



**Santosh Rihal**  
Mother of Indu Jaiswal



**Harinder Kaur Toor**  
Mother of Harpreet Singh Toor



**Mohinder Kaur**  
Mother of Indrajit Saluja



**Syamala**  
Mother of Dr. V K Raju



**Tripti Roy**  
Mother of Bidisha Roy



**Tara Malik**  
Mother of Tirlok Malik



**Pritam Kaur**  
Mother of Raghbir Singh Subhanpur



**Nirmala Saraf**  
Mother of Anu Jain



**Bimla Singh**  
Mother of Yoshita Singh



**Kanta Makhija**  
Mother of Indu Gajwani



**C Gomathy Narayan**  
Mother of Devraj Aiyar



**Dhinki**  
Mother of Ashook Ramsaran



**Kamal Bhatia**  
Mother of Sangeet Sharma



**Kanta Malik**  
Mother of Sujata Seth



**Kunti Mehra**  
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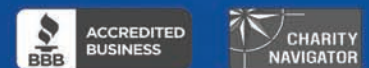
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**INDIA'S WELFARE 'CRITICALLY IMPORTANT' TO U.S.: KAMALA HARRIS**



U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris said in a recorded message delivered at a diaspora event on COVID-19 relief for India that the welfare of India is critically important to the United States. File photo / credit Reuters

**NEW YORK (TIP):** The surge of COVID-19 infections and deaths in India is nothing short of heartbreaking, says the U.S. Vice President

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris said that the welfare of India was critical to the United States. She highlighted the assistance the U.S. was sending India and offered her condolences to those who have lost people to the pandemic.

"As many of you know, generations of my family come from India. My mother was born and raised in India. And I have family members who live in India today. The welfare of India is critically important to the United States," Ms. Harris said in a recorded message delivered at a diaspora event on COVID-19 relief for India. The other speakers at the event were senior State Department official Ervin Massinga, who is involved with the U.S. effort in

**CONTD ON PAGE 48**

**Three Indian-American CEOs join task force to help India fight COVID-19**



**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Sunder Pichai from Google, Punit Renjen from Deloitte and Shantanu Narayen from Adobe have joined the steering committee of the Global Task Force on Pandemic Response, which is overseeing an unprecedented corporate sector initiative to help India successfully fight COVID-19.

The names of the three CEOs were added to the list of the steering committee on May 6. The CEOs have been active in organizing U.S. companies' response to the COVID-19 crisis in India. **contd on page 48**

« Sunder Pichai from Google, Punit Renjen from Deloitte and Shantanu Narayen from Adobe have joined the steering committee of the Global Task Force on Pandemic Response

**US URGES CITIZENS TO RETURN HOME FROM INDIA THROUGH AVAILABLE FLIGHTS**



**WASHINGTON (TIP):** The US, which has urged its citizens not to travel to India due to an unprecedented surge in the COVID-19 cases there, on Friday, May 7, encouraged those in the country to book their tickets to return home through currently available flights. The United Airlines and Air India are continuing to operate numerous direct flights weekly

**CONTD ON PAGE 48**

**AUSTRALIA OFFERS MORE AID, REFUSES TO LIFT BAN ON ITS STRANDED CITIZENS**



Australian Prime minister Scott Morrison and Indian Prime minister Narendra Modi agreed on the need to ensure an affordable and equitable access to vaccines and medicines for containing Covid-19 globally

**NEW DELHI / NEW YORK (TIP):** Australian PM Scott Morrison offered all help during a conversation with PM Narendra Modi but did not relent on a travel ban that has stranded at least 9,000 Australians in India, including cricketers, who had come to participate in the now-suspended Indian Premier League. During his telephonic conversation with Scott Morrison, May 7, PM Narendra Modi conveyed his appreciation for the prompt and

**CONTD ON PAGE 48**

**US WITHDRAWS PROPOSED BIOMETRICS RULE FOR IMMIGRATION**

The proposed rule was notified in the Federal Register on September 11, 2020 during Donald Trump's term as president

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** The US government on Friday, May 7, withdrew a Donald Trump-era proposal which sought to collect the biometric details of every applicant under immigration and naturalization benefits.

In a statement, the Department of Homeland Security said the withdrawal of the proposed rule was consistent with the Executive Order signed by President Joe Biden, regarding restoring faith in the legal immigration system. As per the proposed rule, which was notified in the Federal Register on September 11, 2020 during Donald Trump's term as president, any

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**-: COMMENT:-**

**Prime Minister Modi should be held responsible for Covid deaths in India**



**COMMENT**

**Prof I.S.Saluja**

The world is worried as reports from India about thousands dying every day for want of medical care pour in. While nations, organizations and individuals have come forward to reach to the suffering people of India the much-needed oxygen, medicines and food, the Modi government seems to be clueless as to how to control an unhinged pandemic ravaging the nation from shore to shore.

India alone has not faced the onslaught of Covid-19. The pandemic ravaged almost every part of the world. And governments all across the world, with a few exceptions though, swung into action to save lives of their people. No doubt, some prosperous nations, including America, with all medical

facilities and the will to combat the pandemic, lost more lives than has India, but there was a tangible, massive effort to pin down the devil.

Not so in India. The Modi government remained indifferent as the number of cases begin to rise. Instead of putting their heart and soul into chalking out a strategy to minimize the harm from Covid-19, Modi government was more involved in making and implementing a strategy to win Assembly elections, particularly in West Bengal where for over 6 months, from November 2020 to April 2021, the top cabinet ministers, including the Home Minister and Prime Minister himself, campaigned ferociously to dislodge Mamata Banerji. The capital of India, Delhi, was one of the worst sufferers, as were other parts of the country, with people dying by scores every hour in the absence of medical care.

And imagine, people dying because they cannot breathe. They cannot

breathe and there is no oxygen in hospitals. They die in streets, in cars, in front of the hospitals because there are no beds available in hospitals.

What a shame for a country touting itself as "Vishwa Guru", claiming to become one of the three largest economies in the world in a couple of years!

The way people are dying a painful death for want of Oxygen is a reminder of those who were made to die in gas chambers in Hitler's Germany. Long after the genocide, the perpetrators were brought to book in a trial, now known as Nuremberg trial.

The dire situation we see in India today has a parallel in those killed in gas chambers. The willful negligence on the part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has caused deaths. Mr. Modi has blood on his hands. He should be held responsible for Covid deaths and tried in a Nuremberg type trial for the heinous crime against Indians.

**-: GUEST COMMENT:-**

**Waiting to breathe**

**Centre, states should strive for uninterrupted oxygen supply**

The disruption of oxygen supply is causing deaths almost on a daily basis in the country. Earlier this week, 24 patients, 23 of them Covid-infected, died in Karnataka's Chamarajanagar due to alleged shortage of the life-saving gas in the district hospital. On Saturday, 12 Covid-19 patients, including a senior doctor, succumbed at a private hospital in New Delhi after it reportedly ran out of medical oxygen for more than an hour. Though the Central government claims that there is no shortage of oxygen, the lapses are evident on all counts, be it production, allocation, transportation or supply.

Time is of utmost importance when a patient's life is on the line. It's a no-brainer that oxygen must reach the

recipient in the shortest duration possible. It defies logic that Punjab has to keep waiting for 4-5 days for a tanker to bring 90 MT (metric tons) of the gas from a plant in Jharkhand's Bokaro. After the Chamarajanagar tragedy, the Karnataka government has decided to focus on three broad goals to streamline the supply of oxygen allocated by the Centre: reduce the time taken to refill tankers; provide a green corridor for faster commuting of tankers; and avoid delay at toll plazas. Such a template needs to be adopted across the board at the earliest in view of the enhanced inter-state movement of tankers.

The Supreme Court has rightly directed the Centre to create a buffer stock of oxygen for emergency purposes in collaboration with the states and

decentralize the location of the stocks so that it is promptly available if the normal supply chain is disrupted. That the Covid Care Centre at Delhi's Commonwealth Games Village will soon have its own oxygen plant that will provide uninterrupted supply to 15-20 beds from its pipeline is too little too late. Such a self-sufficient arrangement will cut down potentially fatal delays. Coordination between the Centre and the states, and also among the states, is vital. There should be no disparity between a state's requirement and the actual allocation as well as supply. The oxygen crisis can be overcome by removing bottlenecks at all stages.

*(Tribune, India)*



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# Mother's Day: A tribute to mothers

As the name suggests, Mother's Day is a celebration of the mother of the family, of her relentless contributions towards the growth and well-being of her children. While one day is really not enough to pay tribute to, and honor the mother, the day encourages people to come out in support and acknowledgement of everything that a mother tirelessly does, day in and day out.

The day is celebrated annually in many countries around the world. While the dates vary every year, it is largely celebrated on the second Sunday of the month of May every year. This year, it is being celebrated on May 9.

## History

Arguably, the tradition of a day to celebrate mothers can be traced back to the times of the ancient Greeks, who held festivities to honor Rhea, the mother of the gods.

Early Christians celebrated the fourth Sunday of Lent as a Mother's festival to honor Mary, the mother of Christ.

In the UK, the tradition of Mother's Day is now very similar to its American counterpart, but its origins are different, as the day commemorates returning to your mother church on the fourth



Sunday in Lent.

The English colonists who settled in America discontinued the tradition of Mothering Sunday, as presumably, it would have been a bit of a trip to return to their mother church for the day.

## The American tradition

For a holiday, that became popular in fairly recent times, we can still manage to find three originations for the day.

A true American Mother's Day was first suggested in the United States by Julia Ward Howe, writer of the Battle Hymn of the Republic. She suggested that the day be dedicated to peace. Starting in 1872, she organized Mother's Day meetings in Boston every year.

However, some would argue that Mother's Day on the current date was almost accidentally set in motion by Mrs Juliet Calhoun Blakely. On Sunday 11 May 1877, Mrs Blakely's birthday, her son who was the pastor of her Church, left the pulpit abruptly. Mrs Blakely then stepped to the pulpit and took over the rest of the service, calling for other mothers to join her.

Mrs. Blakely's two sons felt so moved by their mother's actions that they vowed to return to their hometown of Albion, Michigan., every year to mark their mother's birthday. In addition, the brothers urged others to honor their own mothers on the second Sunday of May.

In terms of the holiday gaining its

national status, undoubtedly the main driver was a Philadelphia schoolteacher called Anna M. Jarvis.

In 1907, Miss Anna, began a movement to set up a national Mother's Day in honor of her mother. Anna's mother, Mrs Anna M. Jarvis, had been instrumental in developing "Mothers Friendship Day" which was set up to assist in the healing process after the Civil War. Miss Jarvis wanted to set aside a day to honor all mothers, living and dead.

Miss Jarvis and her supporters began to write to ministers, evangelists, businessmen, and politicians in their crusade to establish a national Mother's Day.

The first Mother's Day observance was a church service for the second anniversary of her mother's death, on the second Sunday of May. Anna handed out her mother's favorite flowers, white carnations.

The following year, Mother's Day was also celebrated in Miss Anna's own city of Philadelphia. By 1911, Mother's Day had spread nationwide and was being celebrated in almost every state in the Union.

In 1914, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May as a national holiday in honor of mothers.

## Mother's Day falls on May 9

"The truth is that no matter how old we are, as long as our mothers are alive, we want our mother. And it's a very powerful relationship if it's healthy." -Goldie Hawn

## QUOTES

**"My mother was the dearest, sweetest angel. She didn't talk; she sang. She was a tower of strength."**

-Jayne Meadows

**"It may be possible to gild pure gold, but who can make his mother more beautiful?"**

-Mahatma Gandhi

**"All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does. That's his."**

-Oscar Wilde

**"A mother is a woman who shows you the light when you just see the dark."**

-Grimaldos Robin

**"A mother's arms are made of tenderness and children sleep soundly in them."**

-Victor Hugo

**"Never undermine yourself because you are 'just' a house mom."**

-Tracey Taylor

Over the years, Mother's Day became increasingly popular, and the current tradition of card and gift-giving increased. It is said that the commercialization of Mother's Day angered Anna as she felt that the original sentiment of the day was being sacrificed at the expense of greed and profit.

Mother's Day is now one of the most commercially successful U.S. occasions. According to the National Restaurant Association, Mother's Day is now the most popular day of the year to dine out at a restaurant in the United States. This year, consumers are expected to spend \$21.2 billion on Mother's Day, an increase of 5 percent from last year, according to a survey by the National Retail Federation.

The Greeting Card Association estimates that more than 150 million Mother's Day cards are exchanged in the U.S. every year, making Mother's Day the third-largest card-sending holiday after Christmas and Valentine's Day.



## A midnight surprise

Blow a few heart-shaped balloons and hang them in the room, just so she is blown off. You can also buy some helium balloons and put love notes on the loose ends of the strings for her to read.

## Bake a cake

Nothing spells special like hand-baked items. If you're unsure about your baking skills, there are numerous YouTube channels on bakery available online these days. You can follow some who can guide you on how to make cakes.

## HOW CAN WE CELEBRATE MOTHER'S DAY AT HOME?

### Play a beautiful message

Get family and friends to send birthday messages for her. Print them on colored papers put them in a jar and present them to her. If you want to add a personal touch, ask them to send a video message to surprise her with their presence virtually.

### Make a photo collage

Alternatively, you can make a collage of the pictures and present it as either a soft or hard copy. This is sure to get you

a big hug and a kiss! Collate all your pictures and make a touching slideshow presentation with all her favorite songs running in the background. Warning: This might bring some tears to her eyes.

Plan well and assign an alphabet from H-A-P-P-Y B-I-R-T-H-D-A-Y to her loved ones (including you). You can either write down the alphabets or get them printed and ask each one of them to pose with it and send you the photo. Once all the pictures come in, make a collage, present it to her and see the glee on her

face.

### Watch the latest movie

Nowadays, you don't have to check on theaters to watch the latest movie.OTT platforms like Netflix, Hotstar bring all the recent releases on your device. Make good use of it by watching with her and spending some quality time.

### Flip through a previous album

You can sit along with her and refresh the memories and photographs of her. This will give both of you the flashback of good old times.





# Indian American chemist Sumita Mitra named European Inventor Award 2021 finalist by the European Patent Office

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Indian American chemist Sumita Mitra has been named a finalist by the European Patent Office (EPO) in the "Non-EPO countries" category of the European Inventor Award 2021.

Mitra was the first to apply nanotechnology to the production of dental materials, leading to the creation of a new composite to repair teeth which has many advantages over conventional materials, according to a press release.

Mitra's material overcomes many of the limitations of previous dental composites, which were either too weak to be used on biting surfaces, or quickly lost their polish and became physically unattractive.

In addition, her invention is more versatile than other composites, meaning it can be used in any area of the mouth, and simplifies the filling procedure for dentists. Commercialized as Filtek™ Supreme Universal Restorative since 2002 by 3M, the US for whom Mitra worked for more than 30 years, the technology and the products developed from it are today used by dentists around the globe, the release said.

"Mitra's invention takes what was an emerging technology at the time - nanotechnology - and applies it to a new sector to provide a solution for dentists and relief for patients," says EPO president António Campinos, announcing the European Inventor Award 2021 finalists.

"Patents have protected Mitra's material and helped ensure that her invention remains commercially



*Sumita Mitra is named on 58 European patents, four of which are related to her nomination for the European Inventor Award 2021.*

successful nearly 20 years after its launch."

The winners of the 2021 edition of the EPO's annual innovation prize will be announced at a ceremony on 17 June which has this year been reimaged as a digital event for a global audience.

It was while working in the oral care division of US multinational 3M that Sumita Mitra became aware of the limitations of existing composite materials.

Mitra's idea was to replace composite fillers with nanoparticles. "The use of nanotechnology gave me the opportunity of making a new material," she says. "It restores peoples smiles and improves the quality of

their lives".

The material's strength is its versatility according to her: "You have all the desired properties of a tooth filling in one material. That is why this technology has been used to make so many different types of tooth restorations around the world."

