



America UNITED against COVID-19

KEEP SAFE

- Follow CDC guidelines
- Observe Social Distancing
- Wash Hands Frequently

KEEP AMERICA SAFE



COVID-19 Worldwide Update Page 32

Pandit Jasraj cremated with state honors



Wife Madhura Jasraj, daughter Durga Jasraj and son Shaarang Dev mourn near the mortal remains of late classical singer and Padma Vibhushan Pandit Jasraj, in Mumbai, on Thursday, August 20, 2020
Photo / courtesy PTI

MUMBAI / NEW YORK (TIP): Indian classical vocalist Pandit Jasraj was on Thursday cremated with state honors in the presence of his family members and close friends.

The 90-year-old music doyen, who belonged to the Mewati Gharana, passed away on Monday following a cardiac arrest at his home in New Jersey, America. He was in the US when the coronavirus-forced lockdown

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'We can and will overcome this season of darkness', says Biden in his acceptance speech

NEW YORK (TIP): Joe Biden accepted his party's nomination for President Thursday, August 20, on the final night of the all-virtual Democratic National Convention.

Biden excoriated President Donald Trump and vowed that while he was accepting his party's nomination for president, he would work just as hard for those who didn't support him.

"The current president has cloaked America in darkness for far too long. Too much anger, too much fear, too much division," the former vice president said. "We can and will overcome this season of darkness."

But his message was more hopeful than ominous. Drawing on his faith in American potential and his own personal experience overcoming tragedy, Biden said the country was

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"I accept this nomination to be the president of the United States," said the former vice president. He spoke from the virtual convention from Delaware, capping off a decades-long quest to represent his party

Independence Day of India celebrated across USA

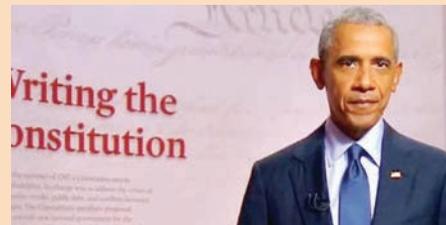
Indian Embassy in Washington DC Celebrates India's 74th Independence Day



The 74th Independence Day of India was celebrated in Washington D.C. with a flag-hoisting ceremony on 15 August 2020 at the India House where Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu addressed the guests virtually

WASHINGTON DC (TIP): The 74th Independence Day of India was celebrated in Washington D.C. with a flag-hoisting ceremony on 15 August 2020 at the India House. Members of the Indian community joined the celebrations in large numbers virtually through digital platforms in view of local public health guidelines. contd on Page 13

Obama's rare rebuke of Trump provokes President's hackles



"Donald Trump hasn't grown into the job because he can't", former US president Barack Obama said at the Democratic Convention - CNN Screen Shot

WASHINGTON (TIP): As Barack Obama tore into US President Donald Trump at the Democratic National Convention, his successor hit back with a barrage of angry tweets, saying the former president spied on his campaign and got caught.

Trump went live with his tweeting as Obama and Indian-origin Senator Kamala Harris delivered their speeches at the 2020 Democratic National Convention on Wednesday.

"HE SPIED ON MY CAMPAIGN, AND GOT CAUGHT!" Trump said in an all-cap tweet.

Trump was referring to the charges that his campaign was being spied on in 2016. As Obama asked Americans to vote for Joe Biden, the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party, Trump fired another tweet in caps.

"WHY DID HE REFUSE TO ENDORSE SLOW JOE UNTIL IT WAS ALL OVER, AND EVEN THEN WAS VERY LATE? WHY DID HE TRY TO GET HIM NOT TO RUN?" he asked.

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Trump's former adviser Steve Bannon arrested, charged with fraud



Ex-Trump adviser Steve Bannon charged with million-dollar fraud in border wall fundraising scheme

Photo / Courtesy Thibault Camus/AP

Allegedly defrauded donors in connection with an online crowdfunding campaign 'We Build the Wall'

Released on \$5M bond, to appear in court next on August 31

NEW YORK (TIP): US President Donald Trump's former top adviser Stephen Bannon was arrested on Thursday and charged for his role in defrauding thousands of donors in connection with an online crowdfunding campaign known as 'We Build the Wall' that raised more than USD 25 million.

Bannon, 66, was charged in an indictment along with Brian Kolffage, 38, an Air Force veteran from Florida, Andrew Badolato, 56, a financier also from Florida and Timothy

Shea, 49, of Colorado, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York Audrey Strauss said on Thursday, August 20.

Bannon, who was arrested off the coast of Connecticut shortly after 7 a.m. Thursday, August 20, on a 150-foot yacht belonging to an exiled Chinese billionaire, pleaded not guilty at his afternoon arraignment via video conference.

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'We can and will overcome this season of darkness...

ready to meet its challenges and do great things.

"While I'll be a Democratic candidate, I'll be an American President," Biden said. "I will draw on the best of us, not the worst. I will be an ally of the light, not the darkness."

The former vice president spoke live to a nearly empty darkened room near his home in Wilmington, Delaware. Supporters in cars filled a parking lot outside to watch on large screens. Protesters, supporting Trump, also were on hand. Fireworks burst overhead after he concluded.

Biden said the nation is facing four crises simultaneously: the coronavirus pandemic, the ensuing recession, renewed demands for racial justice and climate change. And he said that while Trump has failed in every one of them, the country is up to the challenges.

"Our current president has failed in his most basic duty to the nation - he's failed to protect us," Biden said. "And my fellow Americans, that is unforgivable."

If Trump is reelected, Biden warned more people will die from the COVID-19 pandemic, more businesses will shutter and more working people will struggle, even if the wealthiest one percent get another tax break.

"He'll wake up every day believing the job is all about him, not about you," Biden said.

But Biden said that doesn't mean that hope is lost, even as so many have lost loved ones and livelihoods to the virus.

"Look, I understand it's hard to have hope right now," he said. "I know how it feels to lose someone you love. I know that deep black hole that opens up in your chest. That you feel your whole being is sucked into it. I know how mean and cruel and unfair life can be sometimes."

"But I've learned two things," he continued. "First, your loved ones may have left this Earth but they never leave your heart. They will always be with you. And second, I found the best way through pain and loss and grief is to find purpose."

"And we have a great purpose as a nation: To open the doors of opportunity to all Americans. To save our democracy. To be a light to the world once again," he said.

The final night of the DNC program also featured video appearances from Biden's family, including his son Hunter, who has struggled with addiction and is rarely seen in public. There was a moving tribute to his other son, Beau, who died of a brain tumor in 2015. And a video of his granddaughters attesting to his love of ice cream sometimes hidden from their grandmother.

Democrats also paid tribute to John Lewis, the civil rights leader and congressman who died last month, with Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms urging Americans to rise to his example. "Congressman Lewis would not be silenced. And neither can we," she said. "We cannot wait for some other time, some other place, some other heroes. We must be the heroes of our generation." America is ready, Biden said, paraphrasing Lewis, to "lay down the heavy burden of hate" and end systemic racism. "America's history tells us that it has been in our darkest moments that we've made our greatest progress. That we've found the light. And in this dark moment, I believe we are poised to make great progress again. That we can find the light once more," he said.

And in the struggle for racial justice, Biden highlighted his vice-presidential nominee, Kamala Harris.

"Her story is the American story," he said. "She knows about all the obstacles thrown in the way of so many in our country. Women, Black women, Black Americans, South Asian Americans, immigrants, the left-out and left-behind."

"Are we ready? I believe we are," Biden said Thursday night. "This is the United States of America. And there has never been anything we've been unable to accomplish when we've done it together." "This is our moment, this is our mission," he added. "History will be able to say the end of this chapter of American darkness began tonight. This is a battle we will win."

Earlier, Democrats formally nominated Joe Biden as their 2020 presidential nominee on Tuesday, August 18 night, as party officials and activists from across the nation gave the former vice president their overwhelming support during his party's all-virtual national convention.

The moment marked a political high point for Biden, who had sought the presidency twice before and is now cemented as the embodiment of Democrats' desperate desire to defeat President Donald Trump this fall.

The roll call of convention delegates formalized what has been clear for months since Biden took the lead in the primary elections' chase for the nomination. It came as he worked to

demonstrate the breadth of his coalition for a second consecutive night, this time blending support from his party's elders and fresher faces to make the case that he has the experience and energy to repair chaos that Trump has created at home and abroad.

Former president Bill Clinton and former secretary of state John Kerry and former Republican secretary of state Colin Powell were among the heavy hitters on a schedule that emphasized a simple theme: Leadership matters. Former president Jimmy Carter, now 95, also made an appearance.

"Donald Trump says we're leading the world. Well, we are the only major industrial economy to have its unemployment rate triple," Clinton said. "At a time like this, the Oval Office should be a command center. Instead, it's a storm center. There's only chaos." Tuesday's speaking programme underscored Biden's challenge as he seeks to inspire a new generation of voters. While the Democratic leaders of yesteryear can point to experience and achievement, many of them are aging white men. Biden formally captured his party's presidential nomination on Tuesday night after being nominated by three people, two Delaware lawmakers and 31-year-old African American security guard who became a viral sensation after blurting out "I love you" to Biden in a New York City elevator.

Delegates from across the country then pledged their support for Biden in a video montage that featured Democrats in places like Alabama's Edmund Pettis Bridge, a beach in Hawaii and the headwaters of the Mississippi River.

In the opening of the convention's second night, a collection of younger Democrats, including former Georgia lawmaker Stacey Abrams and New York Rep Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, were given a few minutes to shine. But overall, there was little room on Tuesday's program for the younger stars of the party's far-left wing. "In a democracy, we do not elect saviors. We cast our ballots for those who see our struggles and pledge to serve," said Abrams, 46, who emerged as a national player during her unsuccessful bid for governor in 2018 and was among those considered to be Biden's running mate.

Biden is fighting unprecedented logistical challenges to deliver his message during an all-virtual convention this week as the coronavirus epidemic continues to claim hundreds of American lives each day and wreaks havoc on the economy.

The former vice president was becoming his party's nominee as a pre-recorded roll call vote from delegates in all 50 states airs, and the four-day convention culminated on Thursday when he accepted that nomination. His running mate, California Sen Kamala Harris, becomes the first woman of color to accept a major party's vice-presidential nomination on Wednesday, August 19. (Source: Agencies)

Obama's rare rebuke of Trump provokes...

Obama stayed out of the 2020 primary race and did not endorse until the race was all but over.

Trump continued with his tweets as Harris was delivering her acceptance speech.

"BUT DIDN'T SHE CALL HIM A RACIST??? DIDN'T SHE SAY HE WAS INCOMPETENT???" the president said, referring to the criticism by Harris of Biden during the primaries.

At the start of the third day of the convention, Trump welcomed Obama and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to the election campaign.

"Welcome, Barack and Crooked Hillary. See you on the field of battle!" he tweeted.

The president also directed his ire at former first lady Michelle Obama after she took the virtual stage on Monday and accused her of being "over her head" after she encouraged Americans to vote him out of office.

Trump has repeatedly accused Obama of spying on his 2016 campaign. Attorney General William Barr told Congress last year he believed "spying" did take place during a probe into Russian meddling. Obama launched a scathing attack on his predecessor in his convention speech, saying: "Donald Trump hasn't grown into the job because he can't." "For close to four years now, he's shown no interest in putting in the work; no interest in finding common ground; no interest in using the awesome power of his office to help anyone but himself and his friends; no interest in treating the presidency as anything but one more reality show that he can use to get the attention he craves," he said.

Obama's remarks, live from at the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia, were unusual and even unprecedented in their criticism of a presidential successor.

Obama also used the speech to lay out the case for Biden and his running mate Harris. PTI

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New York's COVID-19 Hospitalizations Drop to Lowest Number Since March 18



"Our state's continuing fight against COVID-19 has taken tremendous hard work and discipline from all New Yorkers, and we're seeing results", said Governor Cuomo

File photo

NEW YORK (TIP): New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced August 20 that New York State's COVID-19 hospitalizations dropped to 518-the lowest number since March 18. Aug 19 infection rate of 0.74 percent marked the 13th straight day with an infection rate below 1 percent. The number of COVID-19 patients in ICUs dropped to 120, matching the state's previous low since March 16. The governor also updated New Yorkers on the

state's progress during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"Our state's continuing fight against COVID-19 has taken tremendous hard work and discipline from all New Yorkers, and we're seeing results-a new low for hospitalizations, 13 straight days of an infection rate below 1 percent and a match of a previous low for patients in ICUs," Governor Cuomo said. "I want to commend New Yorkers for practicing the basic daily behaviors-social distancing, washing hands and wearing masks-that make an enormous difference in our capacity to slow the spread, save lives and bring the state's infection rate from one of the nation's highest to one of its lowest. But now isn't the time to get complacent, and local governments must continue to enforce state guidance and New Yorkers must stay vigilant in the face of a continuing crisis throughout this country and around the world."

Yesterday, the State Liquor Authority and State Police Task Force visited 1,230 establishments in New York City and Long Island and observed 3 establishments that were not in compliance with state requirements. A county breakdown of yesterday's observed violations is below:

- Brooklyn - 1
- Manhattan - 2

Today's data is summarized briefly below:

- Patient Hospitalization - 518 (-30)
- Patients Newly Admitted - 62
- Hospital Counties - 28
- Number ICU - 120 (-11)
- Number ICU with Intubation - 62 (+2)
- Total Discharges - 74,406 (+78)
- Deaths - 5
- Total Deaths - 25,275

NJ Governor Murphy Announces \$37 Million in Funding for Counties to Combat COVID-19

MOUNT OLIVE, NJ (TIP): Acting on a commitment to deliver relief to communities who were not eligible for federal funding allocated through the CARES Act, Governor Phil Murphy on Aug 20 announced \$37 million in support for 12 additional counties to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding will be made available to counties in three separate tranches under one Memorandum of Agreement. The 12 counties include: Atlantic; Burlington; Cape May; Cumberland; Gloucester; Hunterdon; Mercer; Morris; Salem; Somerset; Sussex; and Warren. These counties were ineligible for Coronavirus Relief Funding because their populations are below 500,000.

"There is no denying that COVID-19 has placed an incredible amount of strain on resources across all levels of government," said Governor Murphy. "I've been clear from day one of this crisis that we'll spare no expense to protect the health and safety of New Jerseyans, and that requires us to provide our communities with the support they need. Together, this funding will help us save lives and emerge stronger as one New Jersey family."

The first portion of funding, approximately \$15 million in total, provides counties with a reimbursement for COVID-19 related expenses to date. This money represents 25 percent of the county cost share with FEMA paying the remaining 75 percent, along with other eligible Coronavirus Relief Fund expenses. These funds will be made available to all 12 counties upon signing the MOU and upon proper documentation of the expenditures. were made available to all 12 counties upon signing the MOU.

The second portion of funding will help counties stand up and maintain testing sites. All 12 counties will receive \$357,500



NJ Governor Phil Murphy on Aug 20 announced \$37 million in support for 12 additional counties to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. - File photo

for this purpose.

The final allotment is based on population size, and each county will receive funds from the CDC's Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for the Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases to support ongoing testing of vulnerable and high-risk populations. Counties will receive this funding only after submitting a testing plan and gaining approval of that plan by the Department of Health. The sum total of this portion of funding is \$17 million.

"No corner of our state has been immune from the pandemic as communities across New Jersey bleed resources to combat COVID-19 and maintain essential services, while revenues continue to plummet due to the pandemic's economic fallout," said U.S. Senator Bob Menendez. "While this funding will help alleviate some of the strain on local budgets, our towns, cities and counties need more federal assistance to address their growing needs. That's why I am leading bipartisan legislation that will deliver robust, direct and flexible federal funding to every community in the nation, regardless of its size, in any new coronavirus stimulus package."

Consul General Randhir Jaiswal Hoists Indian Tricolor to Celebrate India's 74th Independence Day at Times Square



Consul General of India Randhir Jaiswal hoisted the Indian National Flag at Times Square, August 15. Seen in the picture, besides others are Mrs. Abha Jaiswal, Deputy Consul General Shatrughna Sinha organizers and guests



"The celebration of India's Independence Day in the U.S. is a symbol of the strong relations between the U.S. and India", Consul General said

NEW YORK (TIP): The Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) of the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut (FIA Tristate), created history on August 15, 2020 by organizing the unfurling of the Indian tricolor for the first time ever at the iconic Times Square in New York City, to

commemorate India's 74th Independence Day. It was the first time that such an event was held at the crossroads of the world. Chants of "Vande Mataram" and "Bharat Mata Ki Jai," reverberated through Times Square as attendees stood witness to a historic moment.

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Indian Origin Man gets Life Imprisonment for Murder and Rapes in UK



Aman Vyas, 36, was sentenced at Croydon Crown Court on Thursday, 20 August, to life in prison

LONDON (TIP): An Indian origin man has been sentenced in UK for carrying out a "horrific" series of rapes that culminated in murder. Aman Vyas, 36, (19.08.84) of no fixed address was sentenced at Croydon Crown Court on Thursday, 20 August, to life in prison.

He was recommended to serve 37 years, less time already served in custody, both in England and in India, making his time to serve from sentencing as 34 years 312 days.

He was also sentenced as follows:

- For grievous bodily harm with intent: 14 years;
- For the rape of a woman: 16 years and five months;
- For the rape of a second woman: 18-and-a-half years;
- For the rape of a third woman: 18-and-a-half years;
- For the rape of Michelle: 18-and-a-half years.

All these sentences are to run concurrent with the sentence for murder.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-Origin Driver hit with another 33 charges in Melbourne

MELBOURNE (TIP): A 47-year-old Indian-origin truck driver, who was allegedly involved in a crash that killed four police officers in Australia, has been charged with 33 additional offences including drug trafficking.

Mohinder Singh has been accused of killing four police officers - Lynette Taylor, Kevin King, Glen Humphris and Josh Prestney - on a Melbourne highway on April 22 this year.

He was earlier charged with four counts of culpable driving causing death. The four officers were standing in the emergency lane of the Eastern Freeway at Kew suburb while they were impounding a Porsche which was being driven by a Melbourne's Mortgage broker Richard Pusey. Richard Pusey was allegedly driving at 149 kms per hour and was pulled over by the police officers when Mohinder Singh's semi-trailer refrigeration truck struck the standing officers from behind. Earlier according to police, Singh had suffered a "medical episode", "which seemed to involve him blacking out" when he slammed his vehicle into the officers.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian Origin Doctor in UK Wins Royal Academy Award for Transformative Work during Pandemic

LONDON (TIP): Dr Ravi Solanki, an Indian-origin physician is among 19 winners of the UK's Royal Academy of Engineering President's Special Awards for Pandemic Service for exceptional engineering achievements in tackling COVID-19 throughout the UK.

During the early stages of the UK's COVID-19 lockdown, two things were obvious: the NHS needed more support and the public wanted to help. As everyone was required to stay indoors as isolation requirements intensified, it became clear this goodwill needed to be channeled digitally.

Dr Pimenta's idea for HEROES, the NHS charity founded by and for NHS workers, was quickly supported by former premiership footballer Joe Cole, and the race to build a secure and fully functioning website was live before it was talked about on primetime TV.

Ravi Solanki, a physician working on neurodegenerative diseases, and Raymond Siems, an engineer working in machine learning, volunteered to fulfil this need. They started building www.helpthemhelpus.co.uk only 36 hours before Cole appeared on Good Morning Britain to promote the newly launched charity. The website included a crowdfunding page and resources for NHS staff as well as directing members



Dr Ravi Solanki and Raymond Siems, volunteers for the charity HEROES. In less than two days, their team turned an idea into a platform with genuine impact: creating a secure website to provide much-needed support for frontline NHS workers

of the public to NHS-approved COVID-19 information, crucial at a time when misinformation was spreading rapidly.

The duo then worked alongside Evan Martin and Wilson Griffiths to make the platform more sophisticated and efficient, ensuring it could enable funding, provide counselling and wellbeing services, childcare support and sustainable PPE to NHS workers. This included building secure end-to-end infrastructure to allow NHS workers to apply for and receive financial relief grants digitally. Staff can now submit an application through the HEROES website and, if approved, payments are

made directly to their bank account with notifications sent to their NHS email address.

Solanki and Siems built the website using GatsbyJS, Netlify, Firebase and introduced a content management system so that non-engineers within the leadership team could more easily update content with resources ranging from mental health resources to ambassador announcements. They also partnered with low-cost payment processor Banked to allow members of the public to make donations without paying administration fees to other platforms.

Indian Americans led Virtual prayer and meditation session held for Hindu delegates at Democratic convention

WASHINGTON (TIP): Indian Americans led ongoing Democratic National Convention on Wednesday organized a virtual prayer and meditation session for Hindu delegates and members attending the four-day event.

The session was led by Anurima Bhargava, vice chair, US Commission on International Religious Freedom, Harini Krishnan, Indian classical vocalist and South Asians For Biden state director, Neel Gonuguntla, South Asians For Biden state director and community leader, and Ajay Tejasvi, AAPI Faith Leadership Council and Art of Living instructor.

Murali Balaji, South Asians For Biden communication team and community leader, and Ajay Bhutoria, AAPI Leadership Council For Biden and National Finance Committee member, also led the prayer session.

"The DNC's inclusion and recognition of Hindus at the convention is particularly meaningful on the day that Senator Kamala Harris -- who has Indian heritage -- accepts her nomination as vice presidential candidate," Dewan said.

"Today, meditation has become an essential tool for mental health. In the midst of the many challenges that modern life throws at us, it is important find a sense of calm and clarity of thought to truly be successful in life," Tejasvi added.

Speaking on the occasion, Bhutoria said that earlier this year, he had hosted Dr Jill Biden at his home in California and had presented her a statue of Lord Ganesha.

"I Pray to Lord Ganesha and Hanumanji to remove all obstacles from the path of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris to get elected," he said. "We want to be able to worship in temples, gurdwaras, mosques and churches without the fear of racism and hate crimes. We want to leave a better planet for our next generation, to grow our small businesses, and for our family and friends to be welcome here as immigrants," Bhutoria said.

"So, I am in this fight with Joe Biden and Kamala Harris to restore the soul of our nation for all of us. Joe Biden is and will



Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris at the prayers at Democratic Convention

be the best friend of India and Indo-Americans. US and Joe Biden share the same values - 'Family is most important and it all starts with the family,' he said.

"One of my favorite pictures of Joe Biden and Dr Jill Biden is at Raj Ghat, paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi during his four-day India trip under the Obama Biden Administration," Bhutoria added. "South Asians for Biden recognizes that Hindus will be instrumental in getting the Biden-Harris ticket elected in November," Dewan said.

"Leaders like Harini Krishnan, Dr Murali Balaji, and Neelima Gonuguntla, who were among the individuals who led the DNC's prayer event, will be crucial in persuading the Hindu faith community that Vice President Joe Biden and Senator Kamala Harris are the best choice this November," she added. Indian Origin Man gets Life Imprisonment for Murder and Rapes in UK

Indian-American Diaspora to be wooed by Biden, 'Team of Six' Democrats

NEW YORK (TIP): Having announced Kamala Harris his running mate, Democratic candidate Joe Biden will begin his battle with incumbent Donald Trump for the Indian-American votes with a special message on India's Independence Day.

Of special interest will be the six Democrats who will feature with him. They include four Indian-Americans, three of them women. It is expected that these six will play a prominent role in Biden's foreign policy pitch during the elections.

The four are Seema Sadanandan, Sonal Shah, Nisha Biswal and Richard Varma. Some of them will also help fine-tune Biden's message for the Indian diaspora whose large section is also looking at the Republicans, especially because of the tough words spoken by some Democrat leaders on Kashmir and the turmoil due to CAA and NRC.

A former flatmate of Biden's daughter, Seema Sadanandan has been involved with the former Vice-President's social work and has spoken on police reforms even during Barack Obama's first tenure



Democratic nominees Joe Biden and Kamala Harris at a campaign

as President. Another Indian-American is Sonal

Shah, who once called herself a proud Vishwa Hindu Parishad member, but recanted from her involvement and condemned the Gujarat riots after joining the Obama administration in 2009.

Nisha Biswal has remained in the limelight here as she became president of the US-India Business Council soon after handling the India desk among other responsibilities at the State Department during the Obama administration.

