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EVER TRUTHFUL

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Trump raises possibility of delaying the election-but that power rests in Congress

Trump also said he would not trust results of an election that included widespread mail voting

WASHINGTON (TIP): US President Donald Trump on Thursday, July 30, raised the possibility of delaying the nation's November 3 presidential election, though the Constitution bestows that power on Congress, not the president.

The move drew immediate objections from Democrats and it was not clear whether Trump was serious.

Trump also said he would not trust the results of an election that included widespread mail voting-a measure that many election observers see as critical given the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump, without evidence, repeated his claims of mail-in voter fraud and raised the question of a delay, tweeting: "delay the election until people can properly, securely and safely vote???"

Trump's tweet came shortly after the



President Trump created a flutter in political circles with his Tweet suggesting delaying elections "until people can properly, securely and safely vote???" - File photo

United States reported its worst economic downturn since the Great Depression: a second-quarter crash in gross domestic product due to widespread shutdowns prompted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump, who is trailing challenger and former Vice President Joe Biden in opinion polls, had previously intended to focus his re-election bid on the nation's economic performance.

Trump had previously suggested he would not trust election results-complaints similar to those he raised going into the runup to the 2016 election-but had not so directly suggested changing the November 3 date.

Representatives for the White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment, the Reuter report says.

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USCIS took steps to prevent abuse, fraud in employment-based visa programs, Congressmen told

WASHINGTON (TIP): The Trump administration has taken a series of steps to prevent abuse and fraud in the employment-based visa programs, including H-1B, a top official from the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) told lawmakers on Thursday.

The USCIS has implemented rules, policy memoranda and operational changes that protect the economic interests of US workers and businesses



H-1B is the most coveted foreign work visa for technology professionals from India

and prevent abuse and fraud in employment-based visa programs, Joseph Edlow, Deputy Director of Policy, USCIS told lawmakers during a Congressional hearing. Prominent among these include ensuring the fees that certain H-1B petitioners must now pay ultimately help to train US workers, clarifying calculation guidelines for the one-year foreign employment

contd on Page 2

Oxford vaccine shows protection against COVID-19 in monkeys: Study

Preliminary results from this research were used to facilitate the start of clinical trials of the vaccine in humans, the researchers noted

LONDON (TIP): A COVID-19 vaccine candidate developed by the University of Oxford in the UK elicits an immune response and reduces the viral load in



Preliminary results from this research were used to facilitate the start of clinical trials of the vaccine in humans, the researchers noted

Picture for Representation only

monkeys exposed to SARS-CoV-2 virus, according to a study published in the journal Nature on Thursday, July 30.

The researchers from National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in the US and the Oxford University found that the ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 vaccine protects the macaques from COVID-19 pneumonia - a complication of SARS-CoV-2 infection in which the lungs become inflamed and may fill with fluid.

Preliminary results from this research were used to facilitate the start of clinical trials of the vaccine in humans, the researchers noted.

contd on Page 2

India now has fifth highest COVID-19 fatality count in the world

Health Ministry flags high human cost of herd immunity

NEW DELHI (TIP): In a densely populated country like India, herd immunity cannot be a strategic option because this will come at a very high cost in terms of human lives lost and will cripple the health care system, the Union Health Ministry said on Thursday, July 30th.

"Herd immunity can only be achieved through immunization and till then COVID-19 appropriate behavior is the only way forward," said Rajesh Bhushan, Officer on Special Duty, Health Ministry, at a press conference.

With 786 deaths registered on Thursday, July 30, India's death toll reached 35,800. Maharashtra (266 deaths), Tamil Nadu (100), Karnataka



As liquor stores reopen, people in India forgot about social distancing

(83), Andhra Pradesh (68) and Uttar Pradesh (57) contributed to the bulk of the fatalities. India now has the fifth-highest death toll in the world, surpassing Italy with 35,132 deaths,

contd on Page 2

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL

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PANORAMA IS PROHIBITED.

contd from page 1**Trump raises possibility of delaying...**

Trump has cast doubt on the legitimacy of mail-in ballots, which have been used in far greater numbers in primary elections amid the pandemic.

He has also made unsubstantiated allegations that voting will be rigged and has refused to say he would accept official election results if he lost.

Democrats, including Biden, have already begun preparations to protect voters and the election amid fears that Trump will try to interfere with the November election.

"A sitting president is peddling lies and suggesting delaying the election to keep himself in power," Democratic Representative Dan Kildee wrote on Twitter.

"Don't let it happen. Every American - Republican, Independent and Democrat - should be speaking out against this President's lawlessness and complete disregard of the Constitution."

US Senator Tom Udall, also a Democrat, said, "There is no way @POTUS can delay the election. We shouldn't let him distract us from his #COVID19 incompetence."

Nonpartisan US election analyst Kyle Kondik of the University of Virginia said the tweet seemed to follow Trump's typical approach of trying to distract voters from bad news.

"Trump suggesting delaying the election (he can't do this w/o congressional approval) seems to be one of his more obvious attempts to change the subject given this morning's wretched GDP numbers," Kondik wrote on Twitter.

Attorney General William Barr was asked in congressional testimony earlier this week whether Trump could change the election date: "I've never been asked the question before. I've never looked into it."

Barr also testified that to his knowledge, a sitting president cannot contest the results of an election if the vote tallies are clear. (Source: Reuters)

USCIS took steps to prevent abuse...

requirement for L-1 petitions in order to "ensure consistent adjudication. Among other steps are changing the H-1B cap selection process in order to increase the chances of selection for beneficiaries who have earned a master's degree or higher from a US institution and expanding collaboration with the Department of Justice (DOJ) to better detect and eliminate fraud by employers.

The Trump administration has also created a USCIS H-1B and H-2B fraud reporting online tip form along with creating an H-1B Employer Data Hub to provide information to the public on employers petitioning for H-1B workers, Edlow said.

H-2B visa is for short-term seasonal workers while L-1 is for internal company transfers.

The USCIS has issued the first report of its kind estimating the number of H-1B non-immigrants authorized to work in the United States and has instituted electronic filing for multiple forms and, for the first time ever, using an electronic registration process for the purpose of H-1B cap selection, he told members of the House Judiciary Subcommittee Hearing Citizenship and Immigration.

Sharvari Dalal-Dheini, Director of Government Relations, American Immigration Lawyers of America, told Congressmen that USCIS data reveals the percentage of completed cases with request for evidences (RFEs) increased from 22.3 in FY2015 to 40.2 in FY2019.

"The RFE rate reached 60 per cent during the first quarter of FY2019 and was 47.2 per cent during the first quarter of FY2020. Frequently, RFEs and NOIDs are issued seeking evidence that has already been provided or that is unnecessary to establish eligibility or contrary to the plain language of the law," she said.

Even when the RFEs and NOIDs ultimately result in approvals, the unnecessary delay caused by their issuance effectively means that USCIS reviews each application or petition twice - once upon initial review and again in response to what is often a needless RFE or NOID - thus leading to twice the amount of resources actually needed to complete the adjudication, she said.

According to Dalal-Dheini when these RFEs and NOIDs result in improper denials, US employers and individuals are forced to turn to the federal courts to seek relief.

Frequently, when a legal challenge is brought, the agency is forced to reopen and approve the case because the decision is contrary to law. Most recently, litigation resulted in USCIS being forced to overturn H-1B policy memoranda that were

deemed to contravene the Immigration and Nationality Act. Issuing improper denials, resulting in the time and money spent fending unlawful decisions unnecessarily, drain agency resources that could be better used in eliminating case backlogs. (Source: PTI)

Oxford vaccine shows protection...

ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 is made from a weakened chimpanzee adenovirus - a group of viruses that can cause a range of illnesses, including the common cold - that expresses the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, a structure that enables the coronavirus to enter human cells.

The researchers show that a single dose of ChAdOx1 nCoV-19, given to six macaques 28 days before exposure to SARS-CoV-2, is effective in preventing damage to lungs and drastically reduces the viral load, when compared with six control animals.

A further six macaques were given a booster course of two doses of the vaccine, at 56 and 28 days before challenge, which increased the immune response, the team found.

The vaccinated animals showed no evidence of immune-enhanced inflammatory disease, which has been observed in some preclinical studies of vaccines against SARS-CoV-2, according to the researchers.

They noted that there was no difference in viral shedding from the nose between vaccinated and control animals.

This finding indicates that ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 may not prevent infection or transmission, but may reduce illness, the researchers noted.

The study has led to clinical trials of the ChAdOx1 nCov-19 vaccine, which have enrolled more than 8,000 volunteers as of the beginning of July 2020, they said.

Another study on 52 adult rhesus macaques published in the journal Nature on Thursday found that a single dose of a vaccine made from an adenovirus, a group of viruses that are linked to illnesses such as the mild cold, protected the animals against SARS-CoV-2.

The optimal version of the vaccine is currently being evaluated in clinical trials, said the researchers of this study from Harvard Medical School in the US. (Source: PTI)

India now has fifth highest COVID-19...

according to Johns Hopkins University's COVID-19 tracker. The seven-day rolling average for deaths in India is now 735, next only to the U.S. (1,075) and Brazil (1,052).

The case fatality rate in the country is now 2.18%, which is "among the lowest in the world... 24 States and Union Territories have a lesser fatality rate than that of the country," according to Mr. Bhushan.

As many as 54,660 confirmed cases were registered across the country, marking yet another high in daily cases (data from Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh were not available when this report went to press). The seven-day rolling average for cases also crossed the 50,000 mark. The total confirmed cases went up to 16,38,951 with a 64.58% recovery rate (10,58,464 people have recovered while 5,44,687 people are actively infected).

"16 States have a recovery rate more than the national average," Mr. Bhushan said.

Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh registered 11,147 and 10,167 cases each, both daily highs. The latter had also tested 70,068 samples on July 29, among the highest in States. Karnataka with 6,128 cases and Uttar Pradesh (3,705) also had daily highs, while Tamil Nadu's daily case load dropped marginally from its seven-day average to 5,864.

To a question on vaccine development and how the government plans to make this available to the general public, he said, the world over, there were three vaccine candidates which were currently in phase III clinical trials.

"These three vaccines are being developed by the U.S., the U.K. and China. In India, two indigenously developed vaccine candidates are in phase I and II clinical trials. The first is being tested on 11,050 subjects at eight sites, and the second on 1,000 subjects at five sites. India has not signed any agreement with any vaccine manufacturing company so far but we are in discussions on vaccine distribution and the Ministry is in talks with stakeholders," the official said. He added that there were multiple stakeholders within and outside the government and the Ministry of Health has started actively engaging with them.

He added that there were multiple stakeholders within and outside the government and the Ministry of Health had started actively engaging with such stakeholders.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

US Open Championship to be Held without Fans from September 14-20 in Mamaroneck

New York Hits New Lows for COVID-19 Hospitalizations

ALBANY, NY (TIP): New York Governor Andrew Cuomo announced July 30 that the U.S. Open Championship will be held at Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck from September 14th to September 20th without fans. The USGA will put protocols in place to protect players and staff, including rigorous protocols for testing, cleaning, use of face coverings and social distancing.



"While we focus on COVID-19, we also need to prepare for flu season in the fall. More than \$30 million in grants was awarded to counties, allowing them to enhance COVID-19 contact tracing and flu prevention in advance of the fall flu season. The upcoming flu season is expected to add stress to both contact tracing and testing infrastructure; these funds will allow counties to prepare accordingly", Governor Cuomo warned.

On July 30 Cuomo said that New York hits new lows for COVID-19 hospitalizations, ICU patients and intubations.

AS OF JULY 30:
Hospitalizations Drop to 586
New Low Since March 17
ICU Patients Drop to 142
New Low Since March 16
Lowest Number of Intubations 72
Since March 15

"New York State continues to closely monitor the alarming rise in COVID-19 cases throughout the nation, and as that situation worsens, we're taking every action we can here at home to slow the spread and save lives," Governor Cuomo said. "While yesterday's numbers show New York is continuing on the right trajectory, we cannot get complacent. With much of the rest of the country surging, we are still vulnerable and have to continue to wear masks, socially distance and be New York Tough. We will get through this, together."

Governor Cuomo also confirmed 777 additional cases of novel coronavirus, bringing the statewide total to 414,370 confirmed cases in New York State.

The governor also announced that the State Liquor Authority and State Police Task Force on July 29 visited and observed 835 establishments across New York City and Long Island, and found violations at 41 establishments, or 5 percent.

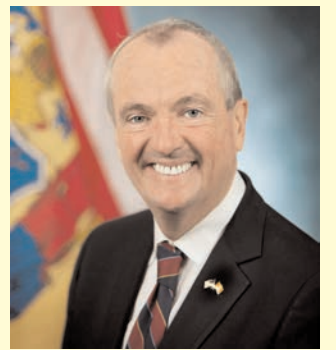
Governor Cuomo asserted that the State needed to be self-reliant in the matter of essential medical equipment. He said: "During the pandemic, we learned a hard lesson. Because we lacked a dedicated supply chain for vital supplies manufactured in the U.S., we relied on overseas shipments that were hard to get and often came only at exorbitant prices. Before COVID started, we paid 70 cents for an N95 mask. When the crisis was at the high point, the cost was up to \$7 per mask"

"We never want that happen again. That's why it's great news that we could help Kodak, our great Rochester company, be at a point to receive a federal loan to produce pharmaceutical ingredients - and it's why I'm glad to announce that NYS is supporting 12 New York companies that will begin producing COVID-related equipment and supplies to support our present and future needs. As a condition to receive the grants, each of the companies will make PPE available to the State of New York for our healthcare facilities when and if we need it."

"This work has already started. Old garment manufacturing businesses in Manhattan have pivoted to the business of making medical gowns. These investments aren't just necessary in order to ensure our future needs in a crisis like this one - they also represent an opportunity to revitalize the New York manufacturing sector and support the economy", said the governor.

New Jersey Sees Increase in Coronavirus Cases; Murphy Not Ready to Reopen More Economy

TRENTON, NJ (TIP): New Jersey announced 16 new COVID-19 deaths and 261 new confirmed cases in the last 24 hours on Thursday, July 30 as the rate of transmission of the virus remains above 1, a key benchmark in determining the spread of the disease.



"New Jersey has 261 new positive cases of COVID-19, pushing our cumulative total to 180,970. Sadly, we must report an additional confirmed 16 COVID-19 deaths, pushing our total to 13,934 lives lost", Governor Phil Murphy tweeted.

The Garden State has reported 2,000 cases over the past four days, and Gov. Phil Murphy is blaming indoor house parties for the growing numbers

The latest update brings the death toll to 15,809 known and probable deaths and 180,970 total confirmed positive tests since the outbreak began nearly five months ago. That includes 13,934 lab-confirmed deaths and 1,875 probable fatalities.

The Garden State has reported 2,000 cases over the past four days, and Gov. Phil Murphy is blaming indoor house parties for the growing numbers. Murphy also indicated that he's not yet ready to reopen more of New Jersey's economy - such as indoor dining. Murphy expressed concern about gatherings and parties that have caused local spikes in cases in Middletown, Long Beach Island and Jackson, the latter involving a party of 700 people.

Governor Murphy advised individuals traveling to New Jersey from additional states with significant community spread of COVID-19 to quarantine for a 14-day period from the time of last contact within the identified state. In addition to the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, the updated advisory includes 3 additional states - Illinois, Kentucky, and Minnesota, bringing the total to 36 states and territories. The travel advisory applies to any person arriving from a state with a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents or a state with a 10 percent or higher positivity rate over a 7-day rolling average.

As of Tuesday, July 28, there are currently 36 states and territories that meet the criteria stated above: Alaska; Alabama; Arkansas; Arizona; California; Delaware; District of Columbia; Florida; Georgia; Illinois, Iowa; Idaho; Indiana; Kansas; Kentucky, Louisiana; Maryland; Minnesota, Missouri; Mississippi; Montana; North Carolina; North Dakota; Nebraska; New Mexico; Nevada; Ohio; Oklahoma; Puerto Rico, South Carolina; Tennessee; Texas; Utah; Virginia; Washington; and Wisconsin.

NYC Commissioner of Immigrant Affairs Welcomes Court decision on Public Charge Rule

NEW YORK CITY, NY (TIP): "The District Court's decision to halt the implementation of the Public Charge Rule nationwide for the duration of the COVID-19 national health emergency brings relief. The Court rightly recognized how severely the Rule continues to harm immigrant communities-many of whom are working on the frontlines of this public health crisis-and hinders our efforts to address the devastating health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.", said Bitta Mostofi, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner.



Bitta Mostofi, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner has welcomed the court decision on Public Charge Rule

one should suffer punishment or penalty if they seek medical care or temporary financial aid as a result of the pandemic's impact. New York City is proud to have joined Attorney General James in protecting immigrant communities from this cruel policy."

New York City residents who have questions about public charge and how accessing certain public benefits may affect immigration status can call the ActionNYC hotline at 1-800-354-0365 to connect with free, safe immigration legal help."

About the NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs: The NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) promotes the well-being of NYC's immigrant communities by advocating for policies that increase justice, equity, and empowerment. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

The Commissioner further added: "It is a matter of life or death that all New Yorkers in need of medical care, food assistance, and other benefits and services seek and receive the help they need without fear. As the Court noted, no



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Indian American Anil Cheriyan Named Cognizant's Strategy, Technology EVP



Cheriyan stepped down from his post as head of TTS and deputy commissioner of the Federal Acquisition Service at GSA on July 17

TEANECK, NJ (TIP): Anil Cheriyan, former director of the General Services Administration's Technology Transformation Services, will join Cognizant on Aug. 3 to serve as executive vice president of strategy and technology. Cheriyan will oversee the company's Global IT, Global Security, Strategy, Alliances, and Business Development organizations and will report directly to chief executive Brian Humphries. As the company's leader of Technology, he will be responsible for informing strategy, digitizing the business, and strengthening IT and Security capabilities and resilience, according to Cognizant.

Cheriyan stepped down from his post as head of TTS and deputy commissioner of the Federal Acquisition Service at GSA on July 17. Mr. Cheriyan was appointed as Director of TTS in January 2019. In this position, he oversees the Presidential Innovation Fellows, 18F, the Office of Products and Programs, and the IT Modernization Centers of Excellence along with offices that provide support across TTS.

Prior to joining GSA, Mr. Cheriyan was the Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer at SunTrust Banks, where he led the transformation of the banks' digital, data, and operations. Prior to SunTrust, he led several consulting practices at IBM and PwC Management Consulting, where he drove the business and technology transformation for the firms' strategic clients. *(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)*

Indian-origin author Avni Doshi on 2020 Booker Prize longlist

The Dubai-based Indian-origin author is among the 13 authors longlisted for her debut novel 'Burnt Sugar'

LONDON (TIP): Dubai-based Indian-origin author Avni Doshi is among the 13 authors longlisted for the prestigious 2020 Booker Prize for her debut novel 'Burnt Sugar', alongside double Booker winner Hilary Mantel for 'The Mirror and The Light'.

The so-called "Booker Dozen" was unveiled on Tuesday, July 28, after judges evaluated 162 novels published in the UK or Ireland between October 2019 and September 2020, with a shortlist of six to be whittled down by September in time for the 50,000-pound literary prize in November.

"This utterly compelling read examines a complex and unusual mother-daughter relationship with honest, unflinching realism - sometimes emotionally wrenching but also cathartic, written with poignancy and memorability," the judges said of Doshi's longlisted entry.

Doshi, born in the US and now living in Dubai, has previously spoken about the long journey to her first novel, which was released in India last year as 'Girl in White Cotton' and gets a UK release this Thursday as 'Burnt Sugar'.

For the coveted Booker, Doshi goes head to head with literary heavyweight Mantel, who is in the running for her final instalment in her series set in King Henry VIII's 16th-century England.

"The Mirror and the Light' completes a tragic arc in which Thomas Cromwell [Henry VII's Minister] is finally brought down by the police state he designed. Mantel's masterful exhibition of sly dialogue and exquisite description brings the Tudor world alive," the judges said, in reference to her book.

British and Scottish nominees this year include Gabriel Krauze for 'Who They Was', Douglas Stuart for 'Shuggie Bain' and Sophie Ward for 'Love and Other Thought



Doshi, born in the US and now living in Dubai, has previously spoken about the long journey to her first novel, which was released in India last year as 'Girl in White Cotton' and gets a UK release as 'Burnt Sugar'.

Picture / [twitter@avnidoshi](https://twitter.com/avnidoshi)

Experiments'. Zimbabwean writer Tsitsi Dangarembga is nominated for the third novel in her trilogy - 'This Mournable Body'.

The rest of the longlist is largely dominated by US-based authors, including Diane Cook for 'The New Wilderness', Colum McCann for 'Apeirogon', Maaza Mengiste for 'The Shadow King', Kiley Reid for 'Such a Fun Age', Brandon Taylor for 'Real Life', Anne Tyler for 'Redhead by The Side of The Road', and C Pam Zhang for 'How Much of These Hills is Gold'.

"Each of these books carries an impact that has earned it a place on the longlist, deserving of a wide readership. Included are novels carried by the sweep of history with memorable characters brought to life and given visibility, novels that represent a moment of cultural change, or the pressures an individual faces in pre and post-dystopian society," said editor and literary critic Margaret Busby, chair of the 2020 judging panel.

"Some of the books focus on interpersonal relationships that are complex, nuanced, emotionally charged. There are voices from minorities often unheard, stories that are fresh, bold and absorbing. The best fiction enables the reader to relate to other people's lives; sharing experiences that we could not ourselves have imagined is as powerful as being able to identify with characters," she said.

Gaby Wood, Literary Director of the Booker Prize Foundation, said: "In this year of seismic change, visibility for new books published in the UK has been drastically low. So, however unintended the ratio, it's especially heartening to know that some authors who have launched their careers in the midst of COVID-19 may now have a chance to reach the readers they deserve."

The Booker Prize for Fiction is open to writers of any nationality, writing in English and published in the UK or Ireland. The shortlist of six books will be announced on September 15, with each shortlisted author receiving 2,500 pounds and a specially bound edition of their book at the prize ceremony scheduled for November.

The 2019 Booker Prize for Fiction was won jointly by 'The Testaments' by Margaret Atwood and 'Girl, Woman, Other' by Bernardine Evaristo. First awarded in 1969, the Booker Prize is recognized as the leading prize for literary fiction written in English.

The rules of the prize were changed at the end of 2013 to embrace the English language "in all its vigor, its vitality, its versatility and its glory", opening it up to writers beyond the UK and Commonwealth, providing they were writing novels in English and published in the UK. (Source: PTI)

Indian-American Political Group Announces New Executive Director, commits \$10M to Support Community Candidates

PHILADELPHIA, PA. (TIP): Indian-American political organization IMPACT announced July 28 that public interest lawyer Neil Makhija will be its new Executive Director. The group also announced a \$10 million commitment to support Indian American candidates nationwide, as well as plans to create a new program to identify, elevate, and support Indian American elected officials running for higher office.



Neil Makhija, a public interest attorney and educator, who teaches election law at the University of Pennsylvania Law School, has been named the new Executive Director of IMPACT

immigrant group in the U.S. - are beginning to flex their political muscle on the national stage: an Indian American woman is a top contender to be the Democratic nominee for Vice President; the number of Indian Americans in Congress has grown five-fold in just the past eight years; a record number of dollars are going to Indian American candidates; and just last

week, the campaign arm charged with electing Democrats to Congress released its first-ever Hindi-language political ad.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian Origin Tech Executive Charged with COVID-Relief Fraud and Money Laundering

SEATTLE (TIP): A Washington tech executive of Indian origin was taken into custody July 23 and charged with fraudulently seeking over \$5.5 million in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans and laundering the proceeds. Mukund Mohan, 48, of Clyde Hill, Washington, was charged by criminal complaint, unsealed after he was taken into custody, in the Western District of Washington with one count of wire fraud and one count of money laundering.

Mohan currently serves as chief technology officer at BuildDirect.com Technologies Inc., a website that connects people with home contractors, according to its website. Before that, he worked for



Former Microsoft executive Mukund Mohan arrested for \$5.5 million fraud

YouTube pic

Amazon.com Inc. and Microsoft Corp.

The complaint alleges that Mohan submitted at least eight fraudulent PPP loan applications on behalf of six different companies to federally insured financial institutions. The complaint alleges that, in support of the fraudulent loan applications, Mohan made numerous false

and misleading statements about the companies' respective business operations and payroll expenses. The complaint also alleges that, in further support of the fraudulent loan applications, Mohan submitted fake and altered documents, including fake federal tax filings and altered incorporation documents. *(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)*

Indian-origin politician Pritam Singh appointed Singapore's first Leader of Opposition in Parliament

'SINGAPORE'S LEGISLATURES HAVE NEVER HAD FORMALLY DESIGNATED LEADERS OF THE OPPOSITION'

SINGAPORE (TIP): Indian-origin politician Pritam Singh was on Tuesday, July 28, designated as the Leader of the Opposition in Singapore, the first such appointment in the history of the city-state.

The 43-year old Singh's Workers' Party won 10 parliamentary seats out of the 93 contested in the July 10 general elections held, making it the biggest opposition presence in Singapore's Parliament.

Singh is the Secretary-General of Workers' Party.

"Singapore's legislatures have never had formally designated Leaders of the Opposition, and such a position is not provided for in the Constitution or the Standing Orders of Parliament," the parliamentary offices said in its statement on Tuesday.

"Singapore's legislatures have never had formal Leaders of the Opposition, not even in the 1950s and early 1960s when there were substantial numbers of opposition legislative assemblymen," the Channel News Asia quoted the statement as saying. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's ruling People's Action Party won 83 seats in the general elections and his government was sworn in on Monday.

Singh will take on more duties and be accorded additional privileges in his role as the Leader of the Opposition,



authorities said on Tuesday in a statement, laying out the details of the new post.

"Similar to other Westminster parliamentary systems, Singh will lead the Opposition in presenting alternative views in parliamentary debates on policies, Bills and motions," said the Office of the Speaker of Parliament and Office of the Leader of the House in a joint statement.

He will also lead and organize the scrutiny of the government's positions and actions in Parliament, and be consulted on the appointment of opposition members to Select Committees, such as the Public Accounts Committee.

Singh, who is also a lawyer, will receive an annual package of 385,000 Singapore dollars (USD 2,79,025.98) as allowances for his new role.

Prime Minister Lee said on July 11 that Singh will be designated the Leader of the Opposition.

After his swearing-in on Monday, Lee said the election results have shown a strong desire among Singaporeans for a greater diversity of views in politics and that the trend is here to stay.

"We have to give expression to it and evolve our political system to accommodate it while maintaining our cohesion and sense of national purpose," said Lee.

"As with any new political appointment, the role of the LO (Leader of the Opposition) will evolve as our political system develops," the statement from Parliament said.

"We look forward to working with the LO to create a robust but stable political system serving the interests of Singapore and Singaporeans," it said.

The statement added that these duties and privileges have been conveyed to Singh, and the Leader of the House will make a statement in Parliament to formally set out these terms. Singapore's 14th Parliament will have its first sitting on August 24. (Source: PTI)

Indian American John Cyrus Joins High Point as IT Strategy, Business Solutions Director



Cyrus previously worked as an IT executive at the United States Patent and Trademark Office and the Food and Drug Administration

WASHINGTON (TIP): HighPoint, a provider of IT and digital services for government agencies, announced the addition of John Cyrus as Director of IT Strategy and Business Solutions. Cyrus brings more than 24 years of management and technology experience within the public and private sectors to

HighPoint. In this new role as a senior leader, Cyrus will work across the organization to drive HighPoint's solution design, architecture function and drive growth in intelligent automation (RPA), cloud migration, next gen software application development and DevOps pursuits for government clients.

Cyrus previously worked as an IT executive at the United States Patent and Trademark Office and the Food and Drug Administration, where he had a proven track record of managing successful engineering and technology portfolios and programs. Prior to his government service, Cyrus also supported key public sector programs at Deloitte Consulting, IBM and SAP America. Cyrus is PMP certified and has a Certification of Cybersecurity from Harvard University. He has a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from Wichita State University and is a graduate of the Federal Executive Institute (FEI), Charlottesville.

Indian arrested for stabbing wife to death in Miami



The victim Merin Joy (28), was a nurse at Broad Health Coral Springs Hospital.

MIAMI, FL (TIP): Philip Mathew (Nevin), 34, of Wixom, Michigan has been arrested and charged in the murder of his Malayalee wife Merin Joy, 26. She was a

nurse at Broad Health Coral Springs Hospital. Merin died around 7:30 am on Tuesday, July 28 as she was returning to the parking area to return home after her night shift. At approximately 7:38 a.m., Coral Springs Dispatch received a 911 call from Broward Health Coral Springs, about a possible stabbing and hit and run in progress. Once officers arrived on the scene, contact was made with the victim, Merin Joy, age 26, who was in the west parking lot with multiple stab wounds. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian Origin former Long Island doctor pleads guilty to conspiring to illegally distribute Oxycodone



Dr. Tameshwar Ammar, 51, of Amityville is charged with illegally selling prescriptions for oxycodone. Credit: U.S. Department of Justice

NEW YORK (TIP): On July 27, in federal court in Central Islip, Tameshwar Ammar, a former medical doctor in Roslyn, New York, pleaded guilty via

teleconference to conspiring to illegally distribute oxycodone. Ammar was indicted in November 2019. On June 22, 2020, he relinquished his license to practice medicine. The plea was entered before United States District Judge Denis R. Hurley. As part of his plea, Ammar agreed to forfeit approximately \$245,700 as proceeds involved in the oxycodone offense. When sentenced, Ammar faces up to 20 years in prison.

Ray Donovan, Special Agent-in-Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, New York Division (DEA), and Seth D. DuCharme, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York, announced the guilty plea.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian Owned Dallas Textiles Company Creates PPE Division During Pandemic



More than 35 million (and counting) pieces of personal protection equipment (PPE) have been shipped to hospitals, school districts and government agencies around the country through Nextt Shield, a new division of Dallas-based textiles company Nextt Affiliated

DALLAS (TIP): More than 35 million (and counting) pieces of personal protection equipment (PPE) have been shipped to hospitals, school districts and government agencies around the country through Nextt Shield, a new division of Dallas-based textiles company Nextt Affiliated, created during the pandemic. Known worldwide for its sheets, bedding and towels, Nextt has now pivoted to produce hand sanitizer, gloves, disposal face masks, face shields, customized reusable face masks and thermometers. Products like isolation gowns are made in its factory in India and shipped from its distribution center in Dallas, Texas.

"This has been a humbling initiative, to say the least," said NEXTT CEO Arun Agarwal. "To be able to maneuver, meet expectations and under promise only to over deliver during this time of critical need is a true testament on how to make

supply chain management work in your favor."

Nextt has been innovating through various fabric driven industries since the 1980s. The focus has always been on providing new and improved solutions with everyday products. "Fabric is utilized all around us, which allows for the unique opportunity to weave solutions seamlessly into routines," said Agarwal. "With a global presence, it is our duty to not only provide a superior product and experience, but to do so in an ethical and responsible manner."

The company understands the severity of the current global pandemic, and because of its in-depth experience with fabrics and many health driven solutions, it has geared up production to help meet the needs of health care professionals in local communities and around the world.

Queens Man charged with attempted murder and assault in shooting of Former Suny Buffalo Football Player

Defendant Allegedly Seen on Video Surveillance Firing Point Blank at Victim; Faces Up to 25 Years in Prison if Convicted

QUEENS, NY (TIP): Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced July 30 that a 27-year-old Hollis, Queens man has been charged with attempted murder and other crimes for allegedly shooting a former student athlete outside a deli on Springfield Boulevard Monday afternoon.

District Attorney Katz said, "This kind of gun violence is unacceptable. A young man is now fighting for his life because of a petty incident that spiraled out of control with a gun. The defendant has been apprehended and will face the consequences for his alleged actions."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Jeffrey Thurston, 27, of Jamaica Avenue in the Hollis neighborhood of Queens. The defendant's arraignment is pending in Queens Criminal Court on a complaint charging him with attempted murder in the second degree, assault in the first degree and criminal possession of a weapon in the second degree. If convicted, Thurston faces up to 25 years in prison on this complaint alone.

According to the complaint, around

4:30 p.m. on Monday, July 27th, the defendant was inside a deli on the corner of Springfield Boulevard and 136th Avenue when Malachi Capers, 20, walked into the store and bumped into Thurston. The defendant pushed Mr. Capers and then allegedly threw a punch. Capers, who played defensive end for SUNY Buffalo, chased the defendant out of the store and tackled him on the sidewalk.

Continuing said DA Katz, video surveillance from both inside the deli and outside on the sidewalk shows the fight that ensued. On the video the two men wrestled on the ground outside. When both were on their feet again, Thurston allegedly pulled out a handgun and fired a single shot into Mr. Capers' abdomen.

The victim was rushed to a nearby hospital where he is in critical condition. Thurston fled the scene but was apprehended yesterday by the Regional Fugitive Task Force of the New York City Police Department.

Defendant Thurston is also charged in a second complaint with burglary, robbery and assault for allegedly

striking an estranged girlfriend and taking her cell phone on April 4, 2020. In a third criminal complaint, the defendant is charged with attempted assault for allegedly firing at an occupied vehicle on July 8, 2020. Thurston is awaiting arraignment on these charges as well.

The investigation into the attempted murder was conducted by Detective Matthew DeBonis of the 105th Precinct and Detective James Zozarro of NYPD Queens South Homicide Squad, under the supervision of Lieutenant James McGarry of the New York City Police Department's 105 Precinct Detective Squad and Lieutenant Richard Rudolph of Queens South Homicide Squad.

Senior Assistant District Attorneys Franchesca Basso and Patricia Diaz, of the District Attorney's Homicide Bureau, are prosecuting the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Brad A. Leventhal, Bureau Chief, Peter McCormack III, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, Jo3hn Kosinski and Kenneth Appelbaum, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and under the overall



MELINDA KATZ
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Jeffrey Thurston, 27, of Jamaica Avenue in the Hollis neighborhood of Queens.

supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Major Crimes Daniel Saunders.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

As City Continues Phased Reopening, New TLC Data highlights Covid's impact on Taxis and for-Hire Vehicle Industry



"Fully understanding the impact of the pandemic will help us make the industry stronger and better able to meet any shifts in passenger demand as the city continues its reopening," says TLC Commissioner Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk.

NEW YORK (TIP): New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC), on July 29, published a report offering crucial insight on the effects of COVID-19 on the City's taxi and for-hire vehicle (FHV) sectors. As New York City's economy paused to flatten the COVID-19 curve, taxi and for-hire passenger demand dropped by 84% in comparison to pre-pandemic levels, according to the report, available at <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/tlc/downloads/pdf/covid-impact-report.pdf>.

The report, "COVID-19 Impact on the NYC For-Hire Industry," covers the period

from March 15 - June 30, 2020 and found that decreases in passenger demand tracked a decline in citywide economic activity, including business travel, tourism, entertainment, and night life. The report also documents the essential work of thousands of TLC-licensed drivers assisting the City to reach vulnerable New Yorkers by participating in the Get Food NYC Program. TLC drivers have delivered over 50 million meals to New Yorkers in need.

"This report details the realities of the for-hire car industry during the pandemic.

I see it as both a testament to the shared mission of TLC and our licensed drivers to support the City during the pandemic, but also as a starting point for many of the changes that will make our industry safer, more accountable and stable for operators, drivers and passengers alike," said TLC Commissioner Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk. "Fully understanding the impact of the pandemic will help us make the industry stronger and better able to meet any shifts in passenger demand as the city continues its reopening."

Some of the report's findings:

- o In the beginning of April, as New Yorkers stayed home, trips in all TLC-licensed vehicles dropped 84% compared to the same time last year. In April 2020, 28,893 TLC drivers were on the road, compared with 122,076 TLC Drivers in April 2019.

- o Since April, more drivers have returned to the road, trips gradually increased by 78% and driver earnings are up over 81%.

- o During this March through April period, trips to parts of the city with hospitals increased as a percentage of all pick-ups, as trips to and from airports decreased.

- o TLC separately licenses vehicles and drivers to maximize accountability.

TLC Vehicle owners have continued to renew their vehicle licenses at historic rates since March, while fewer drivers renewed their TLC Driver License.

Since March, over 20,000 TLC-licensed drivers registered to participate in the Get Food NYC Program, which has distributed over 100 million meals since March. TLC-licensed drivers have so far earned \$29.5 million, delivering 53 million meals across all five boroughs. TLC has made delivery safer for drivers by providing almost 200,000 items of Personal Protective Equipment, including free masks, gloves and hand sanitizer. With drivers and owners facing historic challenges due to the pandemic, the TLC accelerated the launch of a virtual Driver Resource Center, opening in May. The Center offers a range of free financial counseling and legal assistance for TLC drivers, as well as connecting them with government benefits and health and wellness resources. Over 500 licensees have already been served by the

Driver Resource Center.

In addition to creating earning opportunities for drivers, TLC regularly provides drivers with information on resources, such as free or low-cost health insurance, telemedicine, and other work opportunities through its website and via email. Drivers who stayed home to help the City flatten the curve received vital benefits from the state and federal governments, as independent contractors have been eligible for unemployment insurance for the first time.

About TLC

Created in 1971, the TLC licenses and regulates taxicabs, for-hire vehicles, commuter vans, and para transit vehicles. Its board consists of nine members, including eight unsalaried Commissioners. The Chair / Commissioner presides over regular public commission meetings and heads the agency, which has a staff of over 600 employees.

To drive professionally in New York City, licensees undergo a rigorous background check, must have a safe driving record, and complete 24 hours of driver education. TLC-licensed vehicles undergo regular safety and emission inspections at the Agency's Inspection Facility. Current Commissioner, Aloysee Heredia Jarmoszuk, was appointed in February 2020.

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By Abhijit Bhattacharyya

The wheel has indeed turned full circle. After 101 years, reparation today is the sine qua non for a free world facing an autocratic, reckless China which is consistently failing to adhere to, or follow, the canons of collective wisdom, so very essential for the existence, nay survival, of the human race. Will China curtail its expansionist ambitions and avoid taking control of weaker landlocked territory through unfair means? The time for reparation is now."

The Covid-19 pandemic has done more damage to the global economy in mere six months than what the two world wars did in 10 years. The Chinese-origin virus has already claimed over six lakh lives, while more than 1.6 crore cases have been recorded so far. There are debts worth billions, nay trillions, of dollars and over 200 countries are on the road to ruin.

Various sectors are counting the colossal losses, be it banking, transport, shipping, hospitality, core industrial sector or aviation. The key indicators of human welfare - education and health - are in tatters. The future of millions of students across the globe is uncertain. And, the lack of barest human needs - food, housing, clothing and fuel - is plunging millions into poverty.

Such is the havoc wrought on India that the government has extended free ration to an estimated 80 crore till November this year. The entire Europe's 50-nation population is 58 crore. All of North and South America's 37 countries constitute 94 crore people. And India alone faces the daunting task of feeding 80 crore people till November. Isn't it an indication of an unprecedented economic downturn for India? How will the state fund this mega plan? How will the potentially empty state coffers be replenished once the 'free ration' scheme ends? Won't the beneficiaries demand its extension?

Understandably, India is in dire straits today, thanks to the seven-decade-long tradition of misconceived and ill-advised appeasement diplomacy, the Hindi-Chini bhai-bhai (Hindustan-Chinese

AS I SEE IT

World must seek reparation from China

Post-Covid, it's a fit case for the world to demand reparation, as was done after World War I, at the Treaty of Versailles, in 1919. Articles 231 and 232 made Germany sign and pay for the irreparable, willful damage, destruction and death caused to its European neighbors in particular. Germany confessed 'war guilt' and agreed 'compensation will be made for all damage done to civilian population of Allies and their property.'



Coronavirus effect: Global economy has not only been hit hard; it has tumbled. But the Dragon isn't hit or hurt.

fraternity) policy, systematically undercutting the economics, polity, commerce, trade, industry and security systems of India.

Thus, if one were to scrutinize the single most important parameter, gross domestic product (GDP), pertaining to the economics of a nation, there's little doubt that Indian economy is in free fall, along with that of 200-plus countries - the exception being China.

The much-touted 'world is one' slogan is a reality today. The world is indeed one, because it is sinking as one, sans the Chinese. Beijing is tom-tomming its success in combating, containing and crushing the disease which has ravaged the planet.

Here, a cursory glance at the 2017 GDP figures of the 15 biggest economies would be relevant: US (\$19.48 trillion); Japan (\$4.87 trillion); Germany (\$3.69 trillion); India (\$2.65 trillion); UK (\$2.63 trillion); France (\$2.58 trillion); Brazil (\$2.05 trillion); Italy (\$1.94 trillion); Canada (\$1.64 trillion); Russia (\$1.57

trillion); South Korea (\$1.53 trillion); Australia (\$1.32 trillion); Spain (\$1.31 trillion); Mexico (\$1.15 trillion) and Indonesia (\$1.01 trillion). All are going downhill.

Yet, the second biggest economy, as per the 2017 GDP, China (\$12.23 trillion), as reported by the China Daily Global Weekly (July 24-30) is on the upswing. Chinese President Xi Jinping met corporate leaders on July 21 "to protect market players and stimulate vitality as the Covid-19 pandemic has hit hard the domestic and global economy."

Global economy isn't just hit hard, it has tumbled. But the Dragon isn't hit or hurt, as reported by the same daily: "China has become the world's first major economy that's shown robust recovery from the impact of the pandemic, with its GDP expanding 3.2% year-on-year in the second quarter, reversing a 6.8% decline in the first quarter." This is a fit case for the world to collectively demand reparation, as was done after World War I, at the Treaty of

Versailles in 1919. Two Articles - 231 and 232 - made Germany sign and pay for the irreparable, willful damage, destruction and death it had caused to its European neighbors in particular.

The prefix 're' became the economic slogan of the destroyed economies - reconstruction, recovery, reparations, retrenchment, repayment of war debts, revaluation of currencies and the restoration of gold standard. The 21st century thus far, however, has seen a war without war. Essentially because there's hardly any power, outside of Asia, with the manpower to fight a physical war owing to the shrinking demography of the West and the impact of the Chinese virus.

It's, therefore, time to demand reparation from China by the top economic powers of the world in unison. The formula could be arrived at by calculating the loss of the notional GDP figure between 2018-19 and 2020-21. Germany confessed 'war guilt' under Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles and agreed to 'compensation' under Article 232: "compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allies and their property."

The wheel has indeed turned full circle. After 101 years, reparation today is the sine qua non for a free world facing an autocratic, reckless China which is consistently failing to adhere to, or follow, the canons of collective wisdom, so very essential for the existence, nay survival, of the human race. Will China curtail its expansionist ambitions and avoid taking control of weaker landlocked territory through unfair means? The time for reparation is now.

(The author is a writer and political commentator)

GUEST COMMENT

The treatment for coronavirus has thrown up its own set of problems. With no known protocol for treating the disease, the pandemic has seen a renewed thrust being laid on public healthcare, with facilities being ramped up in government hospitals, while private hospitals have been providing care amid charges of being unaffordable. Another dimension has now been added to the problem with the revelation that a drug smuggling cartel has been busted in Gurugram that not only hoarded medicines for Covid treatment but also was to smuggle these on a Vande Bharat flight. What is worse is that the cartel managed to procure the list of travelers

and planned to send the medicines in small batches with Iraqi nationals.

Hospitals for Covid treatment in Gurugram are now under the scanner because the drugs are supposed to be directly provided to the hospitals by the manufacturing company after verifying patients' details. The drug department too is given a daily dispensing report of these medicines. The police are probing if any hospital helped the accused in procuring the drugs. An alert has also been sounded to check the sale of Covid drugs on the black market in Haryana.

Covid drug cartel: Check illegal trade, maintain supply chain

The involvement of foreign nationals is a matter of grave concern, for it may involve national security. That the cartel could think of pulling off the deal at a time when flights are restricted and frisking for security should have been tighter are all aspects that should be looked into.

Unlike India, Iraq has been in turmoil, faced with war and sanctions. The violence has affected hospitals, doctors and other medical staff, besides the supply of medical essentials. The raging coronavirus in neighboring Iran has

also fueled concerns. The chaos has meant laxity, leading to smuggling of drugs from various countries, including India, where the prices are much lower as compared to other countries, assuring lucrative returns for the smugglers. While efforts are being made to boost the manufacturing and supply of Covid drugs to meet the demand, the government should clamp down on their illegal trade while looking into the possibility of humanitarian assistance to other countries.

(Tribune, India)

The 'RIGHT TO RETURN' and violations of a sacred principle



By George Abraham

"Are the NRIs at the mercy of the authorities for a 'right to return?' Don't they deserve a better reception when they arrive home during a crisis such as this? At the minimum, don't the migrant laborers deserve an advance notice of an impending shutdown so they could safely plan for their right to return home? These questions cry out for answers from those who sit in the citadels of power and appear indifferent to the plights of the NRIs and poor migrant laborers"

Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says that 'everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state, and everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own and to return to his country'. However, during the pandemic's challenging times, these grand old principles have taken a severe beating. Many countries, including India, may not have said 'No' to their citizens but advertently or inadvertently put roadblocks in every which way of their timely return to the home country.

The right to return is a principle in international law that guarantees that everyone has a right of voluntary return to or re-entry to their country of origin or citizenship. International covenant on civil and political rights Article 12 (4) states that 'No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country'. The right of a person to return to his own country recognizes the special relationship of a person to that country.

Aren't we supposed to be a global village where our lives have been transcended into a borderless world? Well, COVID-19 has changed everything! The famous writer and columnist Thomas Friedman's dream of the 'world is flat, and the theory

Rampukar Pandit talking to his wife about their sick baby boy as he tried to get home

Photograph / Courtesy Atul Yadav/PTI



of globalization now shifted into warp drive' appears to have gone out of the window. The countries one by one started erecting new barriers and preventing people from traveling to their desired destinations. They were soon deciding which foreign nationals are welcome and who are not. Next, they were closing borders and effectively shutting down all travel and thereby stranding millions of foreign nationals away from their homes.

What happened consequently is a story of people everywhere of pain and sufferings of immense proportions. Although many countries facilitated their nationals' return through provisional means of transportation, millions more were left in a quandary without adequate finances or accommodations. Take, for example, the sad cases of Keralites, who got trapped in the Middle East due to the central government's inaction or bureaucratic bungling. Many of them were confined to a single room, some infected with COVID, and few others either furloughed or out of work lacking resources for food or essential medicines.

After the initial evacuation of a few thousand NRIs from places like China, Italy, and few other places, India sealed its borders, closed the airports, and stopped train and bus services, and practically shut down the entire country. The Modi Government gave just four hours of notice before making the whole country come to a standstill. Millions of migrant laborers who were caught off guard by these fast-moving developments became the ultimate victims of this horrific tragedy orchestrated by a government's ill-advised action.

A photograph of an Indian in the Guardian newspaper, his face contorted with anguish talking with his wife about his sick boy has come to symbolize the plight of the migrant laborers who are penniless but had to walk hundreds of miles under extreme conditions, to reach home! The right to return principle also applies to these migrant laborers within a country. In one of the court rulings by the International Court of Justice, a criterion established for the right of return includes "close and enduring connection,"

"Air India, the national carrier known for its money-losing ways, wasted no time exploiting the situation to its advantage in charging exorbitant prices for a one-way journey. It is not only the Government and the Bureaucracy that has done a disservice to the Indian nationals who are living abroad, but also the neighbors and friends who have targeted them and falsely accused them as carriers of Covid virus."

"tradition," "establishment," "interests," and "family ties." It includes not only the right to return after having left one's own country; it may also entitle a person to come to the country for the first time if he or she was born outside the country.

Many of these conventions and rules were allegedly circumvented or violated by those in power for political expediency. Instead of bringing home the stranded nationals, during the lockdown, they were left to fend for themselves under trying conditions to the detriment of their health and wellbeing. A state like Kerala that lives off the foreign NRI remittances appeared to have placed several roadblocks before the returning residents even from neighboring States. By requiring COVID negative certificates and delaying entry clearance documents, Kerala has sent mixed signals of readiness. In their eagerness to score brownie points from the International media for their management expertise containing the contagion's spread, NRI interests have become the sacrificial lambs at the altar of provincialism and self-indulgence.

Thomas T. Oommen, a community activist in New York who is an intercessor for the NRIs regarding passports and visas with the consular offices, told a heartbreaking story of a family on an H-1B visa refused by Air India to board because their newborn baby only carried an OCI card. Having lost the job, this family vacated their apartment, sold off their possessions, and were ready to move

"Instead of bringing home the stranded nationals, during the lockdown, they were left to fend for themselves under trying conditions to the detriment of their health and wellbeing. A state like Kerala that lives off the foreign NRI remittances appeared to have placed several roadblocks before the returning residents even from neighboring States. By requiring COVID negative certificates and delaying entry clearance documents, Kerala has sent mixed signals of readiness. In their eagerness to score brownie points from the International media for their management expertise containing the contagion's spread, NRI interests have become the sacrificial lambs at the altar of provincialism and self-indulgence."

back to India when they were turned back. This bureaucratic mischief not only denied the right to return of a national but also questioned the very validity and reliability of the OCI card itself. Even without an OCI card, that baby is entitled to come to India because of the "family ties." Although the politicians continue to hail the rights and privileges of the OCI cards, the hollowness of it all was so vivid throughout this pandemic period.

Air India, the national carrier known for its money-losing ways, wasted no time exploiting the situation to its advantage in charging exorbitant prices for a one-way journey. It is not only the Government and the Bureaucracy that has done a disservice to the Indian nationals who are living abroad, but also the neighbors and friends who have targeted them and falsely accused them as carriers of Covid virus. I agree with the premise that returnees ought to be responsible for their conduct as per the rules and regulations. However, there are cases of People who were denied the rightful entry to their apartments and families refusing to receive their loved ones as if they are perpetrators, not anything but hapless victims. Those accolades and praises showered upon the NRIs in the past by the politicians and their fellow citizens not only ring hollow now but expose their duplicity and insincerity at its highest form. According to Human Rights Watch, "like all rights, the right to return binds governments. No government can violate this right. Only individuals may elect not to exercise it. Government's legitimate security or health concerns should be met consistently with these principles and other internationally recognized human rights".

Are the NRIs at the mercy of the authorities for a 'right to return?' Don't they deserve a better reception when they arrive home during a crisis such as this? At the minimum, don't the migrant laborers deserve an advance notice of an impending shutdown so they could safely plan for their right to return home? These questions cry out for answers from those who sit in the citadels of power and appear indifferent to the plights of the NRIs and poor migrant laborers.

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

Nepal to reopen Everest to climbers despite coronavirus case rise

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal will reopen its Himalayan mountains, including Mount Everest, to climbers for the autumn season, officials said on Thursday, to boost the tourism-dependent economy despite rising coronavirus infections.

Home to eight of the world's 14 tallest mountains, Nepal shut down climbing and trekking in March to stem the novel coronavirus, which has so far infected 19,547 people and caused 52 deaths in the country of 30 million.

"We have reopened mountaineering and will issue climbing permits for the autumn season," tourism department official Mira Acharya said, adding that climbers must follow health protocols issued by the government. The autumn climbing season in Nepal runs from September to November.

While infections in many Western nations are falling, South Asian countries, including Nepal, are still witnessing a steady rise in the caseload. The absence of climbing in the popular April-May season caused Nepal millions of dollars in losses. Hundreds of foreign travellers and some 200,000 sherpas, guides and porters were hit.

Though the government now wants to reopen climbing, international flights are shut until mid-August and travel restrictions within Nepal remain, meaning climbers will still be kept away in the short term, expedition organisers said.

"Some climbers to smaller mountains may come but I have doubts about big ones," said Ang Tshering Sherpa, an expedition organiser in the capital Kathmandu.

Nepal on Thursday also allowed the reopening of hotels and restaurants with some restrictions. No conferences, seminars, gyms or casinos would be allowed, said Binayak Shah, vice president of the Hotel Association Nepal (HAN). "Now it is (about) which hotel is safe, not which offers better services," Shah said. Reuters

Singapore PM's nephew found guilty of contempt, fined S\$15,000

SINGAPORE (TIP): The Singapore prime minister's nephew was found guilty of contempt of court and fined S\$15,000 (\$10,884) by the city-state's top court on Wednesday, media reported.

Li Shengwu's case involved a private Facebook post in 2017 in which he said the Singapore government was "very litigious and has a pliant court system". Earlier this year, he said he had opted not to participate in the proceedings against him.

His 2017 post came amid a bitter public feud among the children of the island's founding father, Lee Kuan Yew, including the current prime minister, Lee Hsien Loong, and Li's father, Lee Hsien Yang. Reuters

Pak Senate approves two FATF-related Bills

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan's Senate on Thursday unanimously approved two Bills related to the tough conditions set by the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog FATF, a day after they were passed in the National Assembly amidst vociferous protest from the Opposition parties.

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Amendment Bill, 2020, and the Anti-Terrorism Act Amendment Bill, 2020, were presented by Advisor to Prime Minister on Parliamentary Affairs Senator Babar Awan.

The Bills include measures of freezing and seizure of assets, travel ban, and arms embargo on the entities and individuals, who are designated on the sanctions list of the United Nations and impose heavy fine and long term jails for those facilitating militancy.

The two Bills passed by the National Assembly on Wednesday fulfil various requirements of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) which put Pakistan on its grey list in June 2016 after Islamabad agreed to implement a 27-point plan of action to improve its legal regime to curb money laundering and terror financing.

The UN Security Council Resolution 1373 made it incumbent on the member states to implement counter-terrorism measures, especially countering the financing of terrorism through their domestic laws.

The legislation was part of efforts by Pakistan to move from the FATF'S grey list to the white list.



The FATF put Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked Islamabad to implement a plan of action by the end of 2019 but the deadline was extended later on due to COVID-19.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi thanked the Senate members for approving the Bills and exuded confidence that after this legislation, Pakistan will come out of the FATF grey list.

Law Minister Farooq Naseem in his video message congratulated the nation over the passage of the Bills in the Senate.

"This legislation will help us meet the deadline of FATEF," he said.

According to officials, an implementation report would be submitted to the FATF by August 6.

The National Assembly passed the two Bills with a majority vote amid a loud protest from the Opposition parties on Wednesday. But the situation in the Senate was cordial and cooperative. The session was chaired by Chairman Sadiq Sanjrani.

Earlier, the Senate's Standing

Committee on Law and Justice, chaired by Chairman Javed Abbasi, unanimously approved the Bills with some minor amendments.

The government has prepared eight Bills for legislation on anti-money laundering and terror financing with a view of moving Pakistan from the FATF's grey list to the white list.

In its third and final plenary held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic in June, the FATF decided to keep Pakistan in the "grey list" as Islamabad failed to check the flow of money to terror groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). The plenary was held under the Chinese Presidency of Xiangmin Liu.

With Pakistan's continuation in the 'grey list', it will be difficult for the country to get financial aid from the IMF, World Bank, ADB, and the European Union, thus further enhancing problems for the nation which is in a precarious financial situation.

If Pakistan fails to comply with the FATF directive by October, there is every possibility that the global body may put the country in the 'Black List' along with North Korea and Iran.

The FATF is an inter-governmental body established in 1989 to combat money laundering, terrorist financing, and other related threats to the integrity of the international financial system.

It has currently 39 members including two regional organisations—the European Commission and Gulf Cooperation Council. PTI

Afghan girl takes up motocross and champions women's rights

KABUL (TIP): For 16-year-old Negin Afshar, riding a motorbike around a dirt track in Kabul isn't just about the excitement. It is also a way to show that Afghan women can be tough too in a country where concerns are growing that hard-earned rights might be lost.

Encouraged by her parents, Afshar took up motocross about a year ago after having competed for Afghanistan in athletics when she was younger.

Wearing a white helmet and black and red motorbike suit, she trains with male riders on a barren lot surrounded by warehouses and private homes.

"When I saw the men motorcycling here, I decided to pursue motocross to inspire Afghan women and show that they can do this tough sport as well," Afshar said during a break from practice.

"I tried to be one of the first women to take this path, and I hope we can encourage others as well."

She and her mother worry that pursuing her passion may not be so easy in future, with the hardline Islamist



Taliban movement bidding for a share of power in a country where it has led a ruthless insurgency since 2001.

When the group ruled Afghanistan in the late 1990s, girls were not allowed to attend school, women could not work and they had to wear all-enveloping burqas when they left their homes.

In recent months the Taliban has projected itself as more moderate, as it seeks to turn battlefield gains into formal recognition. Talks with a government-mandated committee remain stalled amid violence and mutual suspicion.

Asked whether she was concerned about the rights of girls and women being eroded should the Taliban return to power, Afshar replied: "God willing, this will not happen, because our government will not allow the Taliban to do so ... If they want to violate our rights, we will stand against them and resist. I will not leave my country, and I want to stay here and serve my country."

Her mother, Frishta Afshar, head of the women's committee of the National Motorcycling Federation of Afghanistan, agreed. "Some people do not agree with this, and they have a negative view, while others agree and encourage," she said. "In any case, my husband and I will support her as much as we can, and we want to take Negin to the highest peaks of success." Reuters

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Mexican megachurch leader charged again with child rape, human trafficking

LOS ANGELES (TIP): California on Wednesday charged the leader of a Mexican megachurch with child rape and human trafficking, months after a court dismissed the previous allegations because of prosecution errors.

Naasón Joaquín García, the self-proclaimed apostle of La Luz del Mundo, was charged with three dozen felony counts involving five women and girls between 2015 and 2018 in Los Angeles County.

Also charged were Susana Medina Oaxaca and Alondra Ocampo.

García is the spiritual leader of La Luz del Mundo, which is Spanish for "The Light Of The World." The Guadalajara, Mexico-based evangelical Christian church was founded by his grandfather and claims 5 million followers worldwide.

García and Ocampo already were in custody while Oaxaca remained free on bail. Messages to their attorneys weren't immediately returned.

Prosecutors contend that the three committed sex crimes and also produced child pornography involving church group members.

In April, an appeals court ordered Los Angeles Superior Court to dismiss charges against García, ruling that his preliminary hearing was not held in a timely manner and he did not waive his right to one.--AP

UK rapper Solo 45 sentenced to 24 years for violent rapes of 4 women

LONDON (TIP): British grime musician Solo 45 was sentenced Thursday to 24 years in prison for raping four women in what police said was among the most violent sexual behaviour they had seen.

The rapper, whose real name is Andy Anokye, was convicted of 30 charges, including 21 rapes and five counts of false imprisonment. Anokye claimed his violent acts — waterboarding, interrogating, assaulting and raping his victims — were part of consensual role play. But a jury at Bristol Crown Court in southwest England convicted him in March of all but one charge against him. Sentencing him on Thursday, judge William Hart said Anokye had "no empathy" for the women he abused.

Detective Superintendent Lisa Simpson of Avon and Somerset Police said Anokye's offenses were "some of the most violent sexual behaviour" the force had seen. "We cannot begin to understand what each individual victim has gone through," she said. Anokye, 33, was signed to Island Records and was part of the grime collective Boy Better Know. The judge said none of the other members of Boy Better Know "knew of your dark side and they are in no way tainted by your misdeeds, which were carried out in a wholly private and hidden way." AP

US coronavirus death toll passes 150,000: Johns Hopkins

The country recorded more than 4.38 million total cases.

WASHINGTON (TIP): More than 150,000 people have died of COVID-19 in the United States, according to a tally maintained by Johns Hopkins University.

The world's worst-hit country announced its first coronavirus-related death at the end of February and has now recorded more than 4.38 million total cases, the Baltimore-based university reported on Wednesday, July 29.

Trump ally who skipped mask tests positive

A Republican lawmaker who made a habit of walking around Congress without a mask tested positive for the coronavirus Wednesday, July 29, as he prepared to leave for his native Texas with President Donald Trump.

Louie Gohmert announced his diagnosis a day after attending a major hearing featuring testimony from Attorney General Bill Barr, with whom he was seen walking and chatting at a close distance while neither wore a mask.

Gohmert, 66, said he was asymptomatic and downplayed his



diagnosis.

He has worn a mask sporadically in recent weeks, and suggested Wednesday that moving it around on his face because it is uncomfortable "puts some germs in the mask" and maybe this caused his infection.

Even as the pandemic has raged in the US, President Donald Trump steadfastly ignored recommendations from US medical experts that people wear masks to help curb the spread of the virus and he did not wear one in public until July 11. Since then, Republican lawmakers

who shunned masks have begun to wear them more regularly. But to wear or not wear a mask remains a political flashpoint in America.

Gohmert was tested Wednesday at the White House because he was supposed to accompany Mr. Trump on a visit to Texas.

"So I'm asymptomatic, I don't have any of the symptoms that are listed as part of COVID-19, but apparently I have the Wuhan virus," Gohmert said in a video using a term that angers China.

Gohmert said he has worn the mask more in the last week or two than in all of the past four months and did so during Tuesday's hearing with Barr.

But he took it off a few times and was seen walking and talking with Barr before the hearing.

"Wear a damn mask," said Democratic representative Jennifer Wexton from Virginia.

"I don't know who needs to hear this, but if you're a Member of Congress who refuses to wear a mask on Capitol Hill, you're not only putting your colleagues at risk -- you're endangering the staff who works here, including many of my constituents," she said. (Source: AFP)

Virendra Sharma MP leads campaign to jobs at Heathrow and other airports

NIRPAL SINGH SHERGILL IN LONDON

LONDON (TIP): Virendra Sharma MP lead the campaign of more than 25 MPs to lobby the Chancellor in favor of vital support for airports. Writing to the Chancellor Virendra Sharma MP said:

"Thousands face being made redundant because of falls in revenue for many businesses and certain industries almost completely drying up. Aviation is one of the hardest hit, almost no long-haul routes are open and passenger numbers are down to tiny fractions compared to the start of the year."

The collected MPs wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer because airports in England and Wales are still being expected to pay Business Rates as though they are functioning normally. While airports in Scotland and Northern Ireland have received support from their governments, English and Welsh airports haven't had anything.

To help address this huge shortfall and unfair discrepancy the MPs wrote:

"Under the current system while a business such as Tesco which has seen growth during Covid-19 has received £585 million in Business Rate Relief our Airports have seen not a penny.

We call on you to provide support to all English and Welsh airports in line with that afforded by Scotland and Northern Ireland. This will allow airports to continue to employ people, pay other



Virendra Sharma MP lead the campaign of more than 25 MPs to lobby the Chancellor in favor of vital support for airports

taxes and support the Covid recovery we all so badly need. We recognize this will in some areas cause an unacceptable shortfall in local authority income and so we ask you to compensate them for that loss and replace lost income to those affected local authorities."

Virendra Sharma MP wrote along with 25 other MPs, to urge action now before it is too late. Passenger numbers have in some cases fallen by 99% and more than 100,000 in the industry alone are facing the risk of unemployment. The aviation industry lost nearly £2 billion in the four-month period between March and June alone, which is equivalent to around £15 million each day.

The signatories (all MPs) included

Virendra Sharma MP
Gavin Newlands MP
Graham Stringer MP
John Spellar MP
Kim Johnson MP
Andrew Gwynne MP
Sarah Champion MP
Yvonne Fovargue MP
Henry Smith MP
George Howarth MP
Ed Davey MP
Barry Gardiner MP
Mike Hill MP
Mick Whitley MP
Allan Dorans MP
Patricia Gibson MP
Christine Jardine MP
Tony Lloyd MP
Ben Bradshaw MP
Ian Byrne MP
Derek Twigg MP
Sammy Wilson MP
Neil Parish MP
Catherine McKinnell MP
Apsana Begum MP
Mohammad Yasin MP

Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu talks trade and investment with Wisconsin Governor

WASHINGTON (TIP): Ambassador of India to the United States, Taranjit Singh Sandhu and Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers on July 29 held a virtual meeting and discussed trade and investment as well as people-to-people relations between Wisconsin and India.

Both discussed strategies to tap the potential in the agriculture, infrastructure and manufacturing sectors common to India and Wisconsin that would lead to win-win outcomes for both. The Ambassador briefed the Governor about the initiatives India has taken in healthcare and education and discussed collaboration in these sectors.

India and Wisconsin share a robust trade and investment relationship. The total trade between India and Wisconsin is over US\$ 1 billion. Many Indian companies in the IT, engineering services, medical equipment, and manufacturing sectors have invested in Wisconsin.

These companies have invested close to \$185 million in Wisconsin, creating over 2,460 jobs in the state. They also add value to local economies and communities through their CSR initiatives. Similarly, Wisconsin-based companies in the automobile, electrical equipment, financial services and technology sectors have established a strong presence in India. They include Harley Davidson, Rockwell Automation Inc., ManPower Group, etc.

The Indian community has a vibrant presence in Wisconsin, which is also an important destination for



Ambassador Sandhu (left) and Governor Evers (right) agreed to further strengthen the multifaceted engagement between India and the state of Wisconsin. (Pictures/ courtesy Embassy of India)

Indian students. Close to 1,500 Indian students are studying in educational institutions in Wisconsin.

India has a strong education connection with Wisconsin. The tradition of Indian studies started on the University of Wisconsin campus in the mid-1880s, when a Professorship of Sanskrit was established. Renowned bio-chemist Dr. Hargobind Khorana received his Nobel Prize in 1968 for research he conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he was on

faculty.

The Ambassador underscored the need to revive and strengthen the university-to-university linkages between India and the U.S., including in the fields of R&D and bio-health.

Ambassador Sandhu and Governor Evers agreed to further strengthen the multifaceted engagement between India and the state of Wisconsin.

(Based on a press release)

Gandhi-King Exchange Act Passed in House Foreign Affairs Committee

WASHINGTON (TIP): Indian American Congressman Ami Bera, M.D. (D-CA) hailed the passage of the Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act out of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. The bill, written by the late Congressman John Lewis and cosponsored by Congressman Bera, would establish an exchange initiative between the United States and India to study the work and legacies of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

"John Lewis was a civil rights hero not only in the United States, but across the globe. John fought for human rights, equality and justice, and democracy for all. Just like Gandhi and Dr. King, Congressman Lewis shaped the world through his actions of nonviolence, and his life story will reverberate throughout history. The Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act is a fitting tribute to his incredible legacy," said Representative Bera, who is the longest serving Indian-American Member of Congress in history. "As the world's oldest and largest democracies, the United States and India have long traditions of upholding these shared values championed by figures like Gandhi, King, and Congressman Lewis. But they are increasingly under threat in both countries. This legislation will help those values endure and remind us that by holding true to them, we embody and live up to the best of our two nations."

In 2009, Congressman John Lewis led a congressional delegation visit to India to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Dr. King's pilgrimage to India. Inspired by his



The bill, written by the late Congressman John Lewis (left) and cosponsored by Indian American Congressman Ami Bera (right), would establish an exchange initiative between the US and India to study the work and legacies of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr

visit, Congressman Lewis created the Gandhi-King Exchange Act to seek to apply the philosophies of Gandhi and Dr. King, Jr. to conflict resolution efforts and current policy challenges.

The Gandhi-King Scholarly Exchange Initiative Act authorizes the State Department, in cooperation with the Indian government, to:

- Establish an annual educational forum for scholars from both countries that focuses on the legacies of Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr;
- Develop a professional development training initiative on conflict resolution based on the principles of nonviolence; and
- Establish a foundation to address social, environmental, and health priorities in India.

Representative Ami Bera serves as Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific, and Nonproliferation.

Indian American Congressman Introduces Lifesaving Legislation to Curb COVID-19 Surge

WASHINGTON (TIP):

As COVID-19 infections continue to surge across America and nearly 30 states impose public mask-wearing requirements, Indian American Rep. Ro Khanna (CA-17), Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and over three dozen of their Democratic colleagues in the Senate and House introduced lifesaving legislation July 28 to manufacture and distribute high-quality, reusable masks to everyone in America.

"If we can afford a \$740 billion defense budget, we can afford to send every American a face mask," said Rep. Khanna. "We are the wealthiest country on earth, yet our health care workers are still facing a shortage of N-95s, our essential workers are having to purchase their own protective face masks, and far too many vulnerable Americans are being left to figure out how to procure this basic need. Congress has a responsibility to step up where the White House has abdicated its responsibility and ensure every family has the equipment, they need to stay safe. If we're asking folks to wear a mask, which is absolutely essential, it's on us to provide one."

"We are the only high-income country in the world where infections and deaths are skyrocketing instead of falling. Nearly 150,000 are dead and 1,000 more are dying every day. That is an absolute scandal," said Sen. Sanders. "Dozens of my colleagues and I are proposing that we do what our public health experts and



"If we can afford a \$740 billion defense budget, we can afford to send every American a face mask," said Rep. Khanna

scientists say we must do. This is not a political or partisan issue. Providing all of our people with high-quality, reusable masks without cost could save tens of thousands of lives and avoid hundreds of billions of dollars in economic harm."

According to one estimate, widespread mask wearing could save over 40,000 American lives by November 1, while another analysis predicted

\$1 trillion in the economic benefits of mask wearing through avoidance of strict lockdown measures. In questioning by Sanders at a recent Senate hearing, Dr. Anthony Fauci voiced his support for the proposal, echoing the consensus of the medical community. "There's no doubt that wearing masks protects you and gets you to be protected. So it's people protecting each other," Fauci said. "Anything that furthers the use of masks, whether it is giving out free masks or any other mechanism, I am thoroughly in favor of."

This proposal, developed in consultation with health experts including Andy Slavitt, the former Acting Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services under President Obama, would use the United States Postal Service to distribute three free, reusable masks to every person in the country, including individuals who are experiencing homelessness or living in group settings such as prisons, shelters, college dorms, and assisted living facilities.

CORONAVIRUS CASES

55,000 fresh cases take India's corona tally to 16.38 lakh; 779 more deaths take toll to 35,747

NEW DELHI (TIP): With a record single-day surge of 55,078 infections, India's COVID-19 caseload raced past 16 lakh on Friday, just two days after it reached the 15-lakh mark, while the number of recoveries rose to 10,57,805, according to Union Health Ministry data.

The country has so far registered 16,38,870 instances of the coronavirus infection. The death toll increased to 35,747 with 779 fatalities being reported in 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

This is the second consecutive day that COVID-19 cases have increased by more than 50,000. The total number of confirmed cases also includes foreigners.

There are 5,45,318 active COVID-19 cases in the country. The recovery rate rose to 64.54 per cent while the fatality rate dropped further to 2.18 per cent.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research, a cumulative 1,88,32,970 samples have been tested up to July 30 with 6,42,588 being examined on Thursday.

Of the 779 deaths reported on Friday, 266 were from Maharashtra, 97 from Tamil Nadu, 83 from Karnataka, 68 from Andhra Pradesh and 57 from Uttar Pradesh.

West Bengal registered 46 deaths, Delhi 29, Gujarat 22, Jammu and Kashmir 17, Madhya Pradesh 14 and Rajasthan and Telangana 13 each.



Ten fatalities have been reported from Odisha, nine from Punjab, five from Jharkhand, four each from Bihar, Haryana, Manipur and Uttarakhand, three each from Goa and Chhattisgarh, two each from Assam, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Kerala while Ladakh and Puducherry recorded one fatality each.

Manipur has for the first time reported COVID-19 fatalities.

Among the 35,747 deaths reported till now, Maharashtra accounts for

the maximum 14,728 fatalities, followed by Delhi with 3,936 deaths, Tamil Nadu 3,838, Gujarat 2,418, Karnataka 2,230, Uttar Pradesh 1,587, West Bengal 1,536, Andhra Pradesh 1,281 and Madhya Pradesh 857.

So far, 663 people have died of COVID-19 in Rajasthan, 505 in Telangana, 417 in Haryana, 370 in Punjab, 365 in Jammu and Kashmir, 282 in Bihar, 169 in Odisha, 103 in Jharkhand, 94 in Assam, 76 in Uttarakhand and 70 in Kerala.



Herd immunity in India may be generated only in pockets, can be short-lived: Scientists

NEW DELHI (TIP): Herd immunity against COVID-19 in India is likely to be achieved only in pockets given the many socio-economic groups in the country and may be short-lived rather than long-lasting, say scientists as sero-surveillance data from New Delhi and Mumbai raise hopes of 'community protection' from the disease.

Herd immunity occurs when a large number of people, usually 70 to 90 per cent, become immune to a contagious disease after being infected to it.

But there are many grey areas clouding the issue as far as the novel coronavirus is concerned with no consensus on when herd immunity sets in.

"There are no clear numbers to say at what per cent of infected population we will achieve herd immunity. Many epidemiologists believe that for SARS-CoV-2 it would be at around 60 per cent," said Shahid Jameel, virologist and CEO of the Wellcome Trust/DBT India Alliance, a public charity that invests in building biomedical sciences and health research frameworks.

He said different parts of the country will get closer to herd immunity at different times.

A recent study published in the journal Science also found that herd immunity against COVID-19 could be achieved with fewer people being infected than previously estimated.

"Herd immunity is determined primarily by how many individuals in a population are immune to a particular infection. This results in indirect immunity to others in the population who never got exposed or infected," explained virologist Upasana Ray.

"Essentially, herd immunity means that the more the number of people get infected and develop immunity, the less chance there is for others in the population to get infected," Ray, senior scientist at CSIR-IICB, Kolkata, told PTI.

MEA: Ladakh disengagement not yet complete

NEW DELHI (TIP): India today said more meetings at the military level were needed because the process of disengagement of Indian and Chinese troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) had not been completed.

"We expect that the Chinese side will sincerely work with us for complete disengagement and de-escalation and full restoration of peace and tranquillity in border areas at the earliest," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said at a virtual briefing.

Speaking minutes after the Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong again accused Indian troops of breaking an understanding between military commanders not to transgress the LAC in the Galwan valley, Srivastava said there had been some progress towards disengagement, but the process had not been completed.

The Chinese envoy said Indian troops had been making roads, bridges and infrastructure in the Galwan valley area since April. Following representations from China, India agreed to withdraw its troops and dismantle the infrastructure. On June 15 evening, Indian troops crossed the LAC and attacked Chinese soldiers, leading to a physical clash.

INDIA GETS RAFALE FIGHTER JETS FROM FRANCE, BOOSTING ITS AIR FORCE

NEW DELHI (TIP): Five French-made jet fighters arrived in India on Wednesday, the first of 36 New Delhi ordered as it moves to upgrade its air force amid a spike in tensions with China.

"The Birds have landed safely in Ambala," Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh tweeted. "The touchdown of Rafale combat aircrafts in India marks the beginning of a new era in our military history."

Singh said the twin-engine, multirole fighters would "revolutionize" the Indian Air Force (IAF). Ordered in 2016, they come in one-seat or two-seat versions and can be armed with air-to-air, air-to-ground and anti-ship missiles as well as a 30mm cannon, according to the manufacturer, Dassault Aviation.

Dassault also touts the Rafale's Flight Control System, which includes the ability for it to fly on autopilot in a terrain-following mode in all weather conditions.

"This aircraft has very good flying performance and its weapons, radar and other sensors and electronic warfare capabilities are among the best in the world. Its arrival in India will make the IAF much stronger to deter any threat that may be posed on our country," Singh is quoted as saying in a government press release.

The arrival of the jets in India comes about six weeks after Indian troops fought with Chinese soldiers along the Line of Actual Control, the disputed border between the two powers high in the Himalayas. Twenty Indians were killed in hand-to-hand combat, and fears linger of further hostilities.



Singh made reference to the dispute on Wednesday. "If it is anyone who should be worried about, or critical about this new capability of the Indian Air Force, it should be those who want to threaten our territorial integrity," he tweeted.

Indian media has been filled with glowing expert reviews of the Rafale jets compared to what China could bring to bear in any aerial conflict, including China's new J-20 stealth fighters. The Rafale is not a stealth jet, but it is touted for having a low profile that is not easy to detect on radar.

How the two aircraft may face off is an open debate, but the Rafale may have one distinct advantage -- combat experience.

Flown by French forces, the Rafale has been used in operations in Afghanistan, Libya, Mali, Iraq and Syria, Dassault Aviation says on its website.

India's development cooperation does not come with any conditions, says PM Modi

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's development cooperation with other nations does not come with any conditions and is not influenced by political or commercial considerations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted on Thursday.

He said India's approach to development is mainly human-centric and it wants to work for the welfare of humanity. "Our development partnerships reflect the development priorities of our partner nations," he said.

The prime minister was addressing a virtual event of the inauguration of a new Supreme Court building of Mauritius.

Modi and Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth jointly inaugurated the new Supreme Court building at Port Louis.

The new building in Port Louis is a symbol of our cooperation and shared values, Modi said.

"Both India and Mauritius respect our independent judiciaries as important pillars of our democratic systems," the prime minister observed.

Modi said history had taught us that in the name of development partnerships, nations were forced into "dependence partnerships". "It gave rise to colonial and imperial rule. It gave rise to global power blocks and humanity suffered," he said.

India is making development partnerships that are marked by respect, diversity, care for the future, and sustainable development, he noted.

For India, Modi said, the most fundamental principle in development cooperation is respecting its partners.

"This sharing of development lessons is our only motivation. That is why our development cooperation does not come with any conditions. It is not influenced by political or commercial considerations," the prime minister asserted.

Modi observed that Mahatma Gandhi had said, "My patriotism includes the good of mankind in general. Therefore, my service to India includes the service of humanity." This, Modi said, is India's guiding philosophy.



"India wants to develop and India wants to help others in their own development needs," he noted. India's development partnerships are diverse, he said, adding that from commerce to culture, energy to engineering, health to housing, IT to infrastructure, sports to science, India is working with nations across the globe.

"If India is honoured to help in the parliament building in Afghanistan, it is also proud to be associated with the making of the Mahatma Gandhi convention centre in Niger," he said.

Modi said New Delhi had been happy to help Nepal improve its health services through the construction of an emergency and trauma hospital. "And we were similarly privileged to support Sri Lanka's efforts to establish emergency ambulance services in all nine provinces," he said.

India is glad that the oil pipeline project it is doing with Nepal will help ensure the availability of petroleum products, he said.



NEW EDUCATION POLICY: FIVE BIG CHANGES IN SCHOOL, HIGHER EDUCATION

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Indian government Wednesday replaced a 34-year-old National Policy on Education, framed in 1986, with the New Education Policy of 2020. The NEP, approved by the union cabinet, makes sweeping reforms in school and higher education including teaching. Some of the biggest highlights of the NEP 2020 are, 1) a single regulator for higher education institutions, 2) multiple entry and exit options in degree courses, 3) discontinuation of MPhil programmes, 4) low stakes board exams, 5) common entrance exams for universities.

New Education Policy 2020: Important highlights

Schooling starts at the age of 3 years now

The New Education Policy expands age group 6-14 years of mandatory schooling to 3-18 years of schooling. The NEP introduces hitherto uncovered three years of pre-schooling, age group of 3-6 years under the school curriculum. The new system will have 12 years of schooling with three years of Anganwadi/ pre-schooling.

With an emphasis on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), the 10+2 structure of school curriculum is to be replaced by a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to ages 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years respectively.

Mother tongue as medium of instruction

The NEP puts focus on students' mother tongue as the medium of instruction even as it sticks to the 'three language formula' but also mandates that no language would be imposed on anyone. The NEP only recommends the mother tongue as medium of instruction, and not make it compulsory.

The policy document states that children learn and grasp non-trivial concepts more quickly in their home language. "Wherever possible, the medium of instruction until at least Grade 5, but preferably till Grade 8 and beyond, will be the home language, mother tongue, local language or the regional language. Thereafter, the home or local language shall continue to be taught as a language wherever possible. This will be followed by both public and private schools," the policy states.

NO UGC, AICTE, NCTE

Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. Public and private higher education institutions will be governed by the same set of norms for regulation, accreditation and academic standards.

Govt will phase out the affiliation of colleges in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges.

Science, arts, commerce gets blurred

Under NEP 2020, there will be no rigid separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams. Students can select subjects of their liking across the streams. Vocational education will start in schools from the 6th grade, and will include internships.

FYUP Programme Returns & No More Dropouts

Under the NEP, undergraduate degree will be of either 3 or 4-year duration with multiple exit options within this period. College will be mandated to give certificate after completing 1 year in a discipline or field including vocational and professional areas, a diploma after 2 years of study, or a Bachelor's degree after a 3-year programme.

I was in a live-in relationship with Sushant, left him on June 8: Rhea to SC

Claims the late actor's father falsely implicated her in suicide case

NEW DELHI (TIP): Actress Rhea Chakraborty has told the Supreme Court that she has been falsely implicated in the FIR registered against her in Bihar by late actor Sushant Singh Rajput's father.

Sushant Singh Rajput's suicide case took a dramatic turn recently after his father KK.Singh recently filed an FIR in Patna accusing six people, including actress Rhea Chakraborty, for abetment to suicide.

The actress, who on Wednesday had moved the Supreme Court seeking transfer of the investigation to Mumbai, told the apex court that she also received many death and rape threats and that she is in deep trauma due to the loss of Sushant, which has multiplied further due to the constant media glare the case has been receiving.

Rhea informed the top court that she was in a live-in relationship with Sushant till June 8. She claimed that Sushant was suffering from depression for some time and was on



anti-depressants.

"In peculiar facts and circumstances of the present case, the petitioner has been falsely implicated in the present case filed by at the instance of Krishna Kishore Singh," Rhea said in her plea.

"He committed suicide on the morning of June 14 at his Bandra residence by hanging himself. The petitioner was summoned and she had visited the Bandra police station on various occasions and her

statement was recorded under Section 175 of CrPC.

"The petitioner has filed a complaint at Santa Cruz police station in Mumbai against the death and rape threats. It would be just and expedient, if the transfer of the case is directed from Patna to Mumbai," the plea said.

Speaking to IANS earlier, Rhea's lawyer Satish Maneshinde had said that his client has electronically filed a petition in the Supreme Court, seeking transfer of investigation from Patna to Mumbai where the investigation in connection to the actor's death was already in progress.

Sushant and Rhea were in a relationship before the actor's alleged suicide on June 14. Sushant's father has levelled various allegations against Rhea, including taking money from his son and also threatening to disclose his medical reports with the media. Sushant's family has also accused Rhea of keeping him away from his family.

'DESERT ONE' INSPIRES TODAY'S TROUBLED TIMES

"It is a film about U.S. leadership and gumption, our leaders taking responsibility - even when things go wrong - and courage in the face of adversity."

"I also experienced one of the most precious moments of my career on this film, sitting down to interview President Jimmy Carter. I can remember well how I felt when Carter won the election. I rediscovered Jimmy Carter's presidency through this film and found much to admire."

- Barbara Kopple, Director

"Kopple's latest film, "Desert One", ranks among her best work."

- "Point Of View" Magazine

Must-see trailer about the most difficult & audacious rescue mission ever

Two-time academy award®-winner

Barbara kopple's "desert one" on august 21 Documentary recounts the story of the 1980 rescue attempt by u.s. Special forces of american hostages being held in iran Includes

Interviews with president jimmy carter, vice president walter mondale,

Abc nightline journalist ted koppel,

Former hostages, hostage takers, and others

Never before seen archival material and exquisite animation

Desert One", from Two-time Academy Award®-winning filmmaker Barbara Kopple ("Harlan County USA," "American Dream") tells the incredible tale of America's secret mission to free the hostages of the 1979 Iranian revolution, which has been called "the most audacious, difficult, complicated, rescue mission ever attempted."

Forty years later, one of the most daring military rescue attempts in US history is coming to the big screen. The acclaimed documentary feature "Desert One" from two-time Academy Award® winner Barbara Kopple will be released on Friday, August 21. The documentary feature, produced by HISTORY®, recounts the April 24/25, 1980 thrilling attempt to rescue 52 US citizens who were taken hostage by Iranian revolutionaries in Tehran.

"Desert One" premiered to rave reviews at the 2019 Toronto International Film Festival followed by incredible reactions at AFI Fest, DOC NYC, Palm Springs International Film Festival, and Double Exposure: Investigative Film Festival where it was the opening night film.

"Desert One" uniquely blends emotion and bravado to tell the incredible tale of America's secret mission to free the hostages of the 1979 Iranian revolution. Barbara Kopple discovers a wealth of unearthed archival sources and receives unprecedented access, engaging in intimate conversations with many of the soldiers closest to the story, some for the first time, as well as President Jimmy Carter, Vice President Walter Mondale and TV newsman Ted Koppel. Evocative new animation brings audiences closer than anyone has ever gotten to being on the inside for this history-making operation.

This is the thrilling story of a group of Americans working together to overcome the most difficult problem of their lives. Among those Americans is President Jimmy Carter, readying to face a re-election



Barbara Kopple interviews President Jimmy Carter

Photo / Zachary Martin (Greenwich Ent)



Iranian students protest

Photo / Zachary Martin (Greenwich Ent)

challenge when self-described student revolutionaries suddenly take power in Iran. Anti-American students take the U.S. embassy in Tehran by force and hold hostage fifty-two American diplomats and citizens.

If the president takes aggressive military action, as many pundits advocate, he believes the hostages will be killed. That outcome is simply not one he is willing to accept. Publicly he takes a posture of pursuing diplomatic talks as his only answer, knowing this will create a perception of weakness that may be exploited by his opponents, but in secret he green lights the training for a rescue mission.

Like President Carter, America's Special Forces are also in uncharted territory as they ready for this one-of-a-kind operation. "Special ops" are today used with great frequency by the U.S. military, but then few had been attempted -- and none of such scale and complexity. Those who volunteer for the mission are forced to largely invent from scratch the techniques and strategies to accomplish Carter's goal. They know what faces them is daunting, but they are driven by a deep empathy toward the kidnapped Americans in Tehran. Someone has to have "the guts to try," they tell themselves, and they determine they will be the ones. Most have never worked together, drawn from several different military branches.

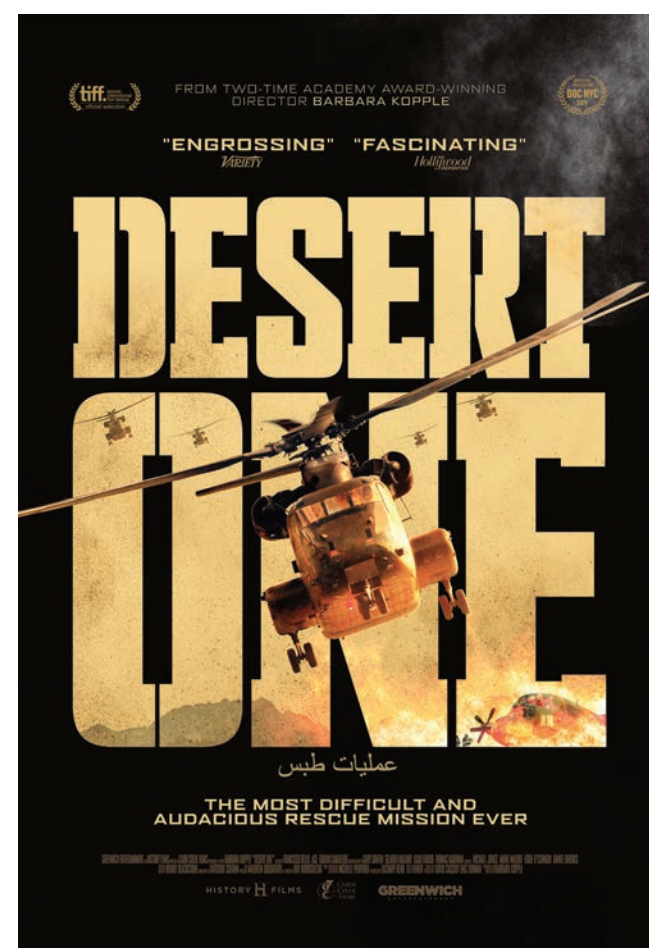
Lingering doubts begin to fade as they train for the mission. News of the crisis dominates their TVs most nights, yet they cannot tell their families what they are about to undertake.

Finally, the day arrives, April 24, 1980, and the heart-pounding and unforeseen events experienced by this rare group will forever unite them. "It was touching and revelatory for me to find another side of these special ops soldiers and Iranians that we don't often see," says director Barbara Kopple, "to sit down for such personal conversations with so many about a story that still clearly matters very much to them." She takes a humanistic approach to a thrilling story, drawing out insider details that offer new understandings about what took place.

This is not only an American story but an Iranian one. Kopple brought on an Iranian crew for original filming inside that country, finding many touched by these events who had for too long been overlooked. One extraordinary new account comes from an Iranian man who had been an 11-year-old boy riding a bus through the desert on the night of the mission, when his family was detained by American soldiers.

At a moment when tensions once again rise between the governments of Iran and the U.S., old wounds remain painfully current for many on each side who detail their recollections in Desert One -- but talk of hope also emerges, that the lessons of the past might finally guide us to a better future.

"What an adventure this film turned out to be! I really loved making it. Going out in search of the full story behind this secret mission was a thrill. Finding undiscovered film and photos and audio with our great



"Desert One" film poster

Photo / Zachary Martin (Greenwich Ent)

archivists. Being welcomed into the lives of people who were a part of this story, listening to their reflections and feeling their passion. Watching the film take shape with the talented editors. Working with our very creative illustrator and animator, an Iranian, to bring to life moments of the mission that had previously only lived in memory. Shooting with an Iranian crew and having them film such interesting people in Iran. The Iranian crew were all women," said Barbara Kopple.

KEY CREDITS

BARBARA KOPPLE: Producer and Director
CABIN CREEK FILMS for HISTORY®: Producer
DAVID CASSIDY & ERIC FORMAN: Producers
RAY NOWOSIELSKI: Co-Producer, Cabin Creek Films
FRANCISCO BELLO & FABIÁN CABALLERO: Editors
ELI LEHRER & ZACHARY G. BEHR: Executive Producers For HISTORY®
FRANCISCO BELLO: Writer
LENGTH: 1hour 48minutes
RELEASE DATE: August 21

View the film trailer at <https://youtu.be/xnSGvR0pZ0g>

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

'RED PENGUINS': CAPITALISM AND OPPORTUNISM RUN AMOK

By Mabel Pais

"I wanted to explore how our two cultures relate to one another and what lies at the core of it. The most fascinating aspect in telling this story was thinking about what it means in the context of today and for the future." - Gabe Polsky, Writer-Director-Producer

Virtual Opening August 4

Red Penguins" tells the wild forgotten true story of capitalism and opportunism run amok in Moscow, detailing an incredible true story involving gangsters, strippers, and live bears serving beer on a hockey rink.

Shortly after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Pittsburgh Penguins and the famed Red Army hockey team formed a joint venture that redefined what was possible in the new Russia. Eccentric marketing whiz, Steve Warshaw, is sent to Moscow and tasked to transform the team into the greatest show in Russia, attracting some of the biggest names in Hollywood and advertising along the way. He takes the viewer on a bizarre journey highlighting a pivotal moment in the U.S.-Russian relations during a lawless era when oligarchs made their fortunes and multiple murders went unsolved.

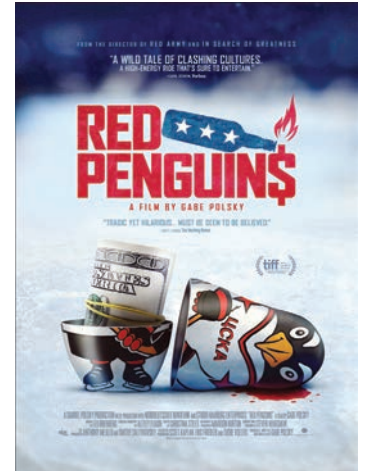
"Red Penguins" is written, directed and produced by Gabe Polsky, the son of Soviet-Ukraine immigrants to the USA in 1976. The Polskys immigrated to America in 1976 from Soviet-Ukraine in hopes of opportunity and a better life. The Soviet Union was corrupt, backward and gave little agency - especially for Jews.

It was an adjustment straddling both worlds and mentalities, and his parents at times had challenges fitting into the community, which he later realized was a blessing.

When Steve Warshaw told Gabe Polsky about the



Red Penguins win Stanley Cup. Photo / MediaSilo



"Red Penguins" poster. Photo / MediaSilo

Russian Penguins story, after initial reluctance, Polsky made the plunge knowing there was an opportunity to tell a fully unique story - wild, profound, and soulful.

In hindsight, he sees this is the reverse of his parents' story. It's a story about Americans going to Russia, trying to adapt and survive in a completely different culture - behaviors and experiences alien to them. Making matters more complicated, Russia in the 90's was changing radically by the day. But still, there was a window of hope and optimism between the US and Russia that has since disappeared.

Steven Warshaw was the Pittsburgh Penguins man in charge on the ground in Moscow. With a "special talent for generating firestorms in arenas," Warshaw was instrumental in the success of the Russian Penguins and was asked to stay after the venture fell apart. He did not. Twenty-five years later, Steven manages Universal Sports

Marketing, creating marketing and branding strategies for players, teams, and leagues, and guest lectures at his alma mater, Syracuse University.

For screening availability, visit <http://www.redpenguinsmovie.com>

KEY CREDITS

Written, Directed, and Produced by Gabe Polsky
Executive Producers: Thore Vollert, Eric Friedler & Scott Kaplan
Co-Producers: Anthony Melillo & Dmitry Saltykovsky
Director of Photography: Aleksey Elagin
Editor: Christina Stiles
Music: Leo Birenberg
Length: 1h 19m
Release Date: August 4

'RIVER CITY DRUMBEAT': Empowering The Underserved

By Mabel Pais

It's nearly impossible to watch this film without laughing, crying and tapping your feet to the fantastic drumbeats as you remember the caring teacher or mentor who made all the difference in your own life - because no one makes it on their own.

"River City Drumbeat" follows the creative community of mentors, parents, and youth making their way in a world where systemic forces raise obstacles to fulfilling their dreams

Docu from 10-Time Emmy-Winning Filmmaker Marlon Johnson and Award-Winning Filmmaker Anne Flatté

VIRTUAL RELEASE AUGUST 7

River City Drumbeat" is a multigenerational story of music, love, and legacies set in the American South. Edward "Nardie" White devoted his life to leading the African-American drum corps - River City Drum Corps (RCDC) he co-founded with his late wife Zambia Nkrumah in Louisville, Kentucky, three decades ago. Together they inspired youth from their West Louisville neighborhood to thrive by connecting them with the art and cultural traditions of their



Ed White, founder

Photo / River City Drumbeat-Larsen Associates/Anne Flatté (OBP)

African ancestors. The couple worked to build on those efforts and developed a year-round lifeline for the youth of his underserved West End neighborhood.

Now Albert Shumake, whose destiny was shaped by the drumline, must take up the mantle for the next generation. Meanwhile, student drummers Imani, Jailen, and Emily navigate adolescence and life changes. River City Drumbeat follows this creative community of mentors, parents, and youth making their way in a world where systemic forces raise obstacles to fulfilling their dreams.

River City Drum Corp (RCDC) became widely recognized and respected in Louisville, performing in churches, parades, city festivals, and schools across the city. Their work has been extremely rewarding witnessing many children succeed, and sobering when others fall into traps born out of systemic racism and generational socio-economic circumstances. Through determination



River City Drumbeat Parade

Photo / River City Drumbeat-Larsen Associates/Anne Flatté (OBP)

and loving mentorship, RCDC remains resilient under its founders' vision.

Zambia died from breast cancer in 2010. Now a widower and age sixty-five, Mr. White decides it's time for him to step down as director of RCDC. Before Mr. White can leave he must fulfill a promise he made to his late wife: to see her last cohort through to their high school graduations. Among the graduating students, Imani and Jailen navigate their last year of high school which comes with their unique struggles while mentoring younger drummers such as pre-teen Emily who grows into her ever-evolving artistic identity.

Like many grassroots community arts entities, RCDC is both powerful and fragile. How Mr. White handles the transition will determine whether the youth drumline will survive or fold. Mr. White chooses Albert Shumake - an alum of the program who credits RCDC with saving his own life - to be the leader for the next generation.

Albert juggles fatherhood and being caretaker to his ailing mother with the demands of his role as the new director. It's a challenging time, but Mr. White has placed the future of the drum corp into Albert's hands..

The incredibly evident and moving on-screen intimacy of River City Drumbeat is reflective of the thoughtful and collaborative film making process that directors Marlon Johnson and Anne Flatté have cultivated with the West Louisville community. River City Drumbeat follows a strong and resilient African-American community who center mentorship as much as music and the arts in their loving approach to raising children in America.

For screening listings around the country, visit <https://www.rivercitydrumbeatmovie.com/screenings>

Each theater will run the film for 2 weeks, with the possibility of extending.

Key Credits
Marlon Johnson and Anne Flatté: Directors
Owsley Brown, Anne Flatté, Marlon Johnson: Producers
Owsley Brown: Executive Producer
Jeff Boyette: Editor
rAmu Aki: Writer
Length: 1h 35m
Release Date: August 7

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



DIVYA DUTTA: I'VE BEEN DROPPED OUT OF MANY MOVIES AT THE LAST MINUTE

Ever since the unfortunate demise of Sushant Singh Rajput, a lot of actors have come out and spoken about how they were treated by the Hindi film fraternity, how they were replaced in films without any information or intimation. And most of the actors who spoke about this were outsiders.

In an interview with Times of India, Divya Dutta has also spoken about being replaced in films and how it left her hurt. She said, "It used to feel like a huge sense of loss, coming and being rejected or being told on the phone that someone else has been roped in."

She added, "I've been dropped out of many movies at the last minute so that hurts because you feel sheer helplessness because you know how good you could've been in that role." When asked about her mother's reaction about her rejections, she stated, "My mother used to ask 'Why are you upset?' then I would say, mom, 'I've been thrown out of the film, why? I don't know.' So she says 'Does that stop your life?'"

She added, "Life never stops and tomorrow's another day. In fact, it's strange that the people who have dropped me, I have worked with them a few years later with better roles," Dutta also shed light on life and how it is important to make the best of the opportunities.

SUSHMITA CELEBRATES 2ND ANNIV WITH BOYFRIEND

Actor and former beauty queen Sushmita Sen has shared a special social media post, marking her two-year anniversary with boyfriend Rohman Shawl. Sushmita took to Instagram to share a picture with Rohman, a model who slid into her DMs as a fan.

In her caption, she wrote, "When Sush met her Rooh. Happy Anniversary jaan @rohmanshawl. Here's to our 2 years of togetherness & counting my blessings!! Babies & I love you infinity!!!" The picture shows the couple of one of their recent holidays.

In an interview to journalist Rajeev Masand, Sushmita recalled the story of how she met Rohman. "It's a very beautiful serendipitous story. He sent me a direct message (on Instagram). I felt that if I check it you are allowing people to communicate with you. So I had many direct messages and I had not opened any," she said. "Touch screen phone ki jai ho because I was just checking what all had come and this boy broke something in the room. So I was talking to him and I came back and it so happened that I had opened one of the DMs and it was a message from him."

She continued, "The first thing I did was read the message and it was from a compassionate warm person. So I go look at this account and I look at the person and say 'aah the face matches the voice'. I wrote back saying 'Thank you so much. Your message made my day. I



wish you all the happiness in the world'."

Sushmita and Rohman have a 15-year age gap, about which he is conscious, she told journalist Anupama Chopra. She said, "Initially, he kept hiding his age for some reason. I would keep asking him, 'So, how old are you? You look so young.' And he would be like,

'You guess!' Later, once I realised how young he was, as to why he didn't want that to get in the way of this conversation. So yeah, we did not really choose this, it was chosen for us. It was destined."

Sushmita recently made her acting comeback with the Disney+ Hotstar drama Aarya, which has received positive reviews.

AYUSHMANN TO PLAY AN ATHLETE IN ABHISHEK KAPOOR'S NEXT

Actor Ayushmann Khurrana has signed another project—a film with Kedarnath director Abhishek Kapoor. The film will see the Andhadhun actor play a 'cross-functional athlete' and will be a love story.

Speaking about the film, Ayushmann told Bombay Times, "Abhishek has a distinct voice in cinema today, and I'm glad that we finally got the opportunity to work together on a project that's close to my heart. This beautiful love story will take viewers on an emotional roller-coaster ride and it is a total family entertainer."

The actor will have to undergo a major transformation for his role. "I have never attempted a look like this on screen before and I'm already looking forward to seeing the reaction of audiences. The process is going to be intense and excruciating, but I feel that the pain will be worth it," he said.

Abhishek, too, is looking forward to the project. "This film is special for both Ayushmann and me. We want audiences to come back to theatres and watch movies as a community. And, we will spare no effort to achieve that," he said.

Apart from this, Ayushmann also has a film with Anubhav



Sinha, with whom he worked in Article 15. Film trade analyst Taran Adarsh has announced, "IT'S OFFICIAL... After #Mulk, #Article15 and #Thappad... Anubhav Sinha to direct #AyushmannKhurrana... An action thriller [not titled yet]... 16 Oct 2020 release. Anubhav and Ayushmann reunite after the much-acclaimed and successful #Article15."

WISHES POUR IN AS KRITI SANON TURNS 30

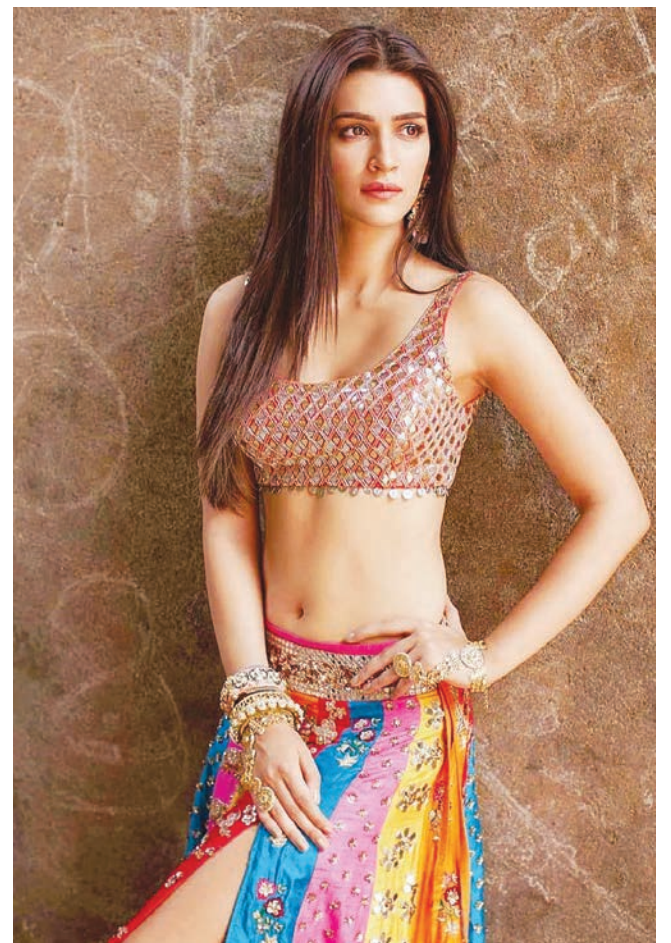
Kriti Sanon turned 30 on July 27. To make her day special, Tiger Shroff, Madhuri Dixit, Ayushmann Khurrana, Athiya Shetty, Sophie Choudry and Manish Malhotra among others took to social media to wish the Bollywood actor.

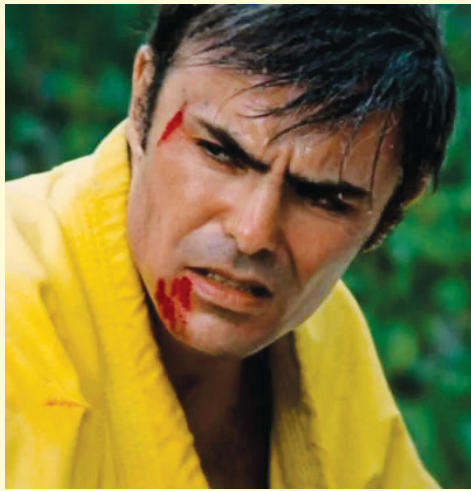
Madhuri Dixit Nene shared on her Twitter account, "Sending you my best wishes @kritisanon. Happy Birthday?? Have a fabulous year ahead!"

Manish Malhotra wrote on his Instagram account, "The gorgeous and fabulous @kritisanon birthday wishes ??stay your fabulous self which you have from your Modelling days to the Movies .. #love #muse #kritisanon."

Tiger Shroff tweeted, "Hope you keep rising and soaring higher every year. Lots of love always dimpy.. happy happy birthday @kritisanon." Kriti made her Bollywood debut with Tiger in the film Heropanti.

Kriti Sanon's sister Nupur shared a Boomerang video on Instagram. Along with the video, she wrote, "Happiest birthday my love, my life, my everything! You only and only deserve the best things in life...the nicest things!! You are the MOST beautiful soul I know."





ENTER THE DRAGON ACTOR JOHN SAXON DIES AT 83

Actor John Saxon, a versatile actor with a lengthy and prolific career who starred with Bruce Lee in *Enter the Dragon* and appeared in several *Nightmare on Elm Street* movies, has died at his home in Tennessee, according to the *Hollywood Reporter*. He was 83.

The entertainment news outlet quotes Saxon's wife, Gloria, as confirming that the actor died of pneumonia on Saturday in Murfreesboro.

Saxon won a Golden Globe for best supporting actor in 1966 for his role alongside Marlon Brando in *The Appaloosa*.

Born Carmine Orrico, the son of Italian-American parents, Saxon grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and began modeling while still a teenager. He then caught the eye of legendary talent agent Henry Willson, who spotted Saxon on the cover of a magazine and brought him to Hollywood. Willson was credited for representing and helping to develop the careers of male stars like Rock Hudson and Tab Hunter, the outlet said.

TOM HOLLAND SHARES PICTURE OF HIS RUMORED GIRLFRIEND NADIA PARKES

Spider-Man actor Tom Holland is said to be dating Nadia Parkes, who is also a London-based actress. The actor shared a photo of Nadia, which gave rise to the rumours. While many say that the actor has made it official, the caption-less picture posted by Tom did raise a lot of speculation. Nadia is seen posing for Tom, holding a bicycle, while the sky looks pretty. Take a look at the picture right away!

On the other hand, Nadia Parkes too shared a few pictures on her Instagram, while roaming on the streets of London. Naida was seen wearing a pretty white crop top, paired with basic blue denim and white sneakers. Her black coloured fanny bag works well on her casual outfit. Check it out.

COVID-19: Pregnant woman delivers healthy baby at Igatpuri railway stationimage-url

Can't wait for the duo to pose together like a couple!

The actor is set to work with actor Mark Wahlberg in the upcoming "Uncharted", based on the video game of the same name. Holland is set to play main character, Nathan Drake, in the film, which will serve as an origin story set before the video game. For Holland, the path towards showbiz began getting carved when he was a child. The son of English comedian Dominic Holland studied dance when



he was in school, and went on to do "Billy Elliot The Musical".

He featured in films like "The Impossible", "How I Live Now", "In The Heart of the Sea" and "The Lost City of Z". But his big-ticket to Hollywood came with a role as the iconic web-singer. Holland was

introduced as Spider-Man in "Captain America: Civil War" in 2016. He got his first solo movie with "Spider-Man: Homecoming" -- which took the superhero back to school. He was back as the superhero with his second solo movie "Spider-Man: Far From Home".

VANESSA MORGAN'S HUSBAND FILES FOR DIVORCE AFTER PREGNANCY REVEAL

Vanessa Morgan's husband Michael Kopech has filed for divorce - just days after the pair revealed they are expecting their first child.

The 'Riverdale' star took to social media to reveal she is set to welcome a baby boy with the White Sox baseball player, but it has now been revealed they will be co-parenting their tot, as Michael has filed for divorce.

According to the *Chicago Tribune*, Michael actually filed paperwork to terminate his marriage back in June in northeast Texas, just mere months after the pair had tied the knot in January this year.

The case has been sealed, meaning no other information is available to the public, so it's not known why Michael decided to terminate his marriage to Vanessa.

During her pregnancy reveal last week, Vanessa said she was considering keeping the news "hidden", but knew that pictures would eventually begin showing her growing baby bump.

She wrote: "Was debating keeping this part of my life hidden but I knew people would see pictures eventually with my belly & I wanted you guys to hear it from me ... I do want to keep this chapter of my life private but did want to be the first to share the news. I am overjoyed to be welcoming my baby boy into the world this January ... It's almost like everything I thought mattered in this life has completely changed. (sic)"



SOPHIE TURNER, JOE JONAS WELCOME FIRST CHILD

Sophie Turner and Joe Jonas have had their first child. The 24-year-old *Game of Thrones* star and the 30-year-old singer announced the birth on Monday.

"Sophie Turner and Joe Jonas are delighted to announce the birth of their baby," they said in a statement released through Joe Jonas' label Republic Records.

The couple was quiet about the pregnancy and gave no further details on the baby.

Sophie Turner, the England-born actor who played Sansa Stark on *Game of Thrones* for eight seasons, and Nick Jonas, the Arizona-born musician who came to fame in a band with his brothers on the Disney Channel, began dating in 2016 and married last year.

They live in Los Angeles, and the baby is the first for both.



WORLD FIGHTS FOR SURVIVAL AGAINST COVID-19



Global Covid-19 cases surpass 17 million

Worldwide coronavirus cases cross 17.477 million with the death toll at 676,786. Coronavirus pandemic has come back to haunt many countries who thought that the worst of it was over for them. There have been spikes in infections in many Asian, European countries pointing towards a 'Second Wave' of the novel coronavirus.

The Philippines saw record daily jump in infections for the fourth time this month as it reported 4,000 new cases.

Coronavirus has made a nasty comeback in Vietnam which had managed to remain virus-free for 99 days. The second wave of virus outbreak in the country that began a week ago has now grown to 48 cases in 6 parts of the country. In order to contain the virus spread the Vietnamese govt has banned large gatherings and have also ordered the bars to remain shut.

The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 4,405,932 coronavirus cases, an increase of 65,935 cases from its previous count. The number of deaths in the US had risen by 1,417 to 150,283.

Florida reported a record increase in COVID-19 deaths for the third day in a row. Florida reported more than 252 deaths, the highest single-day increase since the start of the pandemic. The state of Arizona also reported more than 172 coronavirus deaths, the highest single-day increase since the pandemic started.

The UK reported 846 positive coronavirus tests, highest daily count since June 28. UK PM said that we cannot delude ourselves that the pandemic is over. He also mentioned that the virus is 'bubbling up' in some towns in the UK and the only way to control coronavirus is to obey social distancing rules.

TRACKING THE VIRUS

GLOBAL

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Cases | Deaths |
| 17,477,023 | 676,786 |

INDIA

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Cases | Deaths |
| 1,638,870 | 35,747 |

UK FEARS SECOND WAVE OF INFECTION IN EUROPE

LONDON (TIP): The British authorities are worried about a second wave of Covid infections in Europe and will not hesitate to bring back more quarantine measures, possibly within the next few days, as they did with Spain. Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Covid-19 was under some measure of control in Britain, but a resurgence in some European countries showed the pandemic was not over.

"It is absolutely vital as a country that we continue to keep our focus and discipline, and that we don't delude ourselves that somehow we are out of the woods, because it isn't all over," he said.

Last weekend Britain re-imposed a 14-day quarantine period on people arriving from Spain, a move that caused havoc with the reopening of the continent for tourism in the summer high season.

Health Minister Matt Hancock stopped short of naming other European countries that might end up back on the quarantine list, but cited France as an example of one where infections have lately risen.

Careless Young People Driving Some COVID-19 Spikes: WHO

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND (TIP): The World Health Organization on Thursday warned that spikes in coronavirus transmission in a number of countries were being driven by young people "letting down their guard".



"Young people are not invincible," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a virtual news conference in Geneva.

While the pandemic, which has killed more than 17 million people worldwide, has disproportionately impacted the elderly and people with pre-existing conditions, he stressed that "younger people are at risk too".

He lamented that a major challenge in trying to rein in the novel coronavirus was "convincing younger people of this risk".

He said there was evidence that "spikes of cases in some countries are being driven in part by younger people letting down their guard during the northern hemisphere summer."

WHO's technical lead for COVID-19 Maria Van Kerkhove lamented in particular that nightclubs in a number of places had become "amplifiers" of transmission.

China logs 127 Covid-19 cases in last 24 hours, highest since early March

China on Friday reported 127 new coronavirus cases on the mainland for July 30, up from 105 the previous day, and the highest daily number since March 5 for locally transmitted cases of Covid-19 on the mainland.

Like for the last several days, the highest number of cases among the 124 locally transmitted ones - 112 -- were from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), the northwestern province where China is carrying out controversial de-radicalisation programmes among the mostly Uyghur minority community including putting them in high-security camps.

Of the 112 patients, one was in the Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture and the other 111 were in the regional capital Urumqi, 30 of whom were previously asymptomatic cases, the NHC said.

The remaining 11 cases were reported from Liaoning province, located in the northeast of China, the national health commission (NHC) said in its daily report on Friday.

Beijing is yet to share information about how the new infection cluster spread in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang.

Coronavirus spikes in Asia spur warnings against complacency

Spikes in novel coronavirus infections in Asia have dispelled any notion the region may be over the worst, with Australia and India reporting record daily infections on Thursday, Vietnam preparing to test thousands and North Korea urging vigilance.

Asian countries had largely prided themselves on rapidly containing initial outbreaks after the virus emerged in central China late last year, but flare-ups this month have shown the danger of complacency.

"We've got to be careful not to slip into some idea that there's some golden immunity that Australia has in relation to this virus," Prime Minister Scott Morrison told reporters.

Australia recorded its deadliest day with at least 13 deaths and more than 700 new infections, mostly in the second-most populous state of Victoria, where the government ordered all residents to wear face-coverings outside.



The country has confirmed a total of 16,298 cases since the pandemic began, with 189 fatalities, more than half in Victoria and its capital Melbourne, which is

under a new lockdown.

Victoria's new infections have seeded outbreaks in other areas, including Australia's most populous state, New South Wales, which reported 18 new cases.

Authorities have introduced new measures to stop the spread and further restrictions on movement would deal a blow to the economy, already in its first recession for 30 years.

But failure to control the outbreaks would do more economic harm in the long run, Morrison said.

Vietnam, virus-free for months, has also had a harsh reminder of the dangers with a new surge spreading to six cities and provinces in six days, linked to an outbreak in the central city of Danang.

Authorities told tens of thousands of people who visited Danang to report to disease control centres, as nine new cases were confirmed, taking total infections to 42 since the virus resurfaced at the weekend.

WORLD FIGHTS FOR SURVIVAL AGAINST COVID-19

HISTORY OF THE VIRUS



On January 9 of this year, Chinese state media reported that a team of researchers led by Xu Jianguo had identified the pathogen behind a mysterious outbreak of pneumonia in Wuhan as a novel coronavirus. Although the virus was soon after named 2019-nCoV, and then renamed SARS-CoV-2, it remains commonly known simply as the coronavirus. While that moniker has been catapulted into the stratosphere of public attention, it's somewhat misleading: Not only is it one of many coronaviruses out there, but you've almost certainly been infected with members of the family long before SARS-CoV-2's emergence in late 2019.

Coronaviruses take their name from the distinctive spikes with rounded tips that decorate their surface, which reminded virologists of the appearance of the sun's atmosphere, known as its corona. Various coronaviruses infect numerous species, but the first human coronaviruses weren't discovered until the mid-1960s. "That was sort of the golden days, if you will, of virology, because at that time the technology became available to grow viruses in the laboratory, and to study viruses in the laboratory," says University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center pediatrician Jeffrey Kahn, who studies respiratory viruses. But the two coronaviruses that were identified at the time, OC43 and 229E, didn't elicit much research interest, says Kahn, who wrote a review on coronaviruses a few years after the SARS outbreak of 2003. "I don't believe there was a big effort to make vaccines against these because these were thought to be more of a nuisance than anything else."

The viruses cause typical cold symptoms such as a sore throat, cough, and stuffy nose, and they seemed to be very common; one early study estimated that 3 percent of respiratory illnesses in a children's home in Georgia over seven years in the 1960s had been caused by OC43, and a 1986 study of children and adults in northern Italy found that it was rare to come across a subject who did not have antibodies to that virus (an indicator of past infection).

Coronaviruses' mild-mannered reputation changed with the SARS outbreak. Although related to OC43 and 229E, SARS-CoV was far deadlier, killing about 10 percent of people it

infected—a total of 774 worldwide, according to the United Kingdom's National Health Service. While it's still unclear exactly where SARS-CoV came from, similar viruses were later found in bats, and some studies suggested the virus could have jumped to humans via an intermediary such as civets.

While SARS was a wake-up call that coronaviruses posed a greater risk to humans than had been thought, it's unsurprising that a virus that's newly spilled over to humans would be more deadly than its human-adapted cousins, says Rachel Roper, a virologist and immunologist at East Carolina University. "When a species is co-evolving with its pathogen... they tend to come to a detente, where the virus will be surviving in the population, and the population is surviving without that much illness," she explains. "But when a virus jumps species, then you've got a real problem."

In the wake of the SARS epidemic, some researchers went looking for other human coronaviruses—and found them. In 2004, researchers in the Netherlands reported they'd found a novel coronavirus, related to 229E, in a child with pneumonia and in four other people with respiratory disease. That virus came to be known as NL63, and Kahn and his colleagues found it at around the same time in hospitalized children in New Haven, Connecticut (Kahn worked at Yale University School of Medicine at the time).

Although first identified in people with severe infections, NL63 is, much like 229E and OC43, a widespread virus that causes colds in most people it infects. But there were hints that its effects could

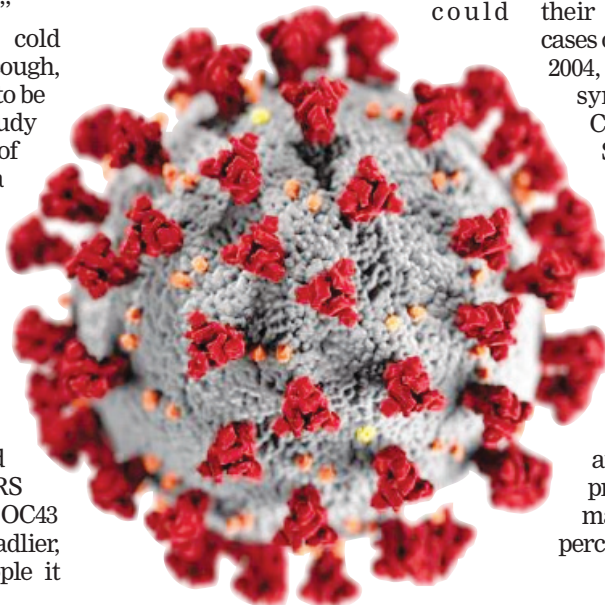
extend beyond the respiratory tract. In their 2005 paper on the newly-discovered virus, Kahn and his colleagues reported finding it in 8 of 11 patients they tested who had Kawasaki disease, an inflammation of the blood vessels that occurs primarily in young children. But most follow-up studies failed to find such an association.

Close on the heels of NL63's discovery came a report from Hong Kong on yet another common, cold-causing coronavirus, this one called HKU1. As with NL63, researchers in other parts of the world went looking for HKU1, finding it in Australia, France, and the United States, among other places.

The cold-causing coronaviruses each carry a similar array of symptoms, says Kahn, and it's not clear how long any of them have been hosted by humans, or where they came from originally. As ubiquitous as they are, other basic questions about these viruses also remain open, such as whether infection with one of them confers lasting immunity. Studies reported in two recent preprints found that it's not uncommon for a person to be infected with the same coronavirus twice. But Roper suspects that our bodies do learn to fend off coronaviruses they've encountered. "There are literally thousands of respiratory viruses, so probably every time you get a cold, you're getting a new virus that you've never seen before," she says. "Plus, they're always mutating."

Until the emergence of SARS-CoV-2, human coronaviruses that have made the news have been both far more deadly and far more contained than their cold-causing counterparts. No cases of SARS have been detected since 2004, and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), first found in a patient in Saudi Arabia in 2012, has caused fewer than 2,500 confirmed cases worldwide, according to the World Health Organization—but it kills about 35 percent of people with confirmed diagnoses. SARS-CoV-2, which, as its name suggests, is closely related to SARS-CoV, appears to be far more transmissible, and its mortality rate has so far proven difficult to nail down, but many estimates land at around 1 percent.

Source: *The Scientist*



HUMAN CORONAVIRUS DISCOVERIES

- 1965**
 Researchers at the Common Cold Research Unit in Wiltshire, UK, report cultivating a virus, B814, from a boy with a cold. They describe the pathogen as "virtually unrelated to any other known virus of the human respiratory tract."
- 1966**
 Dorothy Hamre and John Procknow of the University of Chicago describe a virus, which they dub 229E, isolated from a medical student with a cold. It is distinct from other known respiratory viruses.
- 1967**
 Scientists at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases report using the same methods used to culture B814 to grow another new human virus with a similar morphology. They name the virus OC43.
- 1968**
 Eight researchers, including the discoverers of B814, 229E, and OC43 and June Almeida, who first imaged coronaviruses, write to *Nature* to propose that these and several other recently isolated human viruses belong to a new category, coronaviruses. These viruses, they say, have a "characteristic 'fringe' of projections 200 Å long, which are rounded or petal shaped... recalling the solar corona..." (Samples of B814 and the unnamed other viruses are no longer available for study, but Jeffrey Kahn of UT Southwestern Medical Center suggests they may have been the same cold-causing coronaviruses that were characterized and named in the mid-2000s.)
- 2003**
 An international group of researchers reports that the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), which began in late 2002 in southern China, is caused by a newly emerged human coronavirus.
- 2004**
 Researchers at Erasmus Medical Center in the Netherlands report isolating a coronavirus, later named NL63, from a child with pneumonia.
- 2005**
 A group of researchers based at the University of Hong Kong discovers another coronavirus, HKU1, in samples from two patients with pneumonia.
- 2012**
 Researchers at Erasmus Medical Center and their colleagues identify a new coronavirus, later named MERS-CoV, that was isolated from a man in Saudi Arabia with pneumonia and kidney failure.
- 2020**
 A team of researchers in China identify the cause of a disease outbreak in Wuhan as a novel coronavirus, now known as SARS-CoV-2.

WORLD FIGHTS FOR SURVIVAL AGAINST COVID-19

HOW CORONA IS CAUSING DEBTS TO SOAR AND CRUSHING CREDIT RATINGS

The crippling effects of the coronavirus crisis have crushed government and corporate finances and sent debt soaring. It is also crunching their credit ratings and causing a spike in defaults.

BROKEN RECORDS

S&P Global has already made 1,190 downgrades so far this year. That is just 136 short of the record 1,326 set in 2009 during the global financial crisis, and more than four months are left in the year. Almost 975 of those downgrades have been directly affected by COVID or the partly related collapse in oil prices. If cuts to rating outlooks are also added, that number rises to 1,939.

Fitch isn't far behind. It has had nearly 1,500 negative rating actions altogether, although total downgrades is less than half S&P's at 441.

ACROSS THE BOARD

Every sector has been affected by the coronavirus, but energy and oil companies, retailers, media and entertainment companies, airlines, travel and leisure, banks and capital goods firms have been hit the worst. It has also been global. S&P has downgraded or cut the outlook on 1,015 firms in North America. Latin America's 180 negative actions work out at almost 60 per cent of the region's ratings. That compares with 35 per cent to 40 per cent for the rest of the world.

Governments have been hit hard, too. Fitch has made a record number of sovereign downgrades -- 32 rating actions affecting 26 sovereigns -- including pushing two of the biggest borrowers, Italy and Mexico, into the danger zone. More than a third of its 118 sovereign grades are also still on downgrade warnings.

S&P has made 19 sovereign downgrades and 31 outlook cuts, while Moody's estimates the virus will push up debt in the world's richest nations by close to 20 percentage points on average, almost double the damage done by the financial crash.

FALLEN ANGELS

S&P's count of fallen angels, or issuers downgraded to junk ("BB+" or lower) from investment grade ("BBB-" or higher) has hit 34 issuers with over \$320 billion in rated debt among them, including Ford, Rolls-Royce, Kraft Heinz, Renault, Delta Air Lines, Lufthansa, British Airways and Macy's. They have all been companies so far, although Moody's has cut South Africa to junk and Italy, India, Colombia, Morocco, Romania, Uruguay and Mexico are all near the brink with at least one of the main agencies.

Fallen angels are significant because the prospect of losing investment-grade ratings can lead investors to sell the bonds in favour of more creditworthy companies, pushing up their borrowing costs.

S&P also has a record 126 potential fallen angels on a warning. They have another \$576 billion of bonds, meaning



ENERGY AND OIL COMPANIES, RETAILERS, AIRLINES, TRAVEL AND LEISURE, BANKS AND CAPITAL GOODS FIRMS HAVE BEEN HIT THE WORST

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE VIRUS



Massive production disruptions that started in China have led to a lower supply of goods and services that reduces overall hours worked, leading to lower incomes.

The UN's Framework for the Immediate Socio-Economic Response to the COVID 19 Crisis warns that "The COVID-19 pandemic is far more than a health crisis: it is affecting societies and economies at their core. While the impact of the pandemic will vary from country to country, it will most likely increase poverty and inequalities at a global scale, making achievement of SDGs even more urgent.

Assessing the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on societies, economies and vulnerable groups is fundamental to inform and tailor the responses of governments and partners to recover from the crisis and ensure that no one is left behind in this effort.

Without urgent socio-economic responses, global suffering will escalate, jeopardizing lives and livelihoods for years to come. Immediate development responses in this crisis must be undertaken with an eye to the future. Development trajectories in the long-term will be

affected by the choices countries make now and the support they receive."

The United Nations has mobilized the full capacity of the UN system through its 131 country teams serving 162 countries and territories, to support national authorities in developing public health preparedness and response plans to the COVID-19 crisis.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, the socio-economic response will be one of three critical components of the UN's COVID-19 response, alongside the health response, led by WHO, and the Global Humanitarian Response Plan.

As the technical lead for the socio-economic response, UNDP and its country offices worldwide are working under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinators, and in close collaboration with specialized UN agencies, UN Regional Economic Commissions and IFIs, to assess the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on economies and communities.

Covid-19 first flared in central China and, within three months, was on every continent but Antarctica, shutting down daily life for millions. Behind the rapid spread was something that initially caught scientists off guard, baffled health authorities and undermined early containment efforts — the virus could be spread by seemingly healthy people.

the amount of debt affected is likely to rise.

Canada has been the only country so far to be stripped of a prized "triple A" credit rating, by Fitch last month. Fitch now has the fewest "AAAs" since 1998, with a total of 10. That is less than 10% of the countries it rates, which is the smallest ever share of the sovereign portfolio.

Analysts at ING estimate that the collective share of triple-A rated government debt is now below 25 per cent. S&P, which no longer grades the U.S. -- the world's biggest government borrower -- as triple A, calculated it to be around 7 per cent last year.

DEFAULTS

S&P has predicted nearly 290, or 15.5 per cent, of US junk-rated companies could default by next March in a pessimistic scenario, while in Europe it could reach 11.5 per cent. Moody's meanwhile saw Germany's scandal-hit Wirecard become its first investment grade firm to collapse since Saudi Arabia's Saad Group in 2009.

A record four sovereigns have already defaulted: Argentina, Ecuador, Lebanon and Suriname. All four were in trouble before the pandemic struck, but Fitch warns others are probable, with Gabon, Mozambique, Republic of Congo and Zambia all potential worries.

Silent spread of virus keeps scientists grasping for clues

Researchers have exposed the frightening likelihood of silent spread of the virus by asymptomatic and presymptomatic carriers. But how major a role seemingly healthy people play in swelling the ranks of those infected remains unanswered — and at the top of the scientific agenda.

The small but mighty coronavirus can unlock a human cell, set up shop and mass produce tens of thousands of copies of itself in a single day. Virus levels skyrocket before the first cough, if one ever arrives. And astonishing to scientists, an estimated 4 in 10 infected people don't ever have symptoms.

The slyness of the virus remains on the minds of many scientists as they watch societies reopen, wondering what happens if silent spreaders aren't detected until it's too late.

Travelers with no coughs can slip past airport screens. Workers without fevers won't be caught by temperature checks. People who don't feel tired and achy will attend business meetings.

WORLD FIGHTS FOR SURVIVAL AGAINST COVID-19

THE RACE FOR COVID-19 VACCINE

It has become clear that we have to learn to live with Covid-19, till an effective vaccine is available, and possibly after that as well. The upside amid this gloom is that the scientific community was never this enthusiastic about developing any other vaccine as it is today for Covid-19. In less than six months, nearly 180 vaccine candidates have been registered and nearly three dozen of these have entered the human trial stage. There are two vaccines in this race from India as well that have entered human clinical trial stage. Six vaccines have entered the phase III of clinical trials to assess their efficacy and two of these — one from University of Oxford in the UK and the other under development by Moderna in the United States — are being considered as front runners. The results from early-stage clinical trials of these vaccines have shown promising outcomes on safety and immunogenicity parameters. They have also generated both antibodies and T-cell responses.

RUSSIAN VACCINE TO BE READY BY AUGUST 12

The Russian candidate vaccine for novel Coronavirus is back in the news again. According to report by Bloomberg, Russia was planning to 'register' its novel Coronavirus vaccine by August 10-12.

The vaccine, developed by Moscow's Gamaleya Research Institute of Epidemiology and Microbiology, was



likely to be approved for public use "within three to seven days of registration by regulators", said the report.

This is the same vaccine that was, earlier this month, reported to have successfully completed human trials. Actually, at that time, in the second week of July, this candidate vaccine had only completed phase-I human trials. Its

phase-II trials began on July 13, according to a report in TASS news agency at that time.

A vaccine is usually not approved for public use till it completes three phases of human trials, each of which, in normal circumstances, can run for several months.

It appears, however, that Russia was planning to finish phase-II trials early,

and approve the vaccine for use, without phase-III trials.

The Bloomberg report said the Gamaleya vaccine was likely to get "conditional registration" in August, meaning it would be approved for use, even as phase-III trials are carried out. The production of the vaccine was expected to begin in September, the report said. Till the clinical trials are completed, the vaccine is likely to be administered only to health professionals, it said.

Phase-I trials assess the safety of the vaccine in human beings. It usually is carried out on small number of people, in the range of a few dozen, and runs from a few weeks to a few months. In phase-II, the vaccine's ability to trigger immune response against the disease is assessed. In this phase, the vaccine is tested on a few hundred volunteers.

The third and final phase is usually conducted on several thousand volunteers. One group of volunteers are injected with the vaccine while another group is given a dummy vaccine. The volunteers go about their normal lives, and assessed a few weeks later to see whether the group that had been injected with the vaccine had shown any particular resistance to the infection. This phase can take several months.

Scientists and health experts warn against releasing a vaccine in haste, insisting that all safety and efficacy tests must be carried out before it is approved for use.

Serum's plans to start testing Oxford vaccine on Indians by August halted

The plans of Pune-based Serum Institute of India to start testing the Oxford vaccine on Indian participants by August has hit a hurdle. An expert committee studying the firm's proposal for trials has asked it to make revisions. This means that the committee's approval for the trials has been deferred and it is unclear how long Serum would have to wait before it can begin testing the vaccine on Indian participants.

WHAT IS THIS VACCINE?

Being developed by the Oxford University and AstraZeneca, this candidate vaccine is one of the front-runners in the global race to develop a vaccine against novel Coronavirus. Named ChAdOx1, this vaccine tries to use a weakened chimpanzee virus (adenovirus) to carry instructions to the cells in human bodies to recreate the spiky surface of the Covid-19 virus. Once this is done, the body's immune system is expected to recognise these foreign particles as a threat, and create antibodies so that attempts by the real Coronavirus to infect are thwarted.

This vaccine candidate is currently undergoing late stage human trials in the UK, Brazil and South Africa. Serum has an agreement with AstraZeneca to manufacture it for low and middle income countries.

What is this expert committee, and why has it held back its approval?

India's top drug regulatory body, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), makes decisions related to clinical trials based on recommendations of subject expert committees (SECs).



Serum's proposal was being studied by one such SEC.

In its application, Serum had proposed phase-II and phase-III trials on about 1,600 participants. The SEC has sought a demarcation between the two phases. While it is not yet clear whether the Pune-based firm was considering testing sites only in Pune and Mumbai, as it had indicated earlier, the SEC is learnt to have insisted that the test sites should be spread out all over the country.

The SEC is learnt to have recommended about eight amendments to Serum's application. This includes suggestions related to methods adopted to assess the ability of the candidate vaccine to invoke an immune response, and the firm's calculations to determine the number of volunteers the tests would be carried out on.

What happens now?

Serum would have to make changes to its proposal

and come back to the committee. If the SEC is satisfied it can then recommend the trials. Only after the SEC makes its recommendation, can the Drug Controller General of India, who heads CDSCO, would grant approval for conducting the trials in India.

Moderna vaccine induced "robust immune response" on animals, says study

Moderna Therapeutics, a US biotech company considered one of the front-runners to produce a vaccine against novel Coronavirus, has published data from pre-clinical trials of its candidate vaccine in a peer-reviewed journal. The publication in New England Journal of Medicine says the candidate vaccine had elicited "robust immune response and protection" against the virus in the subjects.

Pre-clinical trials are conducted on animals. If successful, the vaccine is then tested on humans in three phases.

Moderna's candidate vaccine, named mRNA-1273 for the time being, has just entered the third and final phase of human trials. It has published findings of phase-I human trials as well, but these were based on preliminary data. The subjects on whom the vaccine is tried are followed up for several weeks to assess their condition.

Moderna's candidate was the first to get approval for pre-clinical trials, way back in February itself. The animals were given two doses of the candidate vaccine during the trial.

"After two vaccinations, the immune response observed in this non-human primate study was consistent with the recent Phase 1 human study of mRNA-1273, also published in The New England Journal of Medicine," the company said in a statement.

WASH YOUR HAIR THE RIGHT WAY TO AVOID DAMAGE

Washing your hair is a regular activity. It goes beyond cleaning our hair and allows a general release of stress and uplifts our mood. But are you washing your hair the right way? Learn the basic steps to wash your hair the right way

Oil your hair first

Oiling is the first step, oil helps retain the moisture after hair wash and shampoo. Gently oil your hair largely at the scalp and leave it for 2 to 3 hours before hair wash. It is very important to include a basic pre-shampooing treatment to your hair wash routine. Also massaging your head and scalp with oils help open up pores and rejuvenates your mood. UrbanClap salon at home experts provide you with just that.

Start with a gentle rinse

Hair rinsing is also an essential part in steps to wash your hair the right way. Rinsing your hair with gushing water opens up the cuticles, softens hair tangles, and removes dirt. Rinsing with lukewarm water is even better as it helps remove extra oil from the scalp and washes off the dry scalp skin making it ready to receive shampoo's nutrition.

Lather up your hair

Selecting the right shampoo for your lovely locks may not be an easy choice to make. With hair shampoos, choose the one which suits you the best and completely compliments your hair. For example, if you have dry hair, the best way to wash your hair is using sulfate and parabens free shampoo. Similarly, for coloured hair, opt for one that keeps your color intact. In a nutshell if you have a rough, uneven or coarse



hair then use a shampoo with moisturizer, for thin hair use volumizing shampoo so you keep more of the volume you have than these products, they are designed to leave less of residue on your hair, use shampoo with moisturizer for curly hair but choose the one without synthetic ingredients like silicone. Synthetic ingredients in shampoos damage the hair cuticle when used regularly, leaving the hair shaft exposed and potentially damaging

your hair permanently.

Condition your hair

Use conditioner after shampoo especially if you have a long hair. Conditioner helps in retaining moisture in the hair after the shampoo and most importantly, binds the hair cuticle after shampoo. Shampoo your hair then rinse with cold water, avoid rinsing hair with hot water. Once shampoo has completely rinsed out apply hair conditioner.

HOW TO DRESS TO HIDE BELLY FAT?

Who says you need to compromise on style just because you do not have flashboard abs? You just need a few tricks up your sleeve, and you're sorted.

Lingerie And Undergarments

Wearing the right intimates is a given, but some of us need to pay more attention to a few things than others normally would. It is important that you choose a bra; that is not loose or sagging, but makes you uptight while giving the right definition. Also, consider high-rise underwears—these help you a great deal. We need to get this one right.

Shapewear

You should try these if you have not already. They are your rescue rangers; I could not wait to get my hands on these. It basically, tucks



the unflattering flab and tucks back into the tummy, at least it creates the illusion. These soft, comfortable and

tight-fitting undergarments come in a lot of variants, taking full control of your tummy area. You can easily get away with those body hugging dresses that were forever part of your wish list. It makes a lot of difference, especially if you make smart choices. I assure that you're going to love it.

Body Posture

We don't pay much attention to our posture, but it's time we all do. Being unaware of your ergonomics while sitting or standing will eventually add up to a lot of other things. Poor posture is proven to sag and loosen the abdomen muscles further and blowing up the bulge, more than what it already is. Not only for wearing great clothes, working on your posture is a healthy practice even otherwise. Make a conscious effort to give it some time; you will see the change for yourself. Remember, a slouchy posture is only going to make it worse.



By Tript Arora

CONNOISSEUR'S CHOICE



Cheesy spinach spaghetti

This Easy recipe of cheesy spinach Spaghetti is just perfect for weekend. Made with spinach, Basil, coriander and green chillies, it is full of flavours. It is neither spicy nor bland. The Italian seasoning gives a perfect aroma. It can be conveniently cooked in two parts. You can prepare the sauce in advance and refrigerate it. When you have a weekend party, just boil Spaghetti and add to it. This sauce has a tendency to get thick after cooling. If that happens add milk as per requirement to adjust its consistency. This recipe doesn't need much effort and is totally basic. In today's hectic life, this fills the gap. Perfect combination of health and taste. As I always prefer Duram wheat pasta, so this spaghetti is no exception. I always prefer to cook my food with fresh ingredients. In this recipe also I have used all the 'green' ingredients from my kitchen garden. While buying food from store, I always check the date on the packing as food nearing to expiry doesn't taste good. This recipe is definitely going to tickle your taste buds. So what are we waiting for, let's get started.



We need

1 Cup Spinach, ¼ Cup Coriander leaves, 6 Basil Leaves (Tulsi), 2 Green Chillies, 7 pods of Garlic, 2 Tsp Olive Oil, 1 Tbsp Chilli flakes, 1 Tbsp Italian Seasoning, 150 gm Spaghetti, 1 tsp Salt or to taste, 2 Tbsp grated Mozzarella Cheese, 2 tsp All purpose flour (Maida), 2 Tsp Butter, 1 Cup Milk.

Let us start

- Boil Spaghetti in 4 cups of salty water with 2 tsp of oil for 10 to 12 min on Medium flame till 'al dante'. That means it should be tender not mushy. When done drain the water and keep aside.
- Blanch Spinach in boiling water. Take out immediately from hot water and immerse it in ice cold water to retain its colour.
- Make a smooth Paste of Coriander, Basil, Green chilli, Blanched Spinach, garlic with 2 tsp olive oil in a blender. Add 1 to 2 tsp of water if required. Keep aside this Spinach sauce.
- Heat 2 Tsp of Butter in a pan. When the butter melts add 2 Tsp of all purpose flour (maida) to it. Keep on stirring on a slow flame for 2 min till raw flavour of maida is gone but the colour of it should not change.
- Slowly Add milk to the pan. Continue stirring constantly to avoid lumps. Adjust consistency of the sauce. The white sauce should coat the back of the spoon. Now slowly Add Spinach Sauce to the white sauce in the pan. Keep on stirring till both the sauces mix evenly. Let the sauce boil for 2 to 3 minute. Add Mozzarella cheese, Italian seasoning and chilli flakes. Stir well.
- Gradually add boiled Spaghetti to the Spinach sauce and mix evenly. Serve Hot.

Tips

When Blanching Spinach avoid overboiling it as it would spoil the taste. Process of Blanching: Boil one cup of water and add spinach to it. Turn off the flame. Keep Spinach in hot water for 2 min. Remove from hot water and immediately immerse in cold water.

As the Spinach sauce tends to get thick therefore it is advisable to add Spaghetti immediately before serving after adjusting the consistency by adding more milk to it. The sauce should coat the Spaghetti.

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SIGNS YOUR BODY IS NOT RECEIVING ENOUGH SUNSHINE OR VITAMIN D

If you are experiencing some kind of muscular pain, or are feeling more tired and fatigued than ever, chances are it could be because of vitamin D deficiency. Pain in the lower back and in the joints are also pretty common.

The most important thing that you need to keep in mind is that those who have vitamin D deficiency, suffer from weak immunity, too. And right now strengthening your immunity should be your one true goal. Don't make yourself more susceptible to seasonal infections; let the sun do its work.

However, before you think of taking a vitamin D substitute, know that the sun is the best source. And also, speak with your doctor if you are showing any of the aforementioned signs. They will be able to guide you better.

Vitamin D is naturally present in very few foods, and often in amounts too low to help a person meet their daily recommended intake. In response, manufacturers fortify several foods with the vitamin.

The prevalence of vitamin D deficiency is highest among older adults, people with obesity, and people in hospitals and other care facilities.

Signs and symptoms

Many people with vitamin D deficiency have no symptoms. However, the deficiency can cause the following issues.

Frequent infections or illnesses

Vitamin D helps support the immune system — it plays a role in regulating immune function and



inhibiting inflammatory reactions.

It can also help prevent infections in the upper respiratory tract.

Fatigue and muscle weakness

Because vitamin D is key to bone health, an insufficient amount can cause bone and muscle weakness, which can lead to fatigue.

Researchers behind a 2014 study that included 174 participants with fatigue found that taking supplementary vitamin D for 5 weeks significantly improved fatigue symptoms.

Bone and joint pain

Vitamin D can increase bone mass and prevent bone loss. If someone has bone and joint pain, it may indicate a vitamin D deficiency.

Joint pain could also result from issues such as rheumatoid arthritis. A 2012 study linked vitamin D deficiency with an increased risk of

developing the condition.

Fractures

Adequate vitamin D in the body helps maintain bone strength by supporting the absorption of calcium.

If someone has a fracture, the doctor might test their vitamin D level, depending on the person's age and health history.

Depression

The authors of a 2019 review have found that lower levels of vitamin D may increase the risk of depression. There are vitamin D receptors in the brain, and the research indicates that the vitamin has a protective anti-inflammatory effect.

As a result, the scientists conclude, a person with very low vitamin D levels and depression may benefit from taking a supplement of the vitamin.



Tips for preventing back pain

Exercise

As well as being good for your health, regular physical activity—such as walking or cycling—is known to prevent back pain. Even those already suffering from backache are encouraged to remain active, in line with recommendations from their doctor.

Yoga

One of the many benefits of yoga is that it can help prevent back pain. Unlike many other forms of exercise, you can easily practise yoga from the comfort of your own home.

Try cat, plank or even child's pose—these all strengthen back muscles and improve spine flexibility.

Take microbreaks

To avoid back pain caused by a static working position, take microbreaks every 20 to 30 minutes. During these short breaks (30 seconds maximum), you should do various stretches (neck, shoulders, arms, etc.) in front of your screen without leaving your workstation.

For example, squeeze your abdominal muscles and stand up from your chair while keeping your back as straight as possible. This stretch helps prevent pain in the lower back region.

Take an hourly break

As well as microbreaks, if you're working in front of a computer you should consider taking slightly longer breaks (5-10 minutes) every hour.

During your break, get up from your chair and walk around your house—this will help improve your circulation. While you're at it, do a few stretches, focusing especially on your arms and back.

Lose weight

Weight gain is a risk factor when it comes to back pain. Excess weight weakens abdominal muscles, and if this weight is concentrated around your mid-section your centre of gravity tends to be altered, which increases the natural arch in your back. People who are overweight are thought to be 30% more likely to suffer from spinal disc degeneration.

WANT TO KEEP YOUR WEIGHT IN CHECK? HAVE RAISINS

Most people who have been staying put at home for months now, are starting to crave outside food, mainly of the junk form. But junk food consumption is never a good idea, even if you are dieting and looking forward to 'cheat days'. There is a way that you can suppress these unhealthy desires and keep your weight in check. And it requires you to eat one simple thing only: raisins.

Experts say that raisins have the power to suppress the cravings that ultimately can have a negative ramification on our health and well-being. And when we begin to crave something, more often than not, it is carbs that hold our attention. This weight loss hack involving raisins is simple. Whenever you crave something that can add to your weight and make you feel unhealthy, just take a few raisins and eat them very slowly. Slow-eating can ensure you are mindful of what you are eating at the moment. It



also makes your mind and body to slow down and understand the process. And it only takes five minutes or even less.

Eating raisins is a part of healthy snacking, which is always encouraged. It is said that when you eat raisins, there begins a chemical reaction in the body, which slows your breathing. Raisins also believed to keep your appetite stable and take care of your immediate cravings, slow down the process of digestion, and bring down the levels of stress, which can

sometimes be the trigger for junk food consumption and binge-eating. This exercise best be done in the morning, or anytime during the day, when the brain sends signals asking the body to eat something. As mentioned earlier, it is a part of healthy snacking. When you eat raisins, pay attention to how your body is reacting, what it is feeling, etc., so as to understand its needs better. This is opposite to how you generally tend to behave when you are unmindfully munching on carbs.

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FIRMS LOST \$3.86 MILLION PER DATA BREACH ON AVERAGE IN 2020: IBM SECURITY STUDY

IBM on Wednesday released a global study on the financial impact of data breaches. The study found that the security breaches cost companies \$3.86 million per breach on an average. It also reports that compromised employee accounts were among the most expensive root causes.

The findings were reported in a '2020 Cost of a Data Breach Report' which was conducted by the Ponemon Institute and sponsored by the IBM Security. It covers interviews with over 3,200 security professionals in organisations that faced data breach over the past year.

According to the study, 80% of the 500 organisations that faced data breaches led to the exposure of customers' personally identifiable information.

Key findings of the study are

- 140 million was the average total cost of a data breach in the 2020 study, an increase of 9.4% from 2019.
- 5,522 was the cost per lost or stolen record in the 2020 study, an increase of 10% from 2019.
- 53% of data breaches were caused by malicious attacks.
- The average time to identify a data breach increased from 221 to 230 days.
- The average time to contain a data breach increased from 77 to 83 days
- Top three root causes of a data breach are - 53% malicious attack, 26% system glitch and 21% human error.

Spotify introduces Group Sessions for Premium users

Spotify on Tuesday introduced a new feature called Group Sessions on its platform. The newly launched feature enables the company's Premium users to listen to a podcast or a playlist together irrespective of their distance.

The music streaming service had first introduced this feature back in May this year in beta mode to a selected bunch of users. At the time, this feature allowed groups of Premium users to share control of their listening sessions with others in real time. It also offered shared opportunities for collaboration among all the listeners.

Now, the company has rolled out its Group Sessions feature to all its users across the globe. Although the feature is still in the beta mode, the company has added a new functionality that allows the Spotify Premium users around the world to tune into the same playlist or podcast simultaneously. "So no matter the distance—whether six feet apart or a thousand miles away—you and the members of your squad can now each listen to the same content at the same time on your own devices (as well as control playback)," the company wrote in its blog post.



GOOGLE NEGOTIATING TO PUSH ASSISTANT, PLAY STORE APPS ON SAMSUNG PHONES

Alphabet Inc.'s Google and Samsung Electronics Co. are negotiating a major deal that would give Google products more prominence on the South Korean company's smartphones, according to correspondence viewed by Bloomberg News.

The talks involve giving Google more control over search on Samsung handsets globally. Samsung is the largest smartphone maker in the world, selling close to 300 million phones last year. Google's Android is already the underlying operating system on Galaxy devices, but a potential deal would promote Google's digital assistant and Play Store for apps on those devices, details from a person briefed on the matter show.

That would provide the U.S. internet giant with more valuable daily access to Samsung users and would mean the Korean company's own mobile services, such as the Bixby digital assistant, are less integrated on its own devices, according to the correspondence. The move would be a capitulation for Samsung, but the drop in demand for mobile devices during the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified the company's need for



revenue and weakened its negotiating position with a key partner.

"Like all Android device makers, Samsung is free to create its own app store and digital assistant," a Google spokesperson said in an emailed statement. "That's one of the great features of the Android platform. And while we regularly

talk with partners about ways to improve the user experience, we have no plans to change that."

"Samsung remains committed to our own ecosystem and services," said a Samsung spokesperson. "At the same time, Samsung closely works with Google and other partners to offer the best mobile experiences for our users."

IISc designs eye gaze-controlled robotic arm for speech, motor impaired

An Indian Institute of Science (IISc) research team has designed a robotic arm that can be manipulated by eye movement using a computer interface, to help people with Severe Speech and Motor Impairment (SSMI).

This interface is non-invasive since it is through a webcam and a computer, unlike other eye gaze-tracking devices that use head-mounted systems, according to Bengaluru-based IISc.

People with SSMI find it difficult to physically operate devices such as a joystick, mouse or trackball, or use speech recognition systems, it was noted.

Eye gaze-controlled computer interfaces can help them perform various tasks on par with their non-disabled peers.

To help people with SSMI (a condition caused by disorders like cerebral palsy), a research team at the Centre for Product Design and Manufacturing (CPDM), IISc, worked with young adult students who have SSMI at Vidya Sagar (formerly the Spastics Society of India) in Chennai, an institution for individuals with disabilities.

"Many of these students [with cerebral palsy] are not able to



precisely focus at a single point in their visual field, due to uncontrolled gaze movement.

They are also not comfortable to look at all portions of the visual field equally," says project lead Pradipta Biswas, Assistant Professor at CPDM.

Biswas and his team used computer vision and machine learning algorithms to analyse live feeds of facial video from the users, and were able to estimate where the user was looking.

They coupled this with an

Augmented Reality application to allow the user to use a robotic arm for tasks like picking up and dropping objects, and placing them where they desire, as long as it was within reach of the robotic arm, according to an IISc statement.

One of the main applications of this eye gaze-controlled robotic arm is rehabilitation of young adults with SSMI, through tasks such as fabric printing.

They usually require assistance in doing such tasks, as they can only do a small part of it by themselves.

Surge in coronavirus cases slowing US economic recovery, says US Central Bank chief

The surge in US coronavirus cases is beginning to weigh on economic activity, the head of the Federal Reserve said on Wednesday, and he promised the US central bank would "do what we can, and for as long as it takes," to limit damage and boost growth.

"It looks like the data are pointing to a slowing in the pace of the recovery," Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said at a news conference, pointing to an apparent pullback by consumers and a slowdown in the rehiring of furloughed workers, particularly by small businesses.

The US, he said, "has entered a new phase in containing the virus, which is essential to protect both our health and our economy."

Powell's comments, made via videoconference after the Fed announced its policy decision to leave interest rates near zero, suggest dimming hopes for a quick economic rebound. Coronavirus infections have exploded in a number of Southern and Southwestern states in recent weeks, and some states have paused or rolled back reopening measures.

The Fed's policy statement, released at the close of its two-day meeting, directly tied the economic recovery to resolution of a health crisis whose direction remains



much in doubt. More than 150,000 Americans have died from COVID-19, the respiratory illness caused by the novel coronavirus.

"The path of the economy will depend significantly on the course of the virus," the central bank's policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) said.

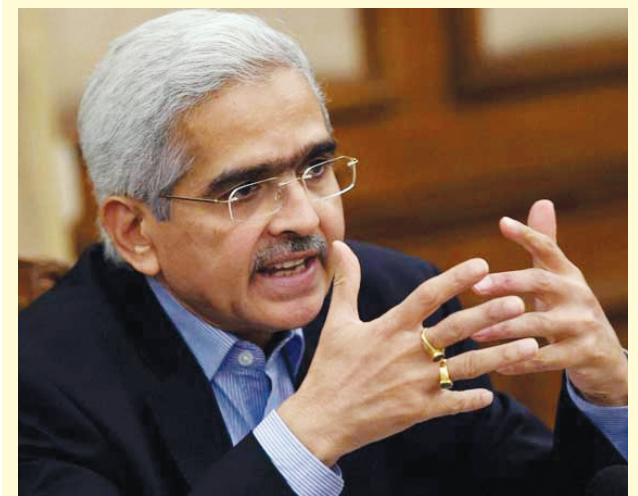
In his news conference, Powell elaborated on just how much remained unclear about the direction of the world's largest economy. Fiscal programs that he credits with sustaining consumer spending in recent weeks are about to expire, with debate still under way in Congress over what, if anything, will take their place.

The virus is moving so fast that

policymakers are taking cues about the economy from real-time flows of data from firms that track people's movements through cellphones, for example, or provide signals about hiring, Powell said.

"That data show that on balance ... the pace of the recovery looks like it has slowed since cases began that spike," he said. "I want to stress," he added, "it's too early to say both how large that is and how sustained that is."

The Fed held policy largely steady, with key decisions likely to come this fall after it is clearer where the health crisis is heading and just what action Congress takes to support struggling businesses and unemployed workers.



INFRASTRUCTURE PUSH CAN REIGNITE ECONOMIC GROWTH: RBI GOVERNOR

MUMBAI (TIP): RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, on July 27, made a strong case for stepping up investments in the infrastructure sector to restart the economy reeling under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In his address to India Inc at a CII event, Das said both private and public sectors would have to play an important role in developing infrastructure that requires huge investments.

Stating that recent agriculture reforms have opened new opportunities, the RBI Governor said the farm sector was emerging as a bright spot.

India needs policies for sustained increase in farm income, he added.

With regard to forex rate, the RBI has no fixed target for the rupee but will monitor undue volatility, Das said.

Yes Bank takes over Anil Ambani's group HQ in Mumbai

MUMBAI (TIP): Yes Bank has taken over the headquarter of Anil Ambani's group in suburban Santacruz for failure to repay dues worth Rs 2,892 crore.

The private sector lender has also taken possession of two flats in South Mumbai for the non-payment of dues by Reliance Infrastructure, according to a notice published by Yes Bank in a newspaper on Wednesday.

Nearly all the major companies in Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group (ADAG) were operating out of the Santacruz office called 'Reliance Centre'. However, in the last few years, the fortunes of the group have gone south with the companies meeting various fates, including bankruptcies and stake sales.

Gold slips as dollar halts slide, investors book profit

Gold was little changed on Wednesday, having retreated from an all-time high as investors booked profits, with caution setting in as focus turned to a U.S.

Federal Reserve meeting widely expected to reinforce loose monetary policy. Spot gold was steady at \$1,959.04 per ounce by 0723

GMT. Prices hit an all-time high of \$1,980.57 on Tuesday. U.S. gold futures rose 0.1% to \$1,958.20.

"As we get closer to the Fed announcement and the event risk, the market will get a bit more wary," said DailyFx currency strategist Ilya Spivak. Gold is closely following moves in the dollar as well, Spivak added. The dollar index resumed its downtrend after a brief pause to hold near its lowest level since June 2018 touched this week. A weaker dollar, also considered a rival safe haven, makes gold cheaper for holders of other currencies.

Coronavirus cases continued to surge in the United States and stood at over 16.6 million globally.

Its intensifying spread and an escalation in U.S.-China tensions have dented hopes of quick economic recovery, and have been driving inflows to safe-haven assets like gold, which has risen more than 28% so far this year.

Samsung beats earnings estimates on recovery of chips, gadget sales

Samsung Electronics Co. reported earnings that beat profit estimates, as rising internet use during the Covid-19 pandemic boosted chip demand and gadget sales.

Net income was 5.5 trillion won (\$4.6 billion) in the three months ended June, the company said in a filing on Thursday, compared with the 4.9 trillion won average of estimates compiled by Bloomberg. Samsung had reported preliminary numbers earlier this month that showed operating profit rose 23%.

The world's largest maker of memory chips and smartphones had warned of a second-quarter sales slump in its consumer business. However, smartphone sales started to pick up from June after stores reopened and demand for gadgets and TVs revived, according to several analysts including Daishin Securities' Park Kang Ho. As people continued to stay home and consume internet-based services like movie streaming and video conferencing, server clients rushed orders for memory chips, which lifted prices.

"While Covid-19 impacted Samsung's earnings in the first half of 2020, we foresee an earnings recovery from the second half, especially in mobile, consumer electronics and display divisions despite a weak memory business," Peter Lee, analyst at Citigroup Inc., said in a note ahead of Thursday's release.



WTO agrees to mediate Japan, South Korea electronics dispute

The World Trade Organization granted South Korea's request for a dispute inquiry into Japan's decision to restrict exports of electronics components.

During a meeting in Geneva Wednesday, it agreed to establish a panel of three experts to determine if Japan violated WTO rules when it imposed restrictions on three classes of chemicals used in the production of smart-phone displays, TV screens and semiconductors.

South Korea alleged Japan's measures "constitute a politically motivated, disguised restriction on trade" that disrupted global value chains for South Korean manufacturers like Samsung Electronics Co. and SK Hynix Inc., according to a statement seen by Bloomberg.

The Japanese delegation expressed disappointment at South Korea's decision to press ahead with the WTO complaint, saying in a statement Tokyo's measures were intended to enhance control over dual-use items, and thus allowable under WTO rules. It added that bilateral talks were the "best and only way" to resolve the matter.

Shree Ganeshaya Namah



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The Indian Panorama brings you Weekly and Birthday Horoscope from the World's most trusted Vedic Astrologer Nastur Bejan Daruwalla.

Weekly Horoscope August 3 - August 9, 2020

ARIES: Ganesha says deals, mergers, joint-finances, collaborations may prove money-spinners; along with it will also be spiritual pursuits, tantra, mantra, meditation. As you can see, it is a mixed bag. There will be radical changes like relocating, moving to a new house, or changing jobs. You look for new experiences to understand life and its meaning. You seek change, novelty, different experiences and want to share your knowledge with all.

TAURUS: Ganesha says there is a great movement in your life now. You reap the whirlwind. There is money in the bank and more prestige at work. What more do you need? This has been an interesting period by all accounts, and you have no regrets as it comes to a close. There will be domestic expenses; the health of children will be a particular cause for worry. But you are on the treadmill of achievement.

GEMINI: Ganesha says there will be better income, perks, and benefits. You acquire a sparkingly bright image at the office and will shine professionally. There will also be travel for pleasure; possibly with a loved one, a secret rendezvous or love nest. Ganesha chuckles happily. Also, this is a period when you are filled with love for the family and close friends.

CANCER: Ganesha says there will be many party times as you bond with everyone. This is an emotional phase and you recollect all the good times with tears in your eyes. You are introspective and contemplative. You also look at social work and help out with some charity organization. You may join an NGO working with disability or with the underprivileged or the less fortunate.

LEO: Ganesha says this is a significant period. You have the right mindset and attitude for great progress and advancement. You want to go full steam ahead and could be looking for a change of scenario in your work / career / employment / profession. Job-hopping, promotions, or even a new business could be some of the possibilities this period.

VIRGO: Ganesha says there is a tremendous rush of energy and power and you feel a tremendous need to do full justice to your potential and talent. All this could lead to spectacular results. There are also family and work commitments to be kept. The results of your endeavours will be fruitful. This is a special time and many favours come your way. This is an ideal phase for getting things done. The fruits of your efforts will be tangible. Enjoy the moment, says Ganesha.

LIBRA: You keep slogging away. There is no respite in your desire to achieve as you make many plans for the future. Your domestic commitments may have taken a back seat in recent times as you concentrate on work and its many dimensions. The family will now make great demands on your time and attention. You will have to unravel the tangled web of family issues, domestic wrangles and problems.

SCORPIO: Ganesha says this is going to be a tough task. There is also another aspect at play; the adventure of high finance, of raking in lots of money, of daring and ambitious business transactions. But now the thrust is strongly on family life. Ganesha agrees with the change in focus. You put your nose to the grindstone and go for it. You are enthusiastic and energized and will be a powerhouse of energy.

SAGITTARIUS: Ganesha says this is a time of genuine achievements, progress and success. Even though expenses will soar, more money will also be earned. Family and professional life will not only blossom but also bear fruit. You will make all the right moves as you get more streamlined and efficient. There will be many purchases and expenses will mount. You look at realty as a good option and may buy a new home or office.

CAPRICORN: Ganesha says there will be pleasing times with your significant other. The temptations of love will be great, and you will have to reign yourself in. Life is good and you thank Ganesha for all the blessings. You live in gratitude. You make big plans and have the will power to carry them through. You look at every opportunity to make the most of the situation.

AQUARIUS: Ganesha says you look for experiences that can improve your knowledge as you firmly believe that knowledge is power. You love beauty and aesthetic surroundings, and this will be the time when you splurge on all the comforts of life. You buy goodies and surround yourself with them. You will focus on the future and work and home will be a major priority.

PISCES: Ganesha says you plan ahead with expertise and innovation as you hope to make all your dreams / hopes / ambitions come true. There is a tendency to overdo things now and you may over-extend yourself at work. Take heed of the 3 R's --- Rest, regular hours, relaxation, and you will quite automatically, of course with some luck thrown in, also get the fourth R - results. Ganesha wishes you well.

Birthday Horoscope August 3 - August 9, 2020

August 3: Ganesha says there may be moody home-business resistance, but if you voice your needs creatively, someone may unexpectedly arrive to lift your spirits!

August 4: Money or investments cause stern, disapproving responses. But you've got faith, confidence, vision, and benevolence on your side.

August 5: The Moon may bring a lively networking opportunity, as well as culmination

to the cross needs to social friends and personal loved ones.

August 6: Yesterday's mood might continue if someone has more to say about freedom vs. commitment. Trust your own creative skills in response.

August 7: A noontime spurt adds action to recent words between social and personal relations. Someone may make an active bid for the most attention.

August 8: You might need a little behind-the-scenes retreat from recent stress levels. Work done in private could be good for your mind-body well-being.

August 9: Edgy, upsetting opinions can replay the bitterness over limited funds. Offset other's harsh words by having lunch with a happy, supportive friend.

RAKSHA BANDHAN

FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE BROTHER'S LOVE AND COMMITMENT FOR SISTER

RAKSHA BANDHAN FALLS ON AUGUST 3. WE WISH READERS A HAPPY RAKSHA BANDHAN

Raksha Bandhan celebrates the pure bond that exists between siblings. It literally translates to 'safety' and 'bond', is a celebration of this very bond that exists between siblings. The promise to always be there, to always protect, no matter what the circumstances. It is a celebration of the unconditional love that only a sibling can provide. The festival is a time-honoured ritual of protection, the greatest gift that siblings give each other.

Raksha Bandhan or Rakhi is celebrated each year on the full moon in the Hindu Month of Shravan which for the year 2020 falls on August 3. Each year there is a particular time which is considered optimal for carrying out the ritual. This year, the 'muhurat' is from 9:28 in the morning till 9:17 in the night.

As most Hindu rituals, Raksha Bandhan is rooted in history and mythology. During the events of the Mahabharat, legend dictates that when Lord Krishna accidentally nicked his finger on his 'sudarshan chakra', Princess Draupadi tore a piece of her saree and tied it to his finger to stop the bleeding. Lord Krishna was so touched by this gesture that he vowed to always protect and cherish her.

Traditionally the ritual involves siblings coming together in celebration, with the sister applying tilak to the brother's forehead and tying a Rakhi or bracelet to his wrist. The Rakhi itself serves as the protective band that ensures the safety of the brother and he in turn promises her the same. Nowadays, you can find Rakhis of all shapes and sizes from which you can select one that represents your sibling bond the best.

In the modern interpretation of this ritual, the roles can go either way. The attention shifts from the religious aspect to a more playful exchange of gifts and a mutual understanding of peace, at least for a day! Sometimes rakhis are tied to elder sister if one doesn't have an older brother, sometimes rakhis are tied to friends and distant relatives especially in the case of single children. No matter how it is carried out, the essence remains the same, the rakhi is tied to someone who has been caring and nurturing towards you, always looking out for you, gender and relations are secondary.

Legends around the festival

Indra and Indrani

Turns out, Raksha Bandhan wasn't just meant as a symbol of sibling love, as is illustrated by the story of Indra and Indrani. During a war between Gods and demons, wherein Indra was losing to King Bali, Indra's wife Indrani prayed to Lord Vishnu, who gave her a holy thread which she tied around Indra's wrist. Blessed with its powers, Indra won the war and the thread became his protection against any evil.

Krishna and Draupadi

It's said that after Lord Krishna hurt his index finger while hurling the Sudharshan Chakra at Shishupala, Draupadi tore her saree immediately and tied it around Krishna's finger to prevent it from bleeding. Touched by her unconditional love, Krishna took the mantle of Draupadi's care and protection upon himself, as was also seen during her cheer haran by the Kauravas.

Queen Kunti and Abhimanyu

Queen Kunti is said to have tied a sacred thread as a measure of protection, on the wrist of her grandson,



Abhimanyu--the son of Subhadra and Arjun--during the battle of Mahabharata.

King Bali and Goddess Lakshmi

According to this website, when a turn of events led to Lord Vishnu disguising himself as the doorman of King Bali--the grandson of Vishnu's ardent devotee Prahlada--Goddess Lakshmi became restless because of his absence in Vaikuntha (their abode). She came to earth in the guise of a Brahmin woman and told Bali, the story of her husband having gone away for some work, due to which she requested for shelter from the King. Bali not only gave her a place to stay, but also took care of her. It's said that on the full moon day (Purnima) of the Shravana month, she tied a thread around Bali's wrist with prayers for his protection and happiness. Touched by her affection, Bali granted her a wish. She requested him to free her husband, the gatekeeper. The incident had Bali confused as he couldn't envision the lady as the doorman's wife. It's then that both Lord Vishnu and Goddess Lakshmi revealed their true selves to the King, who urged Vishnu to return with the Goddess to Vaikuntha. The festival is also known as Baleva.

Santoshi Maa

On seeing Lord Ganesha celebrate Rakhi with his sister, his sons Shubh and Labh started insisting upon a sister, leading to the creation of Santoshi Maa, from the flames that emerged from his consorts, Riddhi and Siddhi.

Alexander the Great's wife Roxana and King Porus

Legend has it that during Alexander the Great's invasion of India in 326 BCE, his wife Roxana sent a sacred thread to Porus, requesting him not to harm her husband in battle. It's believed that on the battlefield, the thread on his wrist was a constant reminder of his promise to Roxana, preventing him from attacking Alexander directly.

Rani Karnavati and Emperor Humayun



Rani Karnavati--the widowed queen of Chittor--is said to have sent a rakhi to Mughal Emperor Humayun, upon the looming threat of invasion from the Sultan of Gujarat, Bahadur Shah. Though Humayun turned up too late, it's no secret that he honored the sentiment with which it was sent.

From Lord Ganesha's sons pestering their father for a sister to Roxana's rakhi--legends like these can't be taken on face value, but they always make the festival a fun affair.

Rakhi as a social bonding

The ritual of Raksha Bandhan strengthens the bond of love between brothers and sisters everywhere; it is also known to exceed the confines of the

family. Rakhi is also sometimes tied on the wrists of close friends or neighbours; this bond underscores the need for an amicable social life, in which people can co-exist peacefully as brothers and sisters. Everybody in the community promises to protect each other in such congregational Rakhi Utsavs, promoted by the Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore.

Rakhi Purnima - The Auspicious Full Moon Day

In North India, Rakhi Purnima is also referred to as Kajri Navami or Kajri Purnima--This is the time when wheat is sown, and Goddess Bhagwati is worshipped. In the Western Indian states, this festival is known as Coconut Full Moon or Nariyal Purnima. In South India, Shravan Purnima is a significant religious occasion, especially for Brahmins. The festival of Raksha Bandhan is known by various names in India: Punya Pradayak--the giver of boons, Vish Tarak -the destroyer of venom, and Pap Nashak - the destroyer of sins.

Rituals

Raksha bandhan is marked by quite a few rituals, which vary regionally in India. Some typical rituals are:

Days or even weeks before the actual festival, the women start preparing for Raksha bandhan. They shop for Rakhi or the ceremonial thread which is tied around their brother's wrists. In return, the brothers shop for gifts for their sisters.

On the morning of the festival day, the siblings get together along with other members of the family. The ritual typically starts with lighting a lamp in front of a deity; the women then tie rakhi on their brothers wrist, apply tilak on their forehead and give them sweets, dry fruits, etc.

While tying the Rakhi, the sister often prays for the well-being of her brother; this ritual may also include an aarti thali, which is a tray with a lighted lamp, flowers, sweets, and other things, which is rotated around the brother's face.

The brother in return gives gifts to his sister; he also gives sweets, and dry fruits etc, to his sister as well. They hug and the elders give blessings to the children.

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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."



Colleague, teacher and father figure: Pharmacy Professor Anjan Kowluru perfects the art of mentoring

As soon as Ismail Syed learned that he received a faculty position at Harvard Medical School this spring, he phoned members of his family to share the good news. Near the top of his call list was Distinguished Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences Anjaneyulu Kowluru, the man who'd served as his PhD program mentor at the Wayne State University Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health

Sciences a full decade ago. He wasn't a relative, of course, but Syed says that Kowluru went beyond mere mentoring: "He was also a father figure."

Syed is among the many researchers and scholars who have gone on to achieve great success after being guided by Kowluru.

"I've had the good fortune to mentor a lot of people at a lot of different levels - more than 90, from undergraduates to postdocs and from clinical investigators to junior faculty," Kowluru said. "It makes my life more interesting."

And that's saying something, considering Kowluru's own impressive career. The senior research career scientist at the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center in Detroit arrived at WSU in 1998, became a full professor with tenure in 2002, and just two years later was named a Charles H. Gershenson Distinguished Faculty Fellow, an honor established by the university to recognize and provide support for faculty whose continuing achievements and activities in scholarship, research or the arts are nationally distinguished.

Kowluru served as WSU Applebaum's program director for research from 2004-11 and as its associate dean for external scientific affairs from 2011-17. In 2006, he was appointed to Wayne State's Academy of Scholars, a prestigious collection of prominent academic experts and celebrated researchers, of which he served as president in 2018-19. He is an oft-invited speaker across the country and globe, has been named chair of a range of committees and membership

organizations, and has been honored with numerous awards, including Wayne State's Distinguished Graduate Faculty Award in 2015.

Through it all, he has worked diligently in his VA Medical Center lab researching the pathophysiology of diabetes. The lab is working to identify specific genes that must be regulated by glucose to induce insulin secretion, to identify novel drug targets to rectify these defects in diabetes, and to develop beta cells resistant to immune attack for use in transplantation for the treatment of Type 1 diabetes. He also has spent the past four decades earning numerous grants, including continuous support for over 30 years from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Merit Award, and collaborating with colleagues near and far to publish more than 180 papers.



President M. Roy Wilson (left) and former Provost Margaret Winters present Kowluru with his faculty award in 2015.

"Dr. Kowluru is the quintessential educator and researcher," said Cathy Lysack, dean of the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. "We are fortunate to have him as an industrious member of our faculty, and his students are fortunate to learn from one of the best."

Harvard's Syed agrees. "He's a great teacher to begin with, and a really great scientist," he said. "He encouraged me to go into academia and warned me that I'd need passion for research because it's not a 9-to-5 job. You dedicate your life for the good of humanity."

Kowluru says Syed's potential to soar

was undeniable. "He worked in my lab at the VA hospital for four years and then went on to a postdoc fellowship at Harvard with Dr. Barbara Kahn, a major name in the field of diabetes research," Kowluru said. "Once I learned he'd received the very elite and competitive K Award from the NIH, I knew he would continue to succeed." Also known as a Career Development Award, the K Award provides support for senior postdoctoral fellows or faculty-level candidates to bring them to the point where they are able to conduct their research independently and become competitive for major grants.

As word spread of Syed's accomplishments, Lysack was among those to cheer: "This is a wonderful example of scientists trained at the college under excellent mentorship moving out into the academic world and having great impact."

Another Kowluru mentee in that category is Abiy Mussa Mohammed, PhD '13, who is on his way to Washington to begin work as a biologist with the EPA - his dream job, Kowluru recalls: "The day he joined my lab, he told me he wanted to work for either the FDA or the EPA. This is great news and another success story for our program."

Strong support

Kowluru says the foundation of a successful mentorship is unconditional support. He encourages hands-on training, interdisciplinary collaboration, project autonomy and co-authorship. "I help each person find their niche, then encourage them to run with it and contribute to the field," he said, noting that publishing helps with data analysis skills and results in a huge sense of accomplishment.

He also makes time to meet with mentees one-on-one to ask, "Is there anything else you want me to do for you?"

It's not all sunshine and roses though, Kowluru said: "I am really strict and I warn them that they're probably not going to like me all the time, but that they've chosen this path so they'll have to do the best they can with no shortcuts to make sure the final product is perfect."

He leads by example, saying, "You have to have a passion for your research and be willing to workdays, nights and weekends."

When Assistant Professor Jiemei Wang joined the WSU Applebaum faculty in 2016, she asked Pharmaceutical Sciences Department Chair George Corcoran for advice on choosing a faculty mentor. "He told me Anjan would be great, so I approached him during our next department meeting and he immediately said yes," she recalled. "I was so grateful and humbled - he treated me both as a valuable colleague and as one of his kids."

That was intentional, as Kowluru says he uses the same skill set for parenting

and mentoring. He raised two accomplished daughters with his wife Renu, a WSU professor herself who researches diabetic retinopathy, teaches retinal cell biology in the School of Medicine and was recently appointed to serve on the National Eye Advisory Council of the NIH. When she was named to the Academy of Scholars in 2011, they became the first-ever married couple in the group's then 32-year history.



Anjan and Renu Kowluru

In addition to collaborating on parenthood, the Kowlurus have published 45 papers together and have been awarded several NIH grants. "It's nice being married to someone in the same field who understands what I do," he said. "And it was also helpful for our daughters to watch us work together and sometimes struggle to win grants and get papers published through the years."

Indeed, teamwork is a key lesson Kowluru expects mentees to learn from him, saying that he's grateful for the support of the college, his department and the VA Medical Center.

Kowluru also makes sure students know that mentoring is a pay-it-forward proposition. He speaks fondly of two professors who guided him along the way decades ago at Brussels Free University School of Medicine in Belgium and at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine: "They are both still conducting high-caliber research, and I'm in touch with them on a regular basis to learn from them."

Syed, meanwhile, is mentoring research assistants and "literally trying to replicate the experience Dr. Kowluru provided for me. Sometimes when I fail, I take a step back and think, 'What would Dr. Kowluru do?'"

And Wang recalls her early years in the college as she guides her own PhD candidates: "Anjan showed me how to train students and encourage them to stay curious and really think critically."

Kowluru says seeing his mentees successfully shepherd others is among his greatest accomplishments: "Mentoring is what I do. And as I tell each of them: You have to be the best at what you do."



Dr. Anjan Kowluru (center) meets with colleagues and postdoctoral fellows, including Abiy Mussa Mohammed (far left), at a professional conference.

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Special article on the occasion of Eid-al-adha which falls on July 31.
We wish our Muslim readers a Happy Eid

Should Muslims sacrifice cattle on Eid-al-Adha?



By Dr. Mike Ghouse

Rituals are the pathways to accomplish milestones of peace for oneself and with what surrounds one; life and environment. None of us can escape from the ceremonies. Each of us instinctively follows certain routines, from waking up to the time we go to sleep. Whether we shower, eat breakfast, go to the office, or gym, we follow the rituals.

The essence of Islam is to create cohesive societies where every human feels secure about his/her faith, race, religion, region, or ethnicity. It is time for Muslims to consider the essence of sacrifice rather than the ritual itself.

Real sacrifice requires us to give up some of what is dear to us. It is about parents going to sleep without food but feeding their kids; it is clothing their kids while waiting to get their own. In the case of extremities, we would instead get the bullet and save our loved ones, we are willing to rescue an individual from a freezing lake risking our own lives, and even strangers do that.

A thousand years ago, a man's assets were made up of his goats, camels, and cattle. The ultimate sacrifice one would make was to give away his precious assets in gifts. Today, the most cherished possession is money, and people must be willing to part some of it to give the ability to the receiver to spend on his/her critical needs.

One of the examples set up for guidance was the test of Abraham's faith, love, and devotion to God, which humans do routinely, "If you love me, you would do this for me." A simple assurance would suffice, be it your fiancé, spouse, kids, siblings, or parents.

It was Abraham's turn to face the command of God to sacrifice his son. Upon hearing this, he prepared to submit to God's will and places his son on the block. Right at that moment, a lamb appears as an alternative. Then God revealed to Abraham that his "sacrifice" has already been fulfilled.

Does God want animals to be sacrificed?

Not at all. Qur'an, Al-Hajj 22:37 (The Pilgrimage) is clear: "Never does their flesh reach God, and neither their blood. It is only your God-consciousness that reaches Him. It is to this end that we have made them subservient to your needs so that you might glorify God for all the guidance with which He has graced you. And

On Friday, July 31, 2020, over a billion and a half Muslims around the world, will be slaughtering millions of goats, camels, and cattle to carry out Abraham's tradition of sacrificing the symbolic lamb. Is there an alternative to the ritual of slaying animals on Eid Al-Adha, the festival of sacrifice? The answer is yes!



Prophet Abraham sacrificing - Photo / author

give thou this glad tidings unto the doers of good."

The act symbolizes our willingness to give up a part of our bounties to strengthen and preserve the web of the universe and help those in need. We recognize that all blessings come from God, and we should open our hearts and share with others.

What would you sacrifice instead?

It is customary for Muslims to sacrifice an animal on the day of the Hajj, a symbolic representation of Prophet Abraham's act. What are our alternatives? We can put that money to a different use that will do greater good like lending to a street hawker who can sell things from a cart and take care of his family or a single mom who can weave baskets or make sweaters to take care of her family. The beauty of this practice is you can make the same money repeatedly work for

the common good. Muslims call it Sadaq-e-Jariah, which is continual giving.

Dr. Nauman Anwar: "Sacrificing animals without making a public spectacle is still a good idea, as long as no wastage of the meat and hides occur. Many Muslim countries have a lot of poverty, and if the meat reaches the deserving population, it will help improve the nutritional status of the poor. Let your single sacrifice multiply rather than the one-time sacrifice of animals. Prophet Muhammad had emphasized service to fellow humans as the highest service to God. Quran (4:152) says, if you are kind to your fellow humans, which is my creation, you will earn my grace regardless of your faith.

Honoring police, firemen, and soldiers

Every day our police officers and firemen risk their own lives to protect ours, our freedom is protected by our

men and women in the uniforms. I urge fellow Muslims to stop and salute every one of these men and women, honoring them for their love for humanity. Better yet, call the firemen, policemen, and let them know that as a Muslim you appreciate their sacrifice, and this festival is about appreciation for such sacrifice.

I did that in Louisville; within minutes, the officer had emailed the article to his fellow officers, appreciating the Muslims.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had said the least you can do as a charity is to smile and appreciate the otherness of the others.

You can wish your Muslim friends by saying, Eid Mubarak, Eid Saeed, Happy Eid, Happy Festivities, etc.

(Dr. Mike Ghouse is the founder and president of the Center for Pluralism. He is a speaker, thinker, author, community consultant, pluralist, activist, newsmaker, and an interfaith wedding officiant. More about him at www.TheGhousesdiary.com)

KARNATAKA: THE LAND OF SILKS, SANDALWOOD AND SPICES

Blessed with natural abundance, Karnataka attracts huge number of tourists every year. In 2014, Karnataka was ranked as the third most popular state for tourism in India. Karnataka has many captivating hill stations such as Coorg, Nandi Hills and Chikmagalur. People in search of pristine beaches enjoy its scenic coastal destinations like the famous Blue Lagoon Beach and Ladies Beach in Karwar, dotted with Casuarina trees. In addition, Karnataka is home to UNESCO World Heritage Sites like Hampi and Pattadakal, ideal for heritage tours.

Gommatesvara statue at Shravanabelagola and Gol Gumbaz in Bijapur are two other remarkable heritages that have drawn visitors for ages to Karnataka. This state also has 21 wildlife sanctuaries and 5 national parks including the well-known Bandipur National Park in Mysore. Places like Kudremukh and Madikeri have now become popular eco-tourism destinations. The Golden Chariot, a train, connects most popular tourist destinations in Karnataka for tourists' convenience.

The land of sandalwood, silks, and spices, Karnataka is a vibrant experience in itself. Its rich cultural heritage and spectacular natural beauty make for an engaging getaway. Tourism in Karnataka is a thrilling assortment of appealing destinations and exciting experiences. Located in the southern part of India, Karnataka offers an amazing tryst with lofty mountains, serene beaches, roaring waterfalls, dense forests, rich wildlife, celebrated heritage sites, majestic architecture, and an incredible cultural extravaganza.

Diverse Attractions

Karnataka has countless natural attractions and man-made wonders to woo tourists. It also offers numerous attractions for those interested in adventure and wildlife activities.

Palaces

Karnataka has been under the rule of many empires and dynasties. The rulers left behind their imprints on the landscape of Karnataka through various structures, including many palaces. Even today, the palaces reflect the past glory of those eras. A visit to the palaces in Karnataka will offer you a glimpse into the bygone world of the royalty. Some of the famous palaces of Karnataka are:

- Mysore Palace, Mysore
- Bangalore Palace, Bengaluru
- Lalitha Mahal Palace, Mysore
- Tipu Sultan's Summer Palace, Srirangapatna
- Jaganmohan Palace, Mysore

Forts

The forts in Karnataka are a reflection of the might and strength of the state's erstwhile rulers. Built by rulers of various dynasties, some of them date back to thousands of years. Vijayanagara, Mysore, Badami, Srirangapatna, Chitradurga, Gulbarga, and many other ancient capitals of the



state had grand forts. Some of the well-known forts of the state are:

- Chitradurga Fort
- Bijapur Fort
- Bidar Fort
- Gulbarga Fort
- Badami Fort
- Bellary Fort
- Kittur Fort
- Raichur Fort

Wildlife Sanctuaries

The state has dense forests teeming with wildlife. There are 21 wildlife sanctuaries and 5 national parks in Karnataka. They are home to diverse species of flora and fauna. If you are a wildlife enthusiast, you must not miss visiting some of these wildlife destinations when on a trip to Karnataka. A few wildlife sanctuaries and national parks of the state are:

- Bannerghatta National Park
- Nagarhole National Park
- Bandipur National Park
- Anshi National Park
- Kudremukh National Park
- Arabithittu Wildlife Sanctuary
- Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary
- Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary
- Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary
- Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary

Temples

Karnataka is one of the best places to explore the beauty of temples in South India. Many of its temples date back to hundreds of years ago. Whether you are a pilgrim or simply interested in admiring temple architecture, Karnataka won't let you complain by any means. Among its significant temples are:

- Kollur Mookambika Temple
- Udupi Srikrishna Temple
- Dharmasthala Manjunatha Temple
- Murudeshwara Temple
- Horanadu Annapurneshwari Temple
- Sri Virupaksheshwara Temple
- Kukke Subramanya Temple
- Gokarna Mahaleswara Temple
- Kateel Durgaparameshwari Temple
- Guddattu Mahaganapathi Temple

Historical Monuments

The state of Karnataka is the right place for history buffs to travel to. It has more than 25000 historical monuments and heritage sites that are worth visiting. Each monument is a reminiscence of the state's rich past. When in Karnataka, be sure to check out some of the monuments and heritage sites of the state, such as:

- Hampi Group of Monuments
- Gol Gumbaz in Bijapur
- Raja's Tomb in Madikeri
- Group of Monuments in Pattadakal
- Badami Cave Temples, Badami
- Ibrahim Rauza, Bijapur
- Somnathpur Heritage Site, Somnathpur

Hill Stations

Lush greenery, misty clouds, and serene retreats define the hill stations of Karnataka. The beautiful hill stations of the state have so much to offer to tourists from all walks of life. If you want to break free from the monotonicity of daily life or pace down your hectic schedule for a while, escape to one of these hill stations to rejuvenate your senses.

- Coorg
- Chikmagalur
- Agumbe
- Madikeri
- Kemmanagundi

ENG VS WI: BROAD GRABS 500TH TEST WICKET AS ENGLAND CLINCH SERIES

MANCHESTER (TIP): Stuart Broad joined one of cricket's most exclusive clubs when he took his 500th Test wicket on Tuesday as England completed a series-clinching win over the West Indies at Old Trafford.

The 34-year-old became just the seventh bowler and fourth pacemen to reach the landmark when he had opener Kraigg Brathwaite plumb lbw for 19 on the fifth day of the third Test.

Broad ended the series when he had Jermaine Blackwood caught behind as the West Indies, set a huge target of 399 for victory, collapsed to a meagre 129 all out in under 38 overs.

Broad finished with a match return of 10-67 in addition to the dashing 62 he made batting at No 10 in England's first innings 369 that featured Ollie Pope's 91.

In between Broad's strikes on Tuesday, fellow paceman Chris Woakes returned innings figures of 5-50.

Victory saw England, who controversially left Broad out of the side that lost the first Test at Southampton by four wickets, complete a 2-1 win in a three-match series and regain the Wisden Trophy they lost in the Caribbean last year.

West Indies were left thinking



about how they could have escaped with a draw when, soon after their defeat, rain hammered down at Old Trafford.

Man-of-the-match Broad, playing in his 140th Test, had been stranded on 499 wickets when, after he had already taken eight in this match, rain washed out the whole of Monday's fourth day.

He reached the 500-mark on Tuesday when a full-length ball struck Brathwaite's back pad, with the opener not bothering to review umpire Michael Gough's decision because he was so clearly out.

"It feels amazing," Broad told Sky Sports of his landmark

achievement, which came during a behind close doors series that marks international cricket's return from the coronavirus lockdown.

"I'm looking forward to playing in front of crowds again," added Broad.

"I want to say a huge thank you to the West Indies too, the sacrifice they've made. This summer wouldn't be happening without them.

Broad's father Chris - a former England opening batsman - was at Old Trafford to witness his son's achievement in his role as the match referee.

ENGLAND NAME UNCHANGED SQUAD FOR FIRST TEST AGAINST PAKISTAN

England named an unchanged squad for first match of the three-Test series against Pakistan that begins on August 5 in Manchester, the country's cricket Board (ECB) said on Wednesday.

England beat West Indies 2-1 in the first international Test series since the COVID-19 pandemic suspended the sport in March, winning the third Test by 269 runs on Tuesday.

After losing the first Test in Southampton, England roared back into the series with all-rounder Ben Stokes shining in the second to level it at 1-1 before fast bowler Stuart Broad guided the home side to victory with 10 wickets in the third match.

James Bracey, Ben Foakes, Jack Leach and Dan Lawrence have been named in the reserves.

The Test series against Pakistan will also be held behind closed doors in a bio-secure bubble, even though a limited number of fans will be allowed to attend county cricket matches with social distancing guidelines in place.

"Our 14-man squad is unchanged," national selector Ed Smith said in a statement. "County cricket now restarts on Saturday, August 1. We want to have sufficient reserves inside the bio-secure Test match bubble."

Criminal case opened against FIFA president Gianni Infantino

A criminal case against FIFA president Gianni Infantino was opened Thursday by a Swiss special prosecutor.

The case is connected to a meeting Infantino had with the Swiss attorney general.

The special prosecutor, Stefan Keller, closed an investigation into two complaints involving Infantino and attorney general Michael Lauber after turning up "elements that make up reprehensible behavior." Lauber announced his resignation last week.

Keller opened a criminal case against Infantino as well as Valais prosecutor Rinaldo Arnold, and has sought authorization to open a legal case against Lauber, too, according to a statement from the Swiss authority overseeing the federal prosecutors office.

Hardik Pandya and Natasa Stankovic blessed with baby boy; Virat Kohli congratulates them

Wishes have been pouring in for first-time parents Hardik Pandya and Natasa Stankovic after the Indian cricketer revealed the news of the birth of his baby boy on Thursday.

Hardik Pandya took to social media to share an adorable photo of his baby boy. In the photo, Hardik can be seen holding the hand of his newborn.

India captain and good friend Virat Kohli was among the first ones to wish Hardik and Natasa. "Congratulations to you both," Kohli wrote responding to the photo of Hardik's baby boy.

Leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal took to social media to congratulate his "brotherman" on becoming a father.

Opener Shikhar Dhawan said: "Congratulations my brother @hardikpandya7 on the birth of your son! Lots of love to Natasa, the beautiful boy and you. Hope everyone is healthy," Dhawan wrote in his social media post.

Australia batsman Chris Lynn also congratulated Hardik along with the likes of tennis star Sania Mirza and Sachin Tendulkar's daughter Sarah.

Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) also wished the couple, welcoming 'Pandya Jr'.



"Congratulations to the couple and a warm welcome to Pandya Jr," the BCCI said in its post.

Hardik's Mumbai Indians teammate Suryakumar Yadav said: "May this innings of Fatherhood be very rewarding and the sweetest one ever! Congratulations Papa Hardik!"

Hardik's Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Mumbai Indians shared a heartwarming message for the first-time parents.

"Welcome to One Family. Congratulations Hardik and Natasa," MI wrote.

Top-ranked Ash Barty pulls out of US Open

No 1-ranked Ash Barty has pulled out of the US Open because she doesn't want to risk travelling during the coronavirus pandemic.

The 24-year-old Australian is the highest-profile player so far to opt out of the August 31-September 13 Grand Slam tournament in New York because of the global health crisis.

"My team and I have decided that we won't be travelling to the ... Western & Southern Open and the US Open this year," Barty said in a statement e-mailed to The Associated Press on Thursday.



Viswanathan Anand loses to Vasyl Ivanchuk, ends disastrous campaign after 8 defeats

Indian chess ace Viswanathan Anand's signed off second from bottom after his disappointing campaign at the Legends of Chess online tournament ended with a loss to long-time rival Vasyl Ivanchuk in the ninth and final round.

It was Anand's eighth loss in the USD 150,000 tournament. The 50-year-old ended in ninth position behind GM Peter Leko who finished last.

After all the four games ended in draws, the Anand-Ivanchuk contest went into the Armageddon (a tie-breaker), which also ended in a stalemate.

The Ukrainian emerged victorious as he played black in the decider late on Wednesday

Anand started the match with a 57-move draw and the tie progressed in a similar vein with the players opting for quiet draws.

The Armageddon game was a 59-move affair before the former world champion signed peace with Ivanchuk.

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An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

-Benjamin Franklin

Prevention is touted as the first and most important step in health. In today's world, we are focused on preventing the spread of disease through proper hygiene including frequent hand washing, wearing masks, and social distancing. Recently, prevention measures have gained international attention, but this was not always the case.

Prevention is celebrated in principle and resisted in practice.

1

Prevention isn't glamorous.

- Disease treatments take center stage, gathering media and financial backing.
- Prevention such as **hygiene, eating right and regular exercise** are less interesting, but far more important.

2

Prevention isn't fun.

- Good nutrition and 30 minutes of activity every day create a healthy lifestyle.
- Fast food, fad diets and excessive screen time make healthy lifestyle challenging.

3

Prevention isn't static.

- Standards for maintaining health and preventing disease are not always agreed upon.
- As more research is done, guidelines and recommendations may change.

"The science and art of **preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting physical and mental health and efficiency** through **organized community efforts** for the sanitation of the environment, the control of community infections, the education of the individual in principles of personal hygiene, the organization of medical and nursing service for the early diagnosis and preventive treatment of disease, and the development of the social machinery, which will ensure to every individual in the community a standard of living adequate for the maintenance of health." - **Charles Edward Winslow (1842)**

Major Public Health Milestones

Hand Washing

Sewage Systems

Garbage Collection

Water Chlorination

Vaccines

Masks

Research supports wearing masks to control the spread of COVID-19.

Wear a mask!

Rotary & Polio

Global Collaboration vs. Deadly Disease

Polio is a paralyzing and potentially deadly infectious disease. It commonly affects children under the age of 5.

The virus typically spreads through contaminated water.

There is no cure for polio; however, there are two effective vaccine forms - an injection or an oral dose, as seen on the right.



In 1979, Rotary International began work to eradicate polio. As a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, they have helped reduce polio cases by 99.9 percent over the last 30+ years. Over 2.5 billion children have been immunized in 122 countries. Now, polio is only endemic in 3 countries - Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Pakistan.

Prevention (Eradication Efforts):

If all eradication efforts stopped today, within 10 years, polio could paralyze up to 200,000 children yearly.