Mitra is a partner at Mitra Chemical Consulting, LLC, a company she set up with her husband after leaving 3M in 2010, and which advises companies on new technology development, product design, commercialization, mergers and acquisitions.

She was named an American Chemical Society Hero of Chemistry in 2009, inducted into the US National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2018 and elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 2021 for her work related to inventions in nanotechnology for use in dental materials.

Other awards include a Hollenback Memorial Prize from the Academy of Operative Dentistry (2020); a Peyton-Skinner Award for Innovation in Dental Materials from the International Association of Dental Research (2012); and a Top 25 Women in Dentistry Award (2010).

Mitra was elected to the 3M Carlton Society 1998 - the highest 3M award given for lifelong contribution to R&D.

Mitra is named on 58 European patents, four of which are related to her nomination for the European Inventor Award 2021.

## Indian-origin author and playwright Ronnie Govender dies at 87 in South Africa

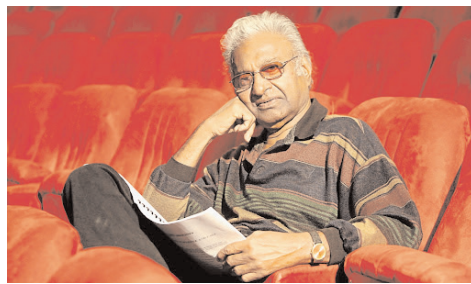
**JOHANNESBURG (TIP):** Ronnie Govender, an internationally acclaimed Indian-origin author and playwright known for his books and theatre efforts reflecting the difficulties of the Indian and African communities under apartheid, has died of age-related illness. He was 87.

Govender, who died in South Africa's city of Cape Town on Thursday, April 29, was the recipient of the Order of Ikhamanga, among the country's highest national orders, in 2008 for his contributions to democracy, peace and justice in the country through theatre.

In the same year, the media did not miss the irony of his new book 'In the Manure' being launched in the beautiful sprawling gardens of the residence of Indian Consul General Navdeep Suri in Johannesburg.

Govender's debut book, 'Cato Manor Stories', won the 1997 Commonwealth Writers' Prize for best first book in the Africa section.

The book told tales of the Indian and African communities that lived side-by-side in the township in Durban before the minority white apartheid government uprooted them for forced resettlement in other separate ethnic townships.



*Ronnie Govender has died of age-related illness at 87. He was an author and playwright known for his books and theatre efforts reflecting the difficulties of the Indian and African communities under apartheid.*

*File photo*

Govender's grandparents, who had arrived in South Africa as indentured laborers, had settled in Cato Manor, where they farmed on a small piece of land.

Govender was also born there.

Govender founded his own theatre company, the Shah Theatre Academy, because of the restrictions of the time not allowing participating in 'white' theatres.

One of his plays, 'The Lahnee's Pleasure', had the longest run across the country and received a lot of attention abroad.

*(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))*

## BAPIO in UK Expands Telemedicine Project to Help India Fight Covid-19

**LONDON (TIP):** Indian-origin doctors in the UK on Sunday, May 2, said they are in the process of rapidly expanding their telemedicine project through collaborations with Indian hospitals as part of a wider Covid-19 India Appeal.

The British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO) has raised nearly 108,000 pounds within days of setting up a Go Fund Me online appeal and said the initial amount of released funds are making their way to India to help provide immediate assistance such as a food supplies for the needy through the Akhshaya Patra charity, with procurement of equipment next in line.

Meanwhile, the BAPIO Telemedicine project has received support and clarification from the UK's General Medical Council (GMC) and has already started teleconsulting with hospitals in Nagpur, with expansion plans in the next few days.

"The effort is aimed at offering help to our exhausted and over-stretched colleagues in India," said BAPIO Secretary Dr Parag Singhal.

"The telemedicine virtual hub project is going very well. We have hundreds of volunteers who have expressed their support for this, and the aim is to get



*The British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO) has raised nearly 108,000 pounds to help provide immediate assistance, such as a food supplies for the needy in India*

1,000 doctors on board to help across three fronts -- reporting on CT scans, help for less serious cases through virtual ward rounds, and help for patients in a home setting," he explained.

BAPIO is working in collaboration with Doctors Association UK (DAUK), Apna NHS and Akshaya Patra with a target to raise around 500,000 pounds towards the telemedicine and advice helplines as well as acquiring and coordinating the distribution of vital oxygen generating and distribution equipment for hospitals and healthcare facilities in India and providing free food to all in need.

*(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))*



# Indian American Sikh community honors victims of FedEx mass shooting

WASHINGTON (TIP): Sikhs in the US state of Indiana have held a memorial service to honor the eight people, including four community members, who were killed in a mass shooting at a FedEx facility last month.

Brandon Scott Hole, 19, a former worker at the Indianapolis FedEx facility, killed eight people on April 15 before killing himself.

Four of those killed were Sikhs, including three women.

The memorial service on Saturday was opened with ardaas, a Sikh prayer.

"We are so thankful to everyone who came together to attend and help put on this important event," said Balwinder Singh, an Indianapolis Sikh community leader.

"What happened on April 15 is a tragedy that forever altered too many lives, and only by coming together to grieve, honor, and call for action can we move forward," he said.

The event, held at a city stadium, featured city, state and federal representatives, Indianapolis-area interfaith leaders and Sikh community members.

"As your governor, I stand with you in support of the Sikh community, with each of the families of the victims, with the hundreds of others who are feeling the impact of this tragedy, and with our



The event, held at a city stadium, featured city, state and federal representatives, Indianapolis-area interfaith leaders and Sikh community members.

law enforcement and first responders who face it daily so most of us don't have to," Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb said.

"And we stand with this city and the entire community, still reeling from the impact of that terrible day. I'm grateful for each person here today to honor lives so tragically lost, to show support for survivors and to extend a comforting hand to the families and friends who were taken from us far too soon," he said.

Several of Indiana's congressional representatives sent letters of support that were read aloud at the event.

President Joe Biden also wrote a letter of support, media reported.

The letter was read by Erika Moritsugu, deputy assistant to the

president and Asian American and Pacific Islander senior liaison.

"To the people of Indiana, I share the heartbreak you are experiencing after such senseless violence pierced your community and our nation's soul once again," Biden wrote.

"They were our friends and neighbors. They were immigrants and fellow Americans, seeking their piece of the American dream." Komal Chohan, whose grandmother was killed during the shooting, said: "It makes us feel like we're not alone." "We don't know if this was bias-related. It feels good to know that not everybody views us in that manner and not everybody sees us as outsiders," Chohan said.

There are an estimated 8,000-10,000 Sikhs in Indiana. Though Sikhs began settling in the state more than 50 years ago, the first gurdwara was not established until 1999. There are 10 gurdwaras in the state now.

Police have not identified a motive for the shooting, yet. It is unclear if the shooter was targeting Sikhs.

The memorial service was jointly organized by the Sikh community in Indianapolis, with the support of national Sikh organizations including the Sikh Coalition, United Sikhs, and the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF).

## Indian American Billionaire Vinod Khosla Pledges \$10 Million for Oxygen Supplies to India



Vinod Khosla pledged USD 10 million for the supply of medical oxygen to hospitals in India.

HOUSTON (TIP): Indian American billionaire businessman Vinod Khosla pledged USD 10 million for the supply of medical oxygen to hospitals in India.

This is in continuation with the Sun Microsystems co-founder's efforts to fund hospitals for oxygen supplies amid a surge in COVID cases in the country.

Taking to Twitter on Sunday, he said there was a need to save lives as further delay may end up in more deaths.

"For @GiveIndia this isn't enough. They've received requests for 20,000 oxygen concentrators, 15,000 cylinders, 500 ICU beds, 100 ventilators, 10,000-beds COVID centers with requests coming from non-profits & hospitals all across India every day. We need to do a lot more urgently," Mr. Khosla said.

For @GiveIndia this isn't enough. They've received requests for 20000 oxygen concentrators, 15000 cylinders, 500 ICU beds, 100 ventilators, 10000-beds Covid-19 centers with requests coming from non-profits & hospitals all across India every day. We need to do a lot more urgently

- Vinod Khosla (@vkhosla) May 2, 2021

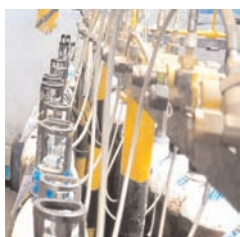
"The Khosla Family is adding USD 10 million to @GiveIndia to its previous commitment as a match and hoping others will join in this urgent need," Mr. Khosla said.

The Khosla Family is adding \$10m to @GiveIndia to its previous commitment as a match and hoping others will join in this urgent need. There is large and very urgent needs & a day's delay costs lives. One day at one hospital without oxygen had 8 people die gasping for breath!

- Vinod Khosla (@vkhosla) May 2, 2021

India is struggling with a second wave of the pandemic with more than 3,00,000 new coronavirus cases being reported daily and hospitals in several states reeling under a shortage of medical oxygen and beds.

## Indian-origin US based Sehgal Foundation shipping oxygen concentrators to 7 Indian states



The shipment of the medical equipment was made possible through donations from its individual supporters across the United States, the foundation said in a press release.

DES MOINES (TIP): The Des Moines, Iowa, -based Sehgal Foundation said it was shipping out 200 oxygen concentrators to seven Indian states on May 6, 2021. The shipment of the medical equipment was made possible through donations from its individual supporters across the United States, the foundation said in a press release.

"Working in close coordination with local partners and government officials, the Sehgal Foundation team on the ground in India is ensuring that the equipment is directly reaching those who need it the most in public hospitals in villages across 7 states," the release said.

(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))

## Three Indian American siblings raise over \$2,80,000 for essential medical supplies for Covid-19 in India

WASHINGTON (TIP): Three Indian American siblings raised more than USD 2,80,000 to send essential oxygen supplies for Covid-19 patients in India.

Founders of a non-profit organization, 'Little Mentors', they reached out to their school friends and families for funds so that they could arrange life-saving equipment like oxygen concentrators and ventilators for needy patients and hospitals in and around Delhi. "Our only request is to return it (the equipment) when it's not further needed as the next patient can use it," said 15-year-old triplets Gia, Karina and Armaan Gupta. "This is important as supply of this equipment is very scarce and the affected population is enormous," they said.

The triplets said they also planned to keep a database of the needy population so that supply could be properly directed.

"We need everybody's help in this as such an enormous task can only be accomplished by teamwork. We are very fortunate to work with an excellent team of physicians, both in the US and India. We are further working on getting vaccine supplies," they said.



Founders of a non-profit organization, 'Little Mentors', the three siblings raised more than USD 2,80,000 to send essential oxygen supplies for Covid-19 patients in India.

Previously, the triplets worked to reach out to senators and congressmen, requesting to lift the critical supply embargo.

"Although we hope and pray that this second wave of the coronavirus will go away soon, we are getting ready for the worst and asking people to be careful and help each other in this major crisis," they said.

Besides, the group plans to open distribution centers in major cities.



## AS I SEE IT

## 'Open Letter' to P.M. Modi - as Covid19 Tsunami ravages India



BY RAVI BATRA

May 6, 2021  
H.E. Narendra Modi  
Prime Minister of India

Re: "Open Letter" - in re as Covid19 Tsunami ravages India, the need for the "raw truth" of this lab-created biowarfare agent is now necessary to fabricate more-accurate vaccines that can disarm the ever-mutating strains of SARS-CoV2, which if not disarmed, this virulent ever-more deadly mutating-disease can eliminate humanity globally.

**Honorable P.M. Modi:**

As an un-conflicted American, having migrated from India at the age of seven (7), I spent four-plus years in Hong Kong and learned to love and admire the Chinese culture, although, Confucius has gotten wiser as I have aged as a happy New Yorker. Your early leadership with a strong "Lockdown" of India was a global example of a government honoring its duty to protect the public health. Given the sudden Covid19-mutated strain's tsunami ravaging India, I write to you, because now, protecting and curing all the people across the world must be Job 1.

It is not a time for political advantage or even seeking compensatory damages, as it is now becoming clear that this lab-created virus can become an existential threat to humanity globally, and those who dream of building new empires will have nothing to dominate or rule over. Instead, India's experience - a year after we were overwhelmed - speaks to a need for an international all-nations' effort to disarm this biowarfare agent with President Xi's help - using a form of Truth & Reconciliation Commission which grants legal immunity for "whole truth disclosure" - so scientists can get immediate access to all the creative knowledge, documents and lab variant-samples about this out-of-control PLA-Lab created weapon. This is much worse than a nuclear weapons threat, as its out of control, and its infection capability makes every person and animal on earth vulnerable, and rendering current vaccines potentially ineffective.

**Disclaimer**

As an open disclaimer, I see life thru an American Lens, given that human follies are well splashed across the pages of history, I am resoundingly certain of American Exceptionalism, structurally embedded in our founding Declaration and Constitution, with each American duty-bound to help "form a more perfect union" - not shaken, until our insurrection of January 6th.

That I successfully intervened, as requested by India, in the shameful auction of Mahatma Gandhi's items in New York and had the items respectfully returned to India; successfully defended Kritika Biswas' honor and won in every federal court and won the highest award for a false arrest and for a night in jail - an effort I was supported in by the now-late great Queens D.A. Judge Richard Brown, Rep. Gray Ackerman and, most effectively, by Senator Chuck Schumer; and, inter alia, successfully represented the Indian National Congress and the Hon. Sonia Gandhi in U.S. Federal courts regarding the painful "1984 Riots" and helped create a legal precedent, that India, like the United States with inter alia our unconstitutional Japanese-American Internment during WWII, has the right to fix her own mistakes without our meddling in her internal affairs. By so doing, I enhanced the bilateral relationship between our two great nations, which you later described in your pivotal Joint Address to Congress as "indivisible." That exact relationship, I have always seen as our "Joint Destiny," given the pull and push of history: Indian tea starred in the 1773 Boston Tea Party, and Lord Cornwallis, after losing to General George Washington, upon arriving as Viceroy of India ordered 5,000 Indian men, women and children be put to death for his American loss, and proceeded to rule with an

"Iron Fist." A Fist that never unclasped, until Mahatma Gandhi. And, Dr. Ambedkar, Columbia Law-educated, authored India's Constitution, deeply informed by ours from 1787.

During the last decade, my incredible wife, Ranju, then-chair of the Diwali Stamp Project, spent seven (7) years seeking a United States Postal Service Diwali Stamp, and got help from many persons, but none more than Rep. Carolyn Maloney, then-Amb. Hardeep Singh Puri, then-ASG Lakshmi Puri, Rep. Grace Meng, then-Rep. Eliot L. Engel, Rep. Greg Meeks, and inter alia, then India's New York-based CG Dnyaneshwar M. Mulay who wrote the Official poem for the Diwali Stamp Project. Indeed, Ranju asked and received from you - your support for the Diwali Stamp during your UNGA visit - as she did and received from then-President Obama. Ranju's achievement was immortal, as the Diwali Stamp successfully dedicated on October 5, 2016 was a USPS "Forever" stamp, and Ranju made personal history by selling over 170,000 stamps for Day One, beating Batman, and making the Diwali Stamp #1 in USPS history. Indeed, your 2016 Diwali Message contained a clip of that Stamp Dedication, which serves to enhance our bilateral relations forever. Indeed, the United Nations has celebrated that achievement with 24 nations coming together to honor Ranju, and now, Ranju, as chair of the Diwali Foundation USA, bestows Power of One awards, aka Oscars of Diplomacy, on exceptional world class diplomats who personify the highest ideals of the United Nations Charter and enhance global peace & security.

More recently, I was invited by then-Chairman Eliot L. Engel of House Foreign Affairs Committee to testify on October 22, 2019 regarding Kashmir, and inter alia, issued: an apology for advocating "restraint" after India's November 26th (akin to our 9/11); and India's right to enact Section 370, and to restore normalcy as soon as public safety was secured. Indeed, on January 9, 2020, during our historic reception in the actual HFAC Room for strong US-India ties and celebrating Congress, your distinguished Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, with now-Joint Secretary Sandeep Chakravorty in attendance, showed pictures of a 16-nations' strong ambassadorial visit to Kashmir earlier that day - a fact I celebrated then and there in Congress, which included, Rep. Brad Sherman and Chairman Eliot L. Engel participating.

**SARS-CoV2 aka Covid-19 aka Wuhan Virus - Case Cracked on April 14, 2020: Lab-Created**

With that truncated disclaimer out of the way, and with God's Grace, I and my family survived Covid19 on or about March 29, 2020. Treating this Virus as a cancer case that I needed to crack, and after learning biochemistry and epidemiology during an intense effort, I did so, and a year ago, on April 14, 2020, I wrote a 6-page "Open Letter" to then-President Trump, Speaker Pelosi and then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell ("OL"; copy enclosed, with uniform spelling of "Wuhan"), and for POTUS, emailed it to a former Marine: Deputy NSA Matt Pottinger at 8:31pm. In the OL, I had the science, the facts, and recommendations, including, bringing our "supply chains" home. The next day, April 15, 2020, about 1 p.m. the United States opened a preliminary investigation into inter alia the origin of SARS-CoV2 from PLA-run Wuhan Virology Lab, and the motives of CCP China in causing its global-spread without sounding a pandemic-alarm directly or thru the WHO. I remain grateful for the start of the April 15, 2020 "all hands on deck" Investigation. I have since, written an Open Letter to President Joseph R. Biden Jr. on April 13, 2021 (copy enclosed).

It remains an open secret that my analysis was and is correct, and that this is a lab-created Frankenstein that transplanted the "Spike Glycoprotein(S)" ("Spike") from Bats - a unique feature in bats, as they are either "cold" or "warm" blooded, and still, a warm Bat can procreate with a cold Bat due to the "Spike." OL at 3. I called "Covid19," aka "WuhanVirus," a Trojan Horse, as its Spike feature does not cause our immune system to sound an alarm upon infection (and the T-cells remain asleep). Disturbingly, China has not turned over, to this day, the genome of Patient Zero who was admitted in Wuhan hospital on or about December 1, 2019, while a different protein string-virus was released on or about December 31, 2019 at the Wuhan Wet Market. The animal farms about a 1000 miles away

from Wuhan, did not experience a Covid19 outbreak, thereby decimating the WHO's coddled-team's report, after a 3-hour chaperoned visit to the Wuhan Virology lab, falsely asserting a zoonotic virus jump from animal to human. Natural viruses mutate to become safe and un-hurtful. This Virus is mutating serially, as if it was a multi-stage ICBM, becoming more and more dangerous as it continues to exist.

WHO dishonored its high fiduciary obligations, and did not promptly alert the leaders of every nation that a pandemic was afoot and ask to lock-down China. President Trump said we were fighting an invisible enemy. I disagree. The Virus is surely invisible, but this string of protein, despite its lab-based default programing, has no animus towards us and does not benefit by causing death and destruction - and by my last count, our needlessly dead far exceed our losses at Pearl Harbor.

Despite Truth-in-Labeling laws, China, run by 100 years' celebrating CCP, has succeeded in blocking this Virus from being origin-labeled by deeming origin-labeling to be racist. But, it's not a fight over labeling.

**Only Solution: Disarm Covid19**

I now write to you - as my views have changed and evolved - as even war will not stop this mutated-variant's tsunami that is ravaging India from jumping to other nations, even as travel restrictions are imposed on India, as we have gotten earlier variants despite best efforts to block travel. Indeed, re-visiting my prior conversation with China's distinguished Foreign Minister Wang Yi suggests - that while I wanted a Little War in 2017 due to events in South China Sea, as in a stitch in time saves nine (a la nine dashes) - whereas he did not, as he clearly said. FM Wang, I believe, with President Xi's change of heart, can be an asset for a new just and honorable peace for all: rejuvenate the world.

Diplomacy is always needed, even to arrange a surrender to end a war. Now, after India being ravaged by mutated variants, with other nations to follow, this ICBM of a virus must be disarmed ASAP with Biowarfare Codes only China can share. It has been reported that President Xi, whom I consider to be at least as much an exceptional mastermind as Chairman Mao was, if not more, has asked his diplomatic corps to unsheathe their swords to be Wolf Warriors - a function or definition that defies diplomacy, even as it weaponizes it.

**How to Disarm Covid19 - Archbishop Desmond Tutu's TRC**

I urge you, as the champion of India's sovereignty and chief protector of her citizens' public health and safety, as well as a vital member of the "Quad," and SCO, run by a dear friend Dr. Vladimir Norov as its Secretary General, to change our geopolitical matrix from competitive, adversarial and crime and punishment, to a restorative formula from South Africa's Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Truth & Reconciliation Commission - so we can move forward collectively as a human family, and disarm this Virus of an ICBM.

South Africa was critical in MKG becoming a Mahatma. Perhaps, if you can get President Xi to share "nuclear codes" of this virus-ICBM to disarm it, more than Nobel Peace prizes will be awarded; prayers and blessings of humanity across India and the globe will follow for saving millions of people, who will otherwise continue to die from this ever-mutating Death Virus. India has a reputation throughout many millennia of being the land of peace. China is currently President of the UNSC, charged with enhancing global peace & security. If you can get President Xi to join you in peace-building the future, the "Rejuvenation" he seeks, will come with Confucius' ultimate blessed wish: "May you live in boring times."

Respectfully,  
/s/  
Ravi Batra

(Ravi Batra is a New York based attorney. He has earlier written open letters on the issue to President Trump (<https://www.theindianpanorama.news/opinion/open-letter-donald-trump-covid-19-tsunami-ravages-india/>), and President Biden (<https://www.theindianpanorama.news/opinion/open-letter-us-president-joe-biden-covid-19-tsunami-ravages-india/>) -Editor.



# Needed a Trial of India's Prime Minister Modi for Covid deaths in India



BY DAVE MAKKAR

The holding of the Kumbh Mela, Election Rallies, Holi celebrations & IPL matches involving over 390 million people, despite the arrival of the second wave was a criminal negligence by Modi regime. Knowingly they put the lives of millions of people in harm's way in the midst of a deadly pandemic. Modi regime is responsible for turning this pandemic into a humanitarian crisis. This is a decision that will also cripple the already wounded economy to an unknown degree and increase poverty and unemployment. The mishandling of first Covid wave resulted in GDP contracting by 23.9 per cent in the 2nd quarter of 2020. By some estimates, more than 100 million people lost their jobs. These are "official figures", issued by a regime notorious for fudging figures to hide the truth, and spread lies.

An Assembly line of death & misery due to Covid on an insurmountable scale at crematorium and burial grounds of India has shocked the entire world. India has descended into a tragedy of unprecedented proportions. There is not a town in India where the crematoriums and burial grounds don't have lines and wait times of 14-24 hours. Burial grounds and crematoriums are so full of bodies, it's as if a war just happened. Some have buried their dead in their gardens.

India with majority Hindu population vs minority Muslims and Christians is witnessing more cremations. Parks,



pavements and car parks are being turned into cremation grounds with makeshift pyres. Fires burn round the clock in crematoriums and there is a shortage of even wood to cremate the dead. Many places are holding mass cremations, dozens at a time, and at night, the sky glows. Unfortunately, it reminds Modi's infamous words at an election rally in 2017, "If a kabristan is built in a village, a shamshan should also be constructed there," "Shamshan! Shamshan!" the mesmerized, adoring crowd echoed back. Only Modi can tell whether he is elated to see the overflowing crematoriums, or he is repenting for those infamous words. He could have ordered to convert temporarily the BJP office spread over about 2,00,000 square feet in Delhi into a Covid hospital under Indian Army to repurpose it in record time and make it functional. Like

1,800,000 square feet Javits Center in NY, in March-April 2020 was turned into a 2,500-bed emergency medical facility for COVID patients in 17 days by the U.S. Army and run by them. This could save thousands of lives. At least this way Modi can atone for his criminal culpability that has seen hundreds of thousands of Indians dead and continuing to die. It looks like Modi is unmoved by the innocent deaths.



Mass cremations

Each funeral and burial is a story of personal loss, misery, indignity and national shame. Hardly anybody knows anyone who has not been ravaged by this humanitarian crisis. Those who died at home or in cars, waiting outside the hospitals without a test or treatment or in the rural areas, Modi regime is not counting those as Covid deaths. This regime is notorious for its undercount of the number of infections and deaths. That is how there is a vast difference between the figures put out by the government and the foreign health experts and media,

Modi's own arrogance, fake Hinduism and nationalism, bureaucratic incompetence and criminal negligence have combined to create humanitarian crisis of epic proportions in India. This is a catastrophe, and we are witnessing a crime against humanity. Modi and all those responsible for culpable homicide of thousands upon thousands of children, young men and young women, old men and old women of India, should be tried and prosecuted under a Nuremberg style Court

If India survives at all, it will be due entirely to the civic commitment of its front-line workers, religious organizations and ordinary citizens, who have stepped in to do the duties of a government that has abandoned its people.

trial. Will justice be done by Indian Courts or all of them should be tried in the International Courts?

Atul Kohli, Political Scientist at Princeton University, calls India a "two-track democracy," where "common people are only needed at the time of elections, and then it is best that they all go home, forget politics, and let the 'rational' elite quietly run a pro-business show."

## MODI REGIME CREATED OXYGEN & HOSPITAL BEDS CRISIS

People are not getting oxygen and dying like animals. It is not the virus but acute shortage of Oxygen, which is the main killer across the country, against the fact that several projects for installing the oxygen are still pending with the Union government for clearance, but no heed was given to such an important need by the Modi government. In the capital Delhi with world class medical facilities and doctors, large number of people have died because of the shortage of Oxygen in prestigious private hospitals like Sir Ganga Ram, Jaipur Golden & Batra. One can imagine the state of affairs in state, district, municipal and small private hospitals, and rural India practically with no hospitals.

In so called big city hospitals across India; there is no oxygen, ventilators, plasma, medicines, beds and ambulances. Some Hospitals are admitting patients that have their own Oxygen cylinders. For every 200 patients there is only 1 doctor available. This time it is the young who are filling the intensive care units. When the young people die, the older dependents, spouse and their children are devastated, and some lose their will to live.

Kevaldia a famous tourist location, for "Statue of Unity" town in Modi's home state of Gujarat, has no hospital. Here no death will be registered in the official Covid count because the individuals die at home. This statue was conceived and inaugurated by Modi in 2018. This was built at a cost Rs. 3,000 crores (\$400 million) and additional Rs 2.63 crores was spent on its advertisement. It was touted by Modi to be the tallest statue of the world! The fact is wonder of the world Eiffel Tower, standing tall at 324 meters till the tip, is 142 meters taller than the 182-meter-tall Sardar Patel statue.

Unfortunately, rural India has been hit very hard this time. In rural India, where people die of easily treatable diseases like diarrhea, infection and tuberculosis. How they can cope with Covid, when Covid tests or Hospitals or doctors or oxygen is not available to them? The first lockdown was the strictest lockdown of the world with a 4 hours' notice. Millions of migrant workers stranded in cities with no work, no money to pay their rent, no food and no transport. Millions of them had to walk hundreds of miles in some cases 1,500-1,700 miles to their homes in far-flung villages. Hundreds died on the way. That exodus resulted in a different kind of chaos: there were no quarantine centers for them to stay in or Covid Test Centers, before they enter their village homes. There was not even a meagre pretense by Modi regime of trying to protect the countryside from the city virus. Now their criminal neglect has resulted in a massive outbreak of 2nd Covid wave in the countryside.

October 2020, the Standing Committee of Parliament for Health, had issued warnings of a more contagious Covid second wave and possibility of a dire shortage of oxygen. Central Medical Services Society (CMSS) an agency under the Union Health Ministry Dr. Harshvardhan was given the charge of commissioning the oxygen plants. CMSS floated a tender on October 21, 2020, inviting bids for the installation of 162 PSA oxygen plants across 14 states with a combined capacity of 154 metric tons daily. The final contracts were given

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in December 2020 with a stipulation in the purchase order that vendor will install the plant within 45 days. This means the actual work on installing the plants could only start ten months into the pandemic. The entire cost of Rs. 201.58 was fully funded from PM-Cares controlled by PMO. This works out to an average of Rs 1.25 crore per plant. A plant with the capacity of 1,000 liters of oxygen per minute can simultaneously cater to 100-160 patients on oxygen support. However, four months after the contracts were given, only 33 of the 162 O2 plants have been installed. UP out of 14, none, Delhi out of 8, none and MP that has no oxygen production facility of its own placed an order for 13 plants on April 14, 2021.

A very disturbing question arises, why private hospitals across India, especially 5 metro cities that are famous for world class facilities catering to medical tourism don't have their own oxygen-generating plants? Then, why the State & local governments did nothing to mitigate the future oxygen shortage?

India's daily oxygen production capacity is 7,200 metric tons and the medical oxygen requirement as of April 21 was 8,000 metric tons, according to a submission made by a central government official in Delhi High Court. This means even if the country uses up its entire oxygen production for medical use, as the government has now decided to do by banning use of oxygen for industrial purposes, India will still face a shortfall of 800 metric tons.



Struggling to get Oxygen

The grossly underestimated planned 162 PSA oxygen plants with no oversight.

If they were all operational with a combined daily capacity of 154 metric tons, it was a minuscule compared to the current shortfall of 800 metric tons. If India had installed oxygen plants on a war footing, the situation would have been different. For an outlay of Rs 2,000 crore, India could have added 1,540 metric tons of additional daily medical oxygen capacity. Significantly, by adding on-site oxygen manufacturing capacity, India could have reduced the need for the massive logistical exercise currently underway to move liquid oxygen in tankers from surplus states by road, airlifting tankers by Air Force and even import it from other countries.

On top of that according to Modi regime's own data amid the pandemic, India exported over 9,000 metric tons of oxygen, a staggering increase of 734 percent in January 2021. India, one time world's largest producers of medical oxygen, is being forced to import 50,000 metric tons of liquid medical oxygen using special India Air Force flights.

### MODI REGIME CREATED VACCINE CRISIS

By the end of March 2020, practically every health expert advised that it is the "Race between the vaccine and the virus." Rapid vaccination of all eligible humans is the only way to fight Covid. This infection has no boundaries and there will be a 2nd and a 3rd wave that will be more lethal and contagious than the present one. Experts have been proved right, the encouraging trend of declining daily infections and deaths shows; in the race between vaccines and variants in the USA-vaccines are winning.

As of May 5, 32.7% or 107.3 Million Americans are

### This humanitarian crisis is a direct result of the Modi regime's, arrogance, complacency, lack of preparation, bureaucratic incompetence, fake nationalism and the criminal neglect of its constitutional duties

fully vaccinated, 44.3% or 148.6 million are partially vaccinated. US FDA by next week will approve Pfizer for 12-15 years old and by Sep 2021 Pfizer plans to submit two new emergency use authorization requests, one request covering children from 5 to 11 years old and a second applying to ages 2 to 5. A separate batch of results and a possible request, for children who are from 6 months to 2 years old, are expected in the fourth quarter of 2021. Researchers have estimated that around 70% to 85% of the country needs to be vaccinated for COVID herd immunity or to stop it from spreading through communities and peter out.

In April-May 2020, USA under "Operation Warp Speed" advanced \$6 Billion to various Pharma companies to develop a vaccine by invoking Defense Act. In May 2020, Europeans mobilized \$8 billion for Covid Vaccine research. They wanted to rope in India also for being the world's biggest producer of vaccines. False pride, confused nationalism & fake self-reliant slogan stopped the arrogant and incompetent Modi regime from joining the consortium. By Aug 2020, US, UK & EU with a combined population of 800 million had placed orders for 850 million doses of vaccine. USA and the China are now manufacturing more Covid-19 vaccines than India.

In contrast, in India with almost 1,400 million people, Modi regime placed its first order of 16.5 million doses in Jan. 2021 and later, 100 million to the domestic producer Serum Institute of India.

A control-freak instinct took over Modi and he announced only Center would buy the vaccines. There will be no private buying, in other words he "Nationalized" the vaccines. Later, Modi regime used vaccines as a political tool to deny adequate quantities of vaccines to non-BJP ruled states like Punjab, Kerala, Maharashtra and Delhi.

In fact, Modi Regime, botched India's inoculation drive by failing to order a sufficient number of doses in advance or investing in vaccine plants in India. Then from May 1, 2021, Modi regime allowed the states to buy/import vaccine directly. In fact, it has passed the responsibility of vaccinating Indians to financially strapped state governments. Now they must negotiate prices and purchase vaccines in the open market and most Indian states are not in a position to execute the task. There's a scarcity of lifesaving vaccines in a country that used to be the world's largest vaccine-maker till 2020.

Bharat Biotech's Covaxin is based on the SARS-CoV-2 strain, which was isolated in the National Institute of Virology under ICMR in Pune. The ICMR then transferred this strain to Bharat Biotech for development to manufacture vaccine for sale to public. As such, one is unable to calculate the share of public investment in the total amount spent on design, and development by ICMR. Bharat Biotech has to pay no royalty to anyone. Presently, the company manufactures 20 million doses per month of Covaxin. On April 24th, 2021, the company tweeted, "Following the Govt of India directives, we announce the prices of COVAXIN vaccines - Rs 600 per dose for state hospitals and Rs 1,200 per dose for private hospitals".

The largest vaccine manufacturer in the world till 2020, Serum Institute of India (SII) the maker of Covisheild under license from Swedish AstraZeneca is producing 70 million doses per month. SII invested Rs 2,000.00 crore of its own and got Rs 2,200.00 crore from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. SII has to pay royalty and they are under contractual obligation to supply an initial 200 million doses to WHO backed Covax vaccine sharing program to ensure availability to low- and middle-income countries. SII was expected to deliver the first 100 million doses between February-May 2021. Indian government data shows that it has so far

delivered only 30 million, which includes 10 million set aside for India itself under WHO-Covax. SII has also made legally binding bilateral commercial deals to supply more than 900 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine, and 145 million doses of Novavax, according to UN data. SII recently confirmed that it had been sent a legal notice by AstraZeneca, concerning its obligations to supply vaccines.



On Sep. 6, 2020 SSI CEO Adar Poonawalla, Tweeted to PMO & Ministry of Health to highlight challenges in vaccine production and distribution. In his "quick question" to the government he asked if the Health Ministry had Rs. 80,000 crore available over the next 12 months to buy and distribute the vaccine to everyone. "I ask this question, because we need to plan and guide, vaccine manufacturers both in India and overseas to service the needs of our country in terms of procurement and distribution."

The government hit back after Adar's tweet, saying that it did not agree with the Rs. 80,000.00 crore figure and that it had sufficient funds to procure and distribute the vaccine. The government did not, however, specify the amount that it had set aside for this purpose. If one looks at \$6 billion (Rs 44,000.00 crore) allocated by USA for vaccines for its 330 Million citizens for vaccines; Adar's suggestion of Rs 80,000.00 crore for 1,400 Million Indians, was very reasonable.

Even the Doctors/medical experts have warned that GOI's goal of vaccinating 300 million people every quarter costs are going to mount. Doctors said it may take two years to vaccinate the entire population, especially when it is a "Race between the vaccine and Covid" to stop Covid from becoming a pandemic or humanitarian crisis with the expected 2nd and 3rd surge. Still PMO & MHO remained unmoved.

HLL Biotech Ltd (HBL), a state-of-the-art Integrated Vaccine Complex in 100 acres near Chennai, was approved by the UPA government in 2012. The goal was to effectively fight the potential public health hazards that hit India from time to time. It was set up as a nodal center for manufacturing, research, and supply of vaccines at affordable prices under the Universal Immunization Program of the GOI. It has a capacity to produce 585 million vaccines for rabies, measles, Japanese Encephalitis, and Hepatitis B among other diseases. It was to replace three existing vaccine units which were set up decades ago - Pasteur Institute of India, Coonoor, BCG Vaccine Laboratory, Chennai, and Central Research Institute in Kasauli.

With the regime change at the Center in 2014, it was starved for funds and, only in 2017, escalated cost of Rs 710 crore was approved. In 2019 the Health Ministry denied project escalation cost of Rs 904 crore, expressing concerns about its "non-profitability".

There are six production lines for vaccine manufacturing, but they are not currently functional. It needs Rs 150 crore or so to make it fully functional. HBL official says, "there is no vision in establishing the firm as the government could have easily upgraded the existing vaccine units to make Covid vaccines."

HBL has written to the Union Health Ministry and NITI Aayog for the additional sum but was denied. "But the government is profit-motivated, they think 'what is the use of having this complex.'" He further said: "The Centre can announce it as 'Pandemic Research Centre' or it can run it on a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. But the policies of the present government are

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against public sector undertakings. In the middle of a pandemic, a facility which was declared a "Project of National Importance" has not only been non-functional, but only contributed to the national effort against Covid-19 by manufacturing hand sanitizers and alcohol-based disinfectants for hospitals treating Covid-19 patients.

Besides disinfectants, HBL also has the capability to produce Viral Transport Medium (VTM) kits used for transporting Covid-19 clinical samples of suspected patients for virus detection testing. With the rising number of infections there is a need for collection of more clinical samples to increase the number of tests. HBL can develop such kits on a massive scale at an affordable/ competitive price. This required manufacturing license from the state and the Centre, HBL's application is pending, and has not been granted as of May 5, 2021.

Modi perhaps does not want to see anything up and working that can even remotely be seen connected to Nehru, Gandhi, PM Singh of the UPA government even if it cost human lives in lacs. That is the reason he changed the names of all schemes started by his predecessors including BJP's AB Vajpayee's government. This is yet another example of Modi style of governance where it lets people die. But Modi does not stop there. He has put up HLL Biotech in Jan 2021 for sale leaving the brand-new plant to rust and there are no buyers yet. That is exactly how an elected autocrat works. That is exactly how arrogant rulers govern. (The Print & The Federal.com).

**UNDER ITS WATCH, MODI REGIME ALLOWED THE DOUBLE MUTANT STRAIN OF CORONA VIRUS B.1.617 TO SPREAD**

The Indian origin home grown virus was first detected on 5th Oct. 2020. That is the main cause of deaths in current Second wave. According to Indian Express only in Jan 2021 a Covid Genomic consortium, a network of 10 labs was formed with a budget of Rs115 crore for further research. The Health Ministry never gave Rs 115 crore to the Dept of Biotechnology. The dept was told to find the money on its own. They were able to allocate first tranche of 80 crore on 31 March 2021 that is after 6 months of detecting B.1.617, and, by that time the Second wave was already spreading exponentially, and death rate was going up rapidly.

**MODI REGIME DID NO PLANNING FOR 1 YEAR TO FIGHT THE EXPECTED 2nd COVID WAVE**

Although the emerging pandemic gave Modi over a year which he could have spent preparing for the second wave, rather than deploying resources in healthcare & vaccines; he was busy in promoting himself, superstitions, quackery and mythology for Covid treatment like banging bells, plates, clapping, lighting earthen lamps (diya) or candles, Cow urine, Cow Dung, Quack Ramdev's Coronil, his own minister Arjun Ram Meghwal's Bhabhiji Pappad and showering flower petals from helicopters on healthcare workers.

Swami Chakrapani Maharaj, president of the Hindu Mahasabha declared that "consuming cow urine and cow dung will stop the effect of infectious coronavirus." The swami added that a "person who chants 'om namah shivay' a salutation to Shiva, a Hindu deity, and applies cow dung on his body will be saved."

According to WSJ Feb 10, 2020, PM Modi wrote to Xi Jinping, offering the Chinese leader help in tackling the Wuhan coronavirus. Details of the assistance aren't public, but Mr. Modi's offer probably didn't include supplies for a "treatment that a senior Hindu fundamentalist advocated recently". In fact, WSJ was referring to Cow urine and Cow dung treatment.

Unfortunately India's most popular news media, co-opted early on by Modi, rich & famous celebrities like Amitabh Bachan, Virat Kohli, Priyanka Chopra and Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani etc., they all supported Modi and his team mate's superstitions, quackery and mythology for Covid treatment.

Modi started laying symbolic foundations for the "Hindu Nation" as per the bonehead idea of the RSS. He was busy in the planning, designing and finally to be the Master of groundbreaking ceremony for Ram Mandir on Aug. 5, 2020 in the middle of raging Covid pandemic.

Prof. Ashok Swain, Peace and conflict researcher wrote, "Modi does not anymore pretend even as the leader of a secular country. He sees himself and overtly acts like a king of a Hindu Kingdom."

October was wasted by Boeing that spanned the deliveries of Modi's 2 personal toys costing Rs. 8,450.00 for his personal travel and for namesake President & VP travel also! One was delivered on Oct 1st and the 2nd, on Oct. 24, 2021. These Boeing 777-300 ER have state-of-the-art missile defense systems called Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) and Self-Protection Suites (SPS), which are capable of countering missile threats from an enemy and on par with the US President's Air Force One in terms of security measures. US economy was \$21 Trillion vs. India's 3.2 Trillion in 2020. After waiting for 5 months, the world-famous Globetrotting PM made his maiden flight on March 26, 2021 to Bangladesh in VVIP "India's Air Force 1" to influence voters of West Bengal.

Much of the Oct and entire Nov 2020 Modi and his entire government was busy campaigning for 3 phase Bihar Elections ending on 29th Nov, when barring China all major economies of the world were reeling under the brutal attack of the 2nd Covid wave with mounting infections and deaths. Just a glance at what is happening in the US and Europe should have opened their eyes to the catastrophes of the pandemic.

On Dec. 10, 2020, again, Modi was the Master of the groundbreaking ceremony of Central Vista (est. cost Rs 20,000.00 crore) with New Parliament and new home for himself. Presently he lives in 17 acres with 5 bungalows; that is the largest & most expansive real estate in the world for a head of the state.

British sculptor Anish Kapoor wrote that Architecture as propaganda, is often used "to give a good face to a fascist regime." "This is not the redesign of buildings; it is instead Modi's way of placing himself at the center and cementing his legacy as the maker of a new Hindu India."

In January 2021, citing Covid, UP Panchayat Elections were postponed to April to coincide with the Kumbh Mela-the world's largest religious gathering that normally convenes every 12 years. It was last held in 2010. Modi regime fraudulently brought it forward by a year against the protest by a large section of Hindu priests, by saying 2021 is an auspicious year for it. To start on March 11 and to end on April 27, 2021.

On Jan. 28, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared victory against COVID-19 while addressing the virtual summit of World Economic Forum at Davos. February 21, BJP passed a resolution praising Modi's "leadership for introducing India to the world as a proud and victorious nation in the fight against Covid." "It can be said with pride, that India "defeated Covid-19 under the able, sensitive, committed, and visionary leadership of PM Modi." That ebullient mood was communicated across the country. It is not that they wanted to get the economy going but wanted to get back to campaigning.

On February 24, the world's biggest, Narendra Modi Cricket Stadium was inaugurated in Ahmedabad, remodeling and renaming Sardar Patel stadium by President Kovind in the company of Home Minister Shah & his Zero qualification son Jay Shah, Secretary of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the President of Asian Cricket Council (ACC). The occasion was the start of the world's biggest cricket tournament ending on May 30, the Indian Premier League (IPL).

55,000 people, mostly maskless, came to cheer India play against England for the pink-ball Test. Modi's main campaign financiers/handlers, Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani were also honored with their names emblazoned on the new Narendra Modi Cricket Stadium, where overs are bowled alternatively from the Adani and Ambani ends! By having a sports stadium

named after himself within his lifetime, Modi has put himself in the worst possible company, including Kim Il Sung and Saddam Hussein. Moreover, Modi's desire to look taller than one of the founding fathers of India, Iron Man Sardar Patel, the unifier of Princely states under Modern India, is disgusting, repulsive and an insult to the great Sardar Patel.



*Modi invites pilgrims to Kumbh*

In the wake of the pandemic, a "Covid task force" of scientific experts had been constituted, yet there was no meeting of the body through February and March 2021. But 5 State Assembly Elections involving 150 million voters with totally unnecessary eight rounds of polling in West Bengal were declared on Feb 27, starting on March 27 and finishing on April 29, 2021. UP Panchayat Polls were also announced in 4 phases, April 15 to April 29 involving 85 million voters.

Every election was to be held around preponed Kumbh Mela that was estimated to attract over 150 million Hindu pilgrims, to influence Hindu voters in state and panchayat elections. There were 4 main days of Kumbh Mela (March 11-April 27) called Shahi Snan (Royal bath) on 11 March April 12, 14, and 27. On these auspicious days it is believed that a dip in the holy water of Ganga will acquit the person of all sins. As many as 5 million visitors came to Haridwar on April 12 and went to the banks of river Ganga to take the holy dip (Shahi Snan). According to a Senior Police Officer Mukesh Thakur, throughout the day, there was an estimated 11,000 to 18,000 people in the water at any time, spread across the 15 main riverbanks.



*Thousands thronged to take a dip in the river Ganga at Haridwar. No masks. No social distancing. Result. Thousands got infected with Covid*

Uttarkhand's CM Rawat (BJP), an RSS stalwart, like PM Modi, when asked on Covid concerns by Media,

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said that, "Kumbh is at the bank of the River Ganga. Maa (Mother) Ganga's blessings are there in the flow. So, there should be no corona." Haridwar where the Mela was being organized is in the state of Uttarakhand.

In contrast to all the above, the decision to postpone the crucial Class XII exams is beyond any sane person's comprehension. The outcome is that millions of children, parents and teachers have been plunged into emotional, mental and financial turmoil.

On April 04, 2021 the Covid task force finally met, after it was clear that a second wave had hit India. Modi regime still remained focused on the state elections, mainly WB. In one of the rallies Modi told the cheering crowd that by taking Cow Urine, Corona will not touch them! On April 17, Modi proclaimed at a rally in his favorite language Hindi, in Asansol (WB), "Maine aisi sabha pehli baar dekhi hai" ("I have never seen such big crowds at a rally"). That day India was on the brink of a humanitarian crisis for recording more than 261,000 new Covid cases and 1,501 deaths. In response, state minister Moley Ghatak tweeted, "When dead bodies were burning, Nero was busy doing election rallies." Ghatak's tweet was censored by Twitter.

The holding of the Kumbh Mela, Election Rallies, Holi celebrations & IPL matches involving over 390 million people, despite the arrival of the second wave was a criminal negligence by Modi regime. Knowingly they put the lives of millions of people in harm's way in the midst of a deadly pandemic. Modi regime is responsible for turning this pandemic into a humanitarian crisis. This is a decision that will also cripple the already wounded economy to an unknown degree and increase poverty and unemployment. The mishandling of first Covid wave resulted in GDP contracting by 23.9 per cent in the 2nd quarter of 2020. By some estimates, more than 100 million people lost their jobs. These are "official figures", issued by a regime notorious for fudging figures to hide the truth, and spread lies.

Modi has been good only for a few businessmen since 2014. During the pandemic, even as tens of millions of Indians lost their jobs, a handful of billionaires made windfall gains. Top on the list are Gautam Adani and Mukesh Ambani, with Ambani's net worth zooming to \$84 Billion from \$23.6 Billion in 2014. Modi's mentor, Gautam Adani's net worth zoomed to over \$55.7 Billion from \$1.9 Billion in May 2014. In fact, it has grown from under \$200 million when Adani installed Modi as CM of Gujarat.

**INDIA BECAME A NET EXPORTER OF COVID VACCINES**

India, without vaccinating its own people, became a net exporter of Covid vaccines by exporting more than 66.4 million doses to 95 countries under the 'Vaccine Maitri' or Vaccine Friendship Program" from Jan 21, 2021 to April 16, 2021. In this list, one can find practically all the dictatorships, oppressive regimes and states that sponsor terrorism. It became a global PR campaign for Modi's leadership. In March, an Indo-Canadian group sponsored billboards were erected in Canada to counter Canadian support for Indian farmers, thanking Modi for exporting Indian-made vaccines. They were tools to promote Modi's image as a "Global Vaccine Leader" and a 'Vishwa Guru,' or Global Leader with a Visionary Humanitarianism. "This, when since March, rate of infections was surging in India & Modi regime was exporting vaccines! On April 14, 2021 for the first-time infections crossed 200,000 mark and on April 16, 2021 it was 235,000 but 257,000 vaccines were sent to Syria. On the other hand, USA has put a condition on its vaccine manufacturers that they cannot export Covid vaccines unless every American has been vaccinated.

Dr Navjot Dahiya, the national VP of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) has called PM Modi a 'super spreader' and blamed him for the second wave of Covid-19. "While the medical fraternity is trying hard to make people understand mandatory Covid norms, PM Modi

did not hesitate to address big political rallies tossing all Covid norms in the air."



Election rallies. 300,000 plus covid positive cases; 2,000 plus deaths. Meanwhile, in West Bengal, on April 22, 21, Amit Shah continued his election campaign.

Despite the severity of the health crisis, election rallies and religious congregations like the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar continued, raising questions over the seriousness of Modi-led Union government to tackle the spread of the deadly virus. "The scarcity of medical oxygen has become the reason for the death of many patients in every part of the country against the fact that several projects for installing the oxygen are still pending with the Union government for clearance, but no heed was given to such an important need by the Modi government." Hitting out at the prime minister for passing the buck of its failure on the private medical sector and state governments, Dr Dahiya told the daily: "Even on the issue of farmers' agitation against farm laws, PM Modi did not act in a responsible manner and let the presence of huge gathering of farmers allowed without solving their issues, causing a serious threat of COVID spread." (The Tribune April 27, 2021)

The Australian reported on 25 April. "Arrogance, hyper-nationalism and bureaucratic incompetence have combined to create a crisis of epic proportions in India, with its crowd-loving PM basking while citizens suffocate."

Madras HC Chief Justice Banerjee on April 26, 2021, said, "You [the Election Commission] are the only institution that is responsible for the situation today. No action against political parties taking rallies... Your election commission should be put up on murder charges probably!"

Kapil Komireddi, the author of Malevolent Republic: A Short History of the New India, wrote on April 30, 2021 in Foreign Policy Journal "Modi Fiddles While India Burns" "India might have been spared this humanitarian crisis had Modi not neglected his duties and vilified those who offered him constructive counsel. He had the time, means, and access to expertise to proof the country against this inferno. It is no longer tenable to measure Modi against the performance of previous prime ministers: He has broken into the malign ranks of India's British colonial overlords who went hunting while Indians starved in mass famines.

Lt Gen Prakash Menon (retd), Decan Herald, APR 30, 2021, "The blind faith of Indians in God is now accompanied by blind faith in India's most popular leader of contemporary times "Narendra Modi" has pushed India into Humanitarian Crises."

A two judges-bench of UP HC, comprising justices Siddharth Verma and Justice Ajit Kumar on May 4, 2021, observed that the death of COVID-19 patients just for non-supply of oxygen to hospitals is "a criminal act, not less than a genocide" by state authorities' failure to supply adequate oxygen to hospitals. The bench asked an advocate, Anuj Singh, to call up the Covid helpline number. "Singh dialed the number again and again and the line was showing busy. However, ultimately, he was able to connect, and the reply was that there was no Level-2 (or) Level-3 bed available, whereas the online portal, was showing that there were vacant positions of beds in both Level-2 and Level-3 category." Level 2 beds are for moderately symptomatic Covid patients; Level 3 beds are for serious patients. "Similarly, King George's M U Hospital where portal showed 3 ICU beds to be vacant (on Sunday) and when the hospital was

contacted, it informed that there were no vacant ICU beds. The high court observed, according to records of the proceedings has shredded the CM Yogi's steadfast denial of any oxygen and hospital bed crisis in UP. The bench also sought a clarification on allegations that a sitting high court judge, Justice V.K. Srivastava, who had died last week in Lucknow, had not received proper treatment.

Probably Justice Banerjee, Sidharth Verma and Ajit Kumar were afraid to name PM Modi aka his regime that has forced EC to be an extension of their regime, and that also failed to prepare for second Covid wave. According to Constitutional Scholars, "institutions that speak the language of the executive, and have become indistinguishable from the executive, can never protect democracy.

Supreme Court has badly let down India in recent times, through a combination of avoidance, mendacity, and a lack of zeal on behalf of political liberty. Yet it has not uttered a word against Modi regime's appalling criminal mishandling of the pandemic and turning it into Humanitarian Crisis of epic proportions.

Once upon a time this very SC, aired harsh criticisms of Modi. In 2004, the Court labelled Modi a modern-day Nero. The Court observed that Modi was "looking elsewhere when... innocent children and helpless women were burning" in the carnage that erupted days after Modi was appointed CM of Gujarat in 2002. His own State Minister Haren Pandya gave sworn testimony about the riots, that Modi sanctioned the three days of anti-Muslim violence which is today known to many as the 2002 Gujarat Pogrom. In 2003, Pandya was assassinated, his wife and father both termed it "a political murder."

As India gasps for air, however, countless innocent lives are paying a price forced upon them by a Modi regime that values its iron grip on power and its image over the lives of the people and basic human rights.

Despite the pandemic turning into humanitarian crises, Modi's image builders are still desperately trying to present the current situation as an example of positive Indian exceptionalism. They accuse anyone critical of the Modi regime of "spreading negativity and being anti-National." Anyone daring to point out the murderous and criminal mishandling of the pandemic is called a "vulture" conspiring to defame India on the world stage and as Hinduophobic, self-hating Indians.



Modi is the only world leader to use Vaccination Certificate to push cult of personality (The Wire 01-03-21) India's vaccine program will be unique in one respect- each certificate of vaccination carries a portrait of Modi.

Citizen Tweet: "Just as there is a photo of Modi on the vaccine certificate, there should also be a photo of Modi on the death certificate of those killed by Covid." Grim and even ghoulish, this tweet may yet serve as an appropriate epitaph for the reign of Narendra Modi

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Not to be left behind, RSS's 2nd in Command Dattatreya Hosabale said as India suffers the world's worst Covid-19 crisis. "Destructive and anti-Bharat (India) forces in the society can take advantage of these circumstances to create an atmosphere of negativity and mistrust in the country." He should have, instead pulled the Modi regime for its intentional unpreparedness, incompetence and criminal neglect.

UP CM Yogi (BJP), a known communalist and criminal condemned people who report shortages of oxygen as "anti-social elements who spoil the atmosphere." Yogi declared that there was no shortage of oxygen or beds or doctors in any hospital. He threatened to use the National Security Act to seize the property of the individuals who try to "spoil the atmosphere."

Haryana CM Khattar (BJP), another RSS stalwart and roommate of PM Modi, when he was accused of under reporting Covid deaths, said, "it was useless to debate Covid toll as the dead won't come back to life."

Union Minister Prahlad Patel (BJP) when approached by a supplicant citizen, begging for oxygen, threatened to slap him.

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat while visiting a hospital in Jodhpur told a Covid patient's family, "You offer coconut to Balaji, everything will be alright".

Karnataka' BJP government Instead of arranging Oxygen, medicines & hospital beds Tweeted that they have allocated 230 acres of land on the outskirts of Bangaluru for a temporary crematorium.

Foreign Minister Jaishankar had instructed Indian Diplomats around the world to counter "one sided" world media narrative on government's pandemic response failure. Back home, his own colleague, Ambassador to 5 countries; Ashok Amrohi died a very painful death in the parking lot of Medanta Hospital after waiting for 5 hours to be admitted in a Gurgaon hospital on April 27, 2021.

Modi regime's ever-tightening hold on the Internet puts the social media companies against their own foundational values of free expression. It looks like they don't want to risk a lucrative market like India with a 350 million middle class by not removing post that is critical of Modi regime's functioning and its response to the pandemic that has turned into humanitarian crisis. These companies by towing the line of Modi, are doing a great harm to India by restricting the free flow of information, when India is teetering toward authoritarianism and religious



**Mahua Moitra** ✓  
@MahuaMoitra

Counter 'one-sided' world media narrative on govt's pandemic 'failure', Jaishankar tells Indian diplomats

Your colleague Ashok Amrohi IFS, Ex-Ambassador, died outside hospital after 5 hour wait.

Mr. Foreign Minister- this time even your IFS colleagues won't buy Gol's lies.

13:26 · 30 Apr 21 · Twitter Web App

majoritarianism under Modi and is facing an unprecedented humanitarian crisis.

What the Modi regime calls "misusing social media to create panic" in society, to an impartial observer, looks more like criticizing those in power. The content in question included indictments from the opposition, activists, experts and general public as well as calls for Modi to resign. More than 400,000 new infections and 4,000 deaths every day, although grossly under reported, is a harrowing situation and should cause alarm. Modi regime appears to be using the pretext of public health, not to protect its citizens from harm, but to protect itself from embarrassment and exposures.

Every major economy as well as small countries of the world, big corporations, organizations and celebrities are donating funds or sending critical medical supplies, Oxygen Plants, Oxygen cylinders, ventilators & vaccines to India. India's crisis has become a global crisis.

As usual India's world famous rich and celebrities are in MIA list or giving token donations to insult the Indians. At the same time, work done by Sikh Gurudwaras & organizations, various Hindu Temples and organizations, Muslim Organizations, Christian Organizations and individuals have lifted the human spirits of India. They are the shining light in these



Don't know what the worthy Prime Minister of India means

hours of darkness. If India survives at all, it will be due entirely to the civic commitment of its front-line workers, religious organizations and ordinary citizens, who have stepped in to do the duties of a government that has abandoned its people.

This humanitarian crisis is a direct result of the Modi regime's, arrogance, complacency, lack of preparation, bureaucratic incompetence, fake nationalism and the criminal neglect of its constitutional duties. In every direction, the criminal negligence of this regime is more apparent. The writing is on the wall, India's Covid crisis is the direct result of criminal neglect and misgovernance. It will go down in the history as a case study of how to fail, disastrously, in handling a pandemic and how to cause mass death, rather human genocide by criminal negligence.

As per Indian Parliamentary system, Prime Minister is notionally the Minister for all departments, and the Cabinet Secretary is the Secretary to all departments. There are instances in the past where Prime Minister has overruled the minister concerned. Why was such a practice not resorted to by Modi to supervise various Ministers responsible for proper planning & resource mobilization to stop the Covid pandemic from turning into a human crisis? Modi's failure to supervise his own Ministers, Bureaucrats and to devise a plan for Army help, cannot be termed ignorance; it is deliberate and criminal, and needs to be punished.

PM Modi, Ministers, Bureaucrats, the rich & famous celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan, Virat Kohli, Priyanka Chopra and Mukesh Ambani etc. that supported Modi's superstitions, quackery and mythology for Covid treatment, must be tried in a Nuremberg style Trial to uphold the Justice System of India and India's image as a viable Democracy.

(Compiled & Edited by Dave Makkar.  
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## 15 KILLED, 35 INJURED AS BUS FALLS INTO RAVINE IN PAKISTAN'S PUNJAB

ISLAMABAD (TIP): At least 15 people were killed and 35 others injured when a speeding passenger bus fell into a ravine in Pakistan's Punjab province, police said on Tuesday.

The accident occurred on a motorway in Hasan Abdal area of Attock district.

The bus was travelling from Lahore to Mardan in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province.

According to the police, the bus driver lost control over the vehicle while trying to avoid an accident with another car.

The rescue teams shifted the dead and injured to a nearby hospital.

At least 15 people have lost their lives while over 35 others have been injured in the incident, the police said.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Sayed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari expressed grief over the incident and directed the civil administration to provide assistance to the victims. PTI

## TOP ISLAMIC LEADER HELD IN BANGLADESH

DHAKA (TIP): Maulana Shahinur Pasha Chowdhury, a top leader of hardline Islamist group Hefazat-e-Islam, was arrested in Bangladesh's Sylhet city on Friday, as the government continued to crack the whip on anti-government protesters.

Some Hefazat leaders have been charged for instigating violence during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bangladesh visit in March and orchestrating the violent demonstrations in 2013. — PTI

## HEAVY FLOODING IN AFGHANISTAN KILLS AT LEAST 37 PEOPLE

KABUL (TIP): Heavy rains brought severe flooding to nine provinces around Afghanistan in recent days, killing at least 37 people, some of them children, officials said on Tuesday.

Heavy flooding compounded by mudslides often threatens remote areas of Afghanistan, where infrastructure is poor, especially during the spring and summer months.

Powerful flood waters in western Herat province that began Sunday killed 24 people around the province, said provincial governor's spokesman Jailani Farhad.

Governor Abdul Tahir Faizzada of Western Ghor province said 10 people, including six children, were killed by floodwaters that flowed from area mountains. He said 163 houses were partially destroyed and 910 people were displaced.

AP

# Gunmen shoot dead former news anchor in Afghanistan's Kandahar

KABUL (TIP): A former journalist who worked for Afghanistan's finance ministry was shot dead by gunmen in the southern city of Kandahar on Thursday, provincial officials said, as violence mounted across the country amid a US troop withdrawal.

No group immediately claimed responsibility but government officials and Western powers usually blame Taliban insurgents for such attacks, which they deny.

Nimat Rawan, a former news anchor at ToloNews, Afghanistan's largest private television station, was shot dead on Thursday morning, provincial police spokesman Jamal Naser said. Police were investigating, he said.

Many similar killings have taken place in recent months, often targeting journalists, civil society activists, government officials, and judges.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid denied the militant group was behind the shooting of Rawan in Kandahar. In tweets on Wednesday,



Mujahid had warned against "propaganda and one-sided broadcasts" by some media outlets.

"If this continues, the responsibility for the next steps will fall on the media officials and its staff themselves," he said.

President Ashraf Ghani condemned the attack and said the militants could not silence the people's freedom of speech.

Afghan security forces are locked in

daily combat with the Taliban, which has waged war to overthrow the foreign-backed government since it was ousted from power in Kabul in 2001.

The United States has begun to pull out its forces under an agreement reached with the Taliban in talks last year, although it has missed a May 1 withdrawal deadline. Critics of President Joe Biden's decision to bring the troops home say the Taliban will try to sweep back into power.

In just two days, the Taliban captured a second district in the northern province of Baghlan on Thursday, provincial police spokesman Jawed Basharat said.

Six Afghan security forces were killed in a Taliban night-time attack on their outpost in the central province of Ghazni, a local official said.

The Afghan government says the Taliban have killed and wounded more than 50 troops in attacks in at least 26 provinces during the last 24 hours, while its forces killed dozens of Taliban over the same period. Reuters

## Nepal's Oli govt loses majority support after Maoist party withdraws support

KATHMANDU (TIP): Nepal's embattled Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli-led government on Wednesday lost majority support in the House of Representatives after the CPN (Maoist Center) led by Pushpakamal Dahal "Prachanda" officially withdrew support to it.

The party submitted a letter to this effect to the Parliament Secretariat, informing about its decision to withdraw support to the government, according to a senior leader of the party, Ganesh Shah.

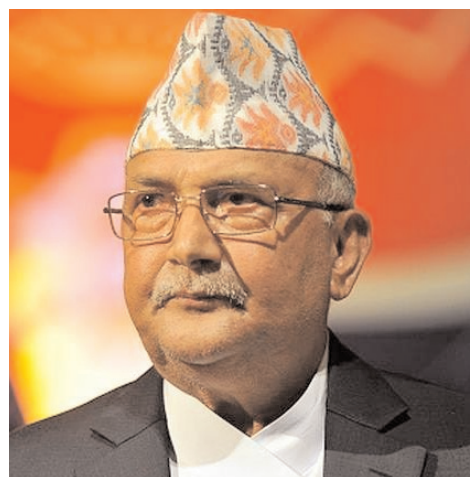
Chief Whip of the Maoist Center Dev Gurung handed over the letter to officials at the Parliament Secretariat, he said.

After handing over the letter, Gurung told the media persons that the party decided to withdraw support to the Oli government as the government had breached the Constitution and the government's recent activities have posed threat to democratic procedures and national sovereignty.

After the withdrawal of support, the Oli government has lost its majority in the House of Representatives.

The decision of the Maoist party to withdraw support to the government comes two days after Oli announced that he will seek a vote of confidence in Parliament on May 10.

The Maoist Center has a total of 49 lawmakers in the lower house.



**Since the ruling CPN-UML has a total of 121 lawmakers, PM Oli is short of 15 lawmakers to save his government in the 275-member House**

Since the ruling CPN-UML has a total of 121 lawmakers, Prime Minister Oli is short of 15 lawmakers to save his government in the 275-member House.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Oli on Wednesday visited the residence of main Opposition leader Nepali Congress president Sher Bahadur Deuba at Budhanilkantha, 10 km north of Kathmandu, to seek his support to save

the government.

The two leaders discussed the latest political developments in the country, according to sources close to Nepali Congress.

Nepal plunged into a political crisis on December 20 last year after President Bidya Devi Bhandari dissolved the House and announced fresh elections on April 30 and May 10 at the recommendation of Prime Minister Oli, amidst a tussle for power within the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP).

Oli's move to dissolve the House sparked protests from a large section of the NCP led by his rival 'Prachanda', also a co-chair of the ruling party.

In February, the apex court reinstated the dissolved House of Representatives, in a setback to embattled Prime Minister Oli who was preparing for snap polls.

A five-member Constitutional Bench led by Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher JBR annulled the government's decision to dissolve the lower house of Parliament and ordered the government to summon the House session within the next 13 days.

Oli repeatedly defended his move to dissolve the House of Representatives, saying some leaders of his party were attempting to form a "parallel government".

As many as 13 writ petitions were filed at the apex court seeking the restoration of the lower house of Parliament. PTI





*Eid Mubarak*

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# NFIA HOSTS INTERACTIVE SESSION ON OCI AND INDIAN VISA WITH NEW YORK INDIAN CONSULATE

**NEW YORK (TIP):** The National Federation of Indian American Associations (NFIA) organized a virtual interactive zoom meeting on Thursday, April 29, 2021 with the Indian Consulate Office in New York, NY. Topics focused on clarifying changes/issues relating to OCI, emergency visa issuance and other related travel guidelines.

NFIA, formed in New York in 1980, is the largest Indian American National umbrella organization looking after the interest of our community and also promoting US-India Relations.

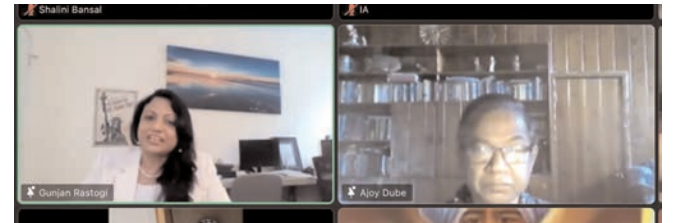
This effort was initiated and organized by NFIA's Regional Vice President (RVP), Mrs. Gunjan Rastogi, who single-handedly spearheaded and successfully executed in a relatively short time frame. This was necessitated due to the fervent requests made by the Indo-American community as well as the community-at-large to hold another session with the Indian consulate office in an effort to gain a better understanding of the OCI changes/issues. The consulate office included Honorable DCG, Shatrughna Sinha and Honorable Consul (CPV) Murugesan Ramaswamy and the zoom live event was attended by approximately 280 participants from all over the United States.

The meeting kicked off with a welcome address by Gunjan Rastogi, followed by a moment of silence observed in honor of the COVID-19 victims in India. Next, NFIA president, Ajoy Dube made introductory



Deputy Consul General Shatrughna Sinha (left) at the Webinar remarks. The consulate office spent the first hour dedicated to the aforementioned topics which were clearly explained in an informative manner and this then transitioned into a Q&A session moderated by Mukesh Modi and Nilima Madan, both residents of the New York area.

Several NFIA members attended were recognized at the event, including NFIA past presidents Subash Razdan, Sudip Gorakhshakar, Dr. Thomas Abraham and Angela Anand as well as NFIA Board members Raj Razdan, Dr. Hari Har Singh, Dr. Satish Mishra, Sunny Gabhawala, Aparna Hande, Prashanthi Harathi,



Gunjan Rastogi (left) and Ajoy Dube participate in the webinar

Kamini Khare and Ashok Patnaik. Further, Mrs. Rastogi also recognized the presidents of the 13 supporting organizations who participated in the event: NIAASC, RANA, UPANY, Kerala Center, World Vegan Vision, India Home, Indian American Action Group, Metropolitan Asian Family Services, Navika Group of companies, Senior Community Center of Vaishnav Temple, Indo-American Senior Citizen NY, A. Holly Patterson Extended Care Facility and IALI.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks and the RVP expressed her appreciation to both the consulate officers and to everyone in attendance. The Deputy Consul General encouraged the viewers to keep sending any unanswered questions to the Indian consulate office. Everyone in attendance felt that the interactive session provided the details and cleared a lot of lingering doubts relating to the OCI and the issuance of the emergency visas.

(Based on a press release by Gunjan Rastogi)

## Harish Thakkar re-elected AIA-NY President for the second term

**NEW YORK (TIP):** The Associations of Indians In America (AIA) NY, the oldest and largest association of Asian Indians in America unanimously elected its new president Harish Thakkar and the new board for the year 2021-2022.



Harish Thakkar has been re-elected President of AIA-NY for a second term

President Elect, Harish Thakkar will spearhead the team for the year 2021-2022 with the help of Executive Vice Presidents Dr. Satish Anand, Dr. Bal Gilja, Dr. Jagdish Gupta, Usha Kapoor, Secretary Beena Kothari and Treasurer Dr. Pushpa Shah - Members at Large Dipika Modi, Divya Shah, Gitanjali Anand, Nishant Garg, Beenu Sabharwal, Rene Mehra, Joyti Gupta, Vimal Goyal, Govind Bhatija, Swati Vaishnav and Sunny Thakkar

Advisor -Dr. Shahi Shah, Asmita Bhatia, Rohit Vyas and Sushma Kotahwala.

Last year 2020, under the leadership of AIA - NY President, Harish Thakkar, AIA did many events for the community.

### AIA NY Chapter 2020 projects were:

February - AIA NY Chapter family Bowling event

COVID help community projects.

June - AIA NY Chapter distributed groceries to needy families.

July - AIA NY young chapter Desi Next distributed Face Masks to Jamaica hospital.

July - AIA NY Chapter distributed meals to Westchester Hospitals & White Plains

Hospital.

October 5th, AIA NY chapter celebrated 33rd Diwali on the Cruise in NYC on East Hudson river.

November-3rd, AIA NY Chapter, Diwali celebrations Zoom event. special guest on zoom event Congresswoman Grace Meng & Deputy Consul General of India, Shatrughna Sinha.

November 6th Friday - AIA NY Chapter did Diya lighting at Times Square in NYC with limited 25 people. Chief guest of Diya lighting, Consul General of India, Randhir Jaiswal, NY state Senator, John Liu, deputy consul General Shatrughna Sinha & Manhattan Borough President Gail Brewer. This event was covered by all Indian media outlets.

The incoming President Harish Thakkar plans to take the organization to new heights with events planned for Celebrating India's Cultural events like Holi and Diwali. This year AIA NY will also host Community help events whenever needed, Youth Basketball Camp, Hindi Summer Camp, Food Drive and Toys of Kids during the holiday season.

With the help of the Executive team and Advisory Board Members, AIA NY plans to take on projects like Job Fair, Entrepreneurship camps and Youth Leadership Development Skill Camps.

## INDIAN AMERICAN SIKH MAN ATTACKED WITH HAMMER BY HATE-FUELED BLACK ASSAILANT

**NEW YORK (TIP):** A Sikh man was attacked with a hammer by a Black assailant who shouted at him "I don't like you" and "You're not the same skin" at a hotel in Brooklyn here, prompting a prominent New-York based advocacy group to call on investigators to examine if the assault was a hate crime incident.



Sumit Ahluwalia, 32, of Astoria, New York said the man, a Black, assaulted him, shouting "I don't like you" and "You're not the same skin"

Sumit Ahluwalia, 32, of Astoria has said his assailant was fueled by racial hatred, according to a report. Ahluwalia said the man, a Black, assaulted him on April 26 at his workplace, the Quality Inn in Brownsville. He said the man came into the lobby of the hotel at around 8 am and started shouting while the front desk lady asked him if he needed help. Ahluwalia stepped into the lobby to speak with the man and to seek the hotel security guard. At that point, the assailant "started running towards me, very fast, and he put his hand in the pocket - I thought, 'He's pulling out a gun'", the report said. Pleading with the man, the victim said, "What happened? You're my brother." The attacker responded, "You're not the same skin," Ahluwalia said, adding that the man then "banged on my head with the hammer so hard." The assailant then screamed, "I don't like you," and ran away, according to the report.

It said the victim "couldn't feel what happened with me" and was eventually taken to an emergency room. "I couldn't sleep. I had a big bump on my head. I could fall - feeling dizziness, and the next morning I went to the doctor," he said, adding that five days later, he was still feeling anxious and fearful.

"I didn't do anything... I don't deserve this. I'm a hardworking guy, wake up in the morning 6 a.m. and go home at 7 pm," he said. Police have released pictures of the suspect, who was still being sought. Advocacy group The Sikh Coalition said its legal team is providing free legal services to Ahluwalia. "We have already been in direct communication with law enforcement and demanded that investigators examine the real possibility that bias was a motive," it said, adding that anyone with information about the incident should contact the New York Police Department. The tragic incident comes as the US has witnessed a recent wave of anti-Asian hate crimes during this pandemic. Eight people, including four Sikhs, were killed in a mass shooting at a FedEx facility in Indianapolis last month.

In March last year, a man stabbed two Asian American children - aged 2 and 6 - and their father at Sam's Club in Texas because "he thought the family was Chinese, and infecting people with the coronavirus." A group of Democratic Senators in May last year said there has been a surge in hate crime against Asian-Americans amid coronavirus pandemic and had urged the Trump administration to take concrete steps to arrest the spike.





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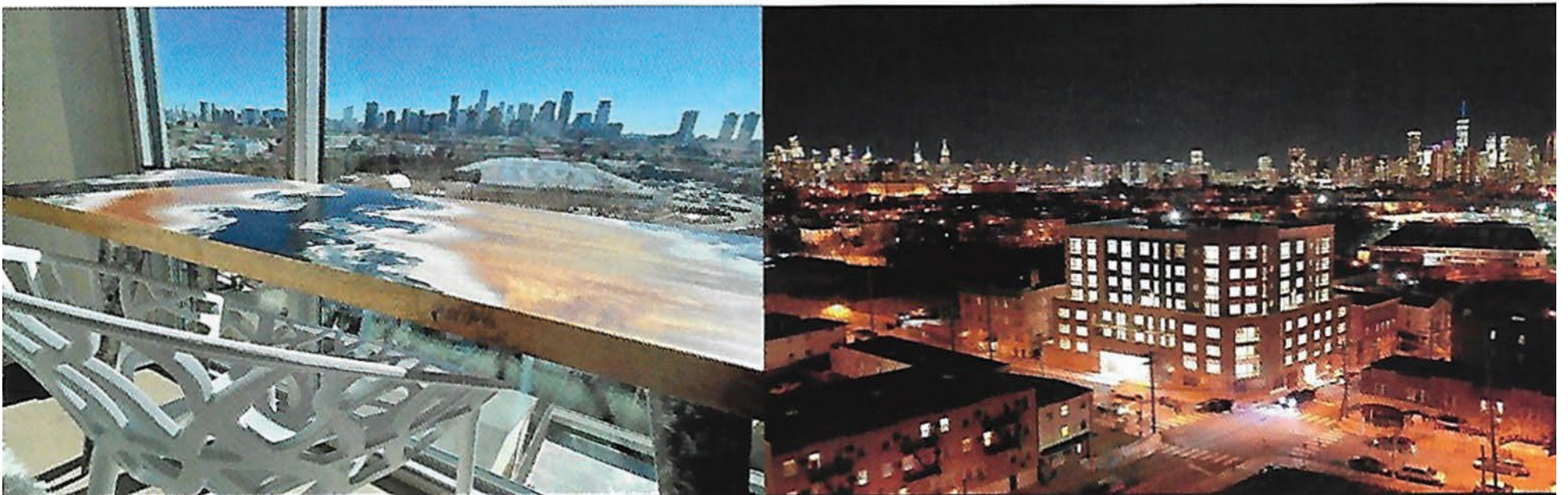
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## TN Assembly has 2 Gandhis, a Nehru and a Stalin

**CHENNAI (TIP):** What is in a name?

In Tamil Nadu, a name may be an indicator to one's political leanings, nationalist passion or the ideology of the parents of the individual.

After India's independence, especially in southern Tamil Nadu, many were named 'Bose' after freedom fighter Subhas Chandra Bose.

Similarly, the names of 'Gandhi,' 'Nehru' and 'Jawahar' are also common in the state, the objective being perpetuating the hallowed memory of freedom fighters.

Also, pure Tamil names and those in memory of leaders of the Dravidian and Left movement are common.

The subject of names is in focus again as the 16th Tamil Nadu Assembly has two 'Gandhis' one of them a Minister, a 'Nehru' who is also a Minister and a 'Stalin' who is the Chief Minister.

As is well known, late DMK patriarch M Karunanidhi (1924-2018) named his son Stalin (Born March 1, 1953) after Soviet ruler Joseph Stalin who died on March 5, 1953.

Though Joseph Stalin may have been a foreign premier and a dictator, Karunanidhi named his son out of his admiration for the Communist ideology.

R Gandhi and K N Nehru, as Ministers for Handlooms- Textiles and Municipal Administration respectively would report to Stalin!

Nehru, a party heavyweight in the Cauvery delta region won from Tiruchirappalli West and Gandhi from Ranipet segment in northern TN and BJP's M R Gandhi, a veteran party leader emerged victorious in Nagercoil constituency in Kanyakumari district in the April 6 Assembly polls.

Source: PTI

# In second wave, Covid hits rural India; cases and deaths quadruple

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** A disconcerting feature of the second wave of Covid-19 is the surge in cases in rural India. Compared with the first peak in September last year, the number of cases in India's hinterland or backward regions has quadrupled, and so has the number of the dead.

The districts covered by the Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) — 243 of the 272 for which data are available — had more than 39.16 lakh people infected with the disease as on May 5. This is more than four times the 9.5 lakh infections at the peak of the first wave on September 16, 2020.

The burden of active cases in these districts is also much higher in the second wave, which is yet to peak. The active caseload right now is more than 4.2 times the peak active caseload in the first wave. More than 7.15 lakh people in these districts are currently infected with the disease, putting under extreme stress the sub-optimal healthcare infrastructure in rural districts.

This is probably reflected in the larger number of deaths in these districts. By May 5, the 243 districts together had reported 36,523 deaths, almost four times the number of dead at the peak of the first wave last year.

By September 16, 2020, those dead in these districts numbered 9,555.

Almost 54 per cent of the 272 districts under BRGF belong to just five districts: Bihar — 38, Uttar Pradesh — 35, Madhya Pradesh — 30, Jharkhand — 23 and Odisha — 20. These states also provide much of the labour force or migrant workers that powers the urban centres in the country.

While there is no urban-rural split of coronavirus cases directly available, an analysis of the case loads and deaths in BRGF districts gives an indication of the rural spread of the pandemic since these 272 districts are primarily rural and relatively less developed.



In absolute terms, the number of infections in the 243 districts quadrupled between the first and second waves, but as a percentage of total infections in the country it has remained almost exactly the same at 18.6 per cent. But the contribution of deaths from these districts had risen significantly. By September 16 last year, deaths in these districts accounted for 11.5 per cent of the national death toll of 83,198. On May 5, however, this contribution had increased to 16 per cent.

Most of these 272 districts provide only basic healthcare facilities. The new infrastructure being created by the states are mostly in bigger towns and cities. As a result, there is a large influx of patients from these districts to the nearest big town, which is adding to the burden on the already-stressed infrastructure in towns and cities.

### Over 15% positivity in 24 states

Twenty-four states have reported a test positivity rate of more than 15 per cent for Covid-19 over the last week, the

government said on Friday, May 7.

At least 30 districts had showed "a steep upward trend" in cases over the last two weeks. The data were a "matter of great concern", the Health Ministry said.

Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Health Arti Ahuja said seven states had reported a very high test positivity rate of 30 per cent or more over the past week: Goa (48.5 per cent), Haryana (36.1 per cent), Puducherry (34.9 per cent), West Bengal (33.1 per cent), and Karnataka, Delhi, and Rajasthan (29.9 per cent each).

"There are 12 states with more than 1 lakh active cases, and seven states with 50,000 to 1 lakh active cases. Case positivity is an important indicator that shows how the cases are spread across [the country]. There are only three states with less than 5 per cent positivity, and nine states have positivity between 5 and 15 per cent. Twenty-four states have more than 15 per cent positivity. The high positivity is the cause of concern for us and the country," Ahuja said.

Source: Indian Express

## FIR filed against Kangana Ranaut for allegedly spreading hate propaganda in West Bengal

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** After being suspended on Twitter for violating their policies, a new FIR has been filed against Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut for allegedly spreading hate propaganda and inciting communal violence in West Bengal.

The complaint has been filed by an activist and spokesperson Riju Dutta who also alleged Kangana to have maligned the image of West Bengal's Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. In the letter, he has urged to take the necessary action against the 'Queen' actor.

The complaint read, "Ms Ranaut has posted several posts from her verified official Instagram handle bearing url: <https://instagram.com/kanganaranaut?igshid=2yruw6zd7j> in the 'Story' section. She has also distorted and maligned the image of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal - Smt. Mamata Banerjee. Hence, she is to be charged against hate propaganda to incite violence in West Bengal."

The action comes after Kangana, reacting to the post-poll violence in Bengal, took a direct dig at the Chief Minister of Bengal, Mamata Banerjee. After her tweets, Kangana's Twitter account was suspended, and then she started posting on Instagram.

According to a Twitter spokesperson, Kangana's account was constantly provoking anger and violence, which was diminishing the value of global public conversation on the platform.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Kangana's much-awaited project 'Thalaivi' which was slated to get a theatrical release on April 23, this year got postponed due to the rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in India. Apart from this she also has 'Tejas', 'Dhaakad', and 'Manikarnika Returns: The Legend Of Didda' in the pipeline.

Kangana has also signed up to play the role of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in an upcoming political drama.

Source: ANI





# Supply 700 MT oxygen to Delhi daily, don't make us go firm: SC tells govt

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The Supreme Court Friday, May 7, made clear to the Centre that it will have to keep supplying 700 MT of oxygen to Delhi every day till its order is modified, saying it meant business and non-compliance may force it to go firm. Two days ago, the top court had stayed the contempt proceedings initiated by Delhi High Court against central government officials for non-compliance of direction to supply 700 MT of oxygen for COVID patients to Delhi, saying putting officers in jail would not bring oxygen and efforts should be made to save lives.



government that the national capital has received 86 MT today till 9 am and 16 MT is in transit.

A bench comprising Justices DY Chandrachud and M R Shah had said however that the Centre will have to ensure supply of 700 MT of liquid medical oxygen (LMO) to the national capital daily. In the proceedings conducted via video conferencing, the bench on Friday was told by senior advocate Rahul Mehra, appearing for Delhi

"We want 700 MT to be supplied to Delhi on a daily basis. We mean business, Please don't force us to be in a situation where we have to be firm," the bench said, adding it cannot be that the supply is made for a day then so many caveats like containers are not there and there are difficulties in transportation are being put. Justice Chandrachud, speaking for the bench, said that he has consulted Justice Shah on the issue before

the hearing on Friday and the view that Delhi has to be given 700 MT LMO daily was a collective one.

We want 700 (MT of LMO) to be supplied to Delhi and we mean business. It has to be supplied and we do not want to be coercive. Our order will take time to be uploaded by 3 pm but you proceed and arrange oxygen, the bench said. Earlier, the top court had said that this is an all-India pandemic situation and it will have to find ways to ensure oxygen supply to the national capital.

The top court had said on May 5 that it cannot review its order of April 30 and the Centre will have to inch towards supply of 700 MT of oxygen daily for Delhi and asked the Union government to place before it a plan as to how it will revamp the supply to 700MT. On May 6, the Centre apprised the Supreme Court that it had complied with the order and instead of 700 MT LMO, it ensured supply of 730 MT to Delhi.

# False alarm, says Jaishankar on Indian diplomats testing positive in London

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar returned to the country from London where he had self-isolated following reports that two diplomats from the team accompanying him had tested positive for Covid.

Jaishankar suggested in a social media post that the reports of positive tests were a false alarm and said all the team members were back in the country.

After the UK media had broken the story, Jaishankar had acknowledged that he was made aware of exposure to possible Covid positive cases. And, as a measure of caution and also out of consideration for others, "I decided to conduct my engagements in the virtual mode. That will be the case with the G7 Meeting today as well," he had posted hours after an in-person meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and UK Home Secretary Priti Patel.

"There is concern the EAM might have been exposed to the virus. We will go by the British health authorities' tracking and testing system. We are concerned about our delegation. We are happy that none is unwell. I would not like to confirm the story," sources here had then said.

"It is not a straight-forward case. We are trying to work out with UK health authorities about the level of exposure. The travel plans of the delegation back to India will depend on exactly what the UK health authorities will say. The External Affairs Minister is well," they had added. *Source: TNS*

## Lockdown in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka starting May 10 as Covid cases rise

**T**he Tamil Nadu and Karnataka governments on Saturday, May 8, decided to impose a lockdown for two weeks, starting May 10 as daily cases of coronavirus disease rise unabated.

During the lockdown period in Tamil Nadu, residents can buy groceries, vegetables and meat products till 12 noon, authorities announced. Amma canteens will also function.

Transport services will also be affected as the government only allowed cabs and autos to ply for purposes of weddings, funerals, exams and jobs interviews. All government and private offices have been asked to allow their staff to work from home.

Movement of healthcare workers, caregivers and volunteers has been allowed. However, they will need to show valid identity proof to police, if required.

Until the lockdown begins, all shops will remain open on Saturday and Sunday from 6am to 9pm only. Tamil Nadu is among the ten states that are reporting a spike in daily cases of infection. According to the Union ministry of health and family welfare, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala Karnataka, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan, accounts for 71.81 per cent of new Covid-19 cases.

According to the revised guidelines in Karnataka, only flights and trains scheduled will continue to operate during this period. "Flight and train tickets shall serve as the passes for movement of persons by personal vehicles/taxis/cab aggregators/ autorickshaws to board flight and trains.

## Black fungus found in Covid-19 patients but 'no big outbreak': NITI Aayog member



**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Mucormycosis, a fungal infection, is being found in COVID-19 patients and largely in cases of those who are diabetic but there is "no big outbreak", Niti Aayog Member (Health) V K Paul said on Friday, May 7. The situation is being monitored and the treatment for mucormycosis is available, he said.

This comes a day after a leading private hospital in Delhi flagged the rising number of COVID-triggered mucormycosis or black fungus cases. Addressing a press conference here, Paul said, "The fungal infection called mucormycosis is being found in patients of COVID-19 disease. It is caused by a fungus named mucor, which is found on wet surfaces. It, to a large extent, is happening to people who have diabetes. It is very

uncommon in those who are not diabetic. There is no big outbreak and we are monitoring it." "Mucor attacks people with uncontrolled sugar. Other than that, if the diabetes patient is taking immune suppressive medicines, steroids, or has cancer, then the impact of mucormycosis is more on that person. If these patients are exposed to wet surfaces, then the chances of getting this disease increases," he said.

Paul said drugs that suppress the immune system but are life-saving like dexamethasone, prednisolone, methylprednisolone, dexamethasone etc., are already being used to treat COVID-19 patients. "All these are related compounds. When these are used, the immune system gets suppressed, even in persons who are diabetic, and this fungus attacks," he said.

## 2nd SIT on Kotkapura firing, report in 6 months

**CHANDIGARH (TIP):** Following pressure by Congress leaders and MLAs to ensure justice in the Kotkapura police firing case ahead of the 2022 Assembly elections, CM Capt Amarinder Singh on Friday, May 7, set up a three-member SIT, headed by LK Yadav, ADGP, Vigilance Bureau, to probe the matter.

Rakesh Aggarwal, Commissioner (Ludhiana Range), and Surjit Singh, DIG (Faridkot Range), are the other two members.

The SIT will complete the probe in six months preferably. As per the orders issued by the Home Department, the SIT would ensure compliance of the directions of the Punjab and Haryana HC, stipulating that there would be no interference from any quarter, internal or external, in the investigation process. A senior PPCC leader said resentment was building up among the MLAs in the wake of inordinate delay in finalising the SIT members. "The development will help abate the build-up, at least for the time being," he said.

Supporting the resentful Congress leaders, Rajya Sabha MP Partap Bajwa said, "The leaders, worried about their future, want the government to act fast." In a letter to the CM, Bajwa said he was disappointed that no meeting of Punjab MPs had been called after the May 4 meet was cancelled.

*Source: TNS*



# India logs 401,078 cases, 4,187 deaths as 2nd wave hammers country

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** India on Saturday, May 8, recorded 401,078 new coronavirus disease (Covid-19) cases and 4,187 deaths in the last 24 hours, taking the caseload and death toll to 21,892,676 and 238,270 respectively, according to the Union health ministry's dashboard.

India is currently seeing a tsunami of cases and deaths under the deadlier second wave of the Covid-19 disease pandemic. According to the Union health ministry, 10 states including Karnataka, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Delhi reported 71.81% of the new cases seen on Friday.

Karnataka, which is the second worst hit state from the pandemic has recorded over 1.8 million cases so far. On Friday, Karnataka saw the highest single-day jump in daily deaths at 592 while 48,791 more people were found out to be positive for Covid-19. The state will be placed under a complete lockdown from 6 am on May 10 to 6 am on May 24 to curb the spread of the disease, chief minister BS Yediyurappa announced on Friday.

Maharashtra, meanwhile, witnessed a dip in its daily tally on Friday after 54,022 new cases were reported, taking the caseload to 4,996,758 including 74,413 deaths and 4,265,326 recoveries. The Centre pointed out on Friday that Maharashtra along with Delhi, Uttarakhand and other states is showing early signs of plateauing or decrease in daily infections.

While the Indian government has so far resisted calls for another national lockdown, states have stepped up restrictions including localized lockdowns and curfews. But health-care experts are worried that the pandemic is now spreading into small towns and villages, where the health infrastructure is not advanced enough to support a surge in cases.

The second wave began in February but cases rose at an alarming rate starting in April. The World Health Organization has said that the sharp rise in infections may be partly due to multiple mutated versions of the virus circulating in the country, including the local B.1.617 variant and the B.1.1.7 variant that was detected in the UK.

But, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has drawn criticism for allowing large crowds to gather for religious festivals and election rallies throughout the country earlier this year and then leaving the bulk of responsibility for fighting the outbreak to state governments. India's hospitals are overwhelmed and facing shortages of beds, medical oxygen and medication to treat Covid-19 patients.

India's Supreme Court reportedly told the central government to start preparing for an anticipated third wave of outbreak and revamp its formula to distribute oxygen across the country. That comes a day after the top court gave the government 24 hours to formulate a plan to meet Delhi's oxygen requirement.



A woman with breathing problem waits inside an ambulance for her turn to enter a COVID-19 hospital for treatment. (Pic source: REUTERS)

## Patent waivers alone may not lead to quick vaccine access, say experts

The waiving off of patents alone is unlikely to help improve vaccine availability anytime soon, scientists, legal experts and pharma industry executives said, pointing to the complicated technical know-how, raw materials and infrastructure required to make vaccines while ensuring they are as safe and effective as the original developer intended it to be.

Several countries, including the US, France and the European Union are considering backing efforts countries such as India and South Africa for a global waiver of coronavirus vaccine patents to boost supplies.

While such a move could well be the first step in broadening access, patents alone do little to allow someone else to make biological therapeutics such as vaccines, unlike in the case of generic drugs, which are chemicals and can be replicated more easily with a recipe book of sorts.

"Patents are a way of protection of your intellectual and commercial information, speaking from a legal point of view. But just by reading a patent, does not necessarily offer the ability to replicate the product or the process, because while a patent does share a lot of the generic information, it protects the specifics, and it is not a self-guide," said Prabuddha Kundu, co-



founder and managing director at Premas Biotech, which is working on an oral Covid-19 vaccine.

To understand the challenge, consider the case of some coronavirus vaccines: AstraZeneca and J&J's vaccines involve a bio-engineered adenovirus that expresses the Sars-Cov-2's spike protein; Novavax's vaccine consists directly of the spike protein that has been cultured and grown in

moth cells in labs.

"A chemical entity and a biological entity are very different. Even a simple protein, for example, is hundred times more complex or has more components than a drug like, say, paracetamol. There can be many ways to make paracetamol, and it would turn out to be exactly that but even if there were few ways to produce the protein, the final product varies in its final shape and form," added Kundu.

For that, he added, "you must understand the process so well, that every time you carry it out, you end up with exactly the same product. In many situations in biologics, the process is the product".

Legal experts in the pharma field said this constitutes know-how, which often is a trade secret. "There is a clear divide between a patent and a trade secret. The technical know-how is proprietary. TRIPS provides for protection of undisclosed information, which would not be found in patents," said Dev Robinson, partner and head, Intellectual Property, at Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas.

TRIPS refers to Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights agreement under the World Trade Organization (WTO), the specific framework that India and South Africa have sought waivers under.

Source: HT



# A tragedy of errors: Lack of foresight caused Covid crisis

As India's coronavirus tally reached 21,892,676 on Saturday, the Covid-19 crisis in the country continues to grab global headlines.

From featuring on the frontpage of newspapers around the world to being the centre of debates on television channels like the CNN, the coronavirus situation has been at the centrestage ever since the second wave of the pandemic hit the country.

The surge in cases has battered its already feeble healthcare system and an acute shortage in supply of vaccines have hit inoculation drives in most states. Thousands of Covid patients have been scrambling to find hospital beds, oxygen cylinders and life-saving medication amidst an acute shortage of medical resources in the country. India is also the only country to record over 4 lakh daily cases since the start of the pandemic.

At a time when India records over 3.5 lakh cases and 3,000 deaths a day, we take a look at how the international media has been reporting about the country's crisis:

India has been hit by the second wave of the pandemic like no other country and according to the New York Times, health experts and analysts blamed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "overconfidence" for it. "Independent health experts and political analysts say that Modi's overconfidence and his domineering leadership style bear a huge share of the responsibility. Critics say his administration was determined to cast an image of India as back on track and open for business despite lingering risks," the article read.

## 'India desperate for oxygen, its politicians deny there's a problem': The Guardian

In an opinion piece published in the Guardian, the writer says that at a time when the country scrambles to gather oxygen for its Covid-19 patients, many of whom have even died because of its shortage, there are political leaders who not only disregard the crisis but also threaten to take action against people who voice their opinion regarding it.

"The chief minister of Uttar Pradesh has threatened legal action against anyone who complains of oxygen shortages because he insists there is no such shortage. He has recently threatened to seize the property of people complaining of the unavailability of oxygen because they are lying rumour-mongers, spreading panic," the article read. Blaming the politicians of the country for the current scenario, the article added, "The Bharatiya Janata party's chief minister of Uttarakhand (the Himalayan state bordering Uttar Pradesh) allows the largest riverside pilgrimage in the world, the Kumbh Mela, to gather right in the middle of the second wave, because astrologers rule that it has to happen a year ahead of schedule. His decision has the prime minister's blessing."

## 'PM Modi could have prevented India's devastating crisis, critics say. He didn't': CNN

Attributing election rallies to the surge in Covid cases across the country, an



Staff at the Ghazipur crematorium in Delhi cart in fresh logs as funeral pyres burn all around them. (Pic source: Getty Images)



SPACE CRUNCH: Covid patients share a bed at a Kanpur hospital (Pic source: India Today)



HUGE DEMAND: People queuing to fill oxygen cylinders in Lucknow (Pic source: Getty Images)

article in CNN read, "On April 17, ahead of a state election, a maskless Prime Minister Narendra Modi boasted to a sea of cheering supporters: 'I've never ever seen such huge crowds at a rally.' His country was on the brink of a humanitarian crisis. That day, India recorded more than 261,000 new coronavirus cases — more than many countries have seen during the entire pandemic."

Stating that that responsibility for India's second wave belonged "first and foremost" to the government, an expert CNN spoke to said, "People expect their governments to assure them that they are in charge and taking care of things ... but the government is almost missing in

action. Now that India is facing the worst crisis, in my lifetime, certainly, where is the Prime Minister?"

## 'India Is What Happens When Rich People Do Nothing': The Atlantic

In an editorial, Vidya Krishnan stated that the Narendra Modi government did very little in the time it got between the first and second wave to help avert the current crisis.

"After the virus landed on India's shores, he imposed a brutal shutdown—one that largely hurt the poorest and most vulnerable — without consulting the nation's top scientists, yet did not use the time to build up the country's health-care infrastructure...and rather than taking

advantage of low case counts in prior months, his government offered an air of triumphalism, allowing enormous Hindu religious festivals and crowded sporting competitions to go ahead. Modi's ruling Hindu-nationalist party has been accused of hoarding lifesaving drugs, and has held mass election rallies cum super-spreader events that would make Donald Trump blush," the article read.

## 'More funeral pyres will burn unless Modi takes accountability': Financial Times, UK

In an article titled "The tragedy of India's second wave", the Financial Times warns that unless Modi takes accountability for his role in this crisis, "more funeral pyres will burn across his nation".

"With reports of people dying in the streets outside overwhelmed hospitals running short of oxygen, India today perhaps most closely resembles the worst-case scenarios painted when the virus was identified 16 months ago. Like populists elsewhere, Modi will be reluctant to take actions that might imply his government's earlier mistakes fuelled today's outbreak. Unless he does, more funeral pyres will burn across his nation," the article read.

## 'Narendra Modi's lack of foresight z caused the crisis': Le Monde

An editorial published in French newspaper Le Monde says that Modi's "lack of foresight, arrogance, and demagoguery are evidently among the causes of a situation that now seems out of control".

"The Prime Minister, after having paralyzed and traumatized his country in 2020 by decreeing brutal confinement, abandoning millions of migrant workers, completely lowered his guard at the beginning of 2021," it stated.

## 'It isn't just Modi, India's media must also take responsibility for Covid-19 crisis': Time Magazine

The Time Magazine, in an opinion piece, has called out the Indian media over "exaggerating the government's successes", saying that it is this "lack of accountability" that led to the current crisis.

"Many Hindi- and English-language news channels, as well as regional news outlets, are unabashedly pro-Modi. They have routinely exaggerated the government's successes and either glossed over its failures or spun ways to pin them on Modi's discontents: the opposition, liberals, Muslims, activists, leftists, protesters, NGOs, and other assorted anti-nationals," the article read.

It added, "The media protected Modi from any proper public scrutiny of his initial handling of the pandemic. He made repeated television appearances in which he said little of substance and offered no concrete plans to tackle the crisis. Instead, he called for festivals of sound and light, and ordered the armed forces to shower flowers on hospitals — all of it hyped up by dotting anchors as proof of Modi's strong leadership."

Source: Indian Express



# The Promise I could not Keep

INDRAJIT S SALUJA



Sardarni Mohinder Kaur lived to be 93, passed away on May 2, 2011

My mother, Mohinder Kaur, kept telling me over the phone from India "You will not come to see me. You are too busy". And each time, I tried to convince her that I would. And she would take a deep sigh and say "Yes, after I am gone".

We were separated for over 7 years during which I did not visit her. I came to the US in 2003, and a quirk of events did not allow me to visit India for the next more than 7 years. It was only in November 2010 that I got my Green Card and was comfortable visiting India.

Somewhere in the beginning of 2010 my mother fell sick which compelled her to curtail her physical activity. Given to an active life which saw her keeping herself busy in domestic chores, she was suddenly pushed into inactivity which made her over the months sicker despite

the fact that she was being well looked after by my son Ashish and his wife Madhu. My daughter Jaskiran was very fond of her grandmother, and the grandmother and granddaughter immensely enjoyed each other's company. My youngest son Chitagam, a very naughty child, of whom my mother was very fond, missed her after joining me in the US. He would often tell me that he would go to see Mataji (my mother was called Mata ji by all children) as soon as he got his Green Card. And that's what he did.

As soon as he got his Green Card in November 2010, he flew to India in early 2011 to be by the side of his ailing grandmother. It did make Mata ji happy. But she was not satisfied with his presence alone. She wanted her most loved son (I am the eldest child in her family) to be with her.

By January 2011, Mata ji got sicker. Lack of physical movements took a toll on her health. She grew weak, and ultimately was confined to bed. Agam took good care of his grandmother as did my eldest son Ashish and his wife Madhu. But the old woman, now 93, longed to see her son she loved the most among her 7 children.

And, here I was, stuck in work. The Indian Panorama was in competition with many other desi newspapers, some with enormous resources, and it required truly hard and dedicated work to survive. With my eyes fixed on the New Year edition, which for all desi newspapers is an occasion to rake in a few extra dollars and draw the attention of the community, I said to myself: "Well, Agam is there looking after Mata Ji. Let

me finish with the New Year edition, and then the Republic Day edition towards the end of January, I will then have enough time to spend with her."

I told Mata ji about my travel plans. She listened calmly, and then commented: "You will have something important coming up again after the Republic Day". I assured her that nothing would stop me from visiting her after I was done with the Republic Day.

Now, the month of April is significant for the Sikhs. Around the middle of April falls the Vaisakhi, which is the day of creation of Khalsa (birthday of the Sikhs) by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. It is a great occasion, celebrated with enthusiasm in the great City of New York when the Sikh community from adjoining States throngs in thousands to participate in an iconic Sikh Day Parade. As any other newspaper publication having readership among the Sikh community, views the historic event as an opportunity to promote itself, The Indian Panorama also saw and wished to exploit the opportunity. So, I decided that I will visit India in May. Why in May? One, I will be comparatively free until June end, and will be able to spend more time with Mata ji. Two, May 8 happens to be my wedding day, and I will be with the family to recall the wonderful day the family spent together when my wife was alive. By the way, my wife, Gurdarshan Kaur, who married me for love in 1977, died fighting multiple ailments in 2007, while I was away in the US.

So, to Mataji's question somewhere in January 2011 when I was planning a visit home, I said that my visit was delayed and that I would see her in May. I vividly

remember her disappointment. She was silent for a while, and then said, "As you like it. Stay blessed". I could understand her pain. I tried all verbal jugglery and sophistry to convince her that it was a genuine compulsion for me to delay my trip to India, and that I would certainly see her in May. She listened calmly. She did not interrupt me in my long explanation, and assurances that I would soon be seeing her in May. And then, she said, it is January, and you want to visit me in May. How many months? Do you call it soon? I may not be here when you come. I know you will come but only after I am gone".

Till today, I haven't forgotten her words. She must have felt cheated when I did not join her in early May. My hollow promises to visit her could not provide her any more oxygen. She lost hope and the desire to breathe. She decided it was an endless wait. So, on May 2, 2011, she bade goodbye to the world.

Mata ji, I haven't forgiven myself for causing you disappointment and pain. Sometimes, I feel, I am responsible for forcing you into your end. Please forgive me. You loved me so much. You have been my mother and my God. I miss you, and that's why I often turn to your portrait hung above the headboard of my bed, and speak with you, and I believe, you hear me as patiently as you did when I told you I would come soon, but now you don't answer. You don't say any more "I know you will come after I am gone" You were so prophetic. But let me tell you, and very honestly this time, that though I am not sure when, I will certainly come and see you.

Love you Mata ji.

## My thoughts on Mother's Day 2021

DR. VK RAJU



Seated Left to right: Syamala, Lacchi, Leela  
Standing Left to Right: Dr. VK Raju, Rani,  
Dr. B R K Rao

**My mother used to say "For doing a good thing, you don't need a good time (auspicious). Just do it.**

Vedas (the oldest manuscripts of Hinduism) say "Matru Devo Bhava". Revere your mother as God. In the Western literature it is said "God created mother because he (she) could not be everywhere".

Every year I plant 100 trees in US national forest/ park on her death anniversary and host a small religious get together of leaders of multiple religions (Hindu, Muslim, Buddhism, and others).

My mother was very broad minded and very generous. In south India, people look for auspicious day to start a project etc. When they are caught up in waiting for this auspicious time and day, they may lose some opportunities and feel sorry later.

My mother used to say "For doing a good thing, you don't need a good time (auspicious). Just do it.

She did not encourage us to go to temples and used to say that God is there in every one of us. She used to recite yoga vasista in the mornings, but she

never insisted her children to do the same.

She believed in "Children learn what they live rather than what they are preached"

My dad died when I was five years old.

Let us look at what the World religions say about women.

Koran and women: When Koran speaks about the souls of human beings, it doesn't differentiate between man and woman.

Bible and woman: God is within her. She will not fail.

Buddhism and woman: Buddhist savior goddess (Tara) with numerous forms, widely popular in Nepal, Tibet, and Mongolia. She is the feminine counterpart of Bodhisattva (Buddha to be).

Jainism and woman: Jainism is a religion of religious equality, devoted to recognizing the rights of all living creatures, so not surprisingly it accepts that women are able to play their part on the road to liberation.

Hinduism and woman: The Devi Sukta

hymn of Rigveda, a scripture of Hinduism, declares the feminine energy as the essence of the universe, the one who creates all matter and consciousness the eternal and infinite, the metaphysical and empirical reality (Brahman), the soul (supreme self) of everything. The woman is celebrated as the most powerful and the empowering force in Hindu Upanishads. There are millions of Hindu deities. Most by far, are Goddesses.

In spite of all wonderful views expressed in all these religions, there are also diverse and conflicting views on the position of women. Woman is the conservator of tradition, but she is also the absorber of the shocks of the future.

Only mothers do not get sick leave, casual leave, public holiday, religious holiday, Bereavement leave, compensatory leave, sabbatical leave, and unpaid leave. (They never get any pay.)

Call her today and express how grateful you are.



# MY MOTHER IS MY GOD

YOSHITA SINGH



Daughters with Mother. L to R: Yosha Saluja, mother Bimla Singh, Yoshita Singh

My mother, Mrs Bimla Singh, is my superwoman. There is nothing she cannot do. No matter how tough the circumstances are, how insurmountable the problems are, she always achieves what seems impossible. And I always marvel at her composure, the calmness with which she

accomplishes everything.

My mother, Mrs Bimla Singh, is my role model. A working woman for over three decades, she carried out her duties with thorough professionalism and extraordinary dedication. And every day after returning from long hours of work, she would sit with my twin sister Yosha and I to prepare us for school tests and ensure we finish our homework. She would not tolerate any laxity on our part when it came to studies and I am grateful she brought us up that way. She made it seem so easy - working a 9-5 job, then coming home and taking care of us. It was only when I too became a working mom that I realized it is not easy to balance personal and professional life and the amount of sacrifices, commitment and hard work it takes to achieve and maintain that balance. Yet, my mother made it seem so effortless. I realize that there must have been times when circumstances would have overwhelmed Mummy, when she would have been tired and stressed, but she

never lost her composure. Mummy has confronted life's challenges head on - with courage in her heart, smile on her face and her head held high.

My mother, Mrs Bimla Singh, is a selfless woman whose unconditional love and support has been the bedrock of our family. Over the years, I have seen her standing shoulder to shoulder with my father Mr Ravindra Singh, providing unflinching and unwavering support to him, through good times and tough times, in sickness and in health. All the way, showing me that true wealth is not the balance in a bank account but a heart full of love and compassion - not just for one's family but for strangers in need.

My mother, Mrs Bimla Singh, epitomizes the perfect daughter, sister, wife, daughter-in-law, mother, aunt, grandmother, friend. It's my greatest blessing to be born as her daughter. I want to be like her, I'm trying to be her like. She and my father have instilled in Yosha and I strong values and morals that have provided a sturdy foundation to

us for a life of integrity and empathy - values that we are now endeavoring to pass on to our children. It is through their life that we learnt the irrefutable value of hard work and perseverance, the importance of treating everyone with respect, compassion towards all, to live our life with honesty, free from fear and our heads held high - no matter what the circumstances, that we must learn from both our successes and failures and to always be grateful. My parents are the wind beneath the wings of my sister and I. For the roots they gave me and for my wings, I am eternally grateful.

My mother, Mrs Bimla Singh, is my God. Mummy, I find my strength in you, in your smile, your effervescent eyes, in your gentle heart and beautiful soul. You mean the world to me. I am blessed because I grew from you. I am rich because I have your values. I am me because of you.

Here's to you Mummy. Happy Mother's Day Mummy. Thank you for everything. I love you more than I can say.

## My best friend ever

BIDISHA ROY



Tripti Roy, who passed away in 2014, with her daughters Papia (Left) and Bidisha

My mother Tripti Roy was my best friend ever. I've never seen a simple, honest, affectionate person like her who dedicated her entire life for others. When I was a kid, it used to make me unhappy that she is giving equal care to everyone around her. Obviously, it used to make me angry as I was not ready to share my mom!! Then when I grew up, I realized how fortunate I am to be a child of a mother who is loved by so many people more than their own mothers!!

She was a brilliant student who got letter marks in mathematics and Sanskrit in matriculation. My father Prof Dhiranando Roy was very proud of the 'most intelligent student of his life' who eventually became his life partner. She was a renowned teacher and taught poor students till her last. She used to help so many needy families without any publicity. A devotee of Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda, my mother was a true 'religious' person who firmly believed that 'We come nearest to the great when we are great in humility' and 'Love is life, hatred is death.'

For me, she is the epitome of humanity and will always remain. Miss you Maa!!!

## There is no greater, more unselfish love, than that of a mother

AMITA SINGH



Amita Singh with mom Laj Verma (left)

There is no greater, more unselfish love, than that of a mother. I truly in my heart believe that. My earliest memories of my mom are of her nurturing, protective instinct.

One who always dressed me well and took pride in every accomplishment of mine. She wanted me to excel not just in academics, but in arts, crafts, drama, you name it. Not an easy feat in the early sixties. One stare from her was enough to make me realize my place. Every time she left me in boarding school, I remember her wearing dark glasses, so I wouldn't see her tears.

She stood beside me yet gave me wings to fly. We both knew our place in each other's life and cherished it. She was old school, she was modern. She went from a gurukul school to living in Baghdad, London and India. Learning and respecting cultures and languages along the way.

It takes giving birth to and nurturing your own child, to truly recognize the efforts and sacrifices of a mom.

Laj Verma, my mom is always with me, guiding me in love.

Love you MOM!!!

## Have no words to describe adequately my loving mother

ANU JAIN



Anu Jain and mother Nirjala Saraf (right)

I don't even have words to describe my Maa and my love for her. Her strong personality and loving nature have always made me feel protected and will continue to do so along with never letting one day pass without making me inspired. I