Honored by the Modi government with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, Biswal like the fourth Indian-American Richard Varma has been deeply involved with policy matters involving India and is aware of the pressure points and red lines. Varma had served three years as the US Ambassador to India and is closely associated with the Democrats.

The other two - Jakes Sullivan and Tony Blinken - were heavyweights in the Obama administration and are tipped for posts of National Security Adviser or even Secretary of State if Biden wins in November.

India's Ambassador to US urges students not to panic as COVID-19 Pandemic is Temporary



Speaking to over 50 Indian students in a virtual interaction, India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu has urged them not to panic over the "uncertainties" surrounding their academic sessions, saying the COVID-19 pandemic is temporary.

WASHINGTON (TIP): India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu has given a pep talk to Indian students here and urged them not to panic over the "uncertainties" surrounding their academic sessions, saying the COVID-19 pandemic is temporary.

Speaking to over 50 Indian students in a virtual interaction, Sandhu said such unprecedented situations should instead inspire them to work harder and contribute towards a self-reliant modern, prosperous and happy India.

"The uncertainties, surrounding the academic session and adoption of novel teaching practices, by educational institutions in India as well as in the US may have seemed insurmountable. However, do remember, the age-old saying tough times don't last, tough people do," Sandhu said.

Observing that such challenges are temporary, Sandhu urged the students not to be daunted by them and not give up pursuing their dreams and aspirations.

"These unprecedented times should in fact inspire us to work harder and contribute towards building a self-reliant, modern, prosperous and happy India. For the hundreds of challenges we face, we have the capacity to provide billions of solutions. We should take inspiration from the tenacity shown by our country in fighting the pandemic," Sandhu said.

During the interaction, Sandhu also referred to the India-US education partnership as an important aspect of the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

Appreciating the students' proactiveness, Sandhu in his remarks stressed that the Indian Embassy and the consulates in America would support the students in all possible ways.

There are about 200,000 Indian students in the US.

Indian-American Sabrina Singh Named Press Secretary of Kamala Harris



Sabrina Singh was earlier part of the communication's team of former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign

NEW YORK (TIP): Indian-American Sabrina Singh, who was earlier part of the communications team of former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign, has been named Press Secretary of Democrat Vice-President candidate and Joe Biden's running mate Kamala Harris.

"I'm so excited to join the #BidenHarris ticket as Press Secretary for @KamalaHarris! Can't wait to get to work and win in November," Singh said in a post on Twitter.

Singh, 32, also worked as the spokesperson for two Democratic presidential candidates - New Jersey Senator Cory Booker and former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg.

Sabrina Singh was born into the family of Sardar Jag Jit Singh, who affected change in United States of America when it was unfathomable. The handsome, 6-ft Sikh of the India League of America, championed the cause of the right to immigration. The long, arduous, nationwide campaign culminated in the then president Harry Truman signing the Luce-Celler Act on July 2, 1946. The signing of the Act allowed a quota of 100 Indians to immigrate to the United States per annum.

The Indian embassy in the Netherlands to start printing passports



THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS (TIP): The Indian embassy in the Netherlands will soon start printing passports for Indian nationals in need, Ambassador Venu Rajamony has said.

In his address on the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day on Saturday, Rajamony made two key announcements for facilitating the consular services by the embassy to the Indian nationals and the diaspora in the Netherlands, according to an official statement issued on Monday.

At present, the passports are sent to New Delhi for printing.

Rajamony said Indian nationals will soon be able to submit various documents to the embassy via post and will also be able to receive various documents from the embassy by post.

It will ease the current process as visits to the Visa Facilitation Service centers in the Netherlands could be avoided henceforth, the statement said.

"(The) Ambassador also informed that the embassy will soon start printing of passports in The Hague and this will significantly reduce the time taken, from two weeks to few days, for issuing passports to the Indian nationals in need," it said.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian Origin Canadian National Charged with Alien Smuggling

NEW YORK (TIP): Cooperation efforts between United States and Turks and Caicos Islands law enforcement authorities culminated in the extradition to the United States of a Canadian national who has been charged with alien smuggling offenses.

Sri Kajamukam Chelliah, aka "Mohan," 55, is charged in a criminal complaint, unsealed today in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, with conspiracy to bring aliens to the United States and to encourage and induce aliens to come to, enter, or reside in the United States for commercial advantage and private financial gain, and attempting to bring aliens to the United States for commercial advantage and private financial gain. "The defendant allegedly facilitated a smuggling operation by attempting to transport aliens through various countries, including the United States, for financial gain," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Brian C. Rabbitt of the Justice Department's Criminal Division. "This case demonstrates the department's commitment to working with our foreign law enforcement partners to prosecute human smugglers who seek to thwart our system of legal immigration, jeopardize our national security, and risk the lives of people who face the dangers of maritime smuggling." "Human smugglers not only violate our country's immigration laws and threaten our national security, they also put in jeopardy the very lives of the people they transport," said U.S. Attorney Ariana Fajardo Orshan for the Southern District of Florida.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Nassau County Celebrates India's Independence Day

MINEOLA, NY (TIP): On August 12th, 2020, the Office of Asian American Affairs hosted a virtual event to celebrate India's Independence Day. This event was hosted by County Executive Laura Curran and Executive Director Farrah Mozawalla. It celebrated the independence of India and the heritage of our Indian-American Nassau residents. The event was held via Zoom and over 100 attendees were present. Special guests included the Consul General Mr. Randhir Kumar Jaiswal of the Consulate General of India in New York and New York State Senator Kevin Thomas. The virtual event was organized through the efforts of the host committee members Indu Jaiswal, Mohinder Singh, Dr. Bobby Kumar, Shashi Malik, Mukesh Modi, Jyoti Bhatia Gupta, and Pinky Jaggi.

Sponsoring organizations included the Indian American Forum, India Association of Long Island, IDP USA, and Long Island Ladies Club. The virtual event started off with the playing of the American and Indian national anthem. Attendees then enjoyed the dance performances of residents followed by a video from community members wishing all a happy Indian Independence Day.

The Office of Asian American Affairs also presented citations to eight honorees to recognize their special efforts to their local community. These eight honorees were: Kuljeet Karishma Ahluwalia,



The dome of the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building was lit in the colors of the Indian flag.

Mukesh Modi, Siddhi Vaishnav, Jessica Kalra, Quddus Ahmed, Flora Parekh, Prakash Shilagani, and Darshan K. Nangia. In addition, the dome of the Theodore Roosevelt Executive and Legislative Building was lit in the colors of the Indian flag. During the midst of a pandemic, we were pleased to be able to commemorate this significant event for the Indian community.



Seen in Picture Honoree Kuljeet Ahluwalia, Secretary IALI, Honoree Qudus Ahmed from Rotary, Honoree Siddhi Vaishnav, Farrah Mozawalla, Executive Director, Nassau County Asian American Affairs, Indu Jaiswal, Chair IAF, Senator Kevin Thomas, Mohinder Singh Taneja, Trustee IAF, Honoree Prakash Shilagani, Laura Curran, Nassau County Executive, Honoree Mukesh Modi, President IDPUSA, Honoree Darshan K Nangia, Kamlesh Mehta, Community Leader, Honoree Flora Parekh, President Gift of Life.

To see videos and pictures of the beautiful event, visit the Nassau County Office of Asian American Affairs Facebook page at www.facebook.com/NassauCountyOAA.

Ace Hockey Player Charanjit Singh Raheja has died



"Charanjit Singh Raheja breathed and lived for hockey", says Harvender Pal Singh

NEW DELHI / NEW YORK (TIP): August 18th, 2020 was a sad day for all hockey aficionados. Ace hockey player Charanjit Singh Raheja breathed his last in New Delhi, India.

New York based Harvender Pal Singh who has worked with Charanjit Singh Raheja reminisced about the dear departed. "Charanjit Singh breathed and lived for hockey. His dedication towards this Indian national sport was unparalleled.

"Being a hockey enthusiast and having worked long at Punjab & Sind Bank, gave him the opportunity to promote this

sport further. He was instrumental in creating the PSB Hockey Team in 1982 which ultimately produced many international players, some Olympians.

"While he was working as Chief Manger at the bank, he also served as the Secretary of Delhi Hockey Association (DHA), General Secretary of Banks Sports Board (IBA) and as Organizing Secretary of S.Balwant Singh Kapur Memorial Hockey Society. He was also the Secretary, Sports of Punjab & Sind Bank for over two decades, and organized sports events for employees each year.

"Under his stewardship, in the first year of its formation, PSB Hockey team brought laurels to the bank by winning Indira Gandhi Gold Cup Hockey tournament at J&K. Under his continued encouragement and leadership, the team went on to win all the esteemed tournaments in India. Needless to add, PSB Hockey team was a force to reckon with under his charge.

"Going a step further, Charanjit Singh had a vision for encouraging hockey in India. He instituted the PSB Hockey Academy which has also proven its worth by producing world class hockey players for the Indian Hockey Team. Besides being a good sportsman and a proponent of hockey, Charanjit Singh was a person who would go out of his way to help people. Words at this point will not be enough to sum up his life. However, those we have loved cannot be lost because they are always a part of us. **Rest in peace, Charanjit Singh Raheja.**"

contd from page 3

Consul General Randhir Jaiswal...

Indian American community leaders, representatives from Indian American community organizations, patriotic Indians as well as members of the media attend the event.

Consul General of India in New York, Randhir Kumar Jaiswal, unfurled the Indian flag. He was accompanied by his wife Abha Jaiswal, Deputy Consul General Shatrughna Sinha and his entire team at the Consulate General of India in New York.

In his address, Consul General Jaiswal highlighted Hon. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day message, delivered from New Delhi's majestic Red Fort, where he paved the way forward for India, and our aspirations of building a new India. The celebration of India's Independence Day in the U.S. is a symbol of the strong relations between the U.S. and India, he said.

Others who spoke at the flag hoisting event were grand sponsor Kenny Desai, Deepak Patel of Dunkin Donuts, and Mr. Sethuraman of Incredible India who congratulated FIA on the historic event and wished everyone present on the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day.

FIA Chairman Ankur Vaidya thanked all the sponsors and his team and the members of the Board of Trustees as well FIA's senior advisors, Dr. Sudhir Parikh and Dr. H.R. Shah, for making the event a grand success. Vaidya recognized the support of the Consulate General of India in New York, as well as that of Hon. Mayor of New York City, Bill de Blasio and his entire staff, as well as the New York Police Department and the Fire Department.

This year's Independence Day marked a new chapter in FIA's history, as two iconic venues in Manhattan will come alive to celebrate India's Independence Day. Along with the first ever celebrations on Times Square, the FIA, in continuing with its annual tradition, will be illuminating the Empire State Building in tricolors - orange, white and green - to mark India's Independence Day.

The Times Square flag hoisting ceremony is a

testament to the Indian American community's growing patriotism and is a fitting tribute to the FIA which is celebrating its golden jubilee year. Established in 1970, FIA of the largest esteemed umbrella organizations in the Indian community. Since 1981, the FIA has been organizing its flagship event - the annual India Day parade, which showcases India's rich cultural heritage and history.

"I, along with my FIA family, team members and the patriotic community, share the joy and pride of such an historic celebration here in the New York area and back home in India," FIA President Anil Bansal said. "Traditionally, for the last 40 years, FIA has celebrated India's Independence Day in the form of the world-famous India Day Parade on the streets of the financial capital of the world, New York City. However, this year due to the unprecedented havoc created by the COVID-19 pandemic globally, the FIA, in the interest of the community and in following the guidelines of the city, had to cancel the India Day Parade," he said "This year, FIA added another milestone in its glorious accomplishments by organizing for the first time, the hoisting of India's tricolor, at the Iconic, Times Square."

Indian American organizations which participated in this year's organization were Society of Indo American Engineers and Architects (SIAEA), National Association of Asian Indian Christians (NAAIC), Shri Guru Ravi Dass Sabha of New York, Maharaja Darshan Das Charitable Trust, Siddhendra Kuchipudi Art Academy, Telangana American Telugu Association, Telugu Association of North America, Association of Indians in America, Bihar Jharkhand Association of North America, Telugu Literal and Cultural Association, Siddhendra Kuchipudi art Academy, Telugu Fine Arts Society, Marathi Vishwa, Siddhi Vinayak Temple Toms River, N.J., The Association of Indians in America, N.Y., and the Jackson Heights Merchants Association. FIA thanks all its sponsors, Kenny Desai, Dunkin Donuts and /- Incredible India as well as the Empire State Building Trust Inc., for graciously supporting the Times Square flag hoisting event and making it a grand success.

Permanent Mission of India to the UN Celebrates Independence Day



Ambassador Tirumurti hoisted the Tricolor at PMI, August 15



Ambassador Tirumurti reads out President's address to the nation
Photos / Mohammed Jaffer-SnapsIndia

NEW YORK (TIP): 74th Indian Independence day was celebrated at the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations in New York on August 15. Permanent Representative to UN Ambassador T.S.Tirumurti hoisted the Indian National flag and read out President of India's address to the nation.

Innovative way to celebrate India's Independence Day : A Car Parade in Long Island



The program began with lamp lighting and national anthems of the two nations. Deputy Consul General of India Shatrughna Sinha, the Guest of Honor conveyed Independence Day greetings



The cavalcade of cars was led by a fire engine

HICKSVILLE, NY (TIP): Necessity, as they say is the mother of invention. Not cowed down by Covid-19, Long Island's IDP USA went on to find an alternative to holding the annual India Day Parade in Hicksville. The successful Car Parade that took place on August 15 afternoon was so smooth and successful that now the talk is to make it an annual affair, adding a few floats as in the previous parades.

The estimates of the number of cars

displaying the tricolor that participated ranged from 150 to 200. The cavalcade was led by a fire engine and the IDP USA float with Grand Marshall Dr Raj Bhayani, President Mukesh Modi and the glamorous Grand Marshall Bhavna Chamoli waving to cheering India lovers along the route. Starting from Patel Brothers on South Broadway at around 4.45 p.m. the cars wound their way back from Apna Bazar, ending before 6 pm at Badshah Farmers Market before 6 pm, where a cultural program was held and supporters of the parade honored.

At the Patel Brothers stage, the program began with lamp lighting and national anthems of the two nations. The dignitaries who addressed the sizeable gathering included Deputy Consul General of India Shatrughna Sinha (Guest of Honor), Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor Joe Saladino, State Senator Kevin Thomas, and Nassau County's Farrah Mozawalla.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Consulate General of India Celebrates India's Independence Day



Consul General Randhir Jaiswal hoists the Tricolor, watched by guests



Consul General addresses the gathering

NEW YORK (TIP): India's 74th Independence Day was celebrated at Consulate General of India, New York with a flag-hoisting ceremony on Saturday, August 15th, 2020.

Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General, unfurled the national flag after which the national anthem was sung. Consul General then read out the address of the President of India. A short cultural program was presented by Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, which included singing of patriotic songs and poetry recitation.

Due to the current pandemic caused by COVID-19, the event was telecast LIVE through the Consulate's social media platforms. Social distancing was maintained during the event. The event was viewed virtually by around 9000 people.

In addition, Consul General attended the flag hoisting ceremony organized by Federation of Indian Associations (FIA) at the Times Square. He also addressed students of Cornell University and participated in other Independence Day celebrations organized by community organizations such as Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO), Connecticut and central New Jersey; Indian Association of Greater Boston and Council of Indian Organizations in Greater Philadelphia. Consul General attended these events virtually.

Apart from these celebrations, Consul General also shared his good wishes via video messages with other organizations who held functions on the occasion.



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AS I SEE IT

Why India will never be a successful Hindu Rashtra

The two major providers of the nation's stability are democracy and religious freedom.



By Ashok Swain

A few weeks after Narendra Modi's election as the prime minister of India in 2014, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat had proclaimed India as a Hindu nation saying, "the cultural identity of all Indians is Hindutva".

It is no secret that the RSS since its inception in 1925 has been working to declare India as a Hindu Rashtra. But, the 2014 General Elections results added extra impetus to this plan.

Narendra Modi declared himself as a "Hindu nationalist" while promoting his candidature for the most powerful position of the country. Even the chief minister of UP, Yogi Adityanath, has openly endorsed the idea of India becoming a Hindu Rashtra. Encouraged by these utterances, 150 right-wing Hindu groups came together in June 2017 in Goa to plan to convert India into a Hindu Rashtra.

As everyone knows Narendra Modi draws his ideological mooring from the RSS, which he had joined at age 21. His education in shakhas has made him to see Indian and Hindu are synonymous and any non-Hindu as "the other". Modi is a Hindutva devotee and his political ideology continues to unnerve India's minority groups. Under his patronage, the Hindutva forces have been regularly mocking at India's secular constitution.

Minorities are witnessing increased attacks on their places of worship. The ruling party is openly and actively promoting "ghar wapsi" programs and vigilantism against the so-called "love-jihad". There have been increasing incidents of violence involving gau rakshaks, mostly in BJP-ruled state.

Not just with cow, the obsession with cow urine and dung has also reached an absurd height. India, if not a declared "Hindu Rashtra" yet, is threatening to become one for all practical purposes.

While all evidence show that a society is more likely to be strong, and a state is more likely to be developed by being secular rather than being religious, in India, Hindutva forces are not only forcing India to discard its secular character, they also want to convert this multi-religious country to subscribe to one and only religion.

Edmund Burke, Voltaire and Alexis de Tocqueville had argued in the past about the importance of religion for a well-functioning society of a nation. Similarly, votaries of Hindutva see Hinduism as the necessary glue for keeping the nation together and the society stronger.

At the same time, they find India's adherence to principles of secularism since independence as the reason for all societal ills and manifestations of misery and underdevelopment of the country.

Is secularism so bad for the health of a country?

It is a very important question to ponder upon since it has global significance and implications. Recent studies have clearly shown that world is presently experiencing an unprecedented wave of secularization, while religion is in decline. There are more secular societies in the world now than the religious ones. Even in Asian countries such as Japan, religion is declining; in Japan while 80 per cent population consider themselves secular, in China the number is higher than 50 per cent. Rather, many studies have convincingly shown that most social problems correlate more strongly to religious population than the secular population.

Moreover, religious societies not only experience more population growth, as studies have found out religious children are also meaner compared with those from secular households as their religious belief is a negative influence on being kind towards others. As a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2014 shows the top five countries with the highest quality of life in the world are the secular countries, Australia, Norway, Canada, Sweden and United States.

If you compare within the United States, ultra-religious states such as Mississippi, Arkansas and Alabama are in the bottom

of the quality of life index while secular states like New Hampshire, Minnesota and Vermont are on the top.

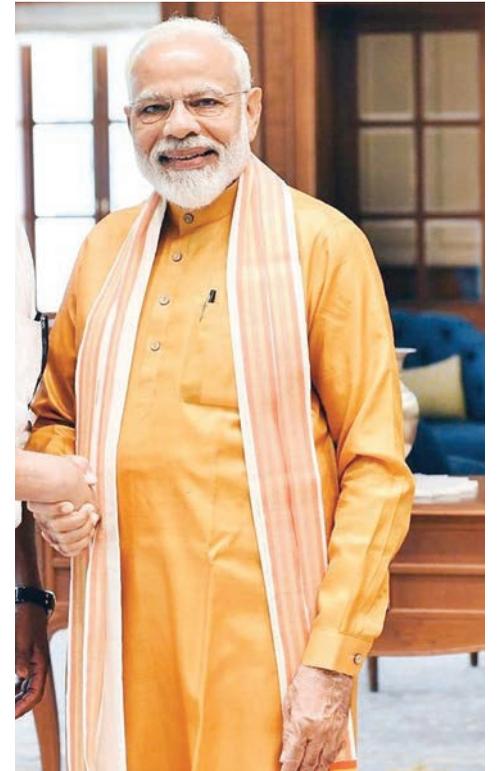
It is absolutely wrong to presume that a secular nation falls apart. On the contrary, it has a better possibility of being safe and healthy in 21st century.

While all evidence show that a society is more likely to be strong, and a state is more likely to be developed by being secular rather than being religious, in India, Hindutva forces are not only forcing India to discard its secular character, they also want to convert this multi-religious country to subscribe to one and only religion. The religious zeal of the RSS and the BJP to convert India to a Hindu nation is not only taking India away from the secular path, which developed and successful nations have adopted in recent decades, it is unfortunately pushing the country to be a Hindu theocracy.

A theocratic India not only will make the leader of the country the chosen favorite of Hindu god(s) endangering country's struggling democracy, it will also put the freedom of religion of more than 20 per cent of country's minority population under serious threat. The target of the Hindu chauvinism will not remain limited to Muslims only. History has shown withdrawal of religious freedom of one minority will lead to discrimination of other minority groups.

For a highly segmented country like India, the two major providers of the nation's stability are democracy and religious freedom. The very notion of "Hindu Rashtra" is antithetical to these key two pillars of sustaining Indian nationhood. As Barack Obama has very rightly warned, "nations that do not uphold these rights sow the bitter seeds of instability and violence and extremism."

A Hindu India will not only push the Kashmir conflict to a new level, Punjab and the northeastern states are also most



Narendra Modi draws his ideological mooring from the RSS, which he had joined at age 21

likely to witness the return of separatist insurgencies. Not only internal peace and stability, a Hindu India will also adversely affect country's ability to protect itself from external threats. India's military is one of the most diverse and secular institutions in the country. Large number of minorities have served and are serving in secular India's armed forces admirably.

It will be foolish to expect similar commitment and sacrifice from them for the territorial integrity of a "Hindu Rashtra". Not only in hard power, the conversion from secularism to theocracy will cost India its hard-earned soft-power among the community of nations as well.

The Hindutva groups' design of "Hindu Rashtra" is very likely to spiral out of control and threaten the actual fabric of the country. The actual transition of secular India to Hindu India remains fraught with high uncertainty and potential danger to the unity and integrity of the country. India needs to recognize this threat soon to survive.

(The author can be reached at ASHOK SWAIN @ashoswain)

GUEST COMMENT

India cannot allow a nexus between influential tech giants and powerful politicians

An investigative report by The Wall Street Journal last week has raised troubling questions about whether Facebook, the world's largest social media network, goes easy on hate speech violations by BJP leaders so as to be on the right side of the ruling party. The Journal story specifically refers to the case of the BJP's Telangana MLA, T. Raja Singh, who, it says, has not been yet removed from Facebook despite his controversial posts about Muslims that were found to be in violation of its own rules and also deemed dangerous. Elsewhere, Facebook reportedly does remove people with such profile and problematic actions from the

platform; radio host Alex Jones and Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan are examples. In this case, the supposed reason for not acting against Mr. Singh is more problematic than the lack of action itself. For, the Journal's report goes on to say that Ms. Ankhil Das, Facebook's Public Policy Director in India, was against taking these posts down as well as those of three others. She reportedly told her colleagues that "punishing violations by politicians from Mr. Modi's party would affect the company's business prospects in the country".

The report has predictably raised the political temperature, with the Congress demanding a joint parliamentary probe. Some of its leaders have even alleged that this amounts to interfering with Indian

elections. Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, who heads the Parliamentary panel on IT, has summoned Facebook. The BJP, responding to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's tweet, that "BJP & RSS control Facebook & WhatsApp in India", has in turn accused the Congress of trying to manipulate data with Facebook's help. This ought not to end as the usual war of words between two political rivals. For, there is little doubt that this report raises uncomfortable questions about the possibility of an unholy nexus between those with the power to influence millions of people and those in power. That too in the only country with a billion-plus population that is open to business for such Internet companies. It is difficult to deny

that the protagonist is a powerful social network, which till date carries the taint of being the source of the data which the political consulting firm, Cambridge Analytica, illegally harvested in its quest to sway elections. Sure, social media platforms in general, having grown rapidly with little content of their own, have struggled on the question of moderating comments and posts. This, however, is much beyond the question of capability. The nature of the relationship between Facebook and the Government, and the rules governing it, are now under a cloud. There is a need to dispel misgivings about Facebook lobbying in the corridors of power. Only a full-fledged inquiry can help reveal the truth. (The Hindu)

Data power: On Facebook and BJP

Meet Kamala Harris; The VP of Biden



By Dave Makkar

Kamala Harris has created history by being the 3rd woman, 1st Black & 1st Indian American to be running for Vice President of America. Being an American, I am proud of my country that after electing its first Black President in 2008 we are definitely moving beyond race, religion & gender.

Then as an Indian American, I have mixed feelings for Kamala's candidacy. Kamala was born to highly educated and affluent parents. Her father Dr Donald Harris, first black Economics professor at Stanford University, came from Jamaica, and mother a Hindu Brahmin Shyamala Gopalan, a cancer researcher from India. Kamala was 7 when her parents divorced in 1972 after a bitterly fought custody battle. Her mother got full custody and raised both her daughters. She died in 2009.

Kamala always claims that she & her sister Maya were raised by her Indian mother, as Black. That's the most admirable thing about her to say for identifying herself with both cultures! It is true or not; I leave it to the Indian American & Black voters to decide. In fact Kamala hardly talks about her father but does use his family name Harris or her multi-cultural and multi-religious roots or her husband whom she married in Aug. 2014, is of the Jewish faith or mentions his two college-age children by a previous marriage. Douglas Emhoff is an Entertainment Attorney and partner at DLA Piper Law Firm in California and makes over a \$1 mil per year.

Those who draw similarities between Kamala and Obama; must understand that the similarities end with multi-cultural and multi-religious backgrounds. Unlike Obama; Kamala cannot boast of any Ivy League credentials or community service or social activism. She earned her undergraduate degree from the historically black Howard University and graduated in 1990 from the University of California's second-tier Hastings College of Law in San Francisco.

Early in her career, Kamala, 29, dated California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, who was 60 at the time and married. As speaker, Brown was instrumental in her appointments as Deputy DA of Alameda County, high-profile lucrative positions on the state's Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board and the California Medical Assistance Commission. These political appointments gave her almost \$400,000 between 1994 and 1999 and access to politically influential and moneyed elite of San Francisco. In 2003, they gave her full financial backing and political support for her first campaign for a public office. Although Kamala & Brown split in 1995 but Brown continued to support her politically, using his mayoral office and political connections to help

her become San Francisco's first black and first female district attorney. Brown himself was the first black mayor of San Francisco.

During her tenure as San Francisco DA, she came under scrutiny when a technician stole cocaine from the DA's crime lab and mishandled evidence. Kamala, trying to keep things under wraps, failed to inform defense attorneys. As a result, about a thousand drug-related cases had to be thrown out. In 2004 she refused to seek death penalty for a cop killer; rather said she will charge David Hill, 21 with crimes that could send him to life with no possibility of parole. Hill gunned down Officer Isaac Espinoza, 29, with an AK 47 assault rifle and wounded his partner, Officer Barry Parker, 38. Espinoza, who left behind a wife and young daughter, had no chance even to draw his weapon; his partner Parker survived from the wounds. AG Bill Lockyer a Liberal Democrat didn't overturn Kamala's decision, concluding that she hadn't abused her prosecutorial discretion though he noted that he would have sought a death sentence if he were the D.A. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer publicly disagreed with Kamala's decision. Even Gavin Newsom, San Francisco's mayor at the time (now CA Governor), said that the case "rattled" his opposition to capital punishment.

In 2004 she came close to Obama when he was running for Senate. They became close friends. Kamala was the first Elected official of CA to endorse him for President in 2008. Her niece Meena Harris worked for Barack Obama's 2008 campaign and later co-founded Gen44, the DNC's millennial fundraising program. Tony West, Kamala's sister Maya's husband was Associate AG in Obama administration. Currently Tony is CLO of Uber. In 2013, President Barack Obama was recorded referring to Kamala as the "best-looking attorney general in the country." He later apologized after critics labeled the comment as sexist!

AG Kamala declined to support two ballot initiatives that would've banned the death penalty - raising accusations of political opportunism and inconsistency on the controversial issue. Same Kamala as DA of San Francisco in 2004 refused to seek death penalty for a cop killer and in 2009 again refused to seek death penalty for an illegal immigrant & MS 13 gang member for killing a father and his 2 sons and fatally wounding the third son.

AG Kamala continued her predecessor Jerry Brown's refusal to defend on appeal Proposition 8, a voter-approved state constitutional amendment supporting traditional marriage, because of her personal disagreement with it. The measure's proponents had to litigate the appeal on their own. In *Hollingsworth v. Perry* (2013), the U.S. Supreme Court then ruled that the proponents lacked the "standing" to defend the law on appeal, which left in place a federal district court ruling that the amendment was unconstitutional. The LA Times astutely noted that Prop. 8 "died only for lack of a defender, not

because the court reached the serious constitutional questions at the heart of it."

In 2014, every professional law-enforcement organization in CA and 55 of 58 county DA's opposed Proposition 47, a ballot measure that, by reducing several felony offenses to misdemeanors, would result in thousands of prisoners going free. Kamala refused to take a position one way or the other. Prop. 47 passed.

Kamala agreed to a settlement in 2014 with Rodney Quine, a litigious transgender prisoner serving a life sentence for murder without possibility of parole, allowing him to have a costly sex-change operation at taxpayer expense. That made 1,200 transgender prisoners to be eligible for such operations with taxpayers' money in the future, if recommended by medical experts.

In 2015 Kamala decided not to enforce a provision of Proposition 83, a measure that voters passed in 2006 to bar the state's approximately 6,000 paroled sex offenders from living within 2,000 feet of schools and parks. The CA Supreme Court had ruled that the residency restrictions violated the constitutional rights of sex offenders living in San Diego County because of a dearth there of "compliant housing." The court declined to rule on the legality of the restrictions in the state's 57 other counties. Kamala, concluded that the residency restrictions were invalid everywhere and then refused to make public her legal reasoning. She unilaterally waived legal restrictions supported by more than 70 percent of California voters, without a word of explanation.

As AG she refused to enforce federal immigration laws, vigorously defended SF's sanctuary-city ordinance and opposing California's participation in the federal Secure Communities Program, which requires local authorities to detain criminal suspects for deportation if they're illegal aliens. Even in the wake of the highly publicized killing in 2015 of Kate Steinle by Jose Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, an illegal alien from Mexico with a string of prior felonies and five previous deportations, Kamala wouldn't criticize San Francisco Sheriff Ross Mirkarimi for his earlier refusal to deliver Lopez-Sanchez to the ICE. In response to Donald Trump's criticism of illegal immigration, Kamala declared, "an undocumented immigrant is not a criminal"-ignoring the fact that being "undocumented" in the United States is, in fact, a federal crime.

In Jan 2019 as CA Senator she did not attend the funeral of an Indian origin officer, Ronil Singh, who was shot & killed in the line of duty by an illegal alien in Dec 2018. She is against any meaningful control at the border, rather she is for open borders, welfare, free education & healthcare for all illegal aliens. She even compared ICE to the KKK on the Senate floor.

In Jan. 2019 just before announcing her run for the President, she told a radio



Kamala Harris, the running mate of Joe Biden

interviewer, "That she considers herself to be African-American is beyond dispute-"I was born black and I will die black". After her announcement for President she was asked on the NY radio show about whether she smoked pot when she was young. She joked, "Half my family's from Jamaica, are you kidding me?" She had thoroughly enjoyed marijuana and that, unlike Bill Clinton, she had inhaled it.

Her father, Donald Harris, who perceived the joke as a slam at his family's heritage; released a statement to a Jamaican news site. "My dear departed grandmothers (whose extraordinary legacy I described in a recent essay on this website), as well as my deceased parents, must be turning in their grave right now to see their family's name, reputation and proud Jamaican identity being connected, in any way, jokingly or not with the fraudulent stereotype of a pot-smoking joy seeker and in the pursuit of identity politics." "Speaking for myself and my immediate Jamaican family, we wish to categorically dissociate ourselves from this travesty."

Kamala has proved to be a hyper-ambitious opportunist that lacks political ideology, always combine her flash with her killer political instinct. She lacks personal integrity and cares for herself only. She is farther left than the majority of the Democrat Senators. Support decriminalization of illegal immigration, rejects building Wall on the Southern Border, Compared ICE to KKK, wants free welfare, education & healthcare for illegal immigrants, lax towards criminals & sex offenders, against traditional marriage, supports abortions, wants to abolish private healthcare, co-sponsor of Green New Deal that will kill 9 mil jobs, wants to repeal Tax cuts for Middle class, wants to raise Taxes for 82% of Americans, inconsistent on the controversial issue and has repeatedly betrayed her oath of office. Does she sound like a moderate politician? In fact she is the most radical politician to ever run for the highest office in the history of America.

The facts of her conduct do not give confidence to the voters that if the need arise; Kamala can take over as President! The voters will keep all these things in their mind when they will vote on Nov 3, 2020 to Elect the President of the most cherished and powerful democracy in the world; United States of America!

(Compiled by Dave Makkar. The views expressed are compiler's own)

Six Afghan refugees killed in clash in Pak

PESHAWAR (TIP): At least six Afghan refugees, including five brothers, were killed in a clash between two Afghan groups over a dispute on payment of electricity bill at a refugee camp in northwest Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. According to police, two Afghan groups fired at each other after a dispute over payment of electricity bill in Haripur district.

In the firing, six Afghan refugees were killed and four others were injured. PTI

Nepal's coronavirus tally nears 30K mark

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal on Wednesday recorded 681 new coronavirus cases, taking the country's COVID-19 tally to 28,938, a senior Health Ministry official said.

The 681 new infections were confirmed after testing 11,522 specimens through Real Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) tests in the last 24 hours, Dr Jageshwar Gautam, spokesperson of the ministry, said in the daily press briefing.

So far PCR tests have been conducted on 5,54,388 people through different laboratories across the country.

The health ministry on Wednesday confirmed six more corona related deaths in the country, taking the death toll to 120.

In the past 24 hours, 120 corona patients, who recovered from the disease, have been discharged from different health facilities across the country. With this total number of people recovered from the disease stands at 17,700 in the country. The recovery rate now stands at 61.2 per cent. Currently, there are 11,118 active cases of COVID-19 of which, 7,987 are in institutional isolation and 3,131 are in home isolation. As many as 13,571 persons, mostly those who have returned from abroad have been placed in quarantine.

Some 131 COVID-19 patients across the nation are admitted to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and six patients are receiving ventilator facilities. Kathmandu Valley alone recorded 159 corona positive cases in a single day on Wednesday.

Nepal on Tuesday imposed the week-long prohibitory orders in the Kathmandu Valley after more than 1,000 fresh cases were reported in a single day. The restrictive orders have been issued by three district administration offices in the Kathmandu Valley after a sudden spike in the coronavirus cases.

The orders bar people from coming out of their houses except for emergency works. All businesses and shops, except those providing essential services and goods such as medicines, vegetables, food stuff, drinking water, milk, electricity, telecommunications and petroleum, will be shut. PTI

Sikhs, Hindus 'endangered minorities' in Afghanistan

KABUL (TIP): Describing Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan as "endangered minorities", a resolution introduced in the US Congress has sought to resettle these persecuted religious communities from the war-torn country to America.

Introduced in the House of Representatives last week by Congresswoman Jackie Speier and co-sponsored by seven others, the resolution supports refugee protection for Sikhs and Hindus in Afghanistan, noting the "systematic religious persecution, discrimination and existential danger" faced by the members of these communities.

"Sikhs and Hindus are indigenous but endangered minorities in Afghanistan, numbering approximately 700 out of a community that recently included over 8,000 members," the resolution stated. The resolution supports resettling Sikhs and Hindus from Afghanistan in the US under the United States Refugee Admissions



Programme pursuant to the Immigration and Nationality Act. The resolution

condemns attacks and religious persecution in the war-ravaged country. — PTI

Pakistan to conduct phase-III clinical trial of COVID-19 vaccine

ISLAMABAD (TIP): The Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) has given a nod for phase-III clinical trial of a COVID-19 vaccine developed in collaboration with a Chinese company, a media report said on Tuesday.

According to a statement from the National Institute of Health (NIH), it has obtained "formal approval" from the DRAP for phase-III Clinical Trial of Recombinant Novel Coronavirus Vaccine Adenovirus Type 5 vector (Ad5-nCoV) developed by CanSinoBio and Beijing Institute of Biotechnology China (BIB).

The NIH said this would be the first-ever phase-III clinical trial for any vaccine in Pakistan.

"It is a multi-country multi-centre clinical trial which CanSinoBio is already conducting in China, Russia, Chile, Argentina and will shortly start in Saudi Arabia. The principal investigator of the multi-centre clinical trial in Pakistan is NIH executive director Maj Gen Aamer Ikram," the statement said.

"AJM Pharma CEO Adnan Hussain signed an agreement with the NIH last month for collaborating on the phase-III clinical trial of CanSinoBio Ad5-nCoV in Pakistan," it said.

According to a document signed by DRAP Clinical Studies Committee secretary Shafqat Hussain Danish, the committee recommended that the trial be held in Indus Hospital in Karachi.

The Dawn newspaper reported that after seeing the document the test will be carried out by the International Centre for Chemical and Biological Sciences, Karachi, in collaboration with a Chinese company already conducting trials in China. As many as 200 volunteers from Karachi, representing various ethnic

groups, have been registered. The trial will be completed in 56 days during which three injections of inactivated virus will be administered to the volunteers — both male and female.

The document said the National Data Safety Monitoring Committee will closely monitor the safety of the patients and submit reports on a monthly basis.

A DRAP official, not authorised to speak on record, said it was a major development as, in case of a successful trial, the vaccine would become available to people.

"Though vaccines are being prepared in different countries, we cannot surely say whether we will get them as there will be high demand for the vaccines across the globe. If this trial is successful, the vaccine will be easily available to us at affordable rates," the official said. Pakistan's coronavirus cases reached 289,832 on Tuesday after 617 new infections were diagnosed in the last 24 hours. Fifteen more people died during this period, taking the number of COVID-19 deaths to 6,190 across the country, the health ministry said on Tuesday.

Minister for Planning Asad Umar, who also heads the National Coordination and Operation Centre on COVID-19, said he was hopeful that the trials on the vaccine would be successful. "It is one of the potential vaccines which can become successful," he said. Pakistan was unable to participate in the phase-III trials held in different countries. However, an opportunity had finally been created wherein volunteers could participate in the trials within the country, Umar said. The phase-III clinical trial is designed to evaluate whether an investigational vaccine can prevent symptomatic COVID-19 among adults. PTI

Sri Lanka's President Rajapaksa to scrap reforms limiting powers

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka's president has said he will use the overwhelming mandate received by his governing coalition in recent parliamentary elections to remove a constitutional amendment curtailing presidential powers and limiting the president to two terms.

During a policy speech at the opening of the new parliament on Thursday, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said his government will abolish the 19th Amendment as a matter of priority and then work on a new constitution.

The amendment was added by his predecessor Maithripala Sirisena to reform the country's political system by reducing the ability of presidents to amass extensive powers.

The move will strengthen Rajapaksa's grip on power because the country will return to its previous constitutional status, in which the president could head ministries, appoint and dismiss ministers, appoint officials for the police, judiciary and public service and dissolve parliament any time after one year.

"Our constitution has been changed 19 times from 1978, creating a lot of uncertainties and confusion," he told the parliament.

"Because the people have given us the mandate that we requested from them for a constitutional change, we will as a matter of priority be repealing the 19th Amendment as we promised the people," he said.

"After that, we will get together and bring in a new constitution that is requested by and needed for the country."

Rajapaksa said he had faced many restrictions because of the 19th Amendment since being elected president last November. *aljazeera.com*

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contd from page 1

Pandit Jasraj cremated with state honors

was announced and had decided to stay back in the country.

Pandit Jasraj's son, Shaarang Dev Pandit, performed the last rites, which were followed by a 21-gun salute at Vile Parle's Pawan Hans Crematorium.

Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, only 25-30 people were allowed at the crematorium.

According to Pritam Sharma, media coordinator for the family, granddaughter Shweta Pandit, composer Jatin Pandit, singer Anup Jalota, Kailash Kher and others were present at the funeral.

Earlier in the day, the mortal remains of Pandit Jasraj, draped in the national flag, were kept at his Versova residence for 'darshan'.

Filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali, singer Shreya Ghoshal, Pandit Ronu Majumdar and others from the music and film industry turned up to pay their last respects to the music icon.

Pandit Jasraj is survived by his wife Madhura, son Shaarang and daughter Durga Jasraj, both musicians. (Source: PTI)

Trump's former adviser Steve Bannon arrested, charged with fraud

He was taken into custody by inspectors from the U.S. Postal Service, which has been under fire from Trump for the role it could play in delivering votes in the upcoming November election.

Bannon, 66, who wore a white mask over his sunburned face during the

proceeding, was released on \$5 million bond. The former strategist, who lives in Washington, D.C., will be allowed to go to Connecticut where he works, but his travel will be restricted, and he cannot come into contact with anyone from "We Build The Wall" or raise money for the campaign.

Bannon's next appearance in court will be Aug. 31.

"As alleged, the defendants defrauded hundreds of thousands of donors, capitalizing on their interest in funding a border wall to raise millions of dollars, under the false pretense that all of that money would be spent on construction," Strauss said.

It was assured to donors that Kolfage, the founder and public face of 'We Build the Wall', would not be paid a cent but the defendants secretly schemed to pass hundreds of thousands of dollars to him, which he used to fund his lavish lifestyle, he added.

The men are each charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, each of which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.

Philip R. Bartlett said the defendants allegedly engaged in fraud when they misrepresented the true use of donated funds.

"As alleged, not only did they lie to donors, they schemed to hide their misappropriation of funds by creating sham invoices and accounts to launder donations and cover up their crimes, showing no regard for the law or the truth. This case should serve as a warning to other fraudsters that no one is above the law, not even a disabled war veteran or a millionaire political strategist."

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According to the Indictment unsealed in Manhattan federal court, starting in approximately December 2018, Kolfage, Bannon, Badolato and Shea, and others, orchestrated a scheme to defraud hundreds of thousands of donors, including donors in the Southern District of New York, in connection with an online crowdfunding campaign ultimately known as 'We Build The Wall' that raised more than USD 25 million to build a wall along the southern border of the United States.

In particular, to induce donors to donate to the campaign, Kolfage repeatedly and falsely assured the public that he would "not take a penny in salary or compensation" and that "100% of the funds raised...will be used in the execution of our mission and purpose" because, as Bannon publicly stated, "we're a volunteer organization."

Prosecutors said those representations were false because the men received hundreds of thousands of dollars in donor funds from the online campaign, which they each used in a manner inconsistent with the organization's public representations.

Kolfage covertly took for his personal

use more than USD 350,000 in funds that donors had given to the campaign while Bannon, through a non-profit organization under his control received over USD 1 million from We Build the Wall. Bannon used part of the amount to cover hundreds of thousands of dollars in his personal expenses.

In order to conceal the payments to Kolfage from We Build the Wall, the men devised a scheme to route those payments from the campaign to Kolfage indirectly through the non-profit under Bannon's control and a shell company under Shea's control, among other avenues.

Prosecutors said they did so by using fake invoices and sham "vendor" arrangements, among other ways, to ensure, as Kolfage noted in a text message to Badolato, that his pay arrangement remained "confidential" and kept on a "need to know" basis.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Nicolas Roos on Thursday, August 20, said victims of the alleged fraud scheme could contact the government via a link on the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District's website.

(With inputs from agencies)



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Independence Day of India celebrated across USA

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Taranjit Singh Sandhu, Ambassador of India, unfurled the tricolor, which was followed by singing of the National Anthem. Ambassador Sandhu addressed the guests, and the address to the nation by Hon'ble President of India on the eve of Independence Day was played. This was followed by a cultural program involving rendition of patriotic songs by the students of Gandharva School of Music, Richmond.

Taranjit Singh Sandhu, Ambassador of India, unfurled the tricolor at flag-hoisting ceremony on 15 August 2020 at the India House.

Photos / courtesy Indian Embassy



Trump posts will be taken down if they violate hate speech, misinformation policy: Facebook COO



Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg. Twitter picture

NEW YORK (TIP): Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg has said that posts uploaded by US President Donald would be taken down if they violate the social media company's policies on hate speech and false information.

Ahead of the November 3 presidential polls in the US, Facebook has taken a series of steps to check the spread of misinformation through its platform. The measures include links to reliable sites and flagging of contentious content.

In an interview to a news channel on Tuesday, Sandberg said the company would remove hate speech or false information, even if Trump made the posts.

"When the President violates our hate speech standards or gives false information about voter suppression or coronavirus, it comes down," she said. Last week, Facebook removed a post from the US President, in which he claimed children were "almost immune" to COVID-19. The post was flagged as 'spreading misinformation'. (Source: PTI)

Judge rejects Trump's latest bid to shield his tax records from Manhattan district attorney

NEW YORK (TIP): President Trump's latest attempt to shield his tax records from the Manhattan district attorney was rejected Thursday, August 20, by a federal judge who said Trump's legal team failed to show the subpoena was issued "in bad faith," as they had argued.

U.S. District Judge Victor Marrero threw out Trump's lawsuit attempting to block the subpoena, which his lawyers have called "overbroad" in its request for documents and tantamount to "harassment." Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr., who is seeking eight years of the president's financial records from his accounting firm, has argued the grand-jury subpoena is legally valid and tied to a legitimate criminal investigation.

"The Court finds that the President has not sufficiently pled that the subpoena is overbroad or was issued in bad faith on this basis," the judge wrote in his ruling, which follows a major Supreme Court opinion last month that determined Trump, as sitting president, was not immune from state court actions or criminal investigation.

Prosecutor calls Trump's new bid to shield tax returns an end-run around

Supreme Court ruling

Vance has been investigating hush-money payments made ahead of the 2016 election to two women who alleged having affairs with Trump years ago, claims the president has denied. The district attorney's office recently suggested it is also looking at potential bank and insurance fraud related to the Trump Organization.

Shortly after Marrero's decision was announced Thursday, Trump's legal team filed an emergency motion asking the judge for a delay in enforcing the subpoena so Trump may appeal. The team also asked a federal appeals court and the U.S. Supreme Court to intervene and stay the judge's ruling - preventing the subpoena from being enforced while the case is appealed again.

Asked about the ruling, Trump predicted the case would eventually end up back at the nation's highest court.

"Well, the Supreme Court said if it's a fishing expedition, you don't have to do it, and this is a fishing expedition," the president told reporters at the White House. "But more importantly, this is a continuation of the witch hunt, the greatest witch hunt in history. There's never been anything like it."

The district attorney's office has argued that Trump is attempting to impede its investigation from moving forward. Impending statutes of limitations are nearing and could hinder authorities from pursuing charges if a case is warranted, Vance's team has told the court.

Last August, Vance sent a subpoena to Trump's accounting firm, Mazars USA, asking for Trump's tax returns as well as other documents including "Statements of Financial Condition" that Trump used to tout his wealth to potential lenders.

Those statements sometimes exaggerated Trump's assets or omitted properties with large debts, according to a Washington Post analysis. But versions viewed by The Post also carried disclaimers at the front, written by Mazars, warning that they were not compiled using standard accounting practices.

Vance's subpoena was for Mazars. It did not ask for anything from Trump himself. But Trump sued to block it.

His argument was that he was immune from prosecution - or even investigation - by state or local law enforcement, simply because he is president. There was little precedent for that claim. But Trump's



Trump says ruling on tax records is part of 'the greatest witch hunt in history'

lawyers said his immunity was so broad that he could, in theory, shoot someone on Manhattan's Fifth Avenue and not be prosecuted.

"Local authorities couldn't investigate? They couldn't do anything about it?" an appellate judge asked one of Trump's attorneys in a hearing last year. "Nothing could be done? That is your position?"

"That is correct," said Trump's private attorney William Consovoy. He said Trump could be investigated only after he left office.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



Will discuss J&K political agenda after all leaders freed: Farooq

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Thursday said the party would discuss and review the political agenda with regard to Jammu and Kashmir only after all leaders including former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti have been set free.

"The aim of today's meeting was to ensure that the four leaders were free. We will discuss and review the political agenda once all political leaders are set free," Mr Abdullah said.

The Lok Sabha member was talking to reporters at his residence after meeting NC general secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar and former ministers Mohammad Shafi Uri, Abdul Rahim Rather and Nasir Aslam Wani. Abdullah said he will also call other party leaders for similar meetings in the coming days.

Govt to set up national recruitment agency

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the setting up of a National Recruitment Agency to conduct a Common Eligibility Test (CET) for job hunters. The new decision will benefit job seekers of the country and help in selecting candidates for different sectors, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Prakash Javadekar said at a briefing.

There are more than 20 recruitment agencies currently under the Central government. "Although we are taking exams of only three common agencies as of now, in course of time we will be able to have one Common Eligibility Test for all recruitment agencies in the country," Secretary C Chandramouli said.

Bringing in transformational reform in the recruitment process for central government jobs, the Cabinet has announced the creation of a National Recruitment Agency (NRA) to make the process of applying for such jobs easier for the youth.

The NRA will be a multi-agency body which will encompass the first-level test by the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), the Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) and the Institute of Banking Service Personnel (IBPS). A common eligibility test will be held to screen candidates at the first level for SSC, RRBs and IBPS.

India's COVID-19 tally crosses 29 lakh, recovery rate up to 74%

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's COVID-19 tally zoomed past 29 lakh, a day after it crossed 28 lakh, with a single-day spike of 68,898 infections, while the recoveries have increased to 21,58,946 on Friday taking the recovery rate to over 74 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The total cases of coronavirus infections mounted to 29,05,823, while the death toll climbed to 54,849 with 983 new fatalities being reported in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Case fatality rate has declined to 1.89 per cent while the recovery rate has risen to 74.30 per cent.

There are 6,92,028 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which is 23.82 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative total of 3,34,67,237 samples have been tested up to August 20 with 8,05,985 samples being tested on Thursday.

'One in four Indians could have been infected with coronavirus'

At least one in four people in India may have been infected with the coronavirus -



a much higher number than official government figures suggest, the head of leading private laboratory says.

Dr A Velumani said an analysis of 270,000 antibody tests conducted by his company Thyrocare across India showed the presence of antibodies in an average of 26 per cent of the people, indicating they had already been exposed to the coronavirus. "This is a much higher

percentage than we had expected. The presence of antibodies is uniform across all age groups, including children," Velumani told Reuters.

Thyrocare's findings are in line with government surveys done in Indian cities such as Mumbai, which showed that 57 per cent of the population in its crowded slum areas had been exposed to the coronavirus.

Supreme Court allows CBI probe into Sushant Singh Rajput's death

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court ruled on Wednesday that the ongoing probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the case filed against actor Rhea Chakraborty and her family for allegedly abetting the suicide of Bollywood star Sushant Singh Rajput is lawful, allowing the federal agency to continue its investigation and rejecting a plea by Chakraborty to transfer the case to the Maharashtra Police.

A single-judge bench of justice Hrishikesh Roy invoked powers under Article 142 of the Constitution to hold that a fair, competent and impartial investigation is required considering the fact that there are competing claims and acrimonious allegations of political interference by the Maharashtra and Bihar governments.

"In such situation, there is reasonable apprehension of truth being a casualty and justice becoming a victim. To ensure public confidence in the investigation and to do complete justice in the matter, this court considers it appropriate to invoke the powers conferred by Article 142 of the Constitution. The ongoing investigation by the CBI is held to be lawful," the court said.

Article 142 empowers the Supreme Court to pass orders for doing complete justice in cases



before it.

Rajput was found dead at his Mumbai apartment on June 14 in what police said appeared to be an open-and-shut case of suicide. The post-mortem report ruled out any foul play. After a two-week quiet, a political controversy erupted over the death, as a Bihar Police team constituted to probe the case on a complaint by the actor's family alleged it got no cooperation from its Mumbai counterpart.

CBI in Mumbai, Questions Sushant's staff member

A special 10-member team of the CBI - set up to investigate Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death - questioned a staff member of the actor on Friday. he team will be collecting from Mumbai Police the documents linked to the case, including postmortem report.

Govt to charge passengers higher aviation security fee from September 1

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Civil Aviation Ministry has decided to charge higher aviation security fee (ASF) from domestic as well as international passengers from September 1, senior government officials said on Thursday.

Making the air travel slightly costlier, the officials said the ASF for domestic flyers will be increased to Rs 160 from Rs 150 starting next month, and international passengers will pay 5.2 USD instead of 4.85 USD as the ASF from September 1.

Airlines collect the ASF from passengers when they book their tickets and then give it to the government. The ASF is used to fund the security arrangement at airports across the country.

The ministry had increased the ASF last year too.

On June 7, 2019, the ministry said domestic passengers would be charged Rs 150 instead of Rs 130 as the ASF and international passengers would be charged 4.85 USD instead of USD 3.25 as the ASF from July 1, 2019.

The aviation sector has been significantly impacted due to the travel restrictions imposed in India and other countries in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

All airlines in India have taken cost-cutting measures such as pay cuts, leave-without-pay and firings of employees in order to conserve cash.



Modi ruined unorganised sector: Rahul

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday accused the Narendra Modi government of decimating the unorganised economy, comprising farmers, labourers and small businesses, in the last six years of its rule, and said the country would not be able to generate jobs in the coming period as a result of that.

Addressing via video-conferencing the foundation stone-laying ceremony of the party's offices to be built in 22 districts headquarters of Chhattisgarh, he said although the unorganised economy generates 90 per cent of the country's employment, the Modi government destroyed it through various moves like demonetisation and implementation of "wrong GST". Gandhi stressed the need to restore the balance between the organised and unorganised economies for the welfare of the country. The event was organised on the occasion of the birth anniversary of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Doctors: Pranab's health stable

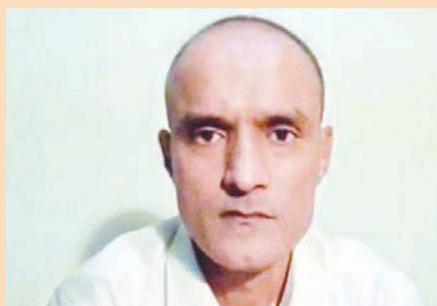
Respiratory parameters of former president Pranab Mukherjee have shown a slight improvement, though he continues to be on ventilator support, the hospital said on Thursday.

Mukherjee, who was admitted to the Army's Research and Referral Hospital on August 10, developed a lung infection on Wednesday.

Doctors attending on him said his vital parameters remain stable. "The respiratory parameters of Pranab Mukherjee have shown slight improvement though he continues to be on ventilatory support. His vital and clinical parameters remain stable and are being closely monitored by a team of specialists," a hospital statement said. Mukherjee was operated on for removal of a clot in the brain on August 10 at the Army Hospital in Delhi Cantonment. He was also tested positive for Covid-19.

MEA seeks Indian lawyer for Jadhav

India has again insisted that Kulbhushan Jadhav should be represented by an Indian lawyer for filing a review petition against his death sentence in Pakistan, said Anurag Srivastava, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). "On this issue, we are in touch with Pakistan through diplomatic channels," he said.



SWACHH SURVEKSHAN 2020

Indore ranked cleanest city, Chhattisgarh cleanest state

The announcement of this year's results was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic

NEW DELHI (TIP): Madhya Pradesh's Indore has been ranked the cleanest city for the fourth consecutive year under the Swachh Survekshan 2020, the centre's annual survey on cleanliness under the Swachh Bharat Mission, announced on Thursday.

Surat in Gujarat and Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra were ranked second and third, respectively. In the category of population of less than 1 lakh, Maharashtra's Karad bagged the first position, followed by Saswad and Lonavala.

Chhattisgarh was ranked the cleanest state of India in the 'under 100 Urban Local Bodies' category while Jharkhand was adjudged the leanest state of India in the 'above 100 Urban Local Bodies' category.

The announcement of this year's results was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the ministry of housing and urban affairs said. The survey, which covered 4,242 cities and saw the participation of 1.87 crore citizens, was completed in 28 days.

"When the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U) was launched in 2014, it was with the objective of making urban India 100% open defecation free (ODF)



along with 100% scientific solid waste management. With no concept of ODF in urban areas and solid waste processing standing at a mere 18%, it was clear that an accelerated approach was necessary if the Hon'ble Prime Minister's dream of a Swachh India was to be achieved within the timeframe of five years," Union housing minister Hardeep Puri said during a virtual press conference on Thursday.

"A framework was therefore needed to

bring about rigour in the progress in monitoring and a spirit of healthy competition among states and cities to improve their performance in key cleanliness parameters. This underlying thought led to the conceptualisation and subsequent implementation of the Swachh Survekshan (SS), a competitive framework to encourage cities to improve the status of urban sanitation while encouraging large-scale citizen participation," he added.

Tweet trouble: Prashant Bhushan gets 4 days to tender apology

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Supreme Court on Thursday gave four days to lawyer-activist Prashant Bhushan to reconsider his statement in the contempt case against him even as the defiant activist-lawyer said he wasn't asking for mercy.

A three-judge Bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra, which had convicted Bhushan of contempt of court on August 14 for his tweets against CJI SA Bobde and the last four CJIs, rejected Bhushan's plea to defer arguments on sentence.

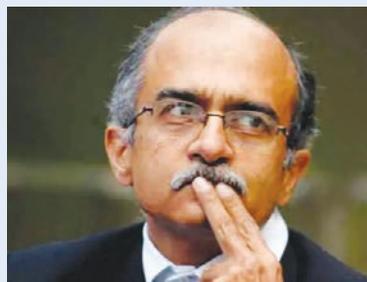
It was not impressed by senior counsel Dushyant Dave's argument on Bhushan's behalf that "heavens are not going to fall if the hearing on quantum of sentence is deferred".

The Bench also turned down his request for arguments on sentence to be heard by another Bench. It would be "act of impropriety", the Bench told Dave.

However, it said the punishment would not be acted upon until his petition seeking review of the August 14 order convicting him of contempt of court was decided.

Attorney General KK Venugopal requested the top court not to punish Bhushan for contempt of court. "It would be tremendously good if Bhushan is

No to deferment



- SC rejected Prashant Bhushan's plea to defer arguments on sentence
- Senior counsel Dushyant Dave argued that 'heavens would not fall' if the hearing was deferred
- The Bench also rejected his request for arguments to be heard by another Bench

given some time," Venugopal said.

However, Bhushan said his statement was a well thought-out. "It's unlikely there will be substantial change in my statement," Bhushan said. "We can give you time... and it is better if you consider it... we will give you two or three days," the Bench told Bhushan.

Justice Mishra, due to retire next month, said, "In my judicial career, I have never held anyone guilty of contempt."

LAC: Border mechanism meets, fails to make headway on disengagement

NEW DELHI (TIP): Talks between Indian and Chinese diplomats Thursday could not achieve a breakthrough to resolve the military standoff along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh, and New Delhi said the two sides will "continue to sincerely work towards complete disengagement" of troops.

This was the fourth meeting via videoconference of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) since the standoff began early May.

The Chinese reluctance to step back from Pangong Tso, where its troops continue to occupy the ridgeline at Finger 4, and the Gogra-Hot Springs area has stalled the disengagement process despite diplomatic and military talks. Unlike statements of the last three WMCC meetings, there was no reference to "progress" or "disengagement process" in the Indian statement Thursday. Nor was there any mention of "early and complete disengagement" which was there the last time.

Beijing, however, said it "positively evaluated the progress made in the disengagement of the front-line forces of the two countries" and agreed to "conscientiously implement the consensus" reached between the two sides.



PANDIT JASRAJ (1930-2020)

INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC'S GREATEST VOICE FALLS SILENT

New Delhi (TIP): Mozart, Beethoven, Pavarotti and Jasraj are up there in the skies somewhere, planets all in a cosmos of stars big and small.

On Monday, Pandit Jasraj died in his New Jersey home, the voice that soared and swooped for over eight decades to touch a chord with music lovers the world over, falling silent forever. He was 90.

It was only last year in September that the International Astronomical Union named a minor planet after Jasraj, an honor that was previously only reserved for classical greats like Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, Luciano Pavarotti -- and then Pandit Jasraj.

The Hindustani vocalist, the first Indian to be honoured so, was considered a great stalwart of classical Indian music. With a voice range that travelled 3.5 octaves, Pandit Jasraj appealed to the most fastidious aficionado looking out for the smallest nuance as well as the untutored fan who just sat back and enjoyed the music flow over her.

Jasraj, who was from the Mewati gharana, belonged to the league of great vocalists such as Bade Gulam Ali Khan, M S Subbulakshmi and Bhimsen Joshi.

The Haryana born Jasraj made classical music accessible to all with his soulful renditions of 'khyal' mixed with 'thumri'.

It was not just about the voice but also perfect diction, clarity in 'sur' and 'gayaki'. Such was his command over ragas that Pandit Jasraj would sometime wake up in the middle of the night to compose a 'bandish'. He is credited with creating new ragas such as 'abiri todi' and 'patdeepki' besides introducing a new style of 'jugalbandi', the 'Jasrangi'.

It was never just about the purists. Awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the Padma Bhushan and the Padma Shri, Pandit Jasraj also popularised semi-classical music like 'haveli sangeet' and reached out to devotees with his 'bhajans', a particular favourite for his fans being "Om Namo Bhagavate" in praise of Lord Krishna.

He clearly had a feel for Urdu too.

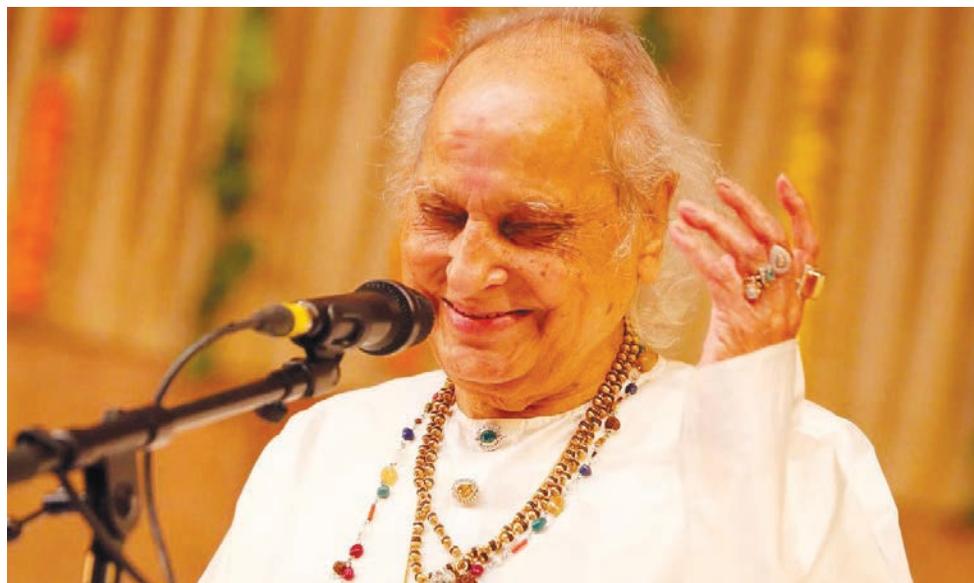
The music legend, who celebrated his 90th birthday in January this year, also had great love for ghazals and once wistfully quoted the popular Ghalib ghazal, "Hazaaron khwahishen aisi ki har khwahish pe dam nikale" to describe all the things left undone in his life.

Born on January 28, 1930 in Haryana's Hisar district, Pandit Jasraj was initiated into classical music by his father, Pandit Motiram and honed his craft under the guidance of his elder brother Pandit Maniram.

In fact, Pandit Jasraj started his musical journey as a tabla player. The turn towards singing came perhaps after he heard Begum Akhtar's voice. He was just a schoolboy then.

Describing this change, Pandit Jasraj had told PTI Bhasha in an interview that he started learning tabla with his elder brother Pandit Maniram but turned to classical singing at the age of 14.

"While going to school in Hyderabad,



there was a hotel where Begum Akhtar's ghazal 'Deewana banana hai to deewana bana de, varna taqdeer tamasha na bana de' used to play. The hotel owner would play the same ghazal every time.

"And my feet would stop there. Such was the pull in her voice that I could not

take a step forward so I started spending more time in the hotel instead of the school," he had said.

His first public concert was for Nepal king Tribhuwan Bir Bikram Shah in 1952.

Sixty-eight years later, he recalled in

vivid detail what had happened.

"The king told his men to announce that he has awarded me 5,000 gold coins. I was shocked, I couldn't believe it. I was sweating and I almost fainted, I was maybe 22 years old then," he told PTI in an interview in January this year.

He also spoke about being self critical and never giving up on 'riyaz' despite advancing age.

The musician, like his music, was completely in sync with the times.

"I teach through Skype. I suggest everyone do it. I am walking with time and that's what one should do. I don't like when people say 'Woh zamaana achha tha' (Those were the good times).

"I believe the current phase is good. One should not compare it with the past - good or bad. One has to walk with time and only then you will like the current time," he said in the interview.

Talking about his fondness for Lata Mangeshkar, he had said, "She is my favourite singer. There is no one like her".

He loved listening to music from every part of the world and was someone who could appreciate the Beatles and Mehdi Hassan as much as he did Bhimsen Joshi.

The musician, who married great director V Shantaram's daughter Madhura, also sang in the movies. The couple has a son, Shaarang Dev Pandit, and a daughter, Durga Jasraj, both musicians.

Pandit Jasraj's first song was in 1966 with the bhajan "Vandana Karo" in raga Ahir Bhairav for his father-in-law V Shantaram's "Ladki Sahyadri Ki". The bhajan was composed by Vasant Desai.

The second film song came almost after a decade in the 1975 movie "Birbal My Brother", for which he collaborated with another legend, classical vocalist Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, on a 'jugalbandi' in raga Malkauns.

Pandit Jasraj's last Bollywood song was in 2008 for Vikram Bhatt's horror movie "1920". The song, titled "Vaada tumse hai vaada", was composed by Adnan Sami.

His rendition of raga Ahir Bhairav was also used by filmmaker Ang Lee in his Hollywood movie "Life of Pi".

Pandit Jasraj will live on - in his endless recordings and also in the many students he mentored.

TRIBUTES POUR IN FOR THE MUSIC LEGEND

The legend's demise has sent the nation into mourning. Remembering Pandit Jasraj's unparalleled contribution to classical Indian music, President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Lata Mangeshkar and others in the music industry condoled the death of the classical Indian vocalist at the age of 90.

The President said he was sad to hear about Pandit Jasraj's passing away.

Contd on page 17

From page 16

“Spanning a distinguished career of over 8 decades, Pandit Jasraj, a Padma Vibhushan recipient, enthralled people with soulful renditions. Condolence to his family, friends & music connoisseurs,” the President said in a statement posted on his official Twitter handle.

PM Modi said Pandit Jasraj’s death had created a huge void in the Indian cultural sphere.

“The unfortunate demise of Pandit Jasraj Ji leaves a deep void in the Indian cultural sphere. Not only were his renditions outstanding, he also made a mark as an exceptional mentor to several other vocalists. Condolences to his family and admirers worldwide. Om Shanti,” Modi tweeted Celebrating Jasraj’s storied legacy spanning almost eight decades, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu credited the music maestro for creating timeless masterpieces in Indian classical music.

Melody queen Lata Mangeshkar, who was Pandit Jasraj’s favourite singer, said she was devastated by the death of the music legend.

“I am devastated by the news of demise of great classical vocalist and worshiper of goddess Saraswati, Sangeet Marthand Pandit Jasraj ji. May his soul rest in peace,” Mangeshkar wrote on Twitter.

Vocalist Madhup Mudgal called Pandit Jasraj the last of the five pillars of Indian classical music.

“He was one of the greatest singers of our country. I always considered him one of the five pillars of Indian classical music - Pandit Bhimsen Joshi, Kumar Gandharva, Mallikarjun Mansur, Kishori Amonkar, and Pandit Jasraj. We have lost an irreplaceable artiste today,” Mudgal told PTI.

Sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan said Pandit Jasraj’s “passing away marks the end of an era in the world of music”.

“I shared so many festivals with Jasraj bhai right from the sixties. He gave a different dimension to vocal music. His musical approach and genius endeared him to the planet. His legacy lives on timelessly. I will miss him immensely both musically and personally! May his soul rest in peace!,” Khan wrote in a Facebook post.

Veteran singer Asha Bhosle said in Pandit Jasraj’s death she has lost a big brother and she would always remember his “childlike demeanor”.

“I have lost someone who was extremely fond of me, I have lost a big brother indeed! Sangeet ka sooraj doob gaya... I will always remember his childlike demeanor. May his soul rest in peace,” the singer said in a statement.

Veteran lyricist-writer Javed Akhtar said a “huge pillar of Hindustani sangeet has fallen today”.

“My heartfelt condolence to Pandit Jasraj’s family . I can see him standing on the stage with his arms raised as if he is blessing all of us and in his soft and silken voice for the last time he is saying,” Akhtar added.

Other celebrities including AR Rahman, Shabana Azmi, Vishal Dadlani, Shankar Mahadevan among others took to Twitter to pen tributes for the legend.

A.R.Rahman

@arrahman

#RIPPanditJasraj indian classical music has lost one of its shining stars.



Shankar Mahadevan

@Shankar_Live

Devastated after hearing the news that Sangeet marthand pandit Jasraj has moved on to the next dimension . A big void in the world of Indian Classical music . His music will live on in this planet .

VISHAL DADLANI

@VishalDadlani

Just heard of the passing of the Legendary #PanditJasraj Ji. My condolence to music itself, and to every musician on the planet. A truly monumental loss.

My heart goes out to my friends Jatin & Lalit Pandit, Shweta & Shraddha Pandit & of course @DurgaJasraj ji, and the family.

Azmi Shabana

@AzmiShabana

Deeply saddened to hear abt the passing away of #Pt Jasraj.Ever since my accident in Jan 2020, Ive been waking up to the strains of #The BestofPanditJasraj n am deeply grateful 4 d solace his voice has given me over d yrs.Condolences to Durga and the http://family.RIP

salim merchant

@salim_merchant

Sangeet Martand Pandit Jasraj ji has left us.. his voice & music has inspired & left a deep impact on the history of Indian classical music.

Om Shanti

Shafqat Amanat Ali

@ShafqatAmanatA

Deeply saddened by the news of the demise of #PanditJasraj ji. Honoured to have shared a stage with him.

A true legend & an affectionate human being. A monumental loss to the world of music. My condolences to his family & fans.

Amaan Ali Bangash

@AmaanAliBangash

With passing away of Pandit Jasraj ji, we have lost a timeless Legend of Music! Our heartfelt condolences to his family. Prayers for his soul to rest in eternal peace. We have lost one of the biggest jewels of our fraternity! #panditjasraj

DISCIPLES AND FOLLOWERS IN US PAY TRIBUTES TO LEGENDARY CLASSICAL VOCALIST

NEW YORK (TIP): Disciples and followers of music legend Pandit Jasraj in the US paid their tributes to the Indian classical vocalist and described his passing away as an irreparable loss to India and its cultural heritage while fondly recalling his humble and gentle nature.

Former president of the diaspora organisation, US Federation of Indian Associations (FIA), Alok Kumar, paid his respects to the legendary artist at the Hindu Funeral Home in Highland Park in New Jersey.

Kumar said a large number of people

had gathered at the funeral home during the day to pay their respects to Pandit Jasraj.

Keeping in mind the social distancing requirements amid the pandemic, a limited number of people were being allowed at a time to enter the funeral home and pay their tributes.

“We will all miss the musical legend. It is indeed the end of an era in Indian classical music. With Pandit Jasraj’s death, we have lost a ‘sargam’ of shastriya sangeet,” Kumar told PTI. “No one can match the legend that he was.”

Hari, one of Pandit Jasraj’s disciples, said that all his pupils are still in a state of shock and are trying to come to terms with the tremendous loss.

“We are trying to make sense of it. We are deeply feeling his loss but we also see the wealth of love that he has left behind,” he said.

Hari said Pandit Jasraj was surrounded by his disciples and they are constantly communicating with his family in India. They are making necessary arrangements to fly his mortal remains to India for the funeral.

“Pandit Jasraj’s demise is a loss for India, for the cultural tradition of India but broadly it is a loss for music overall. He stands for music everywhere, his passing is a big loss for music,” Hari said.

New Jersey-based Alka Aneja fondly recalled her association with the Padma Vibhushan recipient and said he was a maestro and a legend, “but the humanity, kindness and generosity” that came from him was unparalleled.

Aneja said Pandita Tripti Mukherjee, Hindustani classical vocalist and disciple of Pandit Jasraj, as well as two-three other disciples are expected to take the mortal remains of Pandit Jasraj to Mumbai on an Air India flight on Tuesday afternoon.

Aneja, who was Pandit Jasraj’s realtor and had known him for the last three years, said she last met him on the festival of Janmashtami last week.

“He was a legend for the world but he was a very kind and gentle soul for me. I got to know him at a personal level. He had a great sense of humour and was very humble,” she said.

Aneja said a legend like Pandit Jasraj, who had achieved so much in life, was a very humble person who “allowed people in his life. People don’t have their feet on the ground when they achieve as much as he did”. He was very humble and a gentle soul, she said.

Recalling that he used to call her ‘Son Pari’, Aneja said whenever she touched his feet, he would say ‘betiyaan pair nahin chhooti hain (daughters don’t touch feet)’. Aneja said she is blessed to have known him.

FIA Chairman Ankur Vaidya recollected multiple interactions he had with Pandit Jasraj, saying he was a “very inspiring and mesmerising personality”.

Vaidya said Pandit Jasraj was the Guest of Honour at FIA’s India Day parade in 2013 and was honoured again by the organisation in 2018 for his distinguished accomplishment and significant contribution to the Indian classical music.

Pandit Jasraj, who belonged to the Mewati gharana, was in the US when the coronavirus-led lockdown happened and decided to stay back in that country.

Demonstrating his ability to adapt with the times, his last performance was in April this year. He sang on Hanuman Jayanti for the Sankat Mochan Hanuman temple in Varanasi through Facebook Live.

KANGANA TAKES A DIG AT KJO AND 'GUNJAN SAXENA'

Kangana Ranaut has written a poem for Karan Johar, as a dig at his latest production, Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl. While the Janhvi Kapoor-starrer received positive reviews, the film also attracted controversy for its portrayal of the Indian Air Force.

The official handle of Kangana's team shared the poem on Twitter, "Karan Johar ke liye shayari arz hai...Humein nationalism ki dukaan chalani hai par deshbhakti nahi dikhani hai. Pakistan se war wali filmein bahut chalti hain, Hum bhi banaenge lekin uska villain bhi Hindustani hai. Ab third gender bhi aa gaya army mein lekin Karan Johar tu kab samjhega senani sirf senani hai. (A poem for Karan Johar...we want to jump aboard the nationalism bandwagon but won't show patriotism. Films based on war with Pakistan earn money so we will make such films but the villains in these will still be Indian. Now the third gender has also entered the army, when will you understand, Karan Johar, that a soldier is simply a soldier?)."

The team had also criticised Gunjan Saxena, the film, earlier and tweeted, "All n all GS remains a petty film missing the larger picture and essence of a soldier's life, proving her opponents right who said we are here to protect Bharat Mata but you are here for equal opportunity, that's pretty much sums up the film in the end Gunjan wins not India.SAD !"



Swara says she has lost work because of her opinions

Swara Bhaskar does not hold back from sharing her opinions on a variety of issues. The actress admits that she has lost a lot of work because of the opinions she holds and her largely anti-establishment stance, but she has come to accept it as collateral damage.

In an interview with Firstpost, Swara was asked if her opinion have in any way impacted her work. To this, she said, "Yes, of course, there is no denying that, and I have to admit that I have lost a lot of work because of the positions I have taken. But it is fine. It is a collateral that I have come to accept. I don't seek and I don't say things from a position of an influence. I am not a paid influencer, I am not paid to say these things. I say these things because I genuinely believe in it. I am willing to bear that brunt."

Swara also clarified that although she has strong views on certain things, she sees herself as primarily an actor and not an activist. Dismissing the speculation that she is interested in a career in politics, Swara said that she shares her opinions without an agenda behind it.

Online trolling, bullying increased during lockdown: Sonakshi

Sonakshi Sinha wants to bring an end to online trolling and bullying. A frequent target of internet bullies, Sonakshi has launched a new initiative, Ab Bas, calling for an end to online harassment.

Speaking to Pinkvilla, Sonakshi said people are abusing their freedom of expression. "People feel that by just hiding behind the screen they are anonymous and can say whatever they want to, and in whichever way they want. Definitely, democracy has been misused when it comes to social media and online harassment. People are really taking freedom of speech for granted and mistaking it for freedom to abuse – to which they don't have a right. That's why we are trying to create some awareness and what actions can be taken against those who perpetrate it," Sonakshi said.

Sonakshi believes that people sitting idle at home during lockdown, with nowhere better to spend their energies at, might be to



blame. "Yes, I was trolled and bullied even for taking a stand against bullying. People without thinking of anything just go out there and vent their frustration. Especially during the lockdown as people have less to do which is why a lot more negativity and hate are coming out online. Initial thoughts are that it is battle but it's definitely one that needs to begin and we need to fight back," she said.

Varun Dhawan And Sara Ali Khan's Coolie No.1 Headed For A Diwali Release

After scoring a big hit with the remake of Judwa, Varun Dhawan is all set to return with the remake of another iconic comedy from 90's Bollywood, Coolie No.1. The film is already way past its due date on May 1 and now after months of waiting for the theatres to re-open the makers have finally decided to give the film an OTT release on Diwali this year.

The movie has been sold to Amazon Prime Video for a direct OTT release according to a recent report on Bollywood Hungama, which has already released films like Shakuntala Devi and Gulabo Sitabo. The report also mentions that if the theatres had opened by now the makers were ready to hold off Coolie No.1's release till January 1.

According to a source of the publication, "The idea was to hold back for a theatrical release, but in current times, there is no clarity on reopening of cinema halls, and hence, they took the tough call of opting for a direct to digital release. The team feels that Diwali is the ideal time to get the family audiences glued onto their television and laptop screens to collectively enjoy the comic caper."



The source also informs that after Akshay Kumar's Laxmi Bomb and Ajay Devgn's Bhuj: The Pride Of India which are both releasing on Disney+ Hotstar, Varun's comedy has been sold to Amazon as the third highest grosser on OTT.

Coolie No. 1 the original starred Govinda and Karisma Kapoor while the remake is being headlined by Varun Dhawan and Sara Ali Khan.



Britney asks court to curb father's power over her

Britney Spears on Tuesday asked a court to keep her father from reasserting the broad control over her life and career that he has had for most of the past 12 years.

In documents filed by her court-appointed lawyer that give a rare public airing to the wishes of the 38-year-old pop superstar, she asked that her father not return to the role of conservator of her person, which gave him power over her major life decisions from 2008 until 2019, when he temporarily stepped aside, citing health problems.

"Britney is strongly opposed to James return as conservator of her person," the document says.

James Spears has kept his separate role as conservator over his daughter's finances. For the first 11 years of the conservatorship, he served as co-conservator with attorney Andrew M. Wallet, who resigned from the role early last year.

ANGELINA JOLIE CALLS HERSELF BORING: I SPEND TIME STUDYING FOREIGN POLICY

Angelina Jolie might be one of the most beautiful actresses we have but she believes she is quite boring.

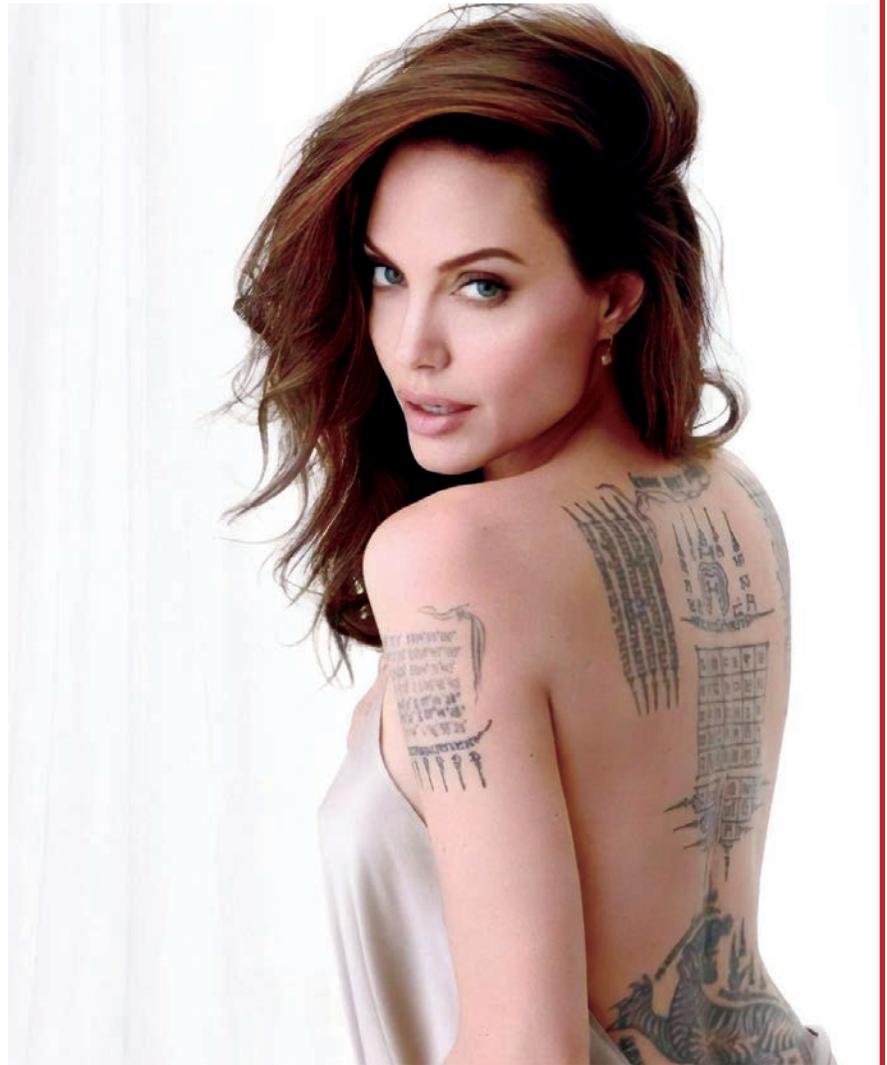
In a new interview Angelina has revealed that its her children that are creative and that she loves to watch each of them take on a new personality.

During a press event for her upcoming film 'The One and Only Ivan', she said, "Oh god, I'm really boring. I spend a lot of time studying foreign policy. But I think my creativity is my kids. Because being with them and making up stories before bed or just being silly with them, (I am) really (doing) nothing. Just watching each of them become uniquely who they are and being around them and going into each of their (space), whether it be their rooms and talking to them or developing or helping them develop. It's not as much me but my mom was like that, and loved seeing other people's creativity."

Angelina Jolie is mother to six children -- sons Maddox, Pax, and Knox, and daughters Zahara, Shiloh, and Vivienne.

In 'The One And Only Ivan', Angelina Jolie has voiced the character of an aging elephant named Stella, who cares for an abandoned baby elephant named Ruby in a circus show at the Big Top Mall.

On her association, Angelina said, "One of my children read the book and said that they loved it. We talked about why it was special and why it meant so much to them. So, I started to pursue where it is being made, what's happening and started to get involved. I looked at the early drafts and it was very interesting."



Miley Cyrus confirms she and Cody split up after 10 months of dating

Miley Cyrus and Cody Simpson have called it quits after 10 months of dating. Following several reports saying that the couple broke up, the "Can't Be Tamed" singer confirmed that she and Simpson are no longer together via Instagram Live on Thursday.

"Today it came out that me and my boyfriend have broken up," Cyrus told fans shortly before releasing her new single "Midnight Sky."

She continued, "For right now, two halves can't make a whole, and we're individually just working on ourselves, becoming the people that we want to be. Like everybody else at this age, we're just deciding who we want to be with our lives, what we want to do with our lives." Cyrus also asked the public to refrain from creating a "drama story" if she and Simpson are spotted spending time together after the breakup.

"We've been friends for 10 years, and we're going to continue to be friends. Just don't make it something that it is not," she said.

After Cyrus dropped her new single, Simpson showed his support for the musician and shared a screenshot of them video-chatting.

"So proud of you," he wrote. "Congratulations to the most special of all. Go cop that new new!"

TMZ and Page Six were the first outlets to report that the couple split several weeks ago, citing anonymous sources close to the couple.



OLIVIA WILDE TO DIRECT A SPIDER-WOMAN MOVIE?

Actor-director Olivia Wilde is all set to helm a Marvel movie for Sony, reported Deadline. Sony has been developing its own Spider-Verse using Spider-Man and related characters.

Now Wilde, who helmed last year's acclaimed coming-of-age comedy Booksmart, has reportedly been recruited by Sony to make a movie about one of the female Marvel characters. And the Deadline report said it will centre on Spider-Woman.

The title of Spider-Woman has been held by many characters in Marvel Comics, including Mary Jane Watson, Gwen Stacy, Jessica Drew, among others. It is unknown which incarnation of the character will feature in Wilde's movie.

Katie Silberman will pen the screenplay.



SR for Black Voices: Retrospective Docs

BY MABEL PAIS

"SRFF has been screening films that deal with the Black experience since its inaugural season in 2014. We are grateful to the filmmakers who have agreed to make their films available in this retrospective so we can all celebrate the growing strength of the Black Lives Matter movement." - Nora Armani, Festival Founder - Artistic Director

**4 Programs of Documentaries on the Black Experience
From SRFF's 7 Previous Editions
Screening Online, August 21-22
SR for Black Voices Retrospective**

The Socially Relevant Film Festival NY 2020 (SRFFNY2020) is proud to bring to its fans a retrospective of documentary films from the past seven editions of SR Film Festival. These are films that touch upon Black Lives and tell Socially Relevant™ stories shining the spotlight on race relations, prejudice, injustice, social inequality, yet showing a glimmer of hope with some positive developments.

Seven handpicked documentaries are grouped into four programs screening over two days, Friday, August 21, and Saturday, August 22. Q&A sessions follow the online film screenings.

Four programs depicting films related to Black Lives Matter will be streamed online free of charge on August 21-22. You must subscribe to the SRFF channel to watch the films - ratedsrff.com

Each program of films is followed by a short Q&A with the filmmakers. All the film and talk programs are free and open to the public. For the complete program, registration information, and film details, visit ratedsrff.com

SRFF has always advocated positive social change through the power of film. Join the retrospective in celebrating Black Voices and Black Lives.

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 7:00 PM

Just Listen, Ching Juhl, 15', USA, 2020 - Music vigil for Elijah McClain victim of police brutality.

String players from around the world join in a vigil for Elijah McClain killed by police brutality. Hundreds gathered in Washington Square Park, NYC for a peaceful and touching event on June 29, 2020. Filmmaker Ching Juhl interviews young American-Chinese violist Sean Juhl, African American violinist Sean Bennett, Russian Asian violinist Anya Ivanova, and African American violinist Lady Jess.

Black Lives Matter, Ching Juhl, 10', USA, 2020 - June 2nd protest at Foley Square.

Thousands join the June 2, 2020 protest and march in New York City, at Foley Square, near City Hall, passing through Lower Manhattan, Chinatown, to rally at One Police Plaza, the NYC police headquarters, shouting "I Can't Breathe!" The film depicts Black Lives Matter as a decentralized movement advocating non-violent civil disobedience in protest against incidents of police brutality and racially motivated violence.

ISAAC POPE: The Spirit of an American Century, Rock Grant, 58', USA, 2018 - 100 years of American history seen by Isaac Pope, grandson of enslaved people, son of sharecroppers.

An intimate view of 100 years of American history seen by Isaac Pope, an African American centenarian who is a spellbinding storyteller and unsung hero of war, the civil rights and workers' movements, and the tale of the nation's spirit, loss, and love. Grandson of enslaved people, son of sharecroppers, he yearned toward the American Dream.

9:00 PM

STONEWALL WITH A T, Samy Nemir Olivares, 80', USA, 2019 - Transgender prejudice.

The New York City transgender activism movement - spanning from Stonewall era to the present - in a decades-long struggle to acquire civil rights, recognition under the law and society, and fighting against discrimination. It's an untold chapter of the LGBT history revisited 50 years after



Collage of scenes from Black Voices in Film - Photo / SRFF2020.

Stonewall with interviews and never-seen-before footage of LGBT pioneer icons Sylvia River and Marsha P Johnson.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22, 3:00 PM

(In the) Executioner's Shadow, Maggie Stogner, 55', USA, 2018 - Capital punishment.

The film tackles tough issues of justice, injustice, and capital punishment and underscores themes of race and economic inequities, high rates of wrongful incarceration, mental illness among inmates. This provocative film challenges viewers to question their deepest beliefs about the meaning of justice and to examine how the death penalty defines who we are as a society.

Straight from the Pen, Paul Sutton, 51', USA, 2017 - A writing program in prison.

An unprecedented creative writing class matches 24 prisoners - mostly lifers - with a dozen college students on a maximum-security yard in southern California. Prisoners learn to express themselves openly and honestly, many for the first time, to a group of strangers, in a setting where survival often demands alienation, disaffection, and aggression.

7:00 PM

INSIDE/OUTSIDE, Nandini Sikand, 95', USA, 2019 - Female mass incarceration.

Inside/Outside is a feature-length documentary film about women and mass incarceration in the United States. Seen through the lens of a predominantly white county jail in a rapidly gentrifying town in the Lehigh Valley in Pennsylvania, this film explores challenges the women face inside and outside the jail as they struggle with sexual assault, substance abuse, and often motherhood. Inside/Outside addresses the hard and cold facts of the prison industrial complex.

"Meet the Filmmakers" sessions broadcast live on the SRFF YouTube Channel. If you missed any, you can still watch all the discussions at ratedsrff.com

Registration for the films and talks is FREE, however, tax-deductible donations are highly appreciated and will be shared with Reel Works and two other Black Lives Matter organizations to help make their voices heard. To

donate, visit ratedsrff.com

Festival Founder and Artistic Director Nora Armani says, "SRFF has been screening films that deal with the Black experience since its inaugural season in 2014. We are grateful to the filmmakers who have agreed to make their films available in this retrospective so we can all celebrate the growing strength of the Black Lives Matter movement."

SRFF 2021

The eight edition of SRFF scheduled for March 2021 will cover a broad range of socially relevant™ stories on climate change, gun control, health care, the Middle East, refugees, indigenous people, LGBTQ rights, and more. Submissions are open on Filmfreeway.com.

ABOUT SR SOCIALLY RELEVANT FILM FESTIVAL NY (SRFFNY)

SR Socially Relevant™ Film Festival New York, a non-profit organization, founded by actress Nora Armani. The Mission of the SR Film Festival is to shine the spotlight on filmmakers who tell compelling, socially relevant™, human interest stories, across a broad range of social issues. The festival was created as a response to the proliferation of violence and violent forms of storytelling in media and entertainment, and works to raise awareness of social issues and promote positive social change. During its first seven years, the festival showcased over 400 films from 35 countries. Submissions for SRFF 2021 are open and accepted from all over the world.

Spokespersons and guests of SR Socially Relevant™ Film Festival NY include Amy Goodman of Democracy Now, Erin Brockovich, Martin Sheen, Pulitzer Prize and Tony award-winning writer Robert Schenkkan, prolific and best-selling French novelist Marc Levy, Academy Award Nominee and Emmy Award Winner Guy Davidi, American TV commentator and author Gretchen Carlson, and Liaison Officer of Tibet and the Dalai Lama, Kunga Tashi.

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

'Sidewalk' Drive-In Film Festival

"I'm super proud and excited that we've moved to a drive-in festival despite the many challenges brought about by the current era."

22nd Edition, August 24-30

7 days, 4 outdoor screens

163 films: 41 features, 122 shorts, 23 music videos

The 'Sidewalk' Film Festival's 22nd edition will take place August 24-30 at The Grand River Drive-In at The Backyard in Leeds, Birmingham, Alabama, making this year's event the largest film festival in the country to present all of their films at the drive-in.

A highly anticipated stop on the regional film festival circuit for filmmakers, film industry veterans and film fans due to its adventurous programming (including its celebrated SHOUT/LGBTQIA+ film festival within a film festival), creative and raucous parties, events, and street gatherings, Sidewalk is the rare film festival that has not gone virtual or postponed altogether this year. With 163 films (41 features, 122 shorts) and 23 music videos, the film festival has packed an ambitious slate into 7 days and 4 outdoor screens. Sidewalk is also taking advantage of the drive-in setting to spice their lineup with some classics and slightly off-the-beaten-path titles.

The 22nd Annual 'Sidewalk' Festival at the Drive-In will screen films each evening on all four screens. Gates will tentatively open each day at 6:30PM with the start of the first films of the night scheduled for 8:00PM daily.

'Sidewalk' Film Festival Creative Director and Lead Programmer, Rachel Morgan, said, "While we would much prefer to be running from film to film in unique and beautiful spaces in downtown Birmingham this late August, I'm super proud and excited that we've moved to a drive-in festival despite the many challenges brought about by the current era. We strongly believe that great films are meant to be experienced communally - on a big screen with big sound and, while the festival will certainly be different this year, we are ecstatic to still bring a little of the magic of Sidewalk to late summer. I can't wait to watch so many of the year's best films under the stars, surrounded by fellow film lovers. Party on (safely)."

'Sidewalk' will open on Monday, August 24 with an Opening Night Extravaganza.

'Sidewalk' will be offering filmmaker Q&As and talkbacks as well as continuing their educational efforts online throughout this year's film festival. One key virtual presentation this year will be A Conversation with Michael O'Neill on Saturday, August 29 as veteran actor and Alabama native Michael O'Neill participates in an Inside the Actors' Studio-style conversation on Zoom. They'll discuss Michael's career in Hollywood and offer advice to anyone looking to break into the industry. There will also be a Q & A portion afterwards.

For Film Schedule, Ticket pricing, Concession and Bar services are also available at the website.

Opening Night Extravaganza BANKSY MOST WANTED

DIRS: Aurélie Rouvier, Seamus Haley | USA | 1h30m

Banksy is a household name, but behind this name hides a multitude of stories, artworks, stunts, political statements and identities, leading to one of the art world's biggest unanswered questions- who is Banksy?

THE BURNT ORANGE HERESY

DIR: Giuseppe Capotondi | USA | 1h40m

Hired to steal a rare painting from one of the most enigmatic painters of all time, an ambitious art dealer



A scene from 'BANKSY MOST WANTED' - Photo / 'Sidewalk'

"We strongly believe that great films are meant to be experienced communally - on a big screen with big sound and, while the festival will certainly be different this year." - Rachel Morgan, Festival Creative Director - Lead Programmer



A scene from 'THE BURNT ORANGE HERESY' - Photo / 'Sidewalk'



A scene from 'FIRST COW' - Photo / 'Sidewalk'

becomes consumed by his own greed and insecurity as the operation spins out of control. Starring Elizabeth Debicki, Mick Jagger, Donald Sutherland, and Claes Bang.

FIRST COW

DIR: Kelly Reichardt | USA | 2h2m

A skilled cook has traveled west and joined a group of fur trappers in Oregon, though he only finds true connection with a Chinese immigrant also seeking his fortune. Soon the two collaborate on a successful business.

TEEN WOLF (1985)

DIR: Rod Daniel | USA | 1h31m

An ordinary high school student discovers that his family has an unusual pedigree when he finds himself turning into a werewolf.

TEEN WITCH (1989)

DIR: Dorian Walker | USA | 1h30m

High school misfit Louise, at a loss for romance, discovers magical abilities, but if the teenage witch finds she cannot conjure herself true love, then so

what?

The other full-length feature films have the following themes:

Shout, Alabama, Black Lens, Life & Liberty, Family Fest, and more.

The Shorts Program include the titles: Narrative Shorts #1, Narrative Shorts #2, Narrative Shorts #3, Narrative Shorts #4; Documentary Shorts #1, Documentary Shorts #2, Documentary Shorts #3, Black Lens Shorts, Environmental Shorts, and Shout Shorts. In addition there are Music Videos running for a total of 89 minutes.

ABOUT 'SIDEWALK'

'Sidewalk' is a nonprofit organization dedicated to encouraging filmmaking in Alabama and building audiences for independent film. The group produces the nationally recognized Sidewalk Film Festival, the SHOUT LGBTQ Film Festival; organizes a wide variety of educational programs for filmmakers and holds other events that create interest in and enthusiasm for independent film.

To expand on this work and better serve their mission they have opened the Sidewalk Film Center + Cinema, a two-screen independent movie theater in the heart of Birmingham's historic theatre district. For twenty-one years the organization's premiere event has been the Sidewalk Film Festival, which showcases the work of more than 250 filmmakers and welcomes 15,000 film lovers to Birmingham annually.

Since its debut in 1999, filmmakers from across the country and around the world have come to Birmingham to screen their work at Sidewalk and have been thrilled to discover enthusiastic crowds eager to devour new independent cinema. The Festival continues to thrive with increased submissions, ticket sales, and press coverage. The 22nd annual Sidewalk Film Festival will take place August 24-30, 2020.

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

Lukashenko rewards security forces as Belarus protests rage on

MINSK (TIP): Alexander Lukashenko, the leader of Belarus, awarded medals “for impeccable service” on Tuesday to law enforcement officials who have helped him crack down on protesters demanding he step down in the 10 days since an election they say was stolen.

In an effort to clamp down on strikes that have hit some of the country’s most important factories, the government also issued a message to managers of state-run plants telling them to ensure workers fulfil their duties or be disciplined.

Lukashenko is under the biggest pressure of his 26-year-rule, with no sign of an end to the protests and strikes over the election, which the president says he won with 80 per cent of the vote but protesters say was blatantly rigged.

At least two protesters have been killed and thousands detained in the post-election crackdown. Many of those detained have complained of punishment beatings, cramped conditions and starvation rations.

Opposition politician Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya says she was the rightful winner.

Tsikhanouskaya, who emerged as the consensus opposition candidate only after a number of others, including her husband, were jailed or barred from standing, has fled abroad, issuing calls via the internet to her followers to rise up.

Hundreds of protesters chanting “shame” gathered at a theatre in Minsk on Tuesday in solidarity with its director, who was fired for speaking out in support of the opposition.

They were due later to converge on a prison where Tsikhanouskaya’s husband has been detained since the end of May.

“All of this outrageous, unfair lawlessness shows us how this rotten system works, where one person controls everything,” Tsikhanouskaya said in a video on Tuesday.

“One man has kept the country in fear for 26 years. One man stole the choice of Belarusians,” she said.

Attention is firmly focused on how Russia will respond to the biggest political crisis facing an ex-Soviet neighbour since 2014 in Ukraine, when Moscow intervened militarily after an allied leader was toppled by public protests.

Of all former Soviet republics, Belarus is the closest to Russia culturally, politically and economically, with a treaty that proclaims the two countries part of a “union state” with a Soviet-style red flag. But President Vladimir Putin and Lukashenko have had a difficult personal relationship.

European officials privately say the situation in Belarus is different from that in Ukraine six years ago, in part because the Belarus opposition is not necessarily seeking to loosen ties with Russia, merely to get rid of Lukashenko. Reuters

Russian Opposition leader ‘poisoned’

Putin critic Navalny in coma ‘after having tea at airport’

MOSCOW (TIP): Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny is in a coma and on a ventilator in a hospital intensive care unit after falling ill from suspected poisoning that his allies believe is linked to his political activity.

The 44-year-old foe of Russia’s President Vladimir Putin felt unwell on a flight back to Moscow from Tomsk, a city in Siberia, and was taken to a hospital after the plane made an emergency landing in Omsk, Navalny’s spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh said on Twitter.

She told the Echo Moskvy radio station he must have consumed something from tea he drank at an airport cafe before boarding the plane early Thursday.

During the flight, Navalny started sweating and asked her to talk to him so that he could “focus on a sound of a voice.” He then went to the bathroom and lost consciousness.

“Looks like Putin is doing really badly — was handed some data on protest sentiment growing explosively — if he made the decision to poison Navalny,” the politician’s close ally Vladimir Milov said in a tweet.

Navalny is currently being treated at the Omsk ambulance hospital. He is in a coma in grave condition. Doctors at the hospital remain tight-lipped about his diagnosis.



‘President scared’

Putin is scared. He is sending a message to his own people not to try do at home what they see on TV from Belarus. —An EU diplomat

Last year, Navalny was rushed to a hospital from prison where he was serving a sentence following an administrative arrest, with what his team said was suspected poisoning. — AP

Russian opposition politician Navalny in coma after suspected poisoning, says spokeswoman

MOSCOW (TIP): Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny is in a coma and on a ventilator in an intensive care unit in Siberia after falling ill from suspected poisoning that his allies believe is linked to his political activity.

The 44-year-old critic of Russia’s President Vladimir Putin felt unwell on a flight back to Moscow from Tomsk, a city in Siberia, and was taken to a hospital after the plane made an emergency landing in Omsk, Navalny’s spokeswoman, Kira Yarmysh, said on Twitter.

She told the Echo Moskvy radio station that he must have consumed something from tea he drank at an airport cafe before boarding the plane early Thursday.

During the flight, Navalny started sweating and asked her to talk to him so that he could “focus on the sound of a voice.”

He then went to the bathroom and lost consciousness, and has been in a coma in grave condition ever since. Other opposition figures were quick to suggest Kremlin involvement.

“We are sure that the only people that have the capability to target Navalny or myself are Russian security services



with definite clearance from Russia’s political leadership,” Pyotr Verzilov, a member of Russia’s protest group Pussy Riot who ended up in intensive care after suspected poisoning in 2018, told The Associated Press.

“We believe that Putin definitely is a person who gives that go-ahead in this situation.” Doctors at the Omsk ambulance hospital, where the politician is being treated, remain tight-lipped about his diagnosis and only said they were considering a variety of theories, including poisoning.

Navalny’s wife Yulia arrived at the hospital in the afternoon, but medical workers would not let her see her husband because she did not have their

marriage certificate and the patient did not consent, according to Yarmysh.

Navalny’s doctor Yaroslav Ashikhmin told the independent Meduza outlet that he is trying to arrange his transfer to a clinic in Hanover or Strasbourg.

Verzilov, who was flown to Berlin for treatment in 2018, said hospitals in Omsk or Moscow would not be able to treat Navalny properly and expressed concern about possible pressure from security services that doctors could be under in Russia.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Thursday said it was necessary to wait for the test results showing what caused Navalny’s condition, adding the authorities would consider a request to allow Navalny to leave Russia, which has not fully opened its borders after a coronavirus lockdown, for treatment.

However, doctors at the Omsk hospital refused to give medical documents necessary for a transfer to Navalny’s wife and allies, Dr. Anastasia Vasilyeva of the Alliance of Doctors union, who also flew to Omsk on Thursday, said in a tweet.

State news agency Tass reported that police were not considering deliberate poisoning, a statement the politician’s allies dismissed as a propaganda ploy. AP

Priti Patel unveils campaign to counter UK's Windrush immigration scandal

'Essential that people who have been affected get support and compensation they deserve'

LONDON (TIP): UK Home Secretary Priti Patel, who has previously issued a formal apology for the Windrush immigration scandal which wrongly denied citizenship rights to thousands of Commonwealth nationals, on Thursday unveiled a new campaign to ensure those affected can access government support and compensation.

The Indian-origin Cabinet minister said she is keen to drive change within her Home Office department in the wake of the scandal from over two years ago, which caused hardship to Commonwealth nationals, including many Indians, welcomed into Britain to address labour shortages in the wake of World War II until immigration rules were later tightened.

It resulted in many historic cases of forced deportations or denial of other citizenship-related rights due to a lack of sufficient paperwork to prove a legitimate entry and settlement in the UK.

"I am driving change to make sure nothing like this can happen again," said Patel.

"It is essential that people who have been affected by Windrush get the support and compensation they deserve. This new campaign will raise awareness of the Windrush Help Team and the support available so that as many people as possible apply," she said.

The Windrush generation refers to citizens of former British colonies who arrived in the UK before 1973, when the rights of such Commonwealth citizens to live and work in Britain underwent a legal modification.

While a large proportion of them were of Jamaican/Caribbean descent who came on the ship Empire Windrush on June 22, 1948, Indian and other South Asian immigrants from that era also fall



within the Windrush generation categorisation.

The Home Office said its new campaign features real people who have applied to the various Windrush support schemes, and caseworkers from the Windrush Help Team, to highlight the benefit of applying and the human faces behind the service.

The 750,000-pound campaign, which will run until mid-October, will use a range of channels, such as community radio and press adverts, to increase awareness amongst those most affected around the UK. "The Windrush Working Group is determined to see the wrongs righted and to this end has collaborated with the Home Office to develop this new campaign which, we hope, will encourage more people to apply to the Windrush Compensation Scheme," said Bishop Derek Webley, co-chair of the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group set up in the aftermath of the scandal.

The scheme applies to anyone who

settled lawfully in the UK before the end of 1988 or anyone whose parents are from a Commonwealth country and settled lawfully in the UK before 1973. Some grandchildren and close family members may also be able to claim compensation via a free application process.

According to the Home Office, over 12,000 people linked to the Windrush generation have already received documentation confirming their residency status in the UK, including nearly 1,400 Indians, and a growing number have been awarded compensation.

People who qualify can apply under multiple categories of adverse impact and there is no overall cap on the amount someone can receive. Categories for loss include employment; detention, deportation removal and returns; housing; health; education; impact on normal daily life; and immigration fees and associated legal costs. — PTI

Belarusian leader orders police to put down protests

MINSK/BRUSSELS (TIP):

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko ordered his police on Wednesday to put down protests in the capital Minsk, signalling an escalation after a week and a half of mass demonstrations against his rule.

Lukashenko's order came even as European Union leaders were holding an emergency summit over the political crisis in Belarus, long Russia's most loyal neighbour, which has heavily militarised borders with the EU.

EU leaders were expected to endorse sanctions on Belarusian officials they blame for election fraud following a dispute August 9 election that the opposition said it won.

However, they were expected to steer clear of more dramatic steps that might provoke intervention from Moscow.

"There should no longer be any disorder in Minsk of any kind," Lukashenko said in remarks reported by the official Belta news agency. "People are tired. People demand peace and quiet." He ordered the border to be tightened to prevent an influx of "fighters and arms". Workers at state media who have quit in protest against the government's policies would not be rehired, he said.

Western officials are trying to head off an escalation along the lines of the crisis in Ukraine six years ago, when a violent crackdown by a pro-Russian leader led to his downfall in a popular uprising, followed by a Russian military intervention and Europe's deadliest ongoing conflict.

"Violence has to stop and a peaceful and inclusive dialogue has to be launched. The leadership of #Belarus must reflect the will of the people," Charles Michel, the EU summit chairman, wrote in a tweet announcing the start of a video meeting. — Reuters

Wuhan pool parties bring post-coronavirus relief in China

BEIJING (TIP): For more than two months, the 11 million residents of Wuhan endured a strict lockdown as coronavirus raced around the city in central China.

Now, some are letting loose en masse at rocking nighttime pool parties at a popular amusement park chain. The Wuhan Maya Beach Water Park reopened in late June, and the crowds have picked up this month.

Wuhan was the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak in China and saw the most deaths. The city and most of the surrounding province was locked down from late January to early April. People couldn't leave or enter the city and were mostly restricted to their homes. The spread of the disease has been all but eradicated in China, though isolated outbreaks pop up sporadically. AP

Australia enters deal with AstraZeneca for vaccine

CANBERRA (AUSTRALIA) (TIP): Australia has announced a deal to manufacture a potential Covid-19 vaccine being developed by British-Swedish pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca.

"Under the deal, every single Australian will be able to receive the University of Oxford Covid-19 vaccine for free, should trials prove successful, safe and effective," Prime Minister Scott Morrison said in a statement Wednesday.

Morrison said the Oxford University trial was in a phase-three stage and more work was needed to prove its viability. "If this vaccine proves successful, we will manufacture and supply vaccines



straight away under our own steam and make it free for 25 million Australians," Morrison said.

He said there was no guarantee that the vaccine would be successful, "which is why we are continuing our discussions

Scott Morrison, PM

Free shots for citizens
Under the deal, every single Australian will be able to receive the University of Oxford Covid-19 vaccine for free, should trials prove successful, safe and effective.

with many parties around the world while backing our own researchers at the same time to find a vaccine". — AP

DECORATE YOUR HOUSE WITH WASTE MATERIALS

Have you ever stopped to think that there can be real treasures for home decoration in your garbage? Yes, many objects that are thrown away can be reused to decorate your home! Creativity is all it takes. Check out these tips and ideas of how you can reuse your trash in your home decor!

Crates

Wooden crates are great decorative objects, so don't throw them away! You can turn them into shelves, tables, and dressers, among other things. The image also shows another trick: empty frames look great on the wall.

Pallets

Pallets are also extremely useful in the home. They make great support for your mattress, and look very modern as a bed.

Plastic bottles

Plastic bottles usually end up in the trash can, but they can be very versatile, especially in gardening. How about making a hanging bottle garden?

Cans

You know those tin cans? Don't



throw them away! Pick some with diverse shapes and sizes and turn them into pots for charming plants. Customizing the cans is optional.

Barrels

Barrels can be transformed into a modern and stylish armchair.

PVC pipes

Pipes can be used to build a modern and stylish sofa. Just add some pillows as cushions and you'll be set!

Old furniture

And what about that old piece of furniture that is no longer useful, like wooden drawers or sinks? They can make great flower beds or vases.

Old shoes

That old shoe can also be an original vase for your plants.

Egg carton

They are great for planting seedlings. These cartons can also be used as sound absorbers in your at-home recording studio.



By Tript Arora

CONNOISSEUR'S
CHOICE



VERMICELLI PULAO

This recipe contains fibre from vegetables and carbs from vermicelli. I cook it in Coconut oil with curry leaves added to it. Both the ingredients have health benefits. It is easy to prepare so makes breakfast quickly. A good option for students and working people who have less time in the morning. You can roast thr vermicelli in advance and keep it in an airtight container. It will be good for 2 to 3 months.

The vegetables you can chop in a chopper. It reduces the chopping time. So next time do try this Savoury Vermicelli for your breakfast.

We need

- 1 Cup Vermicelli
- 1 small Capsicum
- 2 medium sized tomatoes chopped
- 6 to 8 Beans chopped
- 1 small Carrot chopped
- 1 Tsp Mustard Seeds
- 2 to 3 Red whole Chillies
- 9 to 10 Curry Patta
- Salt to taste
- 2 Tbsp Coconut Oil (oil of your choice)

Here We go

- Dry roast the vermicelli in a non stick pan till it is slightly pink. Keep aside
- In the same pan heat coconut oil. When heated add Mustard seeds, curry leaves and broken red whole chillies.
- When they are roasted add all the vegetables and saute till transparent. Add salt. After adding salt the vegetables will release water, when the water has almost dried up then add roasted vermicelli. Saute for two min.
- Now add water to the pan. It should be twice the amount of Vermicelli ie. 2 cups. Stir the whole dish so that everything mixes well. Cover it with the lid and put the flame on low.
- Let it simmer for ten minutes. Open the lid and it is ready to be served.
- Preparation Time 20 min
- Serves : 3

Tips

- Don't stir after covering the lid. Let it simmer. After 10 minutes it will be ready.



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Homemade chia seeds scrub to keep acne and pimples at bay

You may not know but chia seeds are great for your skin. All you need is some chia seeds, oats and aloe vera. Mix these three ingredients and apply on your face to get rid of all the dirt from your skin. It clears all the dust particles that lead to acne and pimples.

How To Prepare?

Soak chia seeds and then add aloe vera and aloe vera to it to make a paste. Apply it all over your face and keep it for 15 minutes. Wash it off with cold water. You can also add lemon juice or rose water to this paste.

Here is another homemade scrub that you can try this monsoon to fight common skin problems:

Multani mitti is great for your skin. To prepare a scrub using it, you need some sandalwood powder, saffron and lemon juice. Mix these ingredients together to make a paste. Apply it on your skin and keep it for 15 minutes. This scrub is great for dry skin as it moisturises your skin well. Also, it makes your skin glow from within.

Here are some more skin care tips you should keep in mind during this season:

- Rosewater is a great toner for your skin and you should keep it handy in your bag. Use it through a spray bottle or apply it all over your face using a cotton ball. This will keep your skin soft.
- You don't need a cleansing cream if you have some cold milk. Take a cotton ball and apply cold milk on your face using it. This will clean your face completely and make your skin glow.
- Scrape out some aloe vera gel from the plant and add some rose water to it. Apply this mix on your face and keep it for a few minutes. Wash it off and you will get clear, glowing skin instantly.
- Make sure you always run a patch-test on your skin before using the pack on your face.



RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA PATIENTS CAN FIND CURE THROUGH ARTIFICIAL VISION, SAY RESEARCHERS

Important findings that could potentially improve the performance of retinal prostheses creating an artificial vision for blind individuals have been reported by a team of Korean researchers.

The Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST) announced that a research team led by Dr Maesoon Im of the Center for BioMicrosystems, Brain Science Institute had found retinal neural signals arising from electric stimulation are altered depending on disease progression in mice affected by outer retinal degeneration. This research was done in collaboration with the lab of Professor Shelley Fried at Harvard Medical School, Massachusetts General Hospital.

The research was published in the journal IEEE Transactions on Neural Systems and Rehabilitation Engineering.

Retinal degenerative diseases, such as retinitis pigmentosa and age-related macular degeneration, primarily destroy photoreceptor cells, which convert light into electrochemical signals, leading to profound vision loss. Currently, there is no available cure for these diseases. Fortunately, retinal ganglion cells are known to survive those conditions, making "artificial vision" available. An array of



microelectrodes can be implanted at the back of the eyeball so that electric pulses applied by those microelectrodes can stimulate ganglion cells to transmit visual neural signals to the brain again. This is the basic working principle of retinal prosthetic devices. Although several retinal prostheses have been commercialized, one of the problems preventing broad application has been a huge performance variation across patients due to unidentified reason.

The KIST research team had delved into the potential source of the performance variation and has found the level of disease progression may be critical. They designed a longitudinal study and performed experiments using mice at various stages of retinal

degeneration. Those mice lost their vision gradually due to a genetic mutation which is similar to people with retinitis pigmentosa.

The researchers recorded electrically-evoked neural activities of retinal ganglion cells from animals at varying ages and tried to correlate those artificial vision signals to the disease progression. They uncovered that both the magnitude and the consistency of the electrically-evoked responses diminished as retinal degeneration advanced.

The response consistency is particularly important for retinal prostheses because they periodically refresh artificial visual percepts using repetitive electrical stimuli. For example, when a retinal prostheses user stares at a letter "K".



Antibodies can ward off second infection: Study

Three people who previously recovered from Covid-19 were protected during a major outbreak of the disease onboard a fishing vessel that left from Seattle, US, according to a new study that offers the first confirmation that having antibodies are enough to prevent a second infection.

The findings were based on antibody (serological) as well as viral detection (reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction, or RT-PCR) tests that were conducted before the vessel departed and upon its return. During its 18 days at sea, 104 of the 122 crew members contracted the virus from a single source.

"This suggests that neutralising antibodies are a correlate of protection for Sars-CoV-2, with obvious caveat that more study is needed since the N (number of people with antibodies) was small," Alexander Greninger, the assistant director of the University of Washington (UW) Medicine Clinical Virology Laboratory and one of the authors of the study, said in an email response to HT.

The study was posted on Friday on the preprint server medRxiv and the researchers were from UW as well as Seattle's Fred Hutch Cancer Research Center.

The findings are significant since they are the closest confirmation yet that the world's main strategy of using vaccines to trigger immune response could indeed work to stop the pandemic. This addresses a complicated question of whether antibodies are enough to prevent disease, and ensure symptoms are mild, or have no effect at all.

Deriving such data is normally challenging since scientific ethics prohibit an intentional infection of a person with antibodies to check whether they are safe from the virus.

"A total of 104 individuals had an RT-PCR positive viral test... yielding an attack rate on board of 85.2%. Only three crewmembers tested seropositive prior to departure in initial serological screening and also had neutralizing and spike-reactive antibodies in follow-up assays... None of these crewmembers showed evidence of bona fide viral infection or experienced any symptoms during the outbreak," the researchers said in their paper.

The analysis involved detailed follow-up tests for 50 days. The researchers also carried out a genomic analysis of 39 genomes from the outbreak and determined that the outbreak was caused by a single source.

Excess bodyweight has alarming impact on cognitive function: Study

An increase in the bodyweight means all of the regions of the brain going down in activity and blood flow, as per a recent brain imaging study.

The recent study was published in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease.

One of the largest studies linking obesity with brain dysfunction, scientists analysed over 35,000 functional neuroimaging scans using single-photon emission computerised tomography (SPECT) from more than 17,000 individuals to measure blood flow and brain activity. Low cerebral blood flow is the #1 brain imaging predictor that a person will develop Alzheimer's disease. It is also associated with depression, ADHD, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, traumatic brain injury, addiction, suicide and other conditions.



"This study shows that being overweight or obese seriously impacts brain activity and increases the risk for Alzheimer's disease as well as many other psychiatric and cognitive conditions," explained Daniel G. Amen, MD, the study's lead author and founder of Amen Clinics, one of the leading brain-centred mental health clinics in the United States.

Striking patterns of

progressively reduced blood flow were found in virtually all regions of the brain across categories of underweight, normal weight, overweight, obesity and morbid obesity. These were noted while participants were in a resting state as well as while performing a concentration task. In particular, brain areas noted to be vulnerable to Alzheimer's disease, the temporal and parietal lobes, hippocampus, posterior cingulate gyrus and precuneus, were found to have reduced blood flow along the spectrum of weight classification from normal weight to overweight, obese and morbidly obese.

Considering the latest statistics showing that 72 per cent of Americans are overweight of whom 42 per cent are obese, this is distressing news for America's mental and cognitive health.

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DR. SATISH AND GITANJLI ANAND



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Facebook is making Oculus's worst feature unavoidable

Facebook infuriated the VR world, announcing plans to require a Facebook login for future VR headsets. The decision broke an early promise from Oculus founder Palmer Luckey and was almost universally reviled online, with critics raising concerns about intrusive data collection, targeted advertising, and being forced to use a service they hated. On the Oculus subreddit, some users posted bitter memes about Farmville and data harvesting, while others swapped recommendations for other headsets. One posted a cartoon of Oculus as a sinking ship.

The truth is probably a lot less dire. Facebook-related boycotts fizzle all the time — when it acquired Oculus in 2014, Minecraft creator Markus “Notch” Persson furiously killed a deal to put his game on Oculus Rift, only to be “officially over being upset” months later. (Minecraft was sold to Microsoft and appeared on the Rift soon after its launch.) And Oculus presents plenty of other benefits that could overcome skeptics’ distaste.

Google Maps is getting a new look

Google's new “color-mapping algorithmic technique” will help people more easily distinguish different types of terrain from tan beaches and lush green forests to varying types of blue for lakes, oceans and ravines. The update is rolling out immediately to users in 220 countries that have access to Google Maps.

“This update is visible no matter what area you're looking at — from the biggest metropolitan areas to small, rural towns,” Google said in a post announcing the changes Tuesday. To accomplish this, Google analyzed advanced satellite imagery and assigned more detailed colors to different types of areas.

Pentagon to set up new unit to investigate UFOs

The Pentagon said Friday it was setting up a new task force under the US Navy to investigate UFO sightings.

With the creation of the Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Task Force (UAPTF), the Defense Department hopes “to improve its understanding of, and gain insight into, the nature and origins of UAPs,” spokeswoman Susan Gough said in a statement.

Rather than little green alien invaders, the US military is actually concerned about “unidentified aerial phenomena” connected with its terrestrial adversaries.

Tips to take better photos from your smartphone

Over the past many years now more photos are shot using phones and not standalone cameras. So while all of us with smartphones, and even feature phones, can click photos, we might not be doing the best given the camera capabilities of the phone and the conditions.

Here are some simple tips

- Always wipe your lens before you shoot. Often, you see photos with a haze effect. That is not a filter, but just oil from that last Aloo Parantha you had for breakfast. So wipe the lens on a clean piece of cloth — yes, you can use your T-Shirt — once in a while.
- To avoid burn out in your photos, once you have composed a frame, tap on the brightest part of the screen. This will balance the exposure and ensure you get a better result. Also, you can then adjust the exposure to make the picture darker or brighter.
- While taking photos of friends and family, use a contrasting background. This gives the photos a much better impact. If there is nothing to contrast against, just go down on your knees and get the sky into the picture behind the faces. See the difference.
- When clicking photos outdoors, the



sun should ideally be behind you to get well-lit faces and subjects. Indoors, apply the same rule to the light source. Always avoid getting the light source in the frame. If it is in the frame, bring the subject in front to cover it, and create a silhouette effect.

- Use portrait mode ideally when there is only one subject. Avoid it for groups, as someone's shoulder

or hair could get messed up. Try portrait modes for clicking photos of flowers, animals and other stuff. The results are often stunning.

- While shooting video of a static object, use slow motion and move towards the subject. This creates a 3D effect with any camera.
- For boring frames, try Black and White. That will make it better than a dull colour photo.

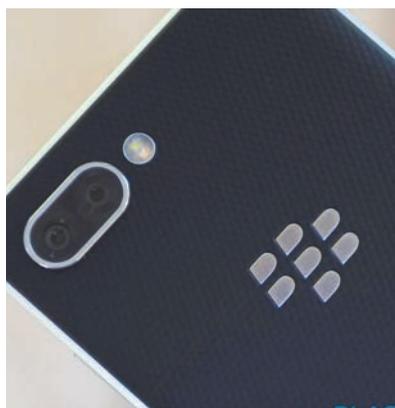
5G BlackBerry smartphones coming in 2021; to sport nostalgic QWERTY keypad

Just when we thought BlackBerry was dead the brand surprised us, especially its fans, on Wednesday. It's coming back.

After being ditched by TCL earlier this year, BlackBerry has announced a licensing partnership with OnwardMobility and FIH Mobile Limited, a subsidiary of Foxconn Technology Group, to bring new smartphones with the nostalgic QWERTY keypad.

It is confirmed that we will see new BlackBerry phones in the first half of next year, the exact date or the name of the devices have not been revealed by the company. OnwardMobility has confirmed that the upcoming BlackBerry smartphones will not only pack QWERTY keypad but also support 5G network. Similar to all the previous BlackBerry models the upcoming phones will also run on Android software.

The companies have confirmed that in the starting the new BlackBerry smartphones will be available in North America and Europe. market. No details on the India availability of the phones for now. Notably, all the previous models of BlackBerry made their way to the Indian market.



The upcoming BlackBerry smartphones are claimed to be secure and “enable productivity, without sacrificing the user experience”.

Commenting on the partnership John Chen, Executive Chairman and CEO, BlackBerry said, “BlackBerry is thrilled OnwardMobility will deliver a BlackBerry 5G smartphone device with physical keyboard, leveraging our high standards of trust and security synonymous with our brand. We are excited that customers will experience the enterprise and government level security and mobile productivity the new BlackBerry 5G smartphone will offer.”

NASA tracks ‘splitting dent’ in Earth’s magnetic field which can damage satellites

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has reported a splitting dent in Earth's magnetic field over the southern Atlantic Ocean which can be bad news for satellites. This unusual weak spot in Earth's magnetic is called the South Atlantic Anomaly (SAA).

Earth's magnetic field has a protective layer around the planet that keeps charged particles (solar particles) from the Sun at bay. Its protection is also extended to the satellites that orbit close to the earth. However, the SAA causes these particles to dip closer to the surface than they are supposed to. This will result in interference in the data collection by knocking out satellites' computers.

So far, the degradation of SAA has not caused any visible impacts on the Earth's surface. However, the recent data shows that it is expanding westward and splitting into two lobes which can result in the weakening of the magnetic field and thus creating problems for current and future satellite missions.

The SAA is caused by the “tilt of Earth's magnetic axis and the flow of molten metals within its outer core”.



Tesla, world's most valuable auto maker

Tesla Inc.'s market value has surpassed retail behemoth Walmart Inc. after an astounding surge in the electric vehicle maker's shares over the past five months.

The stock, which touched a low of about \$350 in March, has almost quintupled since then and briefly crossed \$2,000, nearly 10 times the level it was trading at this time last year. Tesla shares jumped as much as 6.6% on Thursday, reaching the all-time intraday high. The stock has closed at records on three of the past four trading days.

The relentless rally led Tesla to split the stock in order to make it more accessible to individual holders, a move that can drive up demand for the shares. The stock will start trading on the five-for-one split-adjusted basis on Aug. 31. Each stockholder of record by the close of business on Friday Aug. 21 will receive four additional shares of common stock for each one they currently own.

Google launches job search app in India

Google has announced the India launch of its Kormo Jobs app to help entry-level job seekers find and apply for positions. The tech giant, which introduced 'Jobs' last year in India as part of Google Pay to connect job seekers with opportunities in industries like on-demand businesses, retail and hospitality, said the offering will be rebranded to 'Kormo Jobs'.

While announcing the limited launch last year, Google said it has partnered 25 companies including Dunzo, Zomato, Swiggy, 24Seven, Ritu Kumar and FabHotels, which have posted listings for positions such as delivery partners, security guards, customer support partners, field sales and marketing executives, etc.

Asian stocks, oil buckle on uncertain US recovery

Asian equities and US futures fell on Thursday, hurt by the US Federal Reserve's cautious view of the economy, tensions with China and new clusters of coronavirus infections.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan slid 1.24%. US stock futures, the S&P 500 e-minis, were down 0.61%.

Australian stocks dropped 1.04% due to concern that ties with China will worsen further after a report that Australian regulators will reject acquisitions by a Chinese company.

Shares in China fell 0.8%, and Japanese stocks slid 0.77%. South Korean stocks tumbled 2.11% amid a spike in coronavirus cases in Seoul.

RBI to sell 3 government securities totalling Rs 30,000 cr

Auction will be a multiple price-based; successful bids will get accepted at their respective quoted price

MUMBAI (TIP): The Reserve Bank of India announced sale of three government dated securities totalling Rs 30,000 crore.

The securities will be sold through the Reserve Bank of India's Mumbai office on August 21.

"Government of India (GOI) has announced the sale (re-issue) of three dated securities for a notified amount of Rs 30,000 crore...", the RBI said, adding that the government will have the option to retain additional subscription up to Rs 2,000 crore against each security.

It further said that both competitive and non-competitive bids for the auction should be submitted in electronic format on the RBI Core Banking Solution (E-Kuber) system on August 21.

"The result will be announced on the same day and payment by successful bidders will have to be made on August 24, 2020 (Monday)," RBI said.

The auction will be a multiple price-based auction -- successful bids will get accepted at their respective quoted price for the security.

"The Stocks will be issued for a minimum amount of Rs 10,000 (nominal) and in multiples of Rs 10,000 thereafter," the central bank said.

In all the auctions, government stock up to 5 per cent of the notified amount of



sale will be allotted to the eligible individuals and institutions under the scheme for non-competitive bidding facility in the auctions of government securities. With a view to encouraging wider participation and retail holding of government securities, retail investors are allowed participation on "non-competitive" basis in select auctions of dated Government of India securities and Treasury Bills.

As part of the overall strategy of

diversifying the investor base for government securities, the government and RBI have been taking various measures to encourage participation of retail investors in G-Sec market, including introduction of non-competitive bidding in primary auctions.

The Union Budget 2016-17 had announced, inter-alia, that RBI will facilitate retail participation in the primary markets through stock exchanges.

Chinese firms in India hit by new import hurdles



DELHI/SHANGHAI (TIP): Chinese firms like Xiaomi are facing delays in getting approvals from India's quality control agency for their goods, five industry sources said, as the business environment deteriorates after a clash on their Himalayan border.

Greater scrutiny of Chinese imports follows calls for boycotts from Indian nationalist groups linked to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party, angered by the killing of 20 Indian soldiers in the border clash in June.

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has in recent weeks delayed approvals for mobile phone components and televisions, jeopardising the plans of firms

such as Xiaomi as well as Oppo, industry sources in India and China said.

BIS Director General Pramod Kumar Tiwari did not respond to requests for comment. China's commerce ministry and the foreign ministry did not immediately respond. Xiaomi declined to comment, while Oppo did not respond.

The most serious border tension in decades between the Asian giants has hurt already hurt their economic ties and Indian officials expect the damage to get worse.

"The relationship has gone south dramatically," said one official, adding India was unlikely to immediately approve several investments proposals from Chinese companies.

Apple passed \$2 trillion in market value

The iPhone maker's stock hit the \$2 trillion mark before dipping back slightly below that lofty level. Shares finished the day flat Wednesday. The stock has surged almost 60% this year and is at an all-time high. Apple, currently trading at nearly \$465 a share, is about to become more affordable for average investors to purchase, too.

The company's stock will split four-for-one at the end of the month, which will cut the price of a single share to about \$116. The value of Apple remains the same since the company will simply have more shares trading at a lower price.

Tesla also recently announced a stock split -- a move that could attract more millennial and Gen Z investors.

Apple reached the \$2 trillion mark just over two years after passing the \$1 trillion level. It took just five months for the stock to more than double after sinking in March. Apple, like many other tech stocks, has roared back to life in that time — even as the economy fell into recession.

It's not the first company in the world to be valued that high. Saudi Aramco topped that mark in December when it went public, but plunging oil prices have hurt the company's stock. Apple passed Saudi Aramco earlier this month after reporting strong earnings.



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 24 - August 30, 2020

ARIES: Ganesha says in your perception of your role in the family, 'provider' is usually very high in priority. This is typical Arian stuff. And you take it seriously. Funds and income for family prosperity, gain, security will be vitally important to you, and handled as such. And you don't stash it away! You spend on items of comfort, luxury, pleasure, inconvenience. Perhaps even your servants get a raise to keep them working happily and efficiently - the way you do yourself!

TAURUS: You are understanding, gentle, communicative and family and friends all draw close in a circle of mutual affection, warmth, caring. There's an aura of peace, comfort, plenitude surrounding you all this period. Wishes and dreams will also become realities as you live them out. You will know the right way to defuse conflicts and face-offs, and harmony will prevail, in a feeling of blessedness, luxury, fun.

GEMINI: A time when organizing your work - in terms of routine and communication - and your household will be important. It will help you see your way clearly in conflict situations and help you take the right decisions and yet go with the flow. Pleasant repercussions will happen, in both the family scene and with colleagues, co-workers, bosses and superiors.

CANCER: You are given a period of truly stupendous power, achievement and glory by Ganesha now. It will seem that you can't put a foot wrong even if you try! You fulfil even the most far-fetched seeming goals, targets, and have the patience and the drive to resolve disputes and differences, too. It's not only at work that you will use brilliant skills and techniques, but in the sphere of family, of intimate relationships, of parenting, of duty and of love.

LEO: Your personal space has been so beautifully energized and activated that it may seem ideal. Yet you seek to arrange and organize it even better. This will involve you in two related but different activities: a) your care and concern over parents and in - laws, older people, humanitarian causes, social schemes, b) New projects / ventures will be discussed threadbare, planning and executed with skill, precision and perfect timing.

VIRGO: A period packed with so much that it's difficult to describe. There's fun, laughter, romance, good times, entertaining, ceremonies and even perhaps a wedding. There's also leisure pursuits, sports, hobbies. Perhaps games of chance and lotteries, too, where you could easily win some quick bucks. Even speculation and playing the market. That's still not the entire picture. You seek other.

LIBRA: In the cornucopia that Ganesha has for you as a build - up this period, the family scene will be truly beautiful - togetherness, ties, bonding. Love, romance and marriage will be equally good, too. To turn to more practical matters - home budgets will need care, foresight and planning, and you will work towards creating a financial support system for the family. Your own health will be good, too, so that you can cope comfortably, easily with all that you take on.

SCORPIO: A great inflow of serenity and confidence in your temperament and mental makeup benefits you greatly. You can handle the conflicts, confrontations, squabbles that may have to be dealt with easily and impartially. Also there is success in your work - targets and family objectives, too. You not only get things done, but do it with grace and style, and much enjoyment.

SAGITTARIUS: Money flows in for all your needs, from household and domestic expenses to venture capital, high finance. You can handle them with still, expertise, and the rewards come! A rise in status, as well as raises, promotions, perks are almost definite, with the added prestige they bring. While all this may give you the confidence to plan fresh new ventures, you need to exercise care, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN: I'm sure you must have paid heed to Ganesha's advice. Otherwise, the dream run you've been having for the last period would be a hard act to follow, even for Ganesha. Profits, benefits, easy gains, lots of cash. You will perform a true quantum leap in terms of your sincere faith, heightened spiritual awareness, devoutness in prayer. You feel it is the best way to express your gratefulness, your appreciation and love for God.

AQUARIUS: Your public persona will not match up to your performance - both will be brilliant, effortlessly pleasing. You're a whiz at group activities and teamwork, so that you get true co-operation from others. This helps you cope with the rivalry that you are bound to face now. You attract good people near you, the family draws closer; as do your friends. Great achievements flow, as a result; not least of which are family warmth, love, solidarity.

PISCES: Good relationships could well and truly sum up the theme for this period - and right through to the end of the period. Contacts, communications, reaching out, drawing people closer. Meetings, conferences, even intimate interactions will be meaningful, productive. Benefits come to you from travel and short trips. You will break boundaries and barriers of all kinds.

Birthday Horoscope August 24 - August 30, 2020

AUGUST 24: Ganesha says you'll have to deal with a friend's jealousy of possessiveness when you've finally started feeling that being free from such constraints is better.

AUGUST 25: Financial restrictions, a lack or loss, or the need to scale back is a reminder to reshape material plans and do what's responsible re: money.

AUGUST 26: You're on edge and restless.

Someone's in a fighting mood or being too possessive or jealous, and you don't want any part of it.

AUGUST 27: Wandering emotions pin this day on feelings rather than action, but if you play these cards right, tonight affords accord and improvement.

AUGUST 28: A greater idea, insight, or plan can be the result of your hard efforts to succeed. Business

news shows just how far you've come.

AUGUST 29: Take a leap into life this morning through a friendly association and by afternoon you'll feel happy and vitalized among good friends.

AUGUST 30: Your heart is always open, but, today, you feel even more sensitive and compassionate toward others. This good nature carries into a lunchtime encounter that warms everyone's hearts.

GANESH CHATURTHI

THE ARRIVAL OF THE LORD ON EARTH

THE 10-DAY FESTIVAL WILL START ON AUGUST 22. THE INDIAN PANORAMA WISHES ITS READERS A HAPPY VINAYAKA CHATURTHI

Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated annually to mark the birth of Lord Ganesha, the God of new beginnings and a fresh start. The festival falls in the month of Bhadra, according to the Hindu calendar and in August/September according to the Gregorian calendar. This year, the ten-day celebrations will begin on August 22. Lord Ganesha is considered to be a symbol of wisdom, writing, travel, commerce and good fortune. He is also addressed as Gajanana, Ganesh, Gajadant that are among his 108 names.

History

Legend tells the tale of Goddess Parvati who made baby Ganesha using sandalwood paste and asked him to guard the entrance while she took a bath. When Lord Shiva wanted to enter, Ganesha would not even allow him to pass through. Lord Shiva, enraged by this, severed the child's head. When Goddess Parvati realised what had happened, she was overwhelmed and heartbroken. This is when Lord Shiva promised that he would bring baby Ganesha back to life. He went on to instruct his followers (ganas) to search for the head of the first living creature they could find to replace on Ganesha's body. However, the ganas could only find a baby elephant's head. That is how Lord Ganesha came back to life with the head of an elephant. Lord Shiva named him the leader of the ganas, or Ganapati.

Traditions

The excitement for this 10-day long festival begins weeks before Ganesh Chaturthi, with several people making clay idols of Lord Ganesha and painting them. There is more consciousness in terms of organic choices for the Ganpati idol, as the erstwhile methods have been found to deeply affect marine life and pollute the environment.

Originally, Ganesh Chaturthi is known to be celebrated in a large way in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, but the festival and festivities have spread far and wide, with devotees celebrating in other parts of the country with equal fervour.

The festival begins with Pranapratishttha, which consists of the chanting of mantras by a priest. Offerings which are known to be loved by Lord Ganesha are placed in front of his idol. These include modak, shrikhand, payasam, coconut rice, motichoor laddoo and other sweets.

Devotees throng to temples and special pandals set up for Ganesh Chaturthi to pay their respects to the Lord Ganesha. People also sometimes choose to bring Ganpati home ahead of the festival and host him for the 10-day festivities.

On the tenth day, Lord Ganesha's statue is immersed in water, known as Ganpati Visarjan. Devotees chant Ganapati Bappa Morya, paying respect to him as he is seen off, taking all our worries away and leaving blessings behind.

How to install the idol of Lord Ganesha (Ganesh Sthapana)

Ganesh Chaturthi, a day to honor Lord Ganesha, is one of the most auspicious Hindu festivals and is celebrated by the community all across the country. However, the most elaborate festivities are organized in the state of Maharashtra. Ganpati Sthapana, the act of installing the idol at a suitable place, is one of the most important and spiritual moments associated with the festival.

Ganesh Chaturthi is a ten-day long festival and Ganesh Sthapana is usually



performed on the first day of the festival. Lord Ganesha is believed to have been born at Madhyahna Kala, which according to the Hindu calendar denotes midday, and therefore Ganesh pooja is preferred to be performed at Madhyahna. This year, the best time to place the idol is between 12.30 pm to 1 pm. Devotees of Lord Ganesha perform Shodashopachara Ganapati pooja, which is a detailed and 16 step ritualistic pooja of the elephant-headed God.

The place where the idol is to be positioned must be chosen intelligently so as to ensure that people are able to view it during most of the times throughout the day. Before installing the idol, clean the place thoroughly, lay a cloth (preferably red colored) and spread some rice on the cloth. Thereafter, you can place the idol on the cloth. Once that is done, the idol, as well as the shrine, are embellished with majestic flowers and other items. The idols, which are installed in the home, may come in sizes of 3/4 inches, while those at big community celebrations may rise to a height of 70 feet.

Worshippers offer modaks, jaggery, coconut, red hibiscus flowers and other offerings to the idol of Lord Ganesha. During the ceremony, devotees also chant

hymns and perform aartis in the morning and evenings along with their family and friends. Some of the popular Ganesh pooja Mantras sung by the devotees on this day are Ganesh Shubh Labh Mantra, Ganesh Gayatri Mantra, Vakratunda Ganesh Mantra among others.

Rituals

- On the Ganesh Chaturthi, the statue

of Lord Ganesha is installed in homes, temples, and mandaps. The size of the idol may be as small as 3/4 of an inch or as high as 25 feet.

- The idols are elegantly decorated once they are installed.
- Even the temples and mandaps are adorned with flowers and lights. Sometimes, theme-based decorations are used to give a unique look to the mandaps. Such themes include current events and religious issues.
- When the rituals begin, the priest chants mantras to invoke life into the idol. This ritual is called the 'Pranapratishttha'. This ritual is followed by the 'Shhodashopachara' which includes the 16 ways of paying respect to Lord Ganesha.
- There are certain offerings made to Lord Ganesha. These include coconut, jaggery and rice flour preparation. Besides, red flowers and 21 durva (trefoil) are also offered to the Lord. While these offerings are made, a red sandal paste is applied to the idol.
- The Ganesh pooja involves the chanting of hymns from the Ganapati Atharva Shirsha Upanishad, Rig Veda and other religious scriptures. This continues for 10 days, and on the 11th day, the idol of Ganesha is immersed in a river or sea.
- The devotees actually take the idol through the streets, thus singing, dancing and shouting 'Ganapati Bappa Morya, Purnima Varshi Laukariya' which means that the Lord should come back next year.
- On the Ganesh Chaturthi, people usually get up early in the morning and take a bath so that they can proceed toward the temple to offer their prayers to Lord Ganesha. The devotees offer coconut, sweet pudding, and other items when they visit the temples or perform the Ganesh Chaturthi rituals at their homes.
- A popular tradition followed on the 1st day of Ganesh Chaturthi is to avoid looking at the moon on that day and pray to God to give you spiritual strength, so that you succeed in your endeavors.

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UAE sees resurgence in cases

The United Arab Emirates is seeing a jump in new cases and the government blamed the increase on social gatherings and the failure to adhere to precautionary measures. The country reported 435 new infections on Wednesday, the highest daily increase in over a month.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has reported 513 new cases of coronavirus, taking the number of infections in the country to 290,958, the health ministry said on Thursday. The Ministry of National Health Services also said the death toll in the country due to the coronavirus reached 6,209 after eight patients died due to the infection in the last 24 hours.

The ministry said that 272,804 people have recovered so far while 725 were in critical condition. So far Sindh province has detected 127,060 patients, Punjab 95,800, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa 35,468, Islamabad 15,425, Balochistan 12,403 and Gilgit-Baltistan 2,583 and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir reported 2,219 cases, according to local Pakistani media reports. So far 2,363,725 tests were conducted, including 23,670 in the last 24 hours.

Week-long lockdown in Nepal

Authorities imposed a one-week lockdown in Nepal's capital and surrounding districts after a surge in coronavirus cases. Violators face one month in jail and a fine of Rs 500 rupees. Nepal's 1,016 cases recorded Tuesday was its highest daily spike. Kathmandu had 205 of the new cases. A national lockdown imposed in March lasted for 120 days before being lifted last month. The country has confirmed 28,257 cases and 114 deaths from the coronavirus.

New Zealand cluster probe

New Zealand authorities are investigating two cases that may not be linked to a cluster in Auckland, Director-General of Health Ashley Bloomfield said. The country reported five new cases Thursday, taking the total to 101, of which 78 are in the cluster.

Kim Jong Un hints at 'growing crisis'

Kim Jong Un acknowledged that North Korea's development goals have been "seriously delayed," a sign that sanctions, flooding and the coronavirus have dealt a triple blow to the country's economy. Kim told a gathering of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea's Central Committee that the country "faced unexpected and inevitable challenges in various aspects," state media reported. "Planned attainment of the goals for improving the national economy have been seriously delayed and the people's living standard has not been improved remarkably," he said, according to the Korean Central News Agency.

Global Covid-19 tally rises by over 263,000 to over 22.2 million

The number of COVID-19 cases globally has grown by more than 263,000 in the past 24 hours, while over 6,500 patients have died in the same period of time, the World Health Organisation's (WHO) data revealed on late Thursday.

The WHO said that the total number of new cases in the world amounted to 263,601, while the increment in fatalities to 6,554.

Overall, the number of COVID-19 cases worldwide stands at 22,256,220, while the global death toll at 782,456.

Infections flared in Europe, with France and Spain reporting their biggest increases in months. Greece and Puerto Rico moved to tighten rules after a jump in cases. In the United States, New York's positive-test rate fell to the lowest since the pandemic began in March.

And the spread of coronavirus in Brazil could be about to slow, amid reports the transmission rate has fallen below the key level and early signs of a gradual decline in the weekly totals of cases and fatalities. The U.K. is looking at testing people for Covid-19 at airports, and Finland reinstated border controls.

Overall cases have topped 22 million with 7.86 casualties and 14.26 million recoveries.

South Korea sees highest daily spike

South Korea's latest virus cases include 276 local infections. Cases linked to Sarang Jeil church rose to 630, while about 700 members of the church were still unreachable. Authorities urged participants in an anti-government rally held in Seoul on August 15 to take virus tests regardless of symptoms. A total of 53 rally attendees have tested positive for the

TRACKING THE VIRUS			
GLOBAL		INDIA	
Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
22,861,688	797,105	2,905,823	54,849



virus, including 33 members of Sarang church.

Meanwhile, the country has also approved phase II human clinical trials for Green Cross Corp's experimental coronavirus plasma treatment drug. The trials will test the safety and efficacy of the drug in 60 severe patients with underlying conditions like pneumonia, Green Cross said. Green Cross was allowed to skip the phase I trials. Its

therapy is the country's first to enter phase II for COVID-19 plasma treatment

China state papers back Wuhan park after viral pool party

Chinese state newspapers threw their support behind an amusement park in the central city of Wuhan on Thursday after pictures of a densely packed pool party at the park went viral overseas amid concerns about the spread of COVID-19.

Discussions with Russia on vaccine underway: World Health Organisation

The World Health Organisation's Europe office said it has begun discussions with Russia to try to obtain more information about the experimental Covid-19 vaccine the country recently approved. Last week, Russia became the first country in the world to license a coronavirus vaccine when President Vladimir Putin announced its approval. But the vaccine has not yet passed the advanced trials normally required to prove it works before being licensed, a major breach of scientific protocol.



Russian officials claimed the vaccine would provide lasting immunity to Covid-19 but offered no proof. Catherine Smallwood, a senior emergency official at WHO Europe said the agency had begun 'direct discussions' with Russia and that WHO officials have been sharing the various steps and information that's going to be required for WHO to take assessments.

WHO's Europe director Dr. Hans Kluge said the agency welcomed all advances in vaccine development but that every vaccine must submit to the same clinical trials. Russia's vaccine has so far only been tested in a few dozen people. Kluge noted that Russia has a long history of developing and administering vaccines, including those for yellow fever and polio.

Southeast Asia detects mutated virus strain sweeping the world

Southeast Asia is facing a strain of the new coronavirus that the Philippines, which faces the region's largest outbreak, is studying to see whether the mutation makes it more infectious.

The strain, earlier seen in other parts of the world and called D614G, was found in a Malaysian cluster of 45 cases that started from someone who returned from India and breached his 14-day home quarantine. The Philippines detected the strain among random Covid-19 samples in the largest city of its capital region.

The mutation "is said to have a higher possibility of transmission or infectiousness, but we still don't have enough solid evidence to say that that will happen," Philippines' Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire said in a virtual briefing on Monday.

The strain has been found in many other countries and has become the predominant variant in Europe and the U.S., with the World Health Organization saying there's no evidence the strain leads to a more severe disease. The mutation has also been detected in recent outbreaks in China. There's no evidence from the epidemiology that the mutation is considerably more infectious than other strains, said Benjamin Cowling, head of epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of Hong Kong. "It's more commonly identified now than it was in the past, which suggests that it might have some kind of competitive advantage over other strains of Covid-19," he said.

BHOPAL – THE CITY OF LAKES

Bhopal – the capital city of Madhya Pradesh – is a collage of culture, heritage, history, and urban sprawl. While some of these places to visit in Bhopal are age-old forts, palaces, caves, and temples that boast of the city's heritage, there are also marvelous highrises & edifices that reflect the modern architecture. And to top it up, the immaculate natural beauty of Bhopal mesmerizes its tourists round the year. Visiting Bhopal is also an opportunity for you to taste delicious local cuisine and learn about the tribal culture of Madhya Pradesh.

The land popularly referred to as 'City of Lakes' is also considered the 'Greenest city in India'. Here are the leading tourist destinations in Bhopal.

Upper Lake

One of the most famous places in Bhopal, the Upper Lake, locally referred to as 'Bhojtaal' or 'Bada Talab', is the oldest man-made lake in India. Dating back to the 11th century, the lake is believed to have been built by Raja Bhoj.

The lake is overlooked by a grand royal garden called Kamla Park, which is another tourist magnet, tempting tourists into its serene folds every year. The ambience and setting of the two places are too remarkable to be ignored, and warrants a top spot in your Bhopal tour itinerary, without any doubt.

Moti Masjid

One of the most interesting mosques in the country, Moti Masjid was built in 1862 by the most progressive and free-thinking woman of her time, Sikander Jahan Begum. Crafted with beautiful, pure white marble, the architecture of the mosque holds a striking resemblance to the historic Jama Masjid in Delhi.

The dazzling white facade of the monument has earned it the name 'Pearl Mosque', which has a grand courtyard that opens a window to some of the most amazing views of the city. A perfect retreat for history lovers, as well as the curious, Moti Masjid, is indispensable on your Bhopal tour.

Udayagiri Caves

A magnificent set of twenty sculpted caves that date back to the early 5th century CE, the Udayagiri Caves hold within their walls some of the most ancient icon drawings and carvings. The inscriptions inside the caves associate their relation with the reign of the Gupta monarchy.

A significant historic monument, the caves are managed under the observation of the Archaeological Survey of India. The drawings carved depict stories of Vishnu, Lakshmi, Shiva, and Parvati.

Sanchi Stupa

One of the most unbeatable places to visit in Bhopal, and possibly in entire India, the magnificence of the Sanchi Stupa remains unmatched till date. Believed to have originated in the 3rd century BCE, the building was built in the reign of the great emperor Ashoka of the Maurya Dynasty and is one of the most remarkable Buddhist monuments in the country.

The Mauryan king undertook the task of redistributing the mortal remains of Lord Buddha all across the face of the country in order to spread the reach of Buddhism. The gigantic dome of the Stupa contains a central vault where the relics of Lord Buddha have been placed.

Shaukat Mahal

A beautiful anomaly of the Asian and



Western architectural art amidst the predominance of Islamic architecture in Bhopal, Shaukat Mahal is one of the most frequented tourist places in Bhopal.

Gracing the entrance of the famous Chowk area, the building, erected in Sikander Begum's reign, also exhibits a unique blend of Post Renaissance and Gothic styles, along with intricate carvings which adorn its glorious face.

Shaukat Mahal is towered by the grand Sadar Manzil, which is believed to have served as the hall of public audience, back in the era of kings.

Van Vihar National Park

Sitting in close proximity to Upper Lake, the Van Vihar National Park is one of the unmissable tourist places in Bhopal. Serving as the lungs of the city, the park is under strict observation and protection. It is also home to a wide array of wildlife like Blackbuck, Cheetal, Sambar, Blue Bull, Porcupine, Wild Boar, and Hyena, besides exotic floral species.

Also ideal for short day treks, the place is apt for adventurers and nature lovers alike. Vast expanses of dense greenery and the quiet beauty of the place render it mandatory for tourists to visit it.

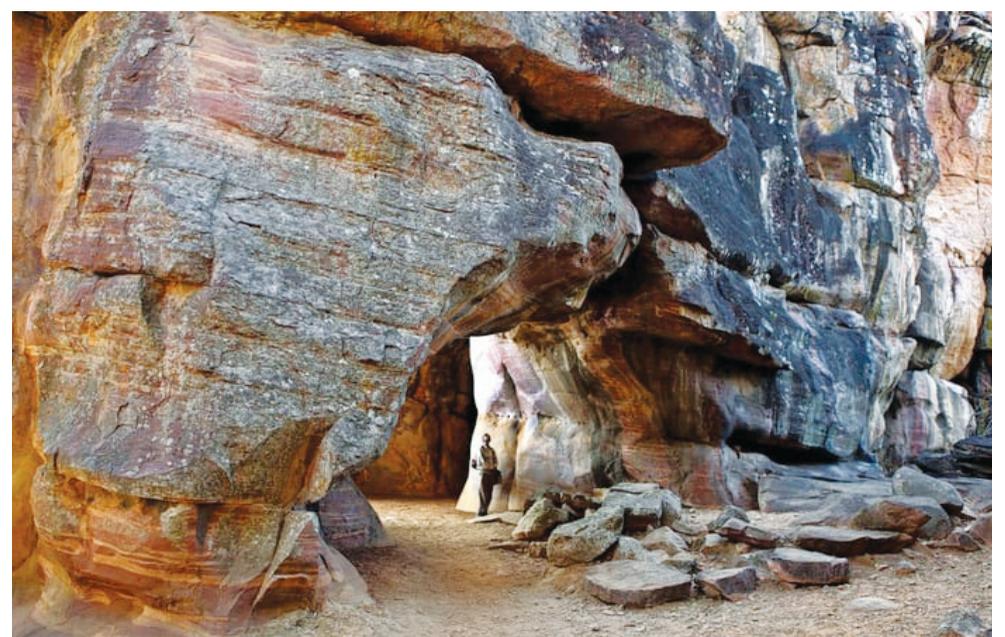
Bhimbetka Caves

Situated at around 45 km south of Bhopal, the monumental Bhimbetka Caves have been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is believed that the caves date as back as over 30,000 years! They are home to magnificent rock shelters, along with some of the most exquisite prehistoric cave paintings in Asia.

The place exudes strong aesthetic vibes, owing to the beautifully sculpted rock formations within the caves, which are fenced by dense, verdant vegetation and woods. One of the most exotic places to visit in Bhopal, the Bhimbetka Caves are truly one of their kinds, which by themselves constitute a timeless piece of art.

Lakshmi Narayan Temple

Set atop the striking Arera Hills, the famous Lakshmi Narayan Temple was built as a tribute to the Hindu Goddess of wealth, Lakshmi, and her consort Lord Vishnu. Besides the beautiful idols of Lakshmi and Vishnu, the temple also houses a reclining idol of Lord Shiva



with his wife Goddess Parvati. The Birla Museum attached to the temple exhibits marvellous sculptures dating back to the 12th century! The temple, besides being a religious abode, offers outstanding views of the Old Bhopal city.

Lower Lake

The lower lake frequently referred to as "Chhota Talab", is separated from the Upper Lake by a bridge known as Pul Pukhta or the Lower Lake Bridge. Akin

to its equally famous counterpart Upper Lake, the Lower Lake also dates back to the 11th century and has fallen under the rule of countless kings. The two lakes are collectively referred to as the Bhoj Wetland, now Ramsar Site, which is the major source of potable water for the city! The lake is bathed in an aura of blissful quiet and tranquillity, making it perfect for nature lovers and tourists alike it is one of the most picturesque places in Bhopal.

Kings XI Punjab, KKR, Royals land in UAE, set ball rolling for bio-secure IPL

Kings XI Punjab, Kolkata Knight Riders and Rajasthan Royals on Thursday arrived in the UAE for the IPL beginning September 19, setting the ball rolling for an event that many thought would not take place amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Royals and KXIP landed in Dubai via a charter flight, which will be the norm this IPL due to the ongoing health crisis. A little later in the evening, Kolkata Knight Riders arrived in Abu Dhabi, their base for the tournament. The players, who were already tested multiple times before departure, will now undergo a six-day isolation period with testing on Day 1, 3 and 6. If they clear all the tests, they will be eligible to enter the tournament's bio-bubble and start training.

Olympics: Torch relay schedule intact for next year: Report

Tokyo Olympic organisers plan to follow roughly the same schedule, delayed by a year, for the nationwide torch relay preceding the postponed summer Games, Kyodo News reported on Thursday.

The relay is expected to start on March 25, 2021, in Fukushima prefecture from the J-Village soccer training centre, a symbol of Japan's reconstruction from the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, Kyodo said, citing unidentified officials with knowledge of the matter. Runners are to pass through all 47 of Japan's prefectures in the relay lasting 121 days, as originally planned, the news agency said. The relay had been scheduled to start in J-Village on March 26 this year, but just days before that, the International Olympic Committee and Japanese government decided to postpone the Games by a year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bayern beat Lyon 3-0 to set up final clash with PSG

Bayern Munich powered into the Champions League final, where they will face Paris St Germain, as two goals from Serge Gnabry led them to an emphatic 3-0 win over Olympique Lyonnais yesterday. Bayern will bid for their sixth European Cup triumph when they come up against Neymar and Kylian Mbappe and after convincingly beating Chelsea, Barcelona and now Lyon, Hansi Flick's side will surely start as favourites. The Germans are unbeaten in 2020, winning 24 of 25 matches in all competitions and they have won every Champions League game this season.

Rohit, Vinesh, Rampal among five Khel Ratna awardees

This is the first time in the history of awards that five athletes have been recommended for the top sporting accolade with the final decision resting on sports minister Kiren Rijiju

Cricketer Rohit Sharma, wrestler Vinesh Phogat, women's hockey captain and table tennis star Manika Batra besides para athlete Mariyappan Thangavelu were recommended for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna by the Sports Awards Committee on Tuesday.

Never before has India's highest sporting honour been bestowed on five athletes though ace javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was not one of them. Chopra won the 2018 Commonwealth Games and Asian Games titles and then made an injury comeback to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics.

Till now, an exception of the award being given to more than two had been made only in an Olympics year. After the 2016 Rio Games, four were awarded the Khel Ratna. Badminton silver medallist PV Sindhu, wrestling bronze medallist Sakshi Malik and gymnast Dipa Karmakar, who captured the imagination of the country with an impressive fourth-place finish in vault and pistol shooter Jitu Rai, who had been a top-notch performer at international level.

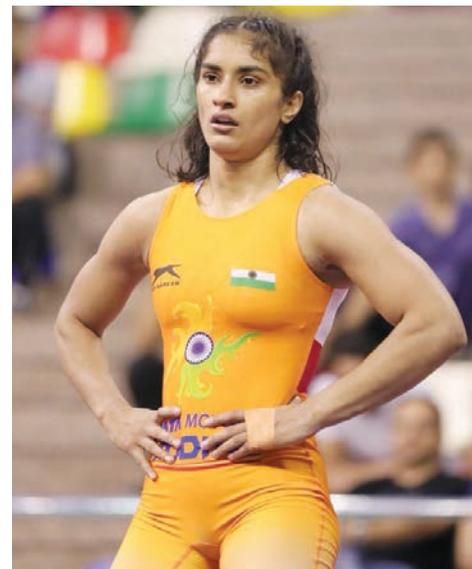
The sports ministry had allowed self-nomination for the Arjuna and Khel Ratna awards this year due to the pandemic, which led to a large number of applications. Around 40 sportspersons applied for the Khel Ratna. Besides Chopra, fellow track athlete Hima Das, shuttler Kidambi Shrikanth and shooter Apurvi Chandela missed out.

Rohit, ICC ODI Cricketer of the Year (2019), is the fourth cricketer to be selected for the Khel Ratna, after Sachin Tendulkar, MS Dhoni and skipper Virat Kohli. Vinesh made a stunning comeback from a serious knee injury she suffered at the Rio Olympics, winning gold at the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games and bronze at the world championships last year, where she also confirmed her qualification for the Tokyo Olympics. Vinesh had missed out twice earlier and reluctantly applied this time.

Manika Batra is the first table tennis player to be chosen for the Khel Ratna. She shot into prominence at 2018



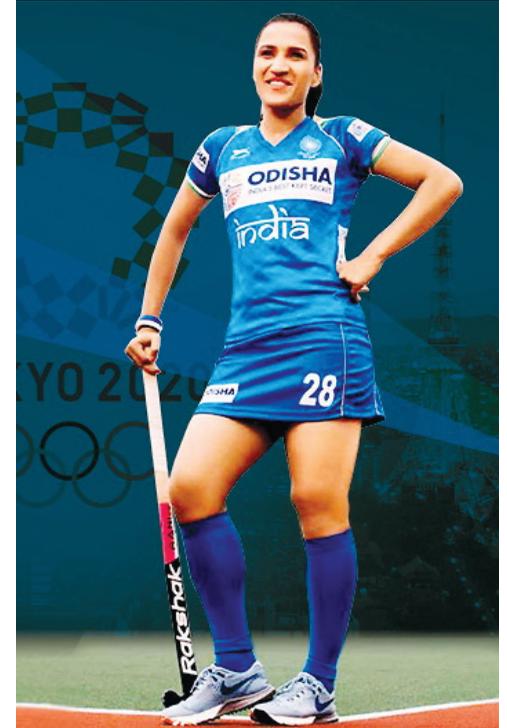
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Vinesh Phogat

Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, winning a phenomenal four medals, including the women's individual and team gold. She won the mixed doubles bronze at the Asian Games that followed.

Under Rani Rampal, the hockey team won silver in Jakarta. She also helped the team qualify for the Tokyo Olympics at the 2019 Women's FIH Olympic Qualifiers. Para high jumper Thangavelu won gold at the Rio Paralympics and bronze at the World Para Athletics Championships last year. He won the Arjuna Award in 2017.



Rani Rampal

The awards function this year is likely to be held virtually by President Ram Nath Kovind. "The ceremony will be conducted as is being done every year but the awardees will be present online. The awards will be handed later," informed a source.

Modi writes heartfelt letter of appreciation to MS Dhoni

Ever since Mahendra Singh Dhoni announced his retirement from international cricket on August 15, fans have been talking about a befitting farewell to the legendary Indian cricketer. While the BCCI might look into that once the Covid-19 situation improves, Dhoni's achievements and contribution to Indian cricket has been appreciated by none other than Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In a warm letter of appreciation, PM Modi lauded the former captain for his efforts on the field and also for setting a great example for those coming from smaller towns in the country. Dhoni's rise to the zenith of Indian and world cricket opened the doors for more and more youngsters from smaller cities and towns in India to dream and achieve success at a bigger stage.

Dhoni guided India to the number 1 position in Test cricket as captain. He is also the only international captain to win all three global ICC tournaments. He won WT20 in 2007, ICC World Cup in 2011 and ICC Champions Trophy in 2013.



END OF AN ERA: DHONI HANGS UP HIS BOOTS FROM INTERNATIONAL CRICKET

MS Dhoni, the former captain of the Indian cricket team, has announced his retirement from international cricket, bringing down curtains on a near 16-year-long storied career of one of the country's greatest limited-overs cricketers. Dhoni retires as India's most successful captain in limited-over internationals, having won three ICC trophies - 2007 T20 World Cup, 50-over World Cup in 2011 and the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy - the only captain to do so.

Dhoni, 39, made the confirmation through a video on Instagram, its caption reading: "Thanks - Thanks a lot for ur love and support throughout. From 1929 hrs consider me as Retired."

The announcement means that Dhoni's last India game would remain the semifinal of the 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup in which India lost to New Zealand by 18 runs. It was his 350th ODI, in which he scored 50 off 72 balls before being run-out by a bullet throw from Martin Guptill in the deep. Incidentally, Dhoni was run-out in his first ODI as well.

Having retired from Test cricket in December of 2014 with 4876 runs from 90 matches, Dhoni carried on playing ODIs and T20Is. With 10,733 runs, Dhoni is fifth in the list of India's all-time run-scorers in ODI behind Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli, Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid. His overall Indian numbers are staggering: 538 matches, 17,266 runs, 16 centuries, 108 fifties, 359 sixes, 829 dismissals.

Dhoni's future was a hot topic of speculation since his sabbatical from cricket following India's World Cup exit. Ever since the defeat to New Zealand, Dhoni did not play any form of cricket in the last one year, hinting he might have played his last in India colours. Dhoni, however, would be turning up in the IPL where he will captain the Chennai Super Kings in the tournament's 13th season in the UAE.

Dhoni burst on to the scene as a 23-year-old batsman, making his India debut in an ODI against Bangladesh in December of 2004. The following year, he slammed his maiden ODI hundred - 148 vs Pakistan at Vizag which shot him to prominence. Later that year, he slammed 183 not out against Sri Lanka in Jaipur; his highest individual score in ODIs and the best by a wicketkeeper in ODIs. In 2006, Dhoni registered his maiden Test hundred (148 against Pakistan in Faisalabad, and played brutal knocks on the ODI leg to help India secure the five-match series 4-1.

After a disappointing 2007 World Cup in the West Indies, Dhoni was



given charge of a young Indian team to play the first-ever T20 World Cup in South Africa, where India beat Pakistan in a riveting final to clinch the title. From there, Dhoni's career as batsman and captain took off and reached unprecedented heights. In March of 2008, he led India to the CB tri-series win in Australia, beating the hosts in back-to-back finals.

Taking over captaincy in Tests once Anil Kumble retired in late 2008, in 2009, Dhoni shepherded India to the pinnacle of ICC Test rankings for the first time and a Test series win in New Zealand which established him as a force to reckon with. He overtook Sourav Ganguly as India's most successful Test skipper and stretched his captaincy record to 27 wins from 60 matches,

a record that stood until last year before Virat Kohli bettered it.

In 2010, under Dhoni, India won the Asia Cup, after 15 years, beating Sri Lanka comprehensively in the final. It was the perfect way to warm up for what was to come next. With the World Cup returning to India after 15 years, India were hot favourites to lift the most prized trophy in cricket, and with Dhoni leading, India realised a 28-year-long dream. Struggling for runs in the tournament, Dhoni saved his best of last. He hit an unbeaten 91, to help India chase down 275 against Sri Lanka. The winning six, the sight of Dhoni lofting Nuwan Kulasekara into the stands, triggering euphoria will stand out as perhaps the most iconic moment in Indian cricket.

Post the World Cup, Dhoni's captaincy prowess, in Test matches, began waning. India were blanked 0-4 in England and Australia, but Dhoni

cracked a century - 134 against England at Cuttack - as India took the series 2-1. It would also prove to be his final ODI century. Dhoni was a pivotal part of India's 2019 World Cup campaign under Kohli, where in the crunch semifinal clash against New Zealand - which was a two-day affair - he almost got India home. He walked off the field without showing much emotion, a trait that became synonymous with Dhoni throughout his career.

Five world records former India captain

Dhoni goes away as one of the greatest cricketers and captains of all time. Here are some of Dhoni's captaincy and batting and wicket-keeping world records.

Only captain to win three ICC tournaments

MS Dhoni led India to victory in the inaugural edition of World T20 in 2007, followed it with an ODI World Cup triumph in 2011 and then became the only captain to lift all three ICC tournaments by leading India to the Champions Trophy title in 2013.

Most international matches as a captain

Dhoni has captained India in 332 international matches - 200 ODIs, 60 Tests and 72 T20Is - which is a world record. Australia's Ricky Ponting has captained in 324 international matches. Dhoni is also the only captain to have led in 50+ international matches in each of

the three formats of the game.

Most final wins as a captain (ODIs)

Dhoni has led India to 6 multi-nation ODI tournament finals and of which India have won 4 - making him the most successful captain in multi-nation ODI tournament finals. Overall, Dhoni has won 110 ODI ODIs as a captain, which is the second-most by any player. Ponting is in the first place on the list by winning 165 ODIs.

Most Not Outs in ODIs

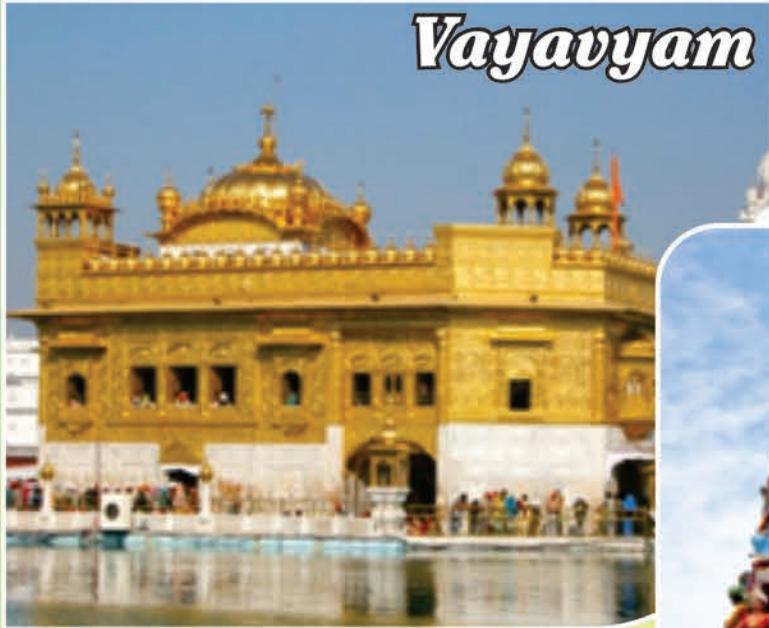
MS Dhoni has remained unbeaten in 84 ODIs, which is again a world record. The second best is by former South Africa all-rounder Shaun Pollock, who has 72 not outs to his name. Out of the 84 times, Dhoni remained unbeaten in ODIs, 51 came while India were chasing and amazingly, the Men in Blue have emerged victorious in 47 of those while two matches were tied and they lost only 2 times.

Most stumpings

MS Dhoni also holds the record for inflicting most number of stumpings in international cricket. In 350 matches, Dhoni has 123 stumpings to his name. He is also the only wicket-keeper to have inflicted 100 international stumpings in his career. In terms of total dismissals, Dhoni is behind South Africa's Mark Boucher and Australia's Adam Gilchrist.



Vayavyam



Esanyam



Nairuti



Agneyam



Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam



12 hours before the supreme court verdict on the Babri Masjid / Rama Janma Bhumi controversy, a friend from India suggested that the land under dispute may be divided into 5 equal parts and five temples representing 5 major religions -Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism and Buddhism, be built, which will truly reflect the spirit of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" in Maha Upnishad, inscribed in front of India's Parliament.

President of India should inaugurate in the presence of the high priests of all 5 religions and 5 young girls from the 5 faiths. This is important for posterity's understanding. History has a nasty habit of repeating itself.

Dr. Arnold Toynbee, the British historian and philosopher said: "It is already becoming clear that a chapter which has a Western beginning will have to have an Indian ending if it is not to end in the self-destruction of the human race..."

"At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian way-Emperor Ashoka's and Mahatma Gandhi's principle of non-violence and Sri Ramakrishna's testimony to the harmony of religions. Here we have an attitude and spirit that can make it possible for the human race to grow together into a single family-and, in the Atomic Age, this is the only alternative to destroying ourselves".