June 2020	AI 174	San Francisco	23:00	Hyderabad

This is a dynamic list and may undergo changes based on operational, technical and other considerations. The list should not be considered as final and is only for the purpose of information. This list cannot be quoted for any legal claims. All visitors are advised to countercheck with Air India for confirmation of the flights, timings, dates, destinations and other details.

Since the number of seats on the flights would be

limited, priority will be given to compelling cases and those Indian nationals and OCI Cardholders registered (Indian nationals: https://indianembassyusa.gov.in/reg_indian_nationals & OCI Cardholders: https://indianembassyusa.gov.in/reg_oci_in_nationals) with the Embassy/Consulates will be considered:

i. Indian Nationals:

With the compelling cases such as those facing medical emergencies or requiring return due to bereavement in the family, students, pregnant women, elderly or those facing expiry of visas.

ii. Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) card holders:

(a) Minor children born to Indian nationals abroad and holding OCI cards.

(b) OCI cardholders who wish to come to India on account of family emergencies like death in family.

(c) Couples where one spouse is an OCI cardholder and the other is an Indian national and they have a permanent residence in India.

(d) University students who are OCI cardholders (not legally minors) but whose parents are Indian citizens living in India.

The OCI cardholders falling into one of the categories mentioned above will not require any fresh emergency visa.

The cost of travel from designated airport in the USA to the designated airport in India will be borne by the passenger. All passengers will be required to undergo medical screening before boarding the flight and only asymptomatic passengers will be allowed to travel.

Before boarding, all passengers shall give an undertaking that they would undergo mandatory quarantine for 14 days as stipulated in the Ministry of Home Affairs order dated 24 May 2020. (<https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/MHAOrderDt24052020forspecifiedpersonstotravelabroad.pdf>)



All passengers on arrival in India will be medically screened and would have to download and register on Arogya Setu app.

All passengers will have to follow the protocols and procedures including Health Protocols issued by the Government of the USA on departure and by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Civil Aviation and other concerned authorities of Government of India before, during the journey and on arrival in India.

All passengers will be required to sign an Undertaking (Download Undertaking Form), which will be collected from them at the airport before boarding the flight.

India Relaxes Travel Restrictions for OCI Card Holders

WASHINGTON (TIP): India on May 22 relaxed the visa and travel restrictions imposed on Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders during the COVID-19 lockdown.

"Relaxing visa and travel restrictions imposed in wake of COVID-19, certain categories of OCI cardholders stranded abroad have been permitted to come to India", a Ministry of Home affairs spokesperson said in a tweet.

The government of India has deployed "Vande Bharat Mission" to bring back Indian citizens stranded abroad including USA. The Government has decided to operate additional Air India non-scheduled commercial flights in the ongoing second phase of operations from the U.S. to various cities in India from May 28 to June 15.

Since the number of seats on the flights would be limited, priority will be given to compelling cases and those Indian nationals and OCI Cardholders registered (Indian nationals: https://indianembassyusa.gov.in/reg_indian_nationals & OCI Cardholders: https://indianembassyusa.gov.in/reg_oci_in_nationals) with the Embassy/Consulates will be considered:

i. Indian Nationals:

With the compelling cases such as those facing medical emergencies or requiring return due to bereavement in the family,

NRIA Donates \$2,500 To Coronavirus Testing Site In Edison, NJ

EDISON, NJ (TIP): NRIA of Secaucus, NJ, a leading luxury multi-family real estate developer, private equity investment manager, and EB-5 Visa specialist has donated \$2,500 to the Indian Business Association of New Jersey (IBA) to help fund the organization's new coronavirus testing site in Edison, NJ. NRIA's Glenn A. LaMatta, SVP of Operations (below left), and

Tanvi Prenita Chandra, SVP of South Asian Marketing and Business Development (right) presented the check to Thomas Lankey, Mayor of Edison, NJ (center) at the grand opening earlier this week.



Located at 103 Cinder Road in Edison, NJ, the IBA-sponsored testing site will be conducting free coronavirus salivary tests by appointment on Mondays and Thursdays, 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Those interested in being tested may register online at <https://IBA.adlabscovidtest.com>. Once registered an Agile Urgent Care staff member will be in touch to discuss symptoms.

The testing site is just one of several IBA-funded coronavirus emergency response projects to help counter the impact of the virus. Other programs include distributing non-perishable food items to hospital employees, supplying Personal Protective Equipment to frontline workers, and translating pertinent coronavirus updates so New Jersey's Indian community can stay apprised of new developments in their native language.

"NRIA is committed to supporting the local South Asian community and we are delighted to make this donation," said Glenn A. LaMatta. Last month, NRIA also donated \$2,500 to the SKN Foundation for the purchase of PPE for local medical staff.

Pulwama-type attack averted, JK Police seize car laden with 45 kg explosives

SRINAGAR (TIP): Jammu and Kashmir Police on Thursday averted a 2019 Pulwama-type attack when they chased and seized a car laden with about 45 kg of explosives in the south Kashmir district, officials said.

Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range) Vijay Kumar told reporters there were intelligence inputs about plans of banned Hizbul Mujahideen and Jaish-e-Mohammed terror groups to repeat an attack similar to last year's February 14 strike on a CRPF convoy that left 40 personnel dead.

"The police had intelligence inputs for past one week that Hizbul Mujahideen and Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists had plans to launch a big strike using a suicide bomber and car bomb to target security forces. Based on these inputs, checkposts were placed in Pulwama by the security forces on Wednesday," he told reporters here.

Unfolding the sequence of events, Kumar said on Wednesday evening when the suspected car, which police claimed to have all inputs, was spotted approaching a check post, it was signalled to stop. However, its driver turned the car in a different direction and fled from the scene before being trapped at another check post.

"At another check post, the forces again fired some warning shots and the terrorist fled from the spot, taking advantage of darkness, and left the car behind. The forces used lights to check the vehicle from a distance after finding something suspicious. We tightened the cordon and waited for the first light of the day.



Picture of the car with IED after it was destroyed.

"This morning, a bomb disposal squad reached the spot and saw the vehicle was laden with explosives. The IED was defused in a technical way by the police, army and paramilitary CRPF. The Pulwama police, with the help of security forces, have averted a major tragedy and I congratulate all of the forces," he said.

Images taken by drones were also shared with the media about the controlled explosion of the car carrying 45 kg of explosives.

The IGP said that a man named Adil, who works for both the terror groups, is believed to be one of the planners. The number plate used on the car actually was that of a motorcycle.

The IGP said the police had inputs that JeM was planning to launch such an attack on the anniversary of Jang-e-Badr day -- the 17th day of

Muslim fasting month of Ramzan -- but could not undertake it then because the forces had taken preemptive measures.

"However, the input got developed on Wednesday and we suspect Adil, who is a Hizbul terrorist but also works with JeM, and Fauji bhai, a Pakistani militant and JeM commander in Pulwama are involved in the planning of the attack," he said.

Kumar said the terrorists were planning to target the security forces vehicles using about 40-45 kgs of explosives in the same manner as the February 14, 2019 Awantipora attack.

"We are calling an expert team to investigate it. Since the explosive debris went up about 50 metres in the air, it seems that the weight of the explosives would have been about 40-45 kg," he said.

INDIA, CHINA STAND GROUND IN LADAKH BORDER STANDOFF

NEW DELHI (TIP): India on Thursday said it is engaged with China at the diplomatic and military levels to end a border standoff involving thousands of troops even as it tacitly ruled out any possibility of US mediation to end the face-off.

The ground situation remained unchanged and neither side had lowered its guard at the four standoff points in the Ladakh sector's Galwan Valley and Pangong Tso areas. Both sides are holding firms and it is not possible to indicate at this time when the status quo ante will be restored, people familiar with the developments said. Since tensions flared along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) after violent clashes involving hundreds of soldiers in Sikkim and Ladakh sectors early this month, both sides have deployed additional soldiers, especially in Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh. India has said it will oppose any unilateral attempts to alter the status quo along the LAC. External affairs ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava told a virtual news briefing that

Modi is not in good mood, says Trump on India-China tensions

WASHINGTON (TIP): United States President Donald Trump on Thursday referred to the border tensions between India and China as a "big conflict" and said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not in "in a good mood" because of the situation, PTI reported. He also repeated his offer to mediate between the two countries. "They have a big conflict India and China," Trump was quoted as saying by the news agency at a press conference. "Two countries with 1.4 billion people each. Two countries with very powerful militaries. India is not happy and probably China is not happy." Trump added that he had spoken to Modi about the standoff between India and China. "He [Modi] is not in a good mood about what is going on with China," Trump said. However, India has denied Trump claims of talks with PM Modi over China logjam.

both sides are engaged at different levels to address tensions, but New Delhi will make no compromises on sovereignty and national security.

Asked specifically about US President Donald Trump's offer to mediate and whether New Delhi had sought such arbitration, Srivastava said: "As I've told you, we are engaged with the Chinese side to peacefully resolve this issue."

India and China, he said, have established mechanisms at military and

diplomatic levels to peacefully resolve situations that may arise in border areas through dialogue, and "continue to remain engaged through these channels".

Srivastava reiterated India's contention that its troops had not violated the LAC, a charge levelled by China soon after the standoff became public.

"India is committed to the objective of maintenance of peace and tranquillity in the border areas with China and our armed forces scrupulously follow the

INDIA LIFTS CURBS ON THE EXPORT OF PARACETAMOL

NEW DELHI (TIP): The central government on Thursday lifted restrictions on the export of paracetamol, a common medicine used to treat fever and body pain.

The directorate general of foreign trade, under ministry of commerce and industry, reviewed its March 3 order that restricted the export of the drug and active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) in the wake of coronavirus disease (Covid-19) situation in the country.

"...government hereby makes following amendment...of the ITCHS export policy amending the notification dated 03.03.2020 related to export policy of paracetamol API. From present policy of restricted use it has been moved to free category under the revised policy," read the directorate notification.

Cong launches 'Speak up India' drive, asks PM to help poor

NEW DELHI (TIP): Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Thursday led party's 'Speak up India' campaign, asking the government to come to the rescue of lakhs of labourers and small traders who continue to battle the economic impact Covid and the lockdown.

In two video messages today, Sonia said the government must immediately open its coffers and help the needy and if it feels constrained about finances, it should scrap the costly Central Vista project that seeks to build a new Parliament complex and government buildings and use that money to feed the vulnerable. In her morning message, Sonia cited the travails of migrant labourers who continue to walk back home thousands of kilometres without food and water and asked the government to arrange their free transport back to their home states.

Shah speaks to all CMs, seeks views on extension of lockdown

NEW DELHI(TIP): Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to all chief ministers on Thursday, and sought their views on extension of the ongoing nationwide lockdown beyond May 31, officials said.

The telephonic conversations of the home minister came just three days before the end of the fourth phase of the lockdown.

The nationwide curbs, which were first imposed on March 25 to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus, and has been extended thrice.

consensus reached by our leaders and the guidance provided. At the same time, we remain firm in our resolve to ensuring India's sovereignty and national security," he said. The Indian troops, he added, have a "very responsible approach towards border management and strictly follow the procedures laid out in various bilateral agreements and protocols with China to resolve any issue that may arise in the border areas".

These include five agreements signed by India and China in the past two decades – the 1993 Agreement on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the LAC in the India-China border areas, the 1996 Agreement on Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field along the LAC, the 2005 Protocol on Modalities for the implementation of the Confidence Building Measures in the Military Field, the 2012 Agreement on establishment of a working mechanism for consultation and coordination on India-China Border Affairs, and the 2013 Border Defence Cooperation Agreement.

Source: HT

SPECIAL REPORT

Rajasthan facing dual challenge of COVID & locust swarm

Drones pressed in service to kill spread of Locust in Jaipur

By Yash Goyal in Jaipur

JAIPUR (TIP): Rajasthan is running into the toughest dual challenge of COVID-19 on ground while Locust swarm in air damaged crop and affected normal life in many cities of the state.

Due to deadly Coronavirus over 8000 people got inflicted and at least 180 have died till May 29 in Rajasthan, while crop worth Rs. 1000 cr eaten up by little grasshoppers, and it affected normal life in 19 out of 33 districts including the state capital of Jaipur early this week.

After 27 years, Locust swarms, a short-horned grasshopper, have reached Jaipur's residential and sub-urban towns and farmland after entering western districts of Rajasthan and travelling via Barmer, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Churu and Nagaur since May first week. Now this flock has moved and roaming in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh' bordering districts.

For the first time, the state Agriculture Department is using a Drone to clear the locust in the air. First batch of tailor-made drones are supplied to the state by the Union Agriculture Ministry. Drones got operationalized on Wednesday, May 27 at Samod village, 30 kms from Jaipur, to clear the swarms roaming in the air. The drones are equipped with 10 liters of chemicals with creating a sound that disperse the flock in the area. Or they get killed.

Dangerous grasshoppers have become gregarious over the housing, kitchen garden, gardens and greenery as they have eaten some of the seasonal vegetable crops on way from Barmer to Jaipur,

On third today, hoppers were seen flying on Jaipur-Agra route over Dausa where farmers were using the traditional way sounding



Locust attack on Madan Gopal Temple in Jaipur and (below) Locust attack on fruit trees in Jaipur. Pictures/ Courtesy Dinesh Bagara

drums, thali, burning cow dung, bursting fire crackers, and creating smoke in the affected areas to divert the route of hoppers.

Rajasthan had already witnessed a long spell of locust invasion last year from May to February this year in which 6.7 lac hectares of Rabi and later Kharif crops were damaged in 12 districts, the Agriculture Minister Lal Chand Kataria has said, adding the state had a loss due to pest invasion to the tune of Rs.1000 cr.

"Rajasthan Government has issued orders to provide 50 percent subsidy to farmers on purchase of pesticides, particularly Malathion (96 percent Ultra Low Value) for spray on intruder insect under supervision of agriculture experts", the minister recalled saying the fresh crop damage assessment due to it was underway.

During lockdown, Hoppers have entered Jaisalmer on April 11 from Pakistan, and since then the swarms are flying to the desert state frequently due to wind direction too, the Minister said.



Holding a review meeting a day ago, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has demanded the Central government to provide the additional resources and fund to control outbreak of Locust Swarm and probable damage of seasonal crop and vegetables.

GLIMMER IN COVID SURGE: LESS THAN 5% OF PATIENTS REQUIRE CRITICAL CARE

NEW DELHI (TIP): As returning migrants and easing lockdown push the coronavirus far and wide, an analysis of statewise data shows that when it comes to Covid patients requiring critical care, their share, even in high-burden states like Maharashtra, Delhi, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, remains low. So is the demand for ventilators.

Similar is the case in states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Odisha where the migrant influx is pushing up Covid numbers.

Of the total 83,004 active cases on May 27, less than 3500 needed any kind of intervention — oxygen therapy, ICU or ventilators.

A total of 1,868 patients needed ICU (2.25 per cent), of whom just three were on ventilators while 1585 people (1.91 per cent) were on oxygen. This trend has remained largely unchanged since the first cases came in.

Until May 15, 18,855 ventilators were available in the country for Covid care, this number would have gone up since. In addition, 60,000 ventilators have been ordered.

These figures assume significance given the apprehension about medical infrastructure being overwhelmed by the pandemic as testing ramps up and more cases pour in.

Replying to a question on the way ahead during Lockdown 4.0, Niti Aayog's Dr Vinod Paul said: "Our goal is to control the pandemic and then restore normalcy so that life can go on. That balance is key to all decisions on restrictions. We have to make sure that the size of the pandemic remains below our capacity to treat patients."

In Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar where returning migrants are a cause for concern, so far no patients are on ventilators, oxygen or in the ICU. The reasons aren't clear: there is speculation that the epidemic may be in its early stages in these states or that few patients need critical care or that the health infrastructure isn't uniformly distributed in these states.

Of the 2,680 active cases in Uttar Pradesh till May 27, 61 needed ICU and 38 needed oxygen. No patient was required to be put on a ventilator.

In Maharashtra, which has seen the most number of deaths, the percentage of people on oxygen is just 2.21 per cent. In Delhi the percentage is 3.56 but on May 27, when the number of active cases in Maharashtra was 36012, there were just 796 people on oxygen while in Delhi, of the 6954 active cases, 248 were on oxygen.

Overall, the percentage of people on oxygen (1.91% of total active cases in the country) is an important metric because it has often been seen in Covid cases that patients recover quickly after a few days on oxygen. However, if timely oxygen is not given, there are increased chances of organ damage and quick deterioration. Until May 26, Delhi had 303 deaths while Maharashtra till May 27 had 1897 deaths.

Source: Indian Express

India registers biggest single-day spike of 7,467 COVID-19 cases

NEW DELHI (TIP): India on Friday reported 7,467 new cases of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) in the last 24 hours in the highest single-day surge, taking the tally to 165,799, according to the Union health ministry.

This is the first time India has reported more than 7,000 cases in a single day and the surge in the Covid-19 numbers comes just days ahead of the fourth phase of the lockdown is scheduled to end on May 31.

According to the health ministry's dashboard in the morning, there are 89,987 active cases of the coronavirus disease in the country and 4,706 people have

succumbed to the deadly infection.

The recovery rate has gone up to 42.88% as 71,105 people, up from 67,691 patients on Thursday, have warded off the respiratory disease, data showed on Friday.

Most of India's Covid-19 cases were reported in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Gujarat.

Maharashtra has witnessed 59,546 Covid-19 cases and 1,982 people have died in the western state so far. In Tamil Nadu, 19,372 people have contracted the disease and 145 people have died, while Delhi reported 16,281 cases and 316 fatalities till date.

The number of deaths in Gujarat, the fourth worst-hit state,

was higher than Tamil Nadu and Delhi at 316 but the cases stand at 7,495 so far.

There will be a continued focus on 13 cities and five states worst hit by Covid-19 and the situation in seven states, which have seen many of their residents who were working outside come back, will be monitored as India exits the ongoing lockdown.

These cities are Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Thane, Pune, Hyderabad, Kolkata/Howrah, Indore, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Changalpattu and Thiruvallur, which constitute about 70% of the positive cases in the country.



MIGRANT WORKERS FACE LOCKDOWN ORDEAL, SHUN CITY JOBS

MUMBAI/CHENNAI (TIP): When power loom operator Lokanath Swain boarded a bus home after a 40-day wait in the Indian textile hub of Surat, he took a silent vow - to never return to his workplace of two decades.

Like millions of migrant workers left jobless by India's strict coronavirus lockdown, Swain was left penniless and facing starvation and could only afford the 1,700 km (1,100 miles) trip back to eastern Odisha state after his family wired him money.

Countless workers in India have walked thousands of miles home after losing their jobs, many dying in accidents along the way, and the ordeal has made them reluctant to return to work despite India easing restrictions to reboot industrial activity.

"Nobody was understanding our problems there. My employer did not lift the phone when I contacted him to ask for my 10 days' wages pending with him. They are big people. What can we do?" Swain, 45, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone.

"I thought I would not survive until the time trains would resume. How long can a starving man survive? May be one or two days," Swain said from a quarantine facility where he is housed near his village in Ganjam district of Odisha state.

Swain is among the often invisible army of about 100 million migrant workers in India - or 20% of the workforce - who leave their villages for jobs in cities, where their skills are needed in manufacturing, construction, or the hospitality industry.

About 80% of these migrant workers are men who send their earnings back to their villages to support their families.

Reports compiled by aid workers show that more than half of the stranded workers who contacted them in distress during the lockdown were out of food and money, with nearly four out of every five not paid by their employers.

About 13% of 17,000 migrants in contact with the volunteers of Stranded Workers Action Network, a collective of relief workers, said they would seek work in their home towns in the future.

"What is the point of returning now? My employer abandoned me. I would rather stay with my family even if I earn half of what I earned there," Swain said.

CHALLENGE

In the melee of millions of homebound migrants are construction workers, gem polishers, masons and skilled artisans who deftly stitched sequins on garments - specific skills that made migrant workers essential to several key industries.

Although informally employed, their skills oil supply chains feeding domestic and global markets and their earnings support rural communities, with economists warning their reluctance to return could mean labour shortages that hit the Indian economy.

Aware of their dependence on migrant workers, many industries and state governments are now grappling to find ways to lure back workers or to train local residents in the often skilled work



conducted by this travelling army of employees.

India's government, also aware of the magnitude of the problem, this month said it would spend 35 billion rupees (\$463.06 million) on food for migrant workers and offer them jobs in their villages under a rural employment scheme.

"The government is concerned about migrant workers," India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told reporters.

Trade union leaders and campaigners said delivery of aid and jobs will be patchy in the world's second most populous country of 1.3 billion people, and industries would have to grapple with a labour shortage, at least for the next few months.

"The bitter experience they have had has left them traumatised and we know that most of them will not even think of coming back to work in the near future," said realtor Kishore Jain from Bengaluru, where trains were stopped to stall construction workers from leaving, triggering protests.

"Bringing them back is going to be our biggest challenge," said Jain, who is the Bengaluru chapter president of Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India.

'CURSED TO BE A MIGRANT'

Migrant worker Rakesh Kumar said he always earned his living in Bengaluru as an electrician, but the lockdown and halting the trains turned him into a beggar.

He described standing in queues for food every day as "a humiliation for a lifetime".

"The government did not give us anything and the food we got was from charities. Even to get that, we faced discrimination, with locals getting first preference," he said. "Being a migrant became a curse."

Migrants are an often invisible group



in the population, never factored into urban planning nor included in the city's population, and rarely counted for either in their villages.

There are estimates on their population but no official statistics, with no central registry of migrant workers despite legislation 40 years ago to establish such a database.

In Surat, migrants form 58% of the population, the highest migrants-to-locals ratio in India and 70% of the city's waged workforce, a study by migrant rights non-profit Aajeevika Bureau shows.

Yet 98% of migrants surveyed for the study, which was released this month, had never interacted with any official in a political party office or local administrative bodies.

The lockdown made them visible to urban dwellers for the first time in recent history in India as they emerged from construction sites and sweatshops to go home.

Unaccounted for in cities, they have poor access to state aid and healthcare offered to rural communities as they are

rarely ever present in their villages.

"These workers have multiple identities - they work on construction sites and then go back home to work in agriculture," said Amita Bhide, dean of School of Habitat Studies at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences.

Migrant workers typically return home for festivals or during the harvest season.

But this time around, many have returned home to stay.

"Once I get home, I will look for a job nearby. Why would I want to repeat this experience?" construction worker Rakesh Kumar said. "I will never come back."

ROAD AHEAD

Industries facing a potential labour shortage are planning various ways to navigate the crisis.

The western state of Maharashtra has asked "sons of the soil" or local citizens "to grab employment opportunities" created by the exodus of migrants, while the real estate industry was planning on training local workers. *Source: Reuters*

TODDLER TRIES TO WAKE UP DEAD MOTHER, VIDEO GOES VIRAL

MUZAFFARPUR (TIP): A toddler's vain attempt to wake up his dead mother from eternal sleep on a railway platform in Bihar's Muzaffarpur on Wednesday presented the most poignant picture of the massive migrant tragedy unfolding across several states.

A video tweeted by Sanjay Yadav, an aide to RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, shows the child walking unsteadily up to his mother's body, tugging at the blanket placed over her, and when failing to wake her up, covering his own head with it. As the mother still lay still, he wobbles away from her, announcements continuing in the background about the arrival and departure of trains that would bring in tens of thousands of people in a rush to get away from hunger and hardship they face in large cities that could sustain them no more.

"This child doesn't know that the bedsheet with which he is playing is the shroud of his mother who has gone into eternal sleep. This mother died of hunger and thirst after being on a train for four days. Who



A toddler's vain attempt to wake up his dead mother from eternal sleep on a railway platform in Bihar's Muzaffarpur on Wednesday presented the most poignant picture of the massive migrant tragedy.

is responsible for these deaths on trains? Shouldn't the opposition ask uncomfortable questions?" tweeted Yadav.

Death due to pre-existing ailment: Railways

NEW DELHI: The Railways on

Wednesday defended its handling of migrant specials after a heart-rending video surfaced online showing a toddler attempting to wake up his dead mother. While the Railways claimed the woman died of a pre-existing heart condition, AAP's Sanjay Singh said the claim is a "lie".

Delhi farmer buys plane tickets to send 10 workers to their homes in Bihar

NEW DELHI (TIP): A farmer in Delhi sent 10 of his workers home on a flight to their home state Bihar on Thursday.

Pappan Gehlot, a mushroom farmer, paid for their flight tickets because the migrant workers have toiled for him for the last 20 years.

"We tried to book trains tickets but were unable to do it. Then we thought these people have been working with us for over 20 years, their journey should be safe. So we got them medically examined and arranged flight tickets for them," Pappu's brother Niranjan Gehlot told news agency ANI.

The workers said their dream came true. "I had never thought I will get to sit in an aeroplane, our employer made the arrangements for us," said one of the workers as he arrived at the Indira Gandhi International Airport to board the 6 am flight to Patna on Thursday.

The workers said they can't believe they are going to their villages in Samastipur - not walking or cycling thousands of kilometres, or scrambling for a seat on a bus or train - but on a plane. "I never imagined in my life that I will be traveling in a plane. I don't have words to express my happiness. But I am also little bit nervous about what I have to do when we reach the airport tomorrow," Lakhinder Ram, who will be returning with his son, told news agency PTI.

Ram, 50, who has been working for Gehlot for 27 years, said the farmer has been taking care of their food and accommodation since the lockdown began on March 25.

Gehlot has a mushroom farm in Delhi's Tigipur village. He bought the tickets worth Rs 68,000 and also gave each worker Rs 3,000 so they don't face any problems when they reach their home state.

Gehlot said that he has been doing mushroom farming since 1993 which has a season between August and March.



The 10 migrant workers at the Indira Gandhi International airport in Delhi before catching flight to Patna.

Migrants' kid dies as father hunts for milk at rly station

MUZAFFARPUR (TIP): The four-and-a-half-year-old son of migrants from Bihar based in Delhi died at the railway station here on arrival by a 'Shramik Special' train, while his father desperately hunted for some milk he believed will save his child.

Maqsood Alam alias Mohd Pintu, the bereaved father, worked as a house painter until the coronavirus-induced lockdown rendered him jobless and drove him to penury, forcing the family to leave their rented home in a Delhi slum and head home after selling off their meagre belongings.

Accompanied by wife Zeba and son Ishaq, Alam had started the journey with some excitement, trying to forget the travails of the past and hoping to reach his native place in West Champaran district on Monday.

The child had fallen ill, apparently because of oppressive heat.

MIGRANTS RETURNING TO BIHAR JUMP OFF TRAINS TO FLEE ISOLATION



PATNA (TIP): Migrant workers returning to Bihar are jumping from trains to escape the 14-day mandatory quarantine.

On Tuesday, 350 migrants returning from Delhi and Patiala pulled the alarm chain at two different places and jumped off the Shramik Special trains. Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel and local villagers, however, caught 180 of them.

"They are jumping ahead of their destination. We convince those we manage to detain that it is necessary not only for themselves but also for their family members," said an RPF official at the Danapur railway station, near Patna.

A large number of migrants on board the Shramik Special from Delhi's Anand Vihar to Purnia in northeast Bihar deboarded near the Ranibagh railway crossing. While around 150 managed to escape, around 250 migrants were caught by the local villagers who then informed the RPF personnel. They were taken to quarantine centres, but some more managed to flee.

In another incident, migrant workers stopped the Shramik Special from Chandigarh to Gaya district somewhere in Sasaram district and 24 are believed to have escaped, said an official. A senior ECR railway official said this was now happening often. "Sometimes they are caught, sometimes they manage to escape," he said.

Lakhs of migrant workers returning home are refusing to be quarantined near their homes. "How can we be away from our family for 14 days after all the trouble we went through?" asked Mahendra Sahni from Muzaffarpur.

Over 12 lakh migrants have so far returned to different districts of the State and another 27 lakh have registered with the government and are waiting for their turn.

Registered to return, migrants in Punjab start backing out

CHANDIGARH (TIP): While a huge number of migrants in Punjab, mainly from UP and Bihar, had registered on the government's portal to return to their native places, only 20 per cent among those have actually gone back despite the state government sending over 300 Shramik trains in the past three weeks.

The dwindling rush in UP and Bihar trains has been visible with several leaving with just 40 per cent occupancy of the total allotted berths. Strangely, this was also true for districts which had a large number of migrants registered with the authorities to leave. The maximum labourers who had registered to return were from UP and Bihar at 88 per cent of the total registrations.

On Monday, four trains chugged off from Jalandhar, including three to Bihar and one to UP. These trains were allotted 1,600 berths each (6,400 total), but less than 3,000 passengers could be sent from five districts including Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Kapurthala, Nawanshahr and Pathankot.

A Deputy Commissioners from the Doaba region said that for the past couple of days, trains — especially those bound for UP districts — are not being filled, adding that they have been calling the registered migrants repeatedly but most of them have changed their minds.



ZOA MORANI DONATES BLOOD PLASMA FOR SECOND TIME

Coronavirus survivor and actor Zoa Morani has once again donated blood for plasma therapy. The actor said the last time she donated blood for plasma therapy, it helped a COVID-19 patient to come out of the ICU.

She tweeted late Tuesday night, "Plasma donation round 2 ! Last time it helped get a patient out of ICU, note from my doctor, 'hoping all recovered covid patients come out and donate their blood, u may be able to help someone' #NairHospital #IndiaFightsCorona #plasmatherapy"

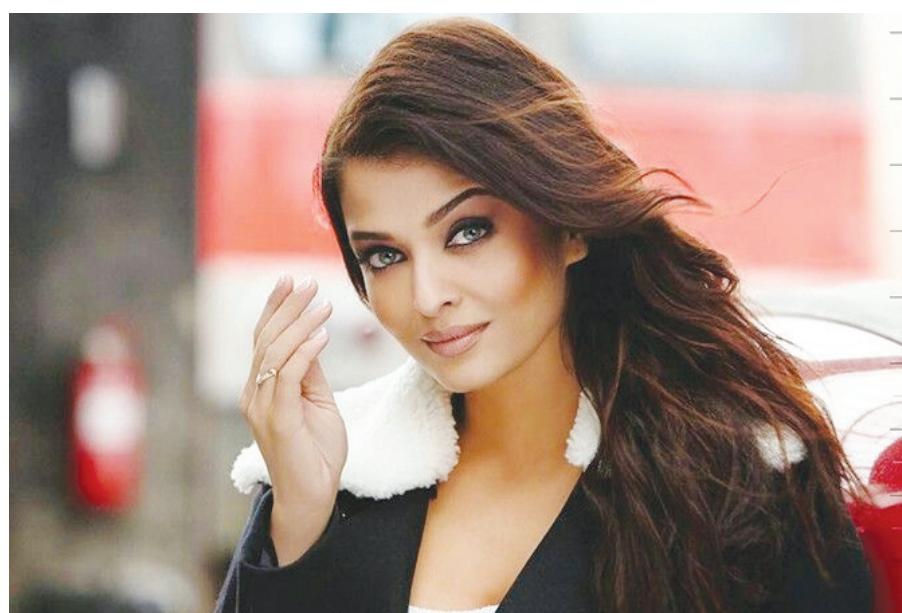
"The last time I donated blood for plasma, it worked very well on a patient who was on a ventilator in the ICU. He responded to the treatment very well and is out of the ICU now. There was an urgent requirement for another serious patient so they asked me to come back. Hoping the patient recovers soon. I spoke to his wife at night and haven't stopped praying for her ever since," the actor said.

AFTER LOCKDOWN, MANI RATNAM TO SHOOT AISHWARYA RAI-STARRER IN ONE GO

Mani Ratnam was eagerly looking forward to the third schedule of Ponniyin Selvan in Puducherry as it would mark his reunion with protégé Aishwarya Rai Bachchan after Raavan (2010).

Unfortunately, the nationwide lockdown was imposed before the auteur could take his place behind the camera for the third stint. With the ongoing shutdown having played havoc with the shoot of the ambitious period drama, sources suggest that Ratnam is planning to call for a start-to-finish schedule when normalcy is restored.

A trade source says, "Amid chatter that shoots may begin from July, Mani sir and his team are reworking the schedules to ensure the film meets its 2021 release. He is hoping to get bulk dates from Vikram, Aishwarya, Karthi and the ensemble cast so that the film can be wrapped up in one go. If all goes well, they will begin the Puducherry leg with Vikram and Aishwarya. If they don't get the necessary permission for an outdoor shoot, they might change the venue to the AVM Studios in Chennai." The period drama, based on the life of Arulmozhi Varman before he became the great Chola emperor, sees Rai in a



double role — as Nandini, the manipulative wife of Periya Pazhuvettaraiyar, and queen Mandakini Devi.

Shiva Anand, executive producer, Madras Talkies, confirms that the first instalment of the two-part movie will be shot in one go. "Like everybody else in the industry, we are waiting for the shoot to resume and talk to the actors about their dates. It will be

difficult to coordinate the schedules, but it's our job to figure out a way," he says. Even though the period piece is mounted on a grand scale and relies heavily on post-production, Anand is confident that it will be ready for its date with the audience next year. "We have no intention of compromising on the film. We will release the first part next year, though we don't have clarity on the release date yet."

WHEN ALIA BHATT SAID SHE'D WANT RANBIR KAPOOR AT HER 'SWAYAMVAR'

Bollywood actors Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor are together for sometime now and the lovebirds have not shied away from expressing their love for each other on several occasions.

Now, we chance upon a throwback video of Alia from Koffee With Karan season 4 (2013-14) which makes it apparent that she was crushing over the Sanju star long before they started dating in real life.

On Karan Johar's chat show, when Alia appeared with her Student of The Year co-stars Varun Dhawan and Sidharth Malhotra, she made a couple of references to her now-flame Ranbir. During the rapid fire round, Karan asks Alia, "If your swayamvar (event for choosing one's groom) were to take place today in Bollywood, name three men you would love to have contest for you." Responding to this, Alia takes Ranbir's name first, followed by Salman Khan and Aditya Roy Kapur.

Later, Karan asks her, "An actor you would not mind doing a steamy scene with." Alia takes Ranbir's name swiftly. Alia also adds in one of the answers that she would marry Ranbir.

Meanwhile, on the movies front, Alia and Ranbir's highly anticipated movie Brahmastra is to release this



year in December after multiple delays. The movie also features Amitabh Bachchan, Mouni Roy and Nagarjuna in key roles. It will be interesting to see if makers push the release date owing to the coronavirus

pandemic. Alia has other projects like Sadak 2, Gangubai Kathiawadi and RRR in her kitty. Meanwhile, Ranbir will feature in YRF's Shamshera and is working with Shraddha Kapoor in a yet untitled movie.

WHEN VARUN DHAWAN AND KIARA ADVANI DANCED TO SUN SAATHIYA



You might have seen Varun Dhawan and Kiara Advani dancing together to the song First Class from the 2019 period drama Kalank but have you seen them grooving together to ABCD 2's Sun Saathiya?

On Wednesday, Varun posted a video from his and Kiara's dance rehearsal session on his official YouTube channel. In the video, Kiara, dressed in a black tank top and a pair of track pants can be seen dancing with Varun, who featured with Shraddha Kapoor in the original song. Sharing the video on his YouTube channel, Varun wrote: "Hi guys! Here's a throwback dance cover video of my rehearsal with Kiara Advani. I hope you guys like this video."

In terms of work, Street Dancer 3D, which also starred Shraddha Kapoor and Nora Fatehi, remains Varun Dhawan's last release.



AVATAR 2 FILMMAKER JON LANDAU REVEALS NEW PLOT DETAILS ABOUT THE SEQUEL

After keeping all the details about the film under tight wraps for years, producer Jon Landau finally spilled some beans on the plot of James Cameron's upcoming film. Just earlier this month, it was reported that the production of eagerly-awaited Avatar sequel is all set to restart in New Zealand. The filming of sci-fi sequel was put on hold in March after the New Zealand Government instituted a lockdown amid the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic to promote social distancing and stop the spread of the deadly virus.

Recently, while discussing the film with Radio New Zealand, Jon revealed that the movie will be a story about the Sully family. "This is the story of the Sully family and what one does to keep their family together," ComicBook reported. Jake and Neytiri have a family in this movie, they are forced to leave their home, they go out and explore the different regions of Pandora, including spending quite a bit of time on the water, around the water, in the water," he explained.

JENNIFER LOPEZ FEELS HEARTBROKEN OVER POSTPONING HER MARRIAGE WITH ALEX RODRIGUEZ

Jennifer Lopez and Alex Rodriguez had been planning a summer wedding in Italy. Reportedly, the couple had started making arrangements for their big day but like many other couples who were looking forward to getting married in 2020, Jennifer Lopez and Alex Rodriguez's marriage plans also got affected by the Coronavirus. As social distancing restrictions are put in place due to the rising number of COVID-19 cases across the globe, public gatherings are forbidden and it seems it'll stay this way for quite some time.

Speaking with the Today Show, Jennifer Lopez revealed how she feels about postponing her marriage with Alex Rodriguez indefinitely due to the Coronavirus outbreak. "Nobody knows,



Really, there's no planning right now. You just have to kind of wait and see how this all plays out," JLo said. "It's disappointing on one level, you know, after the Super Bowl and after World of Dance, after we finished filming it, I planned to take time off, which is what we're doing kind of right now, but at the same time...we had a

TRACEE ELLIS ROSS MAKES SINGING DEBUT IN FILM THE HIGH NOTE

Tracee Ellis Ross plays a singing superstar in her new feel-good movie The High Note, but the actor said the film has nothing to do with her famous mother, Diana Ross.

"I understand the questions. I welcome the questions. It's really fine. But the answer to all of them is no," Ross said.

The movie, which will be released on home video-on-demand platforms on Friday, gives Ross her long-awaited chance to sing on screen.

"It's something I've always wanted to do. It was one of my childhood dreams. My biggest dreams that turned into one of my biggest fears, and understandable fear, because of who my mom is," she said.

Diana Ross, 76, rose to fame in the 1960s as the lead singer of Motown Records' vocal group the Supremes, one of the world's best-selling female groups in history, and later had a successful solo career.

Tracee Ellis Ross said she also was attracted to the film's message of resilience and pursuing one's dreams. The movie follows Ross as singer Grace Davis along with her personal assistant, played by Dakota Johnson, and manager, portrayed by Ice Cube, as they navigate the music industry.

Rapper and actor Ice Cube said he molded his character after an array of managers he has interacted with throughout his career.



DAVID BECKHAM TROLLS VICTORIA

David Beckham pulling his wife Victoria's leg after 20 years of marriage is the cutest thing ever. Recently, David and Victoria's son Cruz took to his Instagram handle and shared a mirror selfie with his mommy after a relaxing spa session. "Apparently my mum does smile," Cruz gave a funny caption to his post as Victoria Beckham is often seen putting up a serious expression in pictures, unlike this particular one where she flaunted her pearl whites.

After Cruz teased his mommy, David Beckham was quick to notice and he further pulled his wife Victoria's leg calling her Ross from FRIENDS. David took to the comments section and asked Cruz, "How white are mums @victoriabeckham teeth?" He then trolled her adding, "Ross from friends." FRIENDS fans would get the reference as Ross played by David Schwimmer whitens his teeth before going for a date in the eighth episode of the sixth season of FRIENDS.

Jokes and leg-pulling is all part of love. David Beckham and Victoria have been married for over 20 years now and make for one of the most quintessential couples ever. A few months ago, Victoria shared a throwback video wherein David Beckham reveals what made him fall in love with her and his response will melt your heart. "I couldn't put my finger on one thing...It was everything. You know, the whole package. I just fell in love with it," he says.



OPERATION BLUESTAR, 36 YEARS ON

JUNE 5 SEES THE 36TH ANNIVERSARY OF ONE OF THE MOST MOMENTOUS EVENTS IN MODERN INDIAN HISTORY - THE STORMING OF THE GOLDEN TEMPLE IN AMRITSAR, THE HOLIEST SHRINE OF THE SIKH RELIGION, BY THE INDIAN ARMY

On 2 June 1984, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi spoke on All India Radio and appealed to "all sections of Punjab not to shed blood, but (shed) hatred".

The call was disingenuous, since the army was already preparing for its assault on the Golden Temple, notes Ramchandra Guha in *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*.

For nearly five days, the Indian Army used heavy artillery, tanks and helicopters to remove Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, who was demanding the establishment of Khalistan – a Sikh homeland – from inside the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

This was Operation Bluestar.

The 1984 Operation Bluestar was the biggest internal security mission ever undertaken by the Indian Army. The operation was Indira Gandhi's solution to the haywire going law and order situation in Punjab.

Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, ordered the military operation to remove Sikh militants who were accumulating weapons in the Harmandir Sahib Complex (Golden Temple).

THE BIRTH OF BLUESTAR

Operation Bluestar took birth after the rise of Khalistan movement in India. The Khalistan movement was a political Sikh nationalist movement which aimed at creating an independent state for Sikhs inside the current North-Western Republic of India.

Even though the Khalistan movement started in the early 1940s and 1950s, it gained popularity between 1970s and 1980s.

THE KHALISTAN MOVEMENT

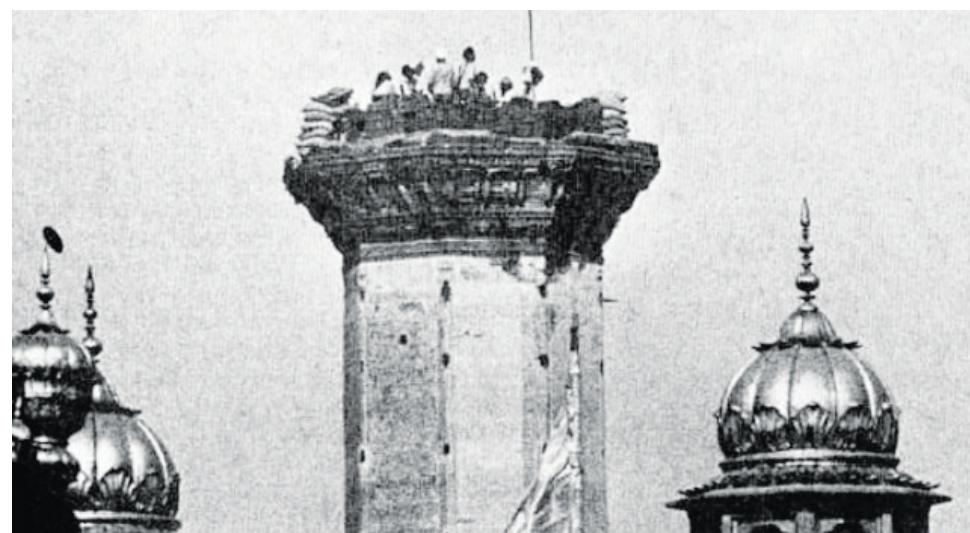
The fight for a separate Sikh state owes its origins to the Punjabi Suba Movement. The Akali Dal - a Sikh-dominated political party - sought to create a separate Sikh Suba or Province. When the States Reorganization Commission, constituted to assess the demand for separate states by linguistic groups, made its recommendations, it rejected the Akali Dal's demand.

But after a series of violent protests, the Indira Gandhi government relented in 1966. The state was trifurcated into Punjabi-majority Punjab, Hindi-majority Haryana and the Union Territory of Chandigarh. Some hilly regions of the state were merged into Himachal Pradesh.

ANANDPUR SAHIB RESOLUTION

The Punjabi movement galvanized considerable political support for the Akali Dal and after a brief split, the party came together under Parkash Singh Badal's leadership, giving the Congress a tough fight in the 1967 and 1969 assembly elections. The 1972 election, however, proved to be blip in the Akalis' rising political graph. The Congress swept to power, prompting the Shiromani Akali Dal to introspect.

The venue for this introspection was the Anandpur Sahib Gurdwara, where



the party adopted a resolution that would serve as a blueprint for the party's future agenda. The resolution demanded autonomy for the state of Punjab, identified regions that would be part of a

separate state, and sought the right to frame its own internal constitution. This was the Anandpur Sahib Resolution.

JARNAIL SINGH BHINDRANWALE

While its original authors may have abandoned its stated aims, the Anandpur Sahib resolution found an admirer in Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale - a religious scholar who'd been travelling across Punjab advocating a return to the Khalsa or a more orthodox form of Sikhism. He targeted Hindus and 'modernised' Sikhs, who cut their hair and consumed alcohol in equal measure.

"He (Bhindranwale) used vituperative language against the Hindus", writes Khushwant Singh in an 4 November 2004 article in the Outlook magazine.

His message appealed to the Jat peasants who'd lost out on the gains of the Green Revolution to large landowners. He also found takers among lower caste-artisans and laborers who were looking to regain some social and economic standing.

By some accounts, Prime Minister Indira's son Sanjay Gandhi propped up Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to counter the growing political influence of the Akali Dal. There exists no evidence to prove these theories, except the Congress' indifference of Bhindranwale's evolution into a dangerous cult figure who led the movement for a separate state of Khalistan. If the Akalis were a moderate faction espousing Sikh pride and politics, Bhindranwale represented the extremist view that among other things called for a separate state. But there were times when the lines blurred, like in August 1982 when Bhindranwale and Harcharan Singh Longowal, then President of the Akali Dal, launched the Dharam Yudh Morcha or a civil disobedience movement. Both took up residence inside the Golden temple, directing demonstrations and police clashes. Only when threatened with the prospect of being labeled a separatist party did the Akalis retreat. In fact, Harcharan Singh Longowal completely distanced his party from the Anandpur Sahib resolution, which his own party had authored only a decade ago.

BLUESTAR BLOODBATH

On June 5, 1984, 20 men in black dungarees stealthily entered the Golden Temple. They wore night-vision goggles, M-1 steel helmets, bulletproof vests and carried a mix of MP-5 submachine guns and AK-47 assault rifles. The men of sg's 56th Commando Company were then the only force in India trained for room intervention, the specialised art of fighting in confined spaces. Each commando was a sharpshooter, diver and parachutist and could do 40-km speed marches. Some of them wore gas masks and carried stubby gas guns meant to launch CX gas canisters, a more potent tear gas. Three months before this night,

Continued on P21

Continued from P 20

the commandos had stayed around the temple and rehearsed for Operation Sundown. Some of them still sported the beards they had grown for their undercover work as volunteers in the Golden Temple's langar. When the plan was called off, they returned to their base in Sarsawa. They had flown into Amritsar the previous day at the request of Lt-Gen Sundarji.

The three battalions that Lt-Gen Brar's 9th Infantry Division sent into the Golden Temple that night were trained to fight a conventional combat on the plains of Punjab and in the deserts of Rajasthan. They would overwhelm the enemy by sheer force of numbers. The commandos, who spearheaded the assault, made use of stealth, speed and surprise to achieve results. Soon after arriving, one of the sg officers had briefed Lt-Gen Ranjit Singh Dayal, Sundarji's chief of staff, on a plan to capture the Akal Takht by blowing off its rear wall. General Dayal, a paratrooper who had captured the Haji Pir pass in an unconventional operation in the 1965 war, immediately overruled it. "There must be no damage to the Akal Takht," he said. The commandos were to capture the sacred building by using gas to flush out the militants, he said.

The Army had clearly underestimated the defences. As soon as they entered the temple, a sniper shot the unit's radio operator clean through his helmet. The rest took cover in the long gallery of pillars that led to the Akal Takht. Light machine guns and carbines crackled from behind impregnable walls of the temple, their multiple gun flashes blinding the commandos' night-vision devices, forcing them to take them off. The commandos and infantry soldiers cautiously advanced, sheltering behind rows of pillars. Those who tried to advance towards the Akal Takht were cut down on the marble parikrama. An armoured personnel carrier bringing in troops was immobilised by a rocket-propelled grenade. "Shabeg knew the Army's Achilles heel," says an SG colonel. "He knew we couldn't fight in built-up areas."

Post-midnight, remnants of the sg unit and the Army's 1 Para huddled near a fountain at the base of the Akal Takht. The area between the Akal Takht and the Darshani Deori that led to the Golden Temple had turned into a killing zone, covered by Shabeg's light machine guns. Attempts by the para-commandos to storm the defences were repeatedly beaten back. They lost at least 17 men, their black dungaree-clad bodies lying prone on white marble. Commandos who tried to fire the CX gas canisters discovered that the Akal Takht's windows had been bricked up. The only openings were horizontal slots out of which machine guns poured deadly fire. The commandos neutralised two of the machine gun nests by dropping grenades into them but the Akal Takht was impregnable. Then, around 7.30 a.m. on June 5, three Vickers-Vijayanta tanks were deployed. They fired 105 mm shells and knocked down the walls of the Akal Takht. Commandos and infantrymen then moved in to mop up the defenders, tossing gas and lobbing grenades inside the building.

The temple premises resembled a medieval battlefield, one sg trooper recalls. Bloodied and blackened bodies lay scattered around the white temple parikrama. In the basement of the blackened, still-smoking ruin of the Akal



Restoration work after the operation.

Golden Temple but it also led to Operation Shop - the capturing of suspects from outskirts of Punjab.

2. Operation Woodrose was launched throughout Punjab. The operation was carried out by Indian Army, using tanks, artillery, helicopters and armored vehicles.

BARRING MEDIA

The government faced a lot of backlash in 1984 as they had barred media from entering Punjab altogether. Media personnel were put on a bus and were dropped off at Haryana border. As there was a curfew-situation in Punjab, no mode of transport was available for them to travel. Whoever reached was not allowed to enter Punjab as well.

THE AFTERMATH

The military assault led to tensions across members of Sikh community worldwide.

THE REVENGE

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards on October 31, 1984, for giving permission for the Operation Bluestar.

Fester Wound

Operation Bluestar still touches a raw nerve in India and abroad. On September 30, 2012, four Sikh youths attempted to murder retired Lt-Gen Kuldip Singh Brar on London's Oxford Street.

Brar, who led Bluestar, and a frequent visitor to London, survived. Two of his attackers were handed down a 14-year sentence in December last year. The new revelations about a possible British role in the build-up to Bluestar have already inflamed passions.

"This obviously raises huge questions over the role of the British government at the time," Labour MP Tom Watson told BBC on January 13. Watson's constituency, West Bromwich East, has many Sikh constituents.

New Delhi has so far not responded to the revelations. Brar calls reports of SAS involvement in Bluestar "utter nonsense".

CONCLUSION

However, 36 years after the infamous Operation Bluestar, Sikhs the world over have not forgiven government of India for the attack on their holiest shrine, and nurse a grievance which is likely to remain for ever a part of their psyche.



Devotees during the kar sewa at the Golden Temple post Operation Bluestar.

Takht, the commandos found the body of Shabeg. The Army recovered 51 light machine guns, 31 of which had been concentrated around the Akal Takht. "Normally, an army unit (of around 800 soldiers) would deploy this quantum of firepower to cover an area of about eight km," Lt-Gen Brar recounted in his book Operation Blue Star: The True Story. Shabeg, he believed, wanted to hold out until daylight in the hope that there would be a popular uprising among the people when they get to know of the army action. The former war hero had extracted a bloody price on an army he felt had wronged him.

DEATH TOLL

Official reports put the number of deaths among the Indian army at 83 and the number of civilian deaths at 492, though independent estimates ran much

higher.

OPERATION SUNDOWN

Operation Sundown was the aborted mission which was planned by the RAW agency to abduct Bhindranwale.

OPERATION BLACK THUNDER

Operation Black Thunder was the second phase of Operation Blue Star. The first phase was carried out on April 30, 1986, while the second Operation Black Thunder began on May 9, 1988. It was carried out by Black Cat commandos of National Security Guards (NSG) to remove Sikh militants from the Golden Temple.

OPERATION BLUESTAR WAS DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS:

1. Operation Metal: It was limited to

Germany summons Russian ambassador over alleged cyber attack

BERLIN (TIP): Germany says it is seeking European Union sanctions against a Russian man over his alleged role in the hacking of the German parliament at a time when evidence showed he was working for Russian intelligence.

The Germany Foreign Ministry said it called in Russian Ambassador Sergei Nekhayev on Thursday to inform him in person of the move.

The ministry says Germany will be pursuing EU sanctions against Dmitriy Baden, and possibly others, under a new regime established to fight cyberattacks.

It says Baden is accused of involvement in the 2015 hacking attack "acting jointly with other persons not yet identified" and allegedly had "undertaken an intelligence operation against Germany for the intelligence service of a foreign power."

The ministry says there is "reliable evidence" he was a member of Russia's GRU military intelligence agency at the time of the attack.

Russia's Foreign Ministry had no immediate comment but has previously denied Russia's involvement. AP

South Korea sees biggest daily jump

SEOUL (TIP): South Korea reported its highest number of new Covid infections in weeks on Wednesday and India saw another record single-day jump of more than 6,000 cases, as the pandemic expanded its grip across much of the globe. Still, optimism over reopening economies from business shutdowns to fight the virus spurred a rally on Wall Street, even as the official US death toll approached 100,000.

Outbreaks are still climbing in much of the Americas, while many countries in Asia and much of Europe are making steady progress in containing the deadliest pandemic in a century.

Cyprus announced Wednesday that it was preparing to welcome tourists back on June 9 and would cover all costs — lodging, food, drink and medication — for anyone testing positive for the coronavirus, and their family members, while on vacation in the east Mediterranean island nation.

The pledge came in a five-page letter that was sent out to governments, airlines and tour operators outlining strict health and hygiene protocols, including a requirement for COVID-19 testing three days before departure, as the tourism-reliant country seeks to woo vacationers. Cyprus has confirmed about 940 cases of the virus and fewer than 20 deaths. In New Zealand, which is still banning foreign arrivals, the Ministry of Health said there were no COVID-19 patients under treatment in the country's hospitals. The nation took aggressive and early action to stop transmissions and has reported only 21 deaths. Reuters

EU PROPOSES 750 BN-EURO RECOVERY FUND

BRUSSELS (TIP): The EU's executive is proposing a 750 billion-euro (\$825 billion) recovery fund to help the bloc's economy through the deep recession induced by the Covid pandemic, commissioner Paolo Gentiloni said on Wednesday.

Gentiloni, who is in charge of economic affairs at the commission, wrote in a tweet that the move is "a European turning point to face an unprecedented crisis." However, the 27-nation EU remains deeply divided over what conditions should be attached to the funds, and Wednesday's proposal from the EU's executive arm is likely to set off weeks of wrangling.

The move comes with the world's biggest trading bloc set to enter its deepest-ever recession as the impact from the Covid ravages economies. Virtually every country has broken the EU's deficit limit as they've spent to keep health care systems, businesses and jobs alive. Earlier this month, the leaders of Germany and France — historically, the two main drivers of EU integration — agreed on a one-time 500 billion-euro (\$543 billion) fund, a proposal that would add further cash to an arsenal of financial measures the bloc is deploying to cope with the economic fallout. That plan would involve the EU borrowing



money in financial markets to help sectors and countries that are particularly affected by the pandemic. The European Commission's blueprint is likely to resemble the Franco-German plan in many ways while attaching the fund to the EU's next long-term budget. The question will be how much money will take the form of grants and how much would be loans.

Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden — a group of countries dubbed the "Frugal Four" for their budgetary rectitude — are reluctant to see money given away without any strings attached, and their opposition to grants could hold up the project.

"Will it be grants or loans? And if it will be grants, who are going to pay the grants? Loans, I think is a more interesting way forward to discuss, but we also have to discuss under what conditions shall we give these loans," Swedish Finance Minister Magdalena Andersson said on Tuesday.

Whatever its content, the commission's plan is likely to spark heated debate and the EU does not have time for the wrangling to drag on. The new budget period begins on Jan 1, and countries across the bloc are desperate for funds now. All 27 member countries must agree for the recovery fund to take effect. — AP

Hard-line former Tehran mayor named Speaker of Iran Parliament

DUBAI (TIP): Iran's Parliament elected a former mayor of Tehran tied to the Revolutionary Guard as its next Speaker on Thursday, solidifying hard-line control of the body as tensions between the US and the Islamic Republic remain high over its collapsed nuclear deal.

Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf's assumption of power comes after a string of failed presidential bids and 12 years as the leader of Iran's capital city, in which he built onto Tehran's subway and supported the construction of modern high-rises.

Many, however, remember Qalibaf for his support as a Revolutionary Guard general for a violent crackdown on Iranian university students in 1999. He also reportedly ordered live gunfire be used against Iranian students in 2003 while serving as the country's police chief. "It is time to thank all representatives, all workers at the parliament complex, experts, managers, security forces and services," Qalibaf said, promising to give a speech on Sunday. Qalibaf's candidacy received 230 votes from the 264 lawmakers present in the parliament in the first round of voting, state television reported. Parliament has 290 seats. Qalibaf, 58, replaces Ali Larijani, who served as the parliament's speaker from 2008 until this

May. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei appointed Larijani as an adviser and a member of the country's Expediency Council on Thursday, state TV reported. As Speaker, Qalibaf leads a body that can debate Iran's annual budget and push for the impeachment of government ministers. However, laws passed by the parliament must be approved by a 12-member Guardian Council and Khamenei holds final say on all matters of state.

The position also puts Qalibaf onto Iran's Supreme National Security Council, the country's highest level body that handles defense and nuclear issues. That takes on new importance as the US withdrew waivers from Iran's nuclear programme late Wednesday and as tensions between the two nations remain high. A trained pilot, Qalibaf served in the paramilitary Guard during the country's bloody 1980s war with Iraq. After the conflict, he served as the head of the Guard's construction arm, Khatam al-Anbia, for several years leading efforts to rebuild.

Qalibaf then served as the head of the Guard's air force, when in 1999 he co-signed a letter to reformist President Mohammad Khatami amid student protests in Tehran over the government closing a reformist newspaper and a subsequent security force crackdown.

The letter warned Khatami the Guard would take action unilaterally unless he agreed to putting down the demonstrations. Violence around the protests saw several killed, hundreds wounded and thousands arrested.

Qalibaf then served as the head of Iran's police, modernising the force and implementing the country's 110 emergency phone number.

However, a leaked recording of a later meeting between Qalibaf and members of the Guard's volunteer Basij force, included him claiming that he ordered gunfire be used against demonstrators in 2003, as well as praising the violence used in Iran's 2009 Green Movement protests.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani hinted at the the 2003 incident during a debate in the 2017 presidential election.

"There was an argument that you were saying that the students should come then we can pincer attack to them and finish the job," Rouhani said at the time.

As mayor, Qalibaf faced corruption allegations, including over some USD 3.5 million being donated to a foundation run by his wife. However, he also used his prominence to travel to the World Economic Forum and even praised New York City in an interview with the Financial Times, undoubtedly raising eyebrows among hard-liners. AP

China's Parliament approves controversial Hong Kong security Bill as tensions with US rise

HONG KONG/BEIJING (TIP): China's parliament approved a decision on Thursday to go forward with national security legislation for Hong Kong that democracy activists in the city and Western countries fear could endanger its special autonomy and freedoms.

China says the legislation will be aimed at tackling secession, subversion, terrorism and foreign interference in the city but the plan, unveiled in Beijing last week, triggered the first big protests in Hong Kong for months.

Riot police were out in force in Hong Kong as its legislators debated another piece of legislation, a bill that would criminalise disrespect of China's national anthem, while the United States piled on pressure aimed at preserving the city's autonomy.

Dozens of protesters gathered in a shopping mall to chant slogans but there was no repeat of disturbances the previous day when police made 360 arrests as thousands took to the streets in anger over the anthem bill and the national security legislation proposed by China.

Last year, the city was rocked for months by often violent pro-democracy demonstrations over an unsuccessful bid to introduce an extradition law to China.

The Chinese government's security law for the city is fuelling fears in Hong Kong and beyond that Beijing is imposing its authority and eroding the high degree of autonomy the former British colony has enjoyed under a "one country, two systems" formula since it returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

Members of China's Parliament, the National People's Congress, in the Great Hall of the People to the west of Beijing's



Tiananmen Square burst into prolonged applause when the vote tally showed 2,878 to one in favour of the decision to move forward with legislation, with six abstentions.

Details of the law are expected to be drawn up in coming weeks. It is expected to be enacted before September.

Chinese authorities and the Beijing-backed government in Hong Kong say there is no threat to the city's autonomy and the new law would be tightly focused.

Nevertheless, the United States, Britain and the European Union have expressed concern about it, and its implications for China's freest city and one of the world's financial hubs.

'Show time'

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Wednesday Hong Kong no longer qualified for special treatment under U.S.

law, potentially dealing a crushing blow to its status as a major financial hub.

The proposed security law was "only the latest in a series of actions" undermining Hong Kong freedoms, he told Congress.

"No reasonable person can assert today that Hong Kong maintains a high degree of autonomy from China, given facts on the ground," he said.

The security law could see Chinese intelligence agencies set up bases in the city.

Relations between the two superpowers have been tense over China's claims in the South China Sea and trade. The coronavirus pandemic has also become an issue of acrimony.

"Already, international business is facing the pressure of increased tension between the U.S. and China, but the enactment of China's security law for

Hong Kong could take the tension to a whole new level," said Tara Joseph, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

"This is show time for Hong Kong," Joseph said in a commentary in the South China Morning Post.

US President Donald Trump has promised action over Hong Kong, with an announcement at the end of the week. More than 1,300 US companies have offices in the city, providing about 100,000 jobs.

China said it would take necessary countermeasures to any foreign interference into what it insists are its internal affairs.

Hong Kong stocks led losses in Asia, dropping more than 2%.

Rich Chinese are expected to park fewer funds in Hong Kong on worries that the security law could allow mainland authorities to seize their wealth, bankers and other industry sources said.

Trump's possible response could include visa and economic sanctions, David Stilwell, the State Department's assistant secretary for East Asia, told reporters.

"Sanction is painful but necessary," Agnes Chow from Hong Kong's pro-democracy group Demosisto told reporters.

Chinese-claimed Taiwan on Thursday promised to settle any Hong Kong people who flee for political reasons, offering help from employment to counselling.

Earlier on Thursday, angry exchanges in the city's assembly, the Legislative Council, during debate on the anthem bill saw some lawmakers removed in chaotic scenes and the session adjourned. Reuters

Man arrested over deadly 2019 arson at Japan's Kyoto Animation

TOKYO (TIP): A Japanese man suspected of killing 36 people and injuring dozens in an arson attack at an animation studio last July was arrested on Wednesday after spending 10 months in hospital for treatment.

Police had issued an arrest warrant for Shinji Aoba at the time of the fire but had been unable to question him after he suffered serious burns in the blaze at Kyoto Animation.

Aoba, 42, was arrested at a Kyoto hospital and transferred to police headquarters for further questioning, police said in a statement. Aoba's injuries had left him unable to walk on his own, a police official said. The fire—one of Japan's deadliest in decades—killed mostly young artists at the studio, shocking animation fans globally and prompting tributes from leaders such as Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Apple's chief executive, Tim Cook.

Police said in a statement that Aoba allegedly went to the studio, poured gasoline inside the building and set it ablaze, killing 22 women and 14 men inside. He was also suspected of the attempted murder of another 34 people. Media reports at the time said Aoba told police he had taken the action because the studio had plagiarized his novel. In a statement, Kyoto Animation said it expected the suspect to be prosecuted "to the maximum extent" under the law. (Reuters)

Australian police won't charge reporter after leak probe

CANBERRA (TIP): Australian police announced on Wednesday that they had decided against charging a journalist over a newspaper article she wrote more than two years ago following a high-profile investigation that triggered a national storm over press freedom.

Australian Federal Police Deputy Commissioner Ian McCartney said he had decided that no one would be charged following an investigation that spanned 25 months because of a "lack of evidence."

Annika Smethurst's article, citing "top secret letters" between the heads of the Defense and Home Affairs departments, reported plans to create new espionage powers that would allow an intelligence agency to spy on Australian citizens for the first time. It was published in News Corp. Australia's Sunday papers on April 29, 2018.

Australian Federal Police responded with raids on Smethurst's Canberra home on June 4 last year with warrants to search her computer, phone and home. The next day, police raided Australian Broadcasting Corp.'s Sydney headquarters over unrelated leaked government documents. ABC journalists Dan Oakes and Sam Clark — who reported in 2017 that

Australian troops had killed unarmed men and children in Afghanistan in a potential war crime — are still under "active investigation," McCartney said.

The raids brought rival Australian media organisations together to demand more press freedom and guarantees that reporters would not risk jail over public interest journalism.

Media organisations argue that press freedoms have been eroded by more than 70 counterterrorism and security laws passed by Parliament since the 9/11 attacks in the US. News Corp. Australasia executive chairman Michael Miller said the police decision to drop the case showed why the law reforms championed by Australia's Right to Know media coalition — particularly contestable warrants and shifting the burden of proof from the defendant — were sensible and essential. "Almost a year has passed since the AFP illegally raided Annika Smethurst's home," Miller said in a statement. "In that time, Annika has shown great courage, forced to live with the threat of jail for simply doing her job of informing the Australian public on a matter of serious public interest," he added. AP

WAYS TO GROW EYEBROWS THICKER

Perfectly shaped eyebrows highlight one's face and personality. We all are aware of how bold eyebrows have become a rage, and yet not too long back, pencil-thin eyebrows dominated the style industry. Now thicker eyebrows are back in trend. In fact, you can see women sporting them on the silver screens and fashion runways. Eyebrows are one of the most noticeable parts of one's face, the thicker they are, more beautiful you look. But not all of us can lay a natural claim to thick eyebrows. Some of us have sparse and scanty eyebrows, and we are always scouting for remedies to make them thicker. Though there isn't a magic tip to bring back your eyebrow hair overnight, but there are certain things that can enhance the process. And for this, nothing can work better than natural remedies.

Castor oil

This is an old and one of the most effective remedies for getting thicker eyebrows. Since it is enriched with proteins, fatty acids, antioxidants and vitamins, it helps in nourishing your hair follicles. Make sure that you apply castor oil every day on your eyebrow roots, it promotes hair growth and also ensures that each hair strand is thick and strong.

Method

Massage a few drops of castor oil into your eyebrows with your fingertips. Keep it on for 30 minutes, wipe with a makeup remover, and wash your face with warm water.

Coconut oil

Coconut oil works as a conditioner as well as a moisturizer and is great for improving blood circulation. The fatty acids found in coconut oil work with the natural proteins found in hair to protect it from breaking. The lauric acid present in it acts as an



antimicrobial agent, preventing infection of hair follicles. The various proteins as well as nutrients like vitamin E and iron in coconut oil promote healthy and thick eyebrows. You can apply coconut oil on your eyebrows every day, but using it even a few times a week can have noticeable results.

Method

Dip a cotton swab in the oil and apply on your eyebrows. Keep it on overnight. Rinse with a face wash in the morning.

Olive Oil

Olive oil contains vitamins A and E, which help in the growth of hair. Vitamin E nourishes each hair strand while vitamin A stimulates the production of sebum, our body's natural oil, which helps with hair growth. This can be done at least once a day in order to see results in a matter of weeks.

Method

Pour a drop of olive oil on your

fingertip and massage it on your eyebrows. Keep it on for a couple of hours and wash it off with face wash and water.

Onion Juice

Onion juice contains lots of sulfur, selenium, minerals, B vitamins and C vitamins which are very good for hair growth. This aids faster and denser growth of eyebrow hair. Sulfur improves the production of collagen tissues required for proper eyebrow growth. Also, it strengthens the hair follicles. As onion has a pungent smell, it is best to use lemon juice to remove all traces of the smell. Apply onion juice to your eyebrows every alternate day.

Method

Chop the onion, put the pieces in a blender and make a paste. Strain this to get the juice. Using a Q-tip, apply the juice on your eyebrows. Keep it on for an hour. Wipe off with a cotton ball soaked in diluted lemon juice.

MORE AND MORE MILLENNIALS ARE SAYING NO TO MARRIAGE

Look around you and you can count on your fingers how many married folks you know. Of course your parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts are included in this list. But besides those belonging to the previous generation, you might find it even more difficult to count that number when it comes to your social circle. Of course, there will be a handful of wedded colleagues and buddies like the sweethearts who got hitched out of college or the friend who agreed to a match-making setup. But overall, millennials and marriages aren't exactly a match made in heaven.

In general, the number of people getting married has fallen steeply. The Coronavirus pandemic could only cause these numbers to drop further. Figures have shown the rate of people getting married in 2018 fell at 6.5%. That's an all-time low since the statistics were started in the 1800s.

So why is it happening?

It has come down to their mindset. Those in their 20s and 30s are increasingly ditching the formal concept of marriage and opting for live-in relationships instead.

Middle income earners with a high school education have impacted this decline in marital numbers.



Those lacking commitment to religion has contributed to live-in relationships without marriage.

Economic security also has to do with it as, in this financial climate, many aren't sure about certain about starting their lives together and what their future will look like.

The COVID-19 pandemic could only further discourage marriage with the lack of economic and financial security as well as restrictions on travel and socialising in the near future.



CONNOISSEUR'S CHOICE

By Tript Arora



Mango Phirni



Phirni is a traditional Indian Dessert made with rice and milk. The first memory of this dish is associated with my grandmother who used to prepare it for all her grandchildren and served it in individual clay platters topped with lots of sliced almonds and pistachios. This simple yet delicious dish has undergone many versions. Today's recipe is about its combination of phirni with Mango 'the king of fruits' which despite being great in taste is packed with nutrients as well. Mango is a great source of Vitamin A &C with lots of fiber. I am sharing with you the recipe of Mango Phirni which requires few ingredients available at our home. This recipe is cooked faster and hence a great option when you need dessert quickly.

We need

- 1 Liter full cream Milk
- 50 gm Rice soaked in water
- 40 gm Sugar or according to taste Green Cardamoms
- 1 cup Mango puree fresh or canned
- 20 Almonds sliced.

Here we go

- Soak 50 gm of rice in water for half an hour. Drain water. Grind rice coarsely in a mixer.
- Boil milk in a heavy bottomed pan. Add whole green cardamom so that we can take it out later. Let it boil for 5 min on low flame stirring in between.
- Add ground rice to milk and let it simmer on low flame till the rice are done and milk is thickened. Keep on stirring in between to avoid lumps. Meanwhile keep on scratching the milk which has stuck to the sides of the pan and mix it in the phirni. This enhances the taste.
- Milk needs constant attention as it sticks to the bottom and get burned.
- Add half of the sliced almonds and keep rest for garnishing.
- When the rice is cooked completely and blended well with milk switch off the flame. If phirni looks very thick you can add hot milk to adjust its consistency.
- Let it cool completely. Add Mango puree to it. It should be on the room temperature when you add Mango puree.
- Pour it in a bowl and garnish it with sliced almonds. Refrigerate it for 2 hours.
- Enjoy the cool Mango Phirni and beat the summer heat.

(The author is an entrepreneur by profession. Cooking for her family is the fuel for her soul. Her mantra is cooking simple, yet delicious recipes, which fit comfortably in today's hectic life. Her life revolves around her husband, a daughter and a fur baby. She loves spending time with them and enjoys watching comedy movies in free time. She can be reached at triptasfoodtunnel@gmail.com)

For more recipes by Tript Arora, visit www.triptasfoodtunnel.com

GLUTEN-FREE GRAINS YOU CAN ADD TO YOUR DIET

Many are going gluten-free these days due to health issues while many have celiac disease and that's why to refrain from having gluten-based products. For the unversed, celiac disease is an autoimmune disease. It triggers an immune response to gluten. For those with this disease or gluten intolerance, eating gluten based foods can lead to issues such as bloating, diarrhea, and stomach pain among others.

Gluten is a type of protein that is found in wheat, rye and barley. Because of this protein, these food items get elasticity, allows the bread to rise, and have that chewy texture. Many of us commonly consumed grains contain gluten. However, there are several grains that are not only gluten-free but also very nutritious. Read on to know which grains are naturally gluten-free.

Jowar aka Sorghum

Sorghum aka Jowar is quite popular and easily available in India, Africa and Asia. So, if you are avoiding wheat, then you can mill the jowar grains and use the flour to make rotis. You can prepare several baked goods as well. The antioxidants present in sorghum helps to reduce oxidative stress and lower your risk of chronic disease. Also, being rich in fibre it helps to maintain blood sugar levels.

Millets- Bajra, Ragi

Millets which are commonly grown in Africa and Asia have three



varieties- Pearl Millet is called Bajra, Finger Millet is known as Ragi and Proso Millet is called as Barri. You can cook it in the main grain form or use the flour for varied dishes. A few days ago, we had shared Ragi based recipes.

Buckwheat aka Kuttu

Buckwheat is not related to 'wheat and it is a pseudocereal. You can prepare from roti to pancakes, cakes and cookies. Eating buckwheat may also help reduce health issues such as cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease. Soba noodles made from buckwheat are quite popular.

Corn aka Butta

Corn or Maize is one of the popular grains. It is known as Butta

in India is easily available as fresh, dried and can be milled to make flour. It is high in fibre, carotenoids called lutein and zeaxanthin, vitamin B6, thiamine, and manganese among others. One can eat it in the form of boiled, grilled, or roasted.

Quinoa

Quinoa is another pseudo-cereal and they are closely related to the edible plants such as beetroot, spinach and amaranth. Quinoa is mostly found in Peru, Bolivia and Chile. However, it is very popular among health enthusiasts across the world. It is one of the best sources of protein and several micronutrients. You can prepare pancakes, tortillas, or quick bread from flour.



RICE VS ROTI: WHAT IS IDEAL FOR WEIGHT LOSS?

Rice and chappati or roti are an important part of a meal in India, be it lunch, dinner or at times also ke paratha for breakfast. But with more awareness, besides diet fads taking over our consciousness, we now view them as carbs, which are often deemed unhealthy. Skipping carbs leads to faster weight loss and so rice and roti are seen as something that will interfere with your path to a fitter body.

What is healthier?

Weight loss happens when there is an overall reduction in calorie intake, explains Anushka Baindur, senior dietician at Fortis Hospital. Rice and chapati, when taken in the same quantities, provide more or less the same number of calories. "So rather than opting for one over the other, more thought should be given to the quantity eaten, be it rice or roti," she explains. An excess of either can lead to extra calorie intake, which can lead to weight gain.

Have a balanced meal

The only difference between the two is the fibre content. Foods with high fibre content makes you feel full faster so you would eat less. Among rice and wheat, whole wheat has the highest fibre content, followed by brown rice and then white rice. But even if the rice has a lower fibre content, it can be balanced by combining it with lots of vegetables and whole pulses, so that one also ends up eating a lesser quantity of rice. Hence, the message here is to eat either rice or roti within limits and balance the meal with a protein like dals, pulses or lean meat and lots of vegetables.



ADD RAW MANGO TO YOUR SUMMER DIET

The summer heat is getting to us and no matter how well we keep ourselves hydrated, even a short stroll can take a toll. Although we are locked inside our homes at the moment, we still do need to step out for essentials. Even indoors, the heatwave can make one feel fatigued.

But there is one desi drink that is guaranteed to refresh. Summers are also the season of mangoes and the raw mango drink, prevalent in the northern belt of India, can make sure you stay hydrated. Raw mangoes can be consumed in various forms: Aam Panna, Raw Mango Pachadi, Raw Mango Rice, Dal with Raw Mango and Raw Mango Salad.

Benefits of raw mango

Consuming raw mangoes is the best way to beat the summer heat. "Rich in vitamin A and vitamin E, they can improve the hormonal system, while preventing dehydration as they can replenish the reserves of sodium chloride. In addition to quenching thirst, they also help cure stomach disorders like constipation, bloating, indigestion, and diarrhoea," informs Rinki Kumari, chief dietitian, Fortis Hospital, Cunningham Road, Bangalore. Consuming raw mangoes can help detoxify the liver, boost cardiovascular health and flush out toxins. Healthy cholesterol levels lower the risk of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, stroke and heart attacks.

Aam panna is usually made using raw mangoes and some mint leaves for that added flavour. But it also contributes to making the drink healthy.



Benefits of mint leaves

Mint or mentha is one of the oldest herbs widely used in global cuisines and is highly prized for its innumerable therapeutic properties. Rich in Vitamins A, C, and B-complex, mint leaves are a good source to improve the skin, bolster immunity, and improve eye health and night vision. Pudina leaves are specifically rich in iron, potassium and manganese, which promote brain function and improve the haemoglobin profile.

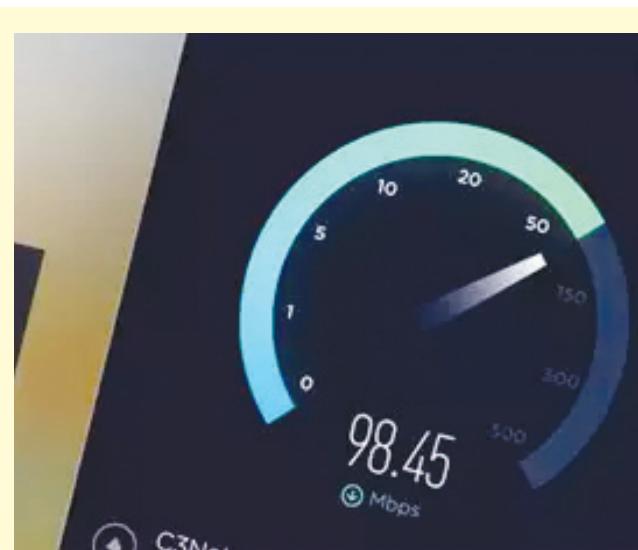
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RESEARCHERS CLAIM NEW INTERNET SPEED RECORD OF 44.2 TBPS

Researchers based out of Australia's Monash, Swinburne, and RMIT universities say they've set a new internet speed record of 44.2 Tbps, according to a paper published in the open-access journal Nature Communications. That's theoretically enough speed to download the contents of more than 50 100GB Ultra HD Blu-ray discs in a single second.

What's interesting about the research is that it was achieved over 75km of standard optical fiber using a single integrated chip source, meaning it has the potential to one day benefit existing fiber infrastructure.

The test fiber connection ran between RMIT's Melbourne City campus and Monash University's Clayton campus, and the researchers say it mirrors infrastructure used by Australia's National Broadband Network (NBN). The findings represent a "world-record for bandwidth," according to Swinburne University Professor David Moss, one of the team members responsible.

"What our research demonstrates is the ability for fibers that we already have in the ground, thanks to the NBN project, to be the backbone of communications networks now and in the future. We've developed something that is scalable to meet future needs," said co-lead author of the study and Monash University lecturer Bill Corcoran.

Mud volcanoes on Mars hint at ancient water reservoirs

Mars's northern lowlands are dotted with tens of thousands of what appear to be run-of-the-mill volcanoes, given the lava-like ripples and fingers that appear around them. But geologists debate whether these bumpy landforms are really frozen magma. In a select few places on Earth, mud erupts rather than molten rock. Could Martian orbiters be sending back pictures of mud volcanoes?

Absolutely not, assumed Petr Bro, a geophysicist at the Czech Academy of Sciences. The circumstances required—sediments buried in precisely the right way—were just too unlikely. Plus, would mud even slosh after hitting the frigid surface? After recreating the scenario in a lab, Bro and his team now have their answer: Muddy mixtures on Mars would flow nearly identically to the way lava flows on Earth, although for completely different reasons, they announced in *Nature Geoscience* this week. The finding means that the volcanic forms on Mars could be made of either rock or hardened mud, a frustration to geologists many millions of miles away.

"The work will be much more complicated now," Bro says. "We cannot rely on [shape] only."

But if researchers can learn to tell the two apart, they'll be rewarded with a host of tantalizing sites for future exploration, as mud volcanoes may also be promising places to look for life.

Bro spent a decade skeptically scrutinizing Martian photographs and trying to argue that certain features proved that the volcanic outcroppings were rocky.

PHYSICISTS JUST BUILT THE FIRST WORKING PROTOTYPE OF A 'QUANTUM RADAR'

Quantum entanglement—that strange but potentially hugely useful quantum phenomenon where two particles are inextricably linked across space and time—could play a major role in future radar technology.

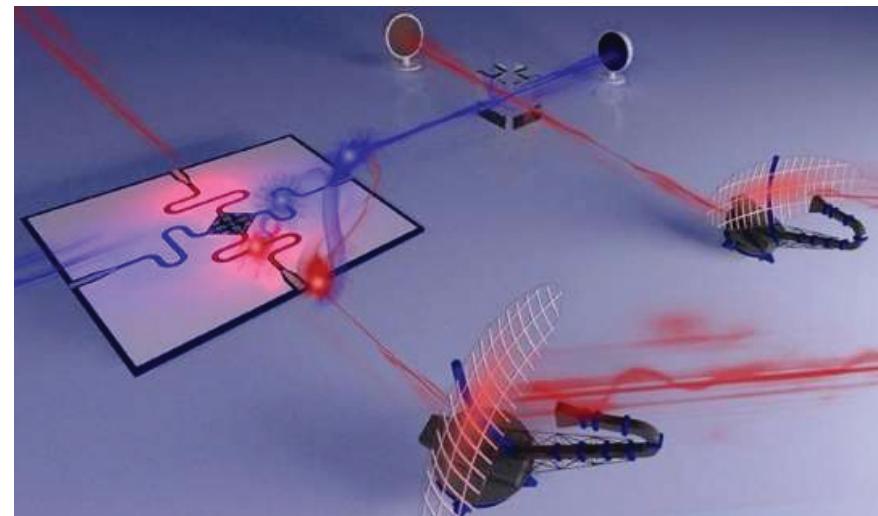
In 2008, an engineer from MIT devised a way to use the features of entanglement to illuminate objects while using barely any photons. In certain scenarios, such technology promises to outperform conventional radar, according to its makers, particularly in noisy thermal environments.

Now, researchers have taken the idea much further, demonstrating its potential with a working prototype.

The technology might eventually find a variety of applications in security and biomedical fields: building better MRI scanners, for example, or giving doctors an alternative way of looking for particular types of cancer.

"What we have demonstrated is a proof of concept for microwave quantum radar," says quantum physicist Shabir Barzanjeh, who conducted the work at the Institute of Science and Technology Austria.

"Using entanglement generated at a few thousandths of a degree above absolute zero, we have been able to detect low reflectivity objects at room temperature."



The device works along the same principles as a normal radar, except instead of sending out radio waves to scan an area, it uses pairs of entangled photons.

Entangled particles are distinguished by having properties that correlate with one another more than you'd expect by chance. In the case of the radar, one photon from each entangled pair, described as a signal photon, is sent towards an object. The remaining photon, described as an idler, is kept in isolation, waiting for a report back.

If the signal photon reflects from an object and is caught, it can be combined with the idler to create a signature pattern of interference,

setting the signal apart from other random noise.

As the signal photons reflect from an object, this actually breaks the quantum entanglement in the truest sense. This latest research verifies that even when entanglement is broken, enough information can survive to identify it as a reflected signal.

It doesn't use much power, and the radar itself is difficult to detect, which has benefits for security applications. The biggest advantage this has over conventional radar, however, is that it's less troubled by background radiation noise, which affects the sensitivity and the accuracy of standard radar hardware.

HOW TO ENABLE DARK MODE IN GOOGLE SEARCH?

Your online searches are about to get dark! Earlier this month, reports hinted that Chrome was working on bringing dark mode to Google Search result pages.

Google Chrome's Android app got the dark mode feature almost a year back. The feature turns almost all of the app's interface dark including various tabs. However, what the dark mode feature doesn't do is turn the search result pages dark. This stands in sharp contrast to the app's overall dark interface and is a bit straining to the eyes. Now, Chrome is planning to change this by turning the result pages dark.

Dark mode for Search in Chrome's Android-based app is still in the development phase. However, as per a report by 9To5 Google there are two workarounds using which users can enable this feature on their Android smartphones.

If you want to try out this feature, here's what you need to do:

Method 1

The first method is simple to implement. All you have to type "&cs=1" at the end of a Search URL and you are good to go. For example: <https://www.google.com/search?q=Hindustan%20Times&cs=1>.



Method 2

This method is slightly trickier and it involves a bunch of steps. Here's what you need to do:

Step 1: Download either Chrome Canary or Chrome Dev from the Play Store.

Step 2: Go to chrome://flags page.

Step 3: Next search for "Show darkened search pages on Android" and enable it.

Step 4: Relaunch the browser and you are good to go!

Paytm enables UPI recharge for feature phone users

Paytm on Tuesday said it has partnered Vodafone Idea and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to allow feature phone users to recharge their numbers using UPI.

"Paytm is now empowering feature phone users to recharge for their Vodafone Idea numbers with just a valid UPI ID. Along with the telecom major and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to extend this service throughout the country," Paytm said in a statement.

The move would help crore of citizens who mostly use feature mobile phones to now top up their numbers without having the need to visit physical stores, it added.

Google considering taking stake in Vodafone Idea: Report

NEW DELHI (TIP): Global internet giant Google is looking to buy up to 5 per cent stake in debt-laden Vodafone Idea, the Financial Times reported Thursday. Google's parent company Alphabet Inc is also looking to buy some stake in Vodafone Idea's rival Reliance Jio Infocomm, the newspaper reported, without providing details.

The report comes almost a month after social media giant Facebook picked up 9.9 per cent stake for Rs 43,574 crore (\$5.7 billion) in Reliance Industries Limited's (RIL) Jio Platforms. Jio Platforms, a wholly-owned subsidiary of RIL, has since seen investments from global private equity players such as General Atlantic, Silver Lake Partners, Silver Lake Partners and KKR.

"If you look at the timing, the Google deal with Vodafone Idea is a win-win for both. Nobody wants Vodafone Idea to go belly-up, and it is certainly not completely out of the woods yet. So it gets the desired money to survive. On the other hand, Google gets a cheap entry into the market and can bring its expertise in data to benefit from a growing wireless user base," said a telecom analyst, who did not wish to be identified.

A deal with Google could be a lifeline for Vodafone Idea, which owes as much as Rs 54,000 crore in adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues to the government.

Following a Supreme Court judgment on October 24 last year, Vodafone Group's chief executive officer Nick Read had said that the company, which holds 49 per cent stake in Vodafone Idea, would not commit any more equity in India as the "country effectively contributed zero value to the company's share price".

Vodafone Idea chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla had said that it might have to shut shop if there was no AGR relief from the government, as it did not make sense to "put good money after bad".

A potential deal between Google and Vodafone Idea will heat up competition in one of the world's largest and fastest growing data consumption markets, experts said. As of January 31, 2020, India had a total of 115.6 crore wireless telephone subscribers, with a net addition of up to 50 lakh users per month, according to data from Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). The three private players, Vodafone Idea, Bharti Airtel, and Reliance Jio, together held nearly 90 per cent share of the domestic telecom market. Though



it has been losing subscribers for over six quarters now, Vodafone Idea had a 28.4 per cent share of the domestic market as of January 31, 2020.

The number of active internet users in the country stands at 500 million, and is expected to grow by another 100 million users within the next three years, according to experts.

With a data market as big as India, experts said that it was only a matter of time before all the global internet giants tried to enter the domestic arena in one way or the other.

"We do not know the details yet, but this could be a world of convergence. Vodafone and Idea got together in the first place due to Jio. Now if Jio can tie up with Facebook, others will also have to find similar deals," said a Supreme Court lawyer for one of the telecom majors.

To push internet usage in India, Google had in 2015 tied up with the Ministry of Railways to provide free unlimited high speed Wi-Fi at 400 railways stations. But with the project yielding limited success, the company said last year that it would wind down the service.

Facebook had also tried to get a share of the Indian internet pie. In 2015, it experimented with Free Basics, which provided free access to basic Internet services as a partnership with service providers. However, it soon pulled out after differential pricing was disallowed by the telecom regulator.

India's economy seen slowing rapidly in March quarter, with worse to come

NEW DELHI (TIP): Gross domestic product data out later on Friday is expected to show India's economy grew at its slowest pace in at least two years in the March quarter as the coronavirus pandemic weakened already declining consumer demand and private investment.

The median forecast from a Reuters poll of economists put annual economic growth at 2.1% in the March quarter, lower than 4.7% in the December quarter. Forecasts ranged between +4.5% and -1.5%.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has maintained the lockdown ordered on March 25 to curb the spread of Covid-19 in the world's second most populous country, though many restrictions were eased for manufacturing, transport and other services from May 18.

The full impact of the lockdown on manufacturing and services will become more apparent in the June quarter, with Goldman Sachs



predicting a 45% contraction from a year ago.

Economists expect the fiscal year that began in April will see the worst economic contraction in four decades.

"Economic activity will face ongoing disruption over the next year as the country transitions to a post-COVID-19 world," the rating agency S&P said on Thursday,

cutting its 2020/21 forecast to a 5% contraction.

Weather forecasts for normal monsoon rains are in Indian farmers' favour at least, giving hope that the rural sector can help support the millions of migrant workers who returned to their villages from the cities when the lockdown began.

Number of coronavirus affected people in India has crossed 158,000 with 4,531 deaths, with an average daily jump of 6,000 cases in the last one week.

Unlike some advanced economies, India's stimulus package has largely focussed on subsidised credit to small businesses and farmers, while direct fiscal stimulus was limited to around 1% of the GDP, economists said.

The Reserve Bank of India cut policy rates by 40 basis points earlier this month, and has reduced its key repo rate by 115 basis points since February.



WIPRO NAMES THIERRY DELAPORTE AS CEO

BENGALURU (TIP): India's Wipro Ltd on Friday named Thierry Delaporte as the new chief executive officer and managing director of the IT company, replacing Abidali Neemuchwala.

Delaporte was most recently the chief operating officer of French consulting and technology firm Capgemini Group.

Wipro said in January Neemuchwala had decided to step down due to family commitments.

Neemuchwala will step down as CEO on June 1 while executive chairman Rishad Premji will oversee day-to-day operations of the company until Delaporte takes over on July 6, Wipro said.

Neemuchwala joined Wipro in April 2015 as the president and chief operating officer, after having served at larger rival Tata Consultancy Services Ltd.

Gold prices rise as Hong Kong dispute riles China-US ties

Gold rose on Thursday after hitting a two-week low in the previous session as the rift between Washington and Beijing over Hong Kong escalated, with prices also supported by central bank and government largesse to cushion the blow from the pandemic.

Spot gold was up 0.6% at \$1,718.77 per ounce, as of 0544 GMT, after dropping to \$1,693.22 on Wednesday. US gold futures rose 0.5% to \$1,717.80.

Worsening relations between the world's two biggest economies could further hobble global business activity, which is already under intense pressure due to the coronavirus crisis.

"The US and China have disagreements on many fronts. There is trade, and there is inquiry into the coronavirus, and now this dispute over Hong Kong," said Michael McCarthy, chief strategist at CMC Markets.

Oil drops as surprise US stock build douses recovery hopes

Oil prices slid for a second consecutive session on Thursday as US industry data showed a steep and surprising build-up in crude stockpiles, dampening hopes of a smooth demand recovery as the world begins to ease its way out of coronavirus lockdowns.

The decline extended losses from Wednesday on uncertainty about Russia's commitment to deep oil production cuts in the lead-up to a June 9 meeting of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies, dubbed OPEC+.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were down 4.4%, or \$1.44 at \$31.37 a barrel at 0402 GMT after slipping as much as 5% to a low of \$31.14 earlier in the session.





Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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



Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at info@bejandaruwalla.com and on phone

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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 June 1 - June 7, 2020

ARIES: Ganesha says this period in your own sign brings many unusual aspects into the light of day. The period is slowly coming to a close and it is a good time for reflection. You started off with ambition and grand plans on the work front and then saw a platter full of goodies coming to you. There have been twists and turns ranging from strange esoteric pursuits, to flights of fancy, the supernatural and even the supra natural, interest in spirits, witches and other occult phenomena.

TAURUS: You have put in a lot in terms of ideas, effort and commitment and this is the time for reaping the harvest. You like the sweet sound of good money in the bank and the social standing and perquisites that come in the form of pleasing symbols of success. They bring joy to you and your family. You look back on the period and even seek to expand on the good fortune coming to you from time well spent.

GEMINI: You are in an introspection mode. You even look at parapsychology and / or psychic insights and ability. Nursing, healing, welfare interests, medicare, healing minds and bodies, charities will take your time and energy and quite happily too. Right now, Ganesha gives you a time of calm, introspection, thought. There is a good chance that you will also be involved in trade and travel.

CANCER: You are pressured by commitments to work and family. Both will need hard work and effort. There will also be investments and outlays, both financial and with time. You will have a lot of coping to do as they are all linked. It can be a heavy burden and so guard against overdoing it. But, whatever you do now, the results that follow will be pleasant. I must also tell you now that this is a special time and is filled with favours coming your way. No more guessing and hoping for the best.

LEO: You are enriched and Ganesha's blessings are with you. Happy times are finally here, and you are certainly on top of the world. Go for whatever you need but remember the saying: "There's no such things as a free lunch". Ganesha also tells you to read the fine print. There could be hidden clauses that could be less than favourable in the long run; watch out for deceit.

VIRGO: You are enthusiastic and energise with all that is happening in your life right now. You will be a human dynamo, a powerhouse of energy, ready to attain targets you've only been hoping to achieve. You make glorious plans for the future leading to great success and joy. There is new zest in your attitude to life itself, and you work exceptionally hard. You will achieve success in all spheres of life and will ride the wave.

LIBRA: There is free time and also a strong inclination to indulge in all kinds of mental activity. It will be back to mind games for you Librans, but of a very different sort. Once again, you look for fresh avenues of self-expression and of exploring new areas of both knowledge and experience. The family and work angles are both energised but there is a certain restlessness that might prove dangerous if it is not channelized properly. Despite it all, you do make sure that you manage all your commitments to the people who matter in your life.

SCORPIO: The trends are encouraging as the period draws to its end. You have had material rewards. Now you reach out for greater love and warmth in relationships and are appreciated, valued and cherished. There is a good chance of an engagement or marriage happening in this period. It could be either yours or that of someone dear to you. You are in an adventurous mood and would like to try out new things. Nothing ventured, nothing gained!

SAGITTARIUS: The period may be approaching its end, but your energy remains undiminished. You are on the go all the time and are filled with a sense of fulfilment and self-realisation. You have introspected a lot and have arrived at this point in your life after a great deal of soul searching. Expenses continue to mount but you are not complaining, as you are confident you can cope.

CAPRICORN: The tide changes here. Once again, from all the gusto and go, you get meditative. You look at the spiritual and the meditative areas with both sincerity and much commitment. Life's meaning and, strangely enough, law and the social order, research, philosophical pursuits and even questions of justice keep you busy through the remaining period. Your ideas, ingenuity will set the stage for stupendous achievements.

AQUARIUS: Your confidence and charisma - 2 great C's - will be at an all-time high. They will be reflected in your interactions, and your attitude to friends, colleagues, and family. Having achieved your targets, you look at the lighter, more pleasant side of life. You dabble in the creative arts and make more contacts. Expression is the key word here and you also go all out to reach out to others. Your life is filled with an assortment of activities and you are enjoying them all.

PISCES: You consciously go slow but can't escape the intensity of the period. Finance and family will be well looked after, but there may also be a new love interest that takes a lot of your time and energy. Don't overstep the line and hurt loved ones in the process. Tread softly, says Ganesha. It may just be a passing fancy and overindulgence may cost you dear. Don't rock the boat where family harmony is concerned. You will be the force behind the social whirligig. Enjoy!

Birthday Horoscope June 1 - June 7, 2020

June 1: Ganesha says a friend's take on things will provide a most useful perspective, particularly on those who are acting out of character

June 2: This is as good a time as any to improve the family budget or to ask for improved compensation on the job if you deserve it.

June 3: You'll have a chance to offer compassionate support and understanding and can excel at doing that. Imagination is strong

and you'll want to channel it. An unspoken message is very helpful.

June 4: Beneficial personal influences encourage you to toot your own horn, or at least to believe in yourself, encouragement that comes in handy for dealing with a situation that presents an obstacle.

June 5: Someone you care about is doing exceptionally well, and that should give you something to feel good about. Good feelings come full circle and give you something to

cheer about.

June 6: Tread carefully when dealing with anything that involved spending money or the potential to earn some complex lunar aspects, and the situations they bring, make your gut reactions unreliable now

June 7: Attention you receive may not be all that welcome and can even cross a line. Make it a point to be very clear when communicating; otherwise, the day will be rife with misunderstandings

Nirjala Ekadashi is the most important and significant Ekadashis out of all twenty four Ekadashis in a year. Nirjala means without water and Nirjala Ekadashi fasting is observed without water and any type of food. Nirjala Ekadashi Vratam is the toughest among all Ekadashi fasting due to strict fasting rules. Devotees abstain not only from food but also from water while observing Nirjala Ekadashi Vrat.

Benefits

Devotees who are unable to observe all twenty fours Ekadashi fasting in a year should observe single Nirjala Ekadashi fasting as fasting on Nirjala Ekadashi brings all benefits of twenty four Ekadashi fasting in a year.

Nirjala Ekadashi is also known as Pandava Ekadashi or Bhimseni Ekadashi or Bhima Ekadashi due to one legend associated with Nirjala Ekadashi. Bhimsen, the second Pandava brother and voracious eater, was not able to control his desire of having food and was not able observe Ekadashi fasting. Except Bhima, all Pandava brothers and Draupadi used to observe all Ekadashi fasting. Bhima, being upset due to his weak determination and doing a dishonor to Lord Vishnu, met Maharishi Vyasa to find some solution. Sage Vyasa advised Bhima to observe single Nirjala Ekadasi fasting to compensate for not observing all Ekadashi fasting in a year. Due to this legend Nirjala Ekadashi is also known as Bhimseni Ekadashi or Pandava Ekadashi.

Nirjala Ekadashi fasting falls during Shukla Paksha of Jyeshtha month and currently falls in month of May or June. Nirjala Ekadashi falls just after Ganga Dussehra but in some years Ganga Dussehra and Nirjala Ekadashi might fall on the same day.

Parana means breaking the fast. Ekadashi Parana is done after sunrise on next day of Ekadashi fast. It is necessary to do Parana within Dwadashi Tithi unless Dwadashi is over before sunrise. Not doing Parana within Dwadashi is similar to an offence.

Parana should not be done during Hari Vasara. One should wait for Hari Vasara to get over before breaking the fast. Hari Vasara is first one fourth duration of Dwadashi Tithi. The most preferred time to break the fast is Pratahkal. One should avoid breaking the fast during Madhyahna. If due to some reasons one is not able to break the fast during Pratahkal then one should do it after Madhyahna.

At times Ekadashi fasting is suggested on two consecutive days. It is advised that Smartha with family should observe fasting on first day only. The alternate Ekadashi fasting, which is the second one, is suggested for Sanyasis, widows and for those who want Moksha. When alternate Ekadashi fasting is suggested for Smartha it coincides with Vaishnava Ekadashi fasting day.

Ekadashi fasting on both days is suggested for staunch devotees who seek for love and affection of Lord Vishnu.

Importance

The greatness of Nirjala Ekadasi was explained by Sage Vyasa.

- It is equal to going on pilgrimage.
- It provides virtue of all 24 Ekadashi.
- It washes away all sin.
- Grants happiness, prosperity, longevity and moksha (salvation).
- This Ekadashi happens before monsoon season and therefore it is also helps in cleansing the body.

NIRJALA EKADASHI

THIS YEAR, NIRJALA EKADASHI WILL BE OBSERVED ON JUNE 2, TUESDAY



How to observe vrat

Nirjala means without water. Hence, fast is observed without water and food. It is considered as the most strict and hence, most sacred of all Ekadashis. This fast is extremely difficult to follow as it falls in the hot Indian summer. The 24 hours long fast begins from sunrise on Nirjala Ekadashi to sunrise the next day. People fast and offer puja to Lord Vishnu on this day.

The fast begins with Sandhyavandanam – a prayer. This prayer is performed in the evening before Nirjala Ekadashi, i.e. on 10th lunar day. After prayer devotee takes only one meal, without rice (as rice eating is prohibited). The strict fast continuous throughout Ekadashi. It gets over on next morning. Devotees offer prayer, tulsi, fruits, and sweets to Lord Vishnu and then finish their fast.

Rituals and celebrations

- Offer Puja to Lord Vishnu and seek his grace.
- Bath the idol of Lord Vishnu with Panchamrit.
- Wash with clean water and then dressed in new clothes.
- Offer flowers, incense, water, lamps and a hand fan.
- In evening, worship Vishnu with Durva grass.
- Visit nearby Vishnu temple and observe Jagran at night.
- Chant bhajans, Vishnu Sahasranama and other slokas dedicated to Lord Vishnu
- Donate clothes, food grains, umbrellas, hand-fans, pitchers filled with water, gold etc.

Story of Nirjala Ekadashi Vrat

Bhimsen – the second Pandava brother and big eater wanted to keep Ekadashi Vrat. All his brothers, wife Draupadi and mother Kunti observed Vrat on 24 Ekadasis throughout the year and request him to do the same. But he was unable to perform the ritual due to unbearable hunger pangs. Bhima, was upset due to his weak determination. He was also sacred of dishonouring to Lord Vishnu. So, when Maharishi Vyasa visited them Bhima asked him to find a solution. Sage Vyasa advised him to observe single Nirjala Ekadasi fasting. This fast would compensate for not observing all Ekadashi fasting in a year. Bhima performed the fast with an ease but on the morning of very next day he became unconscious.

Then he offered Ganga water with

Tulsi to end up his day fast. Due to this legend Nirjala Ekadashi is also known as Bhimseni Ekadashi, Bhima Ekadashi or Pandava Ekadashi.

Nirjala Ekadashi's significance

As per Hindu mythology, Nirjala Ekadashi is a form of God Vishnu and helps in washing away all sins. Also, the devotees are blessed by Lord Vishnu and granted all the happiness, prosperity and a blissful life. It is also believed that by observing Nirjala Ekadashi fast one gains salvation (moksha) as the person at the time of death is not judged by Yama (God of Death). The one who observes fast is taken by the messengers of Vishnu to Vaikuntha, an abode of Vishnu after death.

Legends take one back to the mythological story of Mahabharata as the Nirjala Ekadashi vrat has been mentioned therein. Kunit, mother of the Pandavas, Draupadi, wife of the Pandavas, and all the four Pandava brothers - Yudhisthira, Arjun, Nakula and Sahadeva used to observe Ekadashi vrats without fail.

However, the second Pandava brother, Bhima resisted from fasting as he was a voracious eater and wasn't able to control his hunger. On one occasion, Bhima chose to observe the vrat but he also wanted to eat. Hence, he went out to Ved Vyasa, the grandfather of the Pandavas, to seek help in observing the fast. While eating and fasting were not possible simultaneously, sage Vyasa suggested that he observe the Nirjala Ekadashi vrat, which includes the benefits of observing 24 Ekadashi vrats.

Nirjala Ekadashi is regarded as the strictest fast among all the Ekadashis in the Hindu religion as one cannot even drink water while observing it. The literal meaning of Nirjala is without water. Thus, all Vishnu devotees who take up this fast do not drink water nor eat any food during the entire day of fasting. Observing a Nirjala Ekadashi is highly beneficial as it is considered equivalent to going on a pilgrimage. The vrat begins at sunrise on the Ekadashi and ends on the next day's sunrise. The entire day of the Nirjala Ekadashi vrat is spent at Vishnu temples. Devotees also prefer spending the day at home by listening to stories from Bhagavad Purana or chanting bhajans dedicated to Lord Vishnu.

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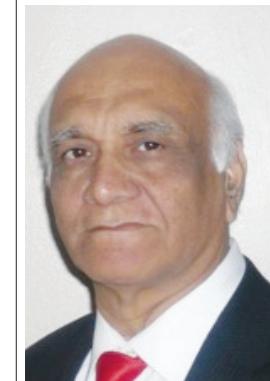
Arish K Sahani (Father)

Shiv Sahani (Son)

Priya Sahani Sood (Daughter)

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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."

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contd from page 1
Protests break out in...



Protesters and police face each other during a rally for George Floyd in Minneapolis, May 27

And the city's mayor said he's requesting state assistance and allowing Police Chief Arradondo to use resources from other jurisdictions.

"We must confront our shortcomings with humility as well as hope. We must restore the peace so that we can do this hard work together," Mayor Jacob Frey said.

Fury has been rising in Minneapolis over Monday, May 25 death of Floyd, a black man who died after pleading for help as a police officer pinned him -- unarmed and handcuffed -- to the ground.

On Wednesday, May 27 night, Minneapolis' second day of protests transitioned to rioting and looting south of downtown, with people smashing their way into stores and setting businesses and other buildings ablaze.

One of Floyd's brothers cried Thursday, May 28 morning as he said his family wants protests to be peaceful, but stressed people are struggling with seeing another black man die following a police encounter, this one over the passing of an allegedly counterfeit \$20 bill at a store.

"I want everybody to be peaceful right now, but people are torn and hurt, because they're tired of seeing black men die," George Floyd's brother, Philonise Floyd, said on CNN's "New Day."

"These officers (involved in George's arrest) need to be arrested right now ... and held accountable about everything because these people want justice right now," he said.

A man was fatally shot overnight near the protests, police said early Thursday. One person was arrested, and police said they're investigating the nature of the incident.

As the protests developed, demonstrators threw water bottles and firecrackers at officers and a police precinct building.

An unspecified number of police officers and other people suffered minor injuries in the protests, Arradondo said, without elaborating.

Demonstrations were held elsewhere in the country Wednesday night. In Los Angeles, hundreds of protesters marched. At one point, some attacked a California Highway Patrol car.

In Memphis, Tennessee, police in riot gear responded to a protest and at least two people were arrested, according to news reports on TV channels.

Meanwhile, Governor Tim Walz signed an executive order Thursday, May 28 to activate the Minnesota National Guard, a move that came at the request of local leaders after "peaceful protests evolved into a dangerous situation for protesters and first responders," according to a release.

In a news conference Wednesday, Mayor Frey also called for criminal charges to be brought against the



Devastating fire breaks out at Lake St. and 26th Ave. S. as angry protesters set property on fire

Twitter picture/ Mark Vancleave @MDVancleave

officer who kept his knee on Floyd. That officer was identified by his attorney Tom Kelly as Derek Chauvin. Kelly has not released a statement on Chauvin's behalf.

Chauvin had 18 complaints filed with the police department's internal affairs division, according to MPD.

It's unclear what the complaints, which were all closed, were for and no details were provided by police.

Only two of the 18 complaints against Chauvin were "closed with discipline," according to a public summary from police. The "discipline issued" column listed a letter of reprimand for each of the two complaints.

George Floyd's family says four officers involved in his death should be charged with murder.

In an interview aired Thursday, Frey told CBS News that he believed Floyd's death constituted murder.

"I am not a prosecutor but let me be clear: The arresting officer killed someone," Frew told CBS. "He (Floyd) would be alive today if he were white."

The other three officers were identified by police as Thomas Lane, Tou Thao and J Alexander Kueng.

Thomas Plunkett, representing Kueng, said, "At this time, out of respect for Mr. Floyd, we are declining all invitations to discuss these painful events."

Earl Gray is representing another of the officers involved but has declined to say who his client is.

Police said they arrested Floyd Monday after responding to the forgery call and finding him inside a car.

Police said he "physically resisted" after he got out of the vehicle.

CNN reports that a surveillance video obtained from a nearby restaurant shows some of the officers' initial contact with him and doesn't appear to show obvious resistance from a handcuffed Floyd. Eventually Floyd is escorted away from view.

Donald Williams, a witness, told CNN he was about to walk into a store when he noticed commotion. He said he saw Floyd "panting for his life, begging for his forgiveness."

Williams' description of events matches a video captured by one bystander in which Floyd can be heard calling for help, saying, "I can't breathe," and that his body was hurting.

Williams said he tried to approach an officer and ask what was happening. Officers said Floyd was "resisting arrest."

"I said, 'Officer, he's not resisting arrest, you have your knee on him and you have handcuffs on him, he's detained at this moment,'" he said. One officer responded by saying "this is what drugs do to you," according to Williams.

Floyd was declared dead at a nearby hospital a short time later. A medics team that responded to the incident worked on an "unresponsive, pulseless male," according to a Minneapolis Fire Department narrative released by police. (With inputs from CNN, CBS and agencies)

Trump cracks whip on social...

The president said Thursday that he would indeed pursue legislation in addition to the order.

Attorney General William Barr, who also attended the signing, said the Justice Department would seek to sue social media companies, saying the statute "has been stretched way beyond its original intention."

The order would push the Federal Communications Commission to set new rules on some websites' protections under Section 230. It would also encourage the Federal Trade Commission to take action against companies that engage in "deceptive" acts of communication, and it would form a working group of state attorneys general to review relevant state laws.

Barr earlier this year signaled the department's intention to look "critically" at the law, originally designed to allow growing technology companies protection. But critics of the law have argued it allowed social media firms to turn a blind eye to unlawful content. It is unclear, though, on what grounds the Justice Department might sue.

While Barr said that the president's order does not repeal Section 230, Trump added shortly after: "One of the things we may do ... is remove or totally change [Section] 230."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Supreme Court Orders States to provide free food, shelter and travel to migrant workers

After hearing Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, senior counsel Kapil Sibal, Colin Gonsalves, Indira Jaising, PS Narsimha and other advocates representing various states, the Bench went on to issue the directions saying, "At present we are looking at the miseries of the migrant workers, we are of the view that some interim directions need to be issued." "We believe that the center and state governments require to be given some time to bring the steps taken by them on record, it said directing them to file detailed replies by June 5 -- the next date of hearing. During the hearing, the Solicitor General faced a volley of questions from the Bench on food, shelter, transportation and as to who would foot the bill. Terming it an "unprecedented crisis", Mehta said around 91 lakh migrant workers had been transported to their native states since special trains started on May 1.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Govt plans for third phase of 'Vande Bharat mission' as 300,000 Indians want to return

Again, government of India wants all those going from here to India to pay for their stay in the hotels government has approved for quarantine. And the payment for 14 is to be paid upfront. Government of India is not supporting us financially in any way. We are paying for everything."

Mr. R.P. Sharma (name changed) said the only favor government of India has done is they have arranged the flights and permitted us to be back. He said going by the pronouncements of government of India, it appeared the government was doing a great favor to those stranded abroad. He added, however, he was happy to be getting back. Mr. Shingara Singh (name changed) from New York said he has been trying to get a ticket but was told by Air India that he will be informed when his turn comes. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

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There are some breathtaking honeymoon destinations in India. Weddings and honeymoons are two things that are always in demand and happening in a country like India! And along with thousands of wedding places rises the biggest question of what are the best honeymoon places in India to go? Well, our country is full of wonders and wonderful places giving couples myriad interesting and romantic honeymoon spots in India. The newlyweds can plan a trip to heaven on earth Jammu & Kashmir or book a flight to Goa, the wondrous beach land in India. Some of the other best romantic getaways in India for honeymoon are Coorg, Ooty, Shimla and Nainital. Here we have shortlisted 10 such honeymoon places in India which can be considered by the newlyweds.

Srinagar

This capital city of Jammu & Kashmir is a paradise in every sense of the word. The lush valleys, sparkling lakes, high mountains and picturesque scenery make it one of the perfect honeymoon destinations in India that you will remember all your life. Even the Bollywood is not untouched with its beauty and a number of movies have been shot in the deep, green valleys of Srinagar. The honeymooners can choose to stay in the shikharas to add a pinch of extra romance on their trip!

How to reach

Srinagar Airport or Sheikh-ul-Alam Airport, around 15 km from the city centre, connects the city with all major Indian cities. A number of airlines operate flights from prime cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore and Mumbai. Jammu Tawi Railway Station is the nearest fully functional railhead to Srinagar.

DURATION OF HONEYMOON: 7 to 10 days

EXPERIENCES: Skiing, sightseeing, Mughal gardens, houseboats, shikara rides, shopping, food

IDEAL TIME TO VISIT: April to October

Goa

The land of sun, sand and sea—Goa is one of the best honeymoon destinations in the world. Couples from all across the globe come here to spend their honeymoon in the rustic city of Goa. The destination offers pristine beaches, scenic views, warm weather and a lot of fun activities. Couples interested in adventure water sports have a lot of options here. Besides, the beachside resorts here are absolutely romantic.

How to reach

Dabolim Airport, around 26 km from Panjim, is well connected with rest of the world and country. Madgaon Railway Station and Vasco da Gama Railway Station are the two major railheads serving this coastal state of India.

DURATION: 5 to 7 days

EXPERIENCES: Nightlife, Goan food, shopping, beaches, adventure water sports.

IDEAL TIME TO VISIT: October to January

Nainital

Nainital is a quaint and romantic hill station, perfect for newlyweds and honeymooners. Home to wonderful lakes, grand mountains and ancient temples, this place is also counted amongst the affordable honeymoon destinations in the country. Couples can opt for boat rides in the various lakes

TOP HONEYMOON DESTINATIONS IN INDIA



present here in a pleasant weather.

How to reach

Kathgodam railway station is the nearest railhead to Nainital, which is about 23 km away from the hill station and is connected with all major Indian cities. Pantnagar Airport, about 70 km away, is the nearest serving airport.

DURATION: 3 to 5 days

EXPERIENCES: Lakes, boat rides, food, snow points, temples

IDEAL TIME TO VISIT: October to April

Jaisalmer

If you want to spend your honeymoon like royalty, head to Rajasthan. Jaisalmer is a gorgeous that city offers history, palaces, forts, elephant and camel back rides and lots more. The place is also known for sand dunes activities in the vast expanses of the Thar Desert. The place is popular for its tent accommodations where the owners also organize cultural nights wherein Rajasthani folk dancers and musicians perform.

How to reach

Jodhpur Airport, about 280 km from

the city, is the nearest airport serving Jaisalmer while Jaisalmer Railway Station is well connected with major Indian cities and operate direct trains from Delhi and Jaipur.

DURATION: 6 to 7 days

EXPERIENCES: Camel safari, desert safari, forts and palaces, shopping, cultural programs, sand dunes, desert camps, sunsets

IDEAL TIME TO VISIT: October to March

Shimla

Shimla has been attracting honeymooners for a long time and is also considered one of the affordable honeymoon destinations in the country! This gorgeous hill station is a perfect place to for the newlyweds. Its beauty, colonial charm, mighty mountains and wonderful surroundings are simply perfect to begin a new stage of life.

How to reach

Shimla Airport, also known as Jubbarhatti Airport (20 km) is the nearest domestic airport operating regular flights from cities like New Delhi and Chandigarh. Kalka railway station

(96 km) is the nearest railhead connecting the hill station with prime neighbouring cities in the country.

DURATION OF HONEYMOON: 3 to 4 days

EXPERIENCES: Ice skating, trekking, hiking, skiing, paragliding, temples, shopping

IDEAL TIME TO VISIT: March to June

Lakshadweep Islands

Lakshadweep is the smallest union territory of India and has the most exotic and uninhabited beaches. The beaches here have a bluish-green tinge and white sands. To heighten your honeymoon experience, book one of the cosy beach cottages and celebrate a new beginning of life.

How to reach

Lakshadweep has just one aerodrome on the Agatti Island called Agatti Airport, which is well connected with Cochin International Airport via helicopter.

DURATION OF HONEYMOON: 7 to 9 days

EXPERIENCES: Island hopping, beaches, coral reefs, water sports, scuba diving, snorkelling

BALBIR SINGH SR DECEMBER 31, 1923 TO MAY 25, 2020

LEGENDARY GOAL MACHINE WHO THRILLED FANS AND MESMERISED OPPONENTS

An equal to Dhyan Chand in wizardry and legacy, Balbir Singh Sr was perhaps the last recognisable connect to that bygone era of Indian hockey which had gold written all over it.

Nostalgia is what that era evokes, a time when Singh and Dhyan Chand became the symbols of India's dominance in international hockey.

Dhyan Chand, the greatest for most, passed away in 1979 at 74 and Singh, considered the best after him, breathed his last at 96 on Monday, May 25.

Three Olympic gold medals (1948, 1952, and 1956) as a player and captain, a world cup gold as manager and to-this-date the highest individual scorer in an Olympic final (1952, Helsinki) - Singh is widely considered the best centre-forward of all time and to many experts and fans "the man who took forward the original wizard's legacy".

Because if Dhyan Chand's wizardry was a source of joy in a colonised India, Singh's artistry was an inspiration for an India trying to find its bearings post-independence.

He never missed a chance to say how special the 1948 Olympic gold was to him because it was for the first time that the Tri-Colour, instead of the Union Jack, went up at the medal ceremony.

Singh and Dhyan Chand never played together at the international level but the comparisons were constant and the former acknowledged how, as a school kid, he felt inspired by watching the original icon.

"...but there is no comparison at all. They were at par in all departments. They were both immensely skillful centre forwards and they were both three Olympic gold medal winners," said Ajitpal Singh, captain of the 1975 World Cup-winning team of which Singh was the manager.

"The only difference was that both played in different eras," he feels.

And if one analysed dispassionately, Singh's three-time Olympic gold-winning legacy will find a place at the same pedestal as that of Dhyan Chand.

Born in 1924 in Punjab's Haripur Khalsa village, Singh was spotted by Harbail



Singh, who was the then coach of Khalsa College and later coached India to two back-to-back gold medals in the 1952 Helsinki and 1956 Melbourne Olympics.

The lanky player, described as the fittest Indian athlete by many including cricket icon Bishen Singh Bedi, went on to make such a name for himself that the suffix of Sr was placed against his name to make a distinction from the numerous other Balbirs he inspired in Indian hockey.

"Many Balbirs came and went in Indian hockey but none could match him and his achievements," said Ajitpal, talking about the incredible journey of the legend, who was admired for his warmth and the willingness to share his experience with anyone who cared to ask.

The talismanic player won three consecutive Olympic gold medals just like the more celebrated Dhyan Chand.

His record of most goals scored by an individual in a men's Olympic final came in India's 6-1 victory over the Netherlands in the 1952 edition, a match in which he struck five times.

It is said that such was Singh's magic

inside the circle that opposition players could only scratch their heads in amazement.

But as luck would have it, Singh's journey somewhat went unnoticed as the beginning of his successes coincided with the tragedy of partition.

In 1957, he did become the first recipient of the Padma Shri award in sports category but that was all he could get despite his countless achievements as a player and later as coach and manager.

Besides being the captain of India's 1956 Olympic gold-winning side, Singh was also a part of the team that won a silver medal at the 1958 Asian Games.

After his retirement, he got involved with hockey coaching and mentored the Indian team that won a bronze medal at the 1971 World Cup.

Four years later, he became the manager of India's only World Cup winning side in Kuala Lumpur.

During the 2012 London Olympics, Singh was named one of the 16 iconic Olympians and lone Indian to be honoured in the Olympic Museum exhibition, "The Olympic Journey: The Story of the Games" held at the Royal Opera House.



Singh's relationship with the sport, in fact, goes way beyond the goals and the trophies. It was like a timeless love affair, one that he described quite vividly in his autobiography -- The Golden Hat-Trick, My Hockey Days, which came out in 1977.

"Her love for me was eternal. Our love blossomed in London. We married in Helsinki and honeymooned in Melbourne. After a period of 11 long years (from the 1964 Tokyo Olympics), she returned to me as fresh, as gay as charming as she ever was," he spoke of hockey, the one true love of his life.

"This time she took me to Kuala Lumpur and we were again top of the world. I am waiting for her - my hockey fairy."



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STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19! LEARN HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND OTHERS AT HOME.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

- The most common symptoms are fever, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath. Other symptoms include feeling achy, loss of taste or smell, headache, and diarrhea.
- Most people with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) will have mild or moderate symptoms and can get better on their own.

WHO IS MOST AT RISK FOR SERIOUS ILLNESS?

- People age 50 or older (people age 65 or older are at the highest risk)
- People who have other health conditions, such as:
 - Lung disease
 - Obesity
 - Asthma
 - Diabetes
 - Heart disease
 - Kidney disease
 - Liver disease
 - Cancer
 - A weakened immune system

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I GET SICK WITH COVID-19 SYMPTOMS?

If you are sick with COVID-19 symptoms, assume you have it.

When you are sick:

- If you have trouble breathing, pain or pressure in your chest, are confused or cannot stay awake, or have bluish lips or face, **call 911** immediately.
- Call your doctor if you are age 50 or older or have a health condition that puts you at increased risk, or if you do not feel better after three days.
- Always contact a doctor or go to the hospital if you have severe symptoms of COVID-19 or another serious health issue.
- Do not leave your home except to get necessary medical care or essential food or supplies (if someone cannot get them for you).
- If you must leave your home:
 - Avoid crowded places.
 - Stay at least 6 feet from others.
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a bandana, scarf or other face covering.
 - Wash your hands before you go out, and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer while outside.
- Household members can go out for essential work and needs but should monitor their health closely.

If you or someone in your home is sick:

- Create physical distance:
 - Do not have visitors.

- Stay at least 6 feet from others.
- Sleep head-to-toe if you share a bed with someone who is sick, or sleep on the couch.
- Keep people who are sick separate from those at risk for serious illness.
- Cover up:**
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a bandana, scarf or other face covering when you are within 6 feet of others.
 - Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your inner elbow.
- Keep it clean:**
 - Throw tissues into the garbage immediately after use.
 - Wash your hands often with soap for 20 seconds, especially after you cough or sneeze.
 - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you are unable to wash your hands.
 - Frequently clean surfaces you touch, such as doorknobs, light switches, faucets, phones, keys and remote controls.
 - Wash towels, sheets and clothes at the warmest possible setting with your usual detergent, and dry completely.
 - Do not share eating utensils with others, and wash them after every use.

WHEN CAN I LEAVE MY HOME AFTER BEING SICK?

- If you have been sick, stay home until:
 - You are fever-free for three days without Tylenol or other medication **and**
 - It has been at least seven days since your symptoms started **and**
 - Your symptoms have improved
- Reminder:** New York is on PAUSE. This means that even if you have been sick, you should only leave your home for essential work or errands, or to exercise, while staying at least 6 feet from others.

NEED HELP?

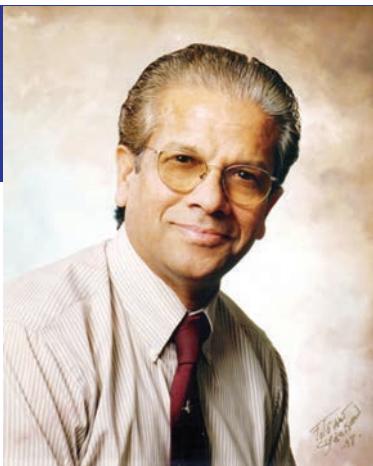
- If you are having a medical emergency, **call 911**.
- If you do not have a doctor but need one, **call 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692)**. New York City provides care, regardless of immigration status, insurance status or ability to pay.
- For more information, **call 311** or visit nyc.gov/coronavirus.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves. 4.20

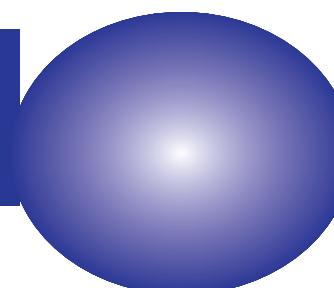


CORONAVIRUS HELPLINE

Dr. VK Raju and Dr. Leela Raju of the Eye Foundation of America will be glad to answer any eye related concerns of the readers of The Indian Panorama during this difficult period of Coronavirus onslaught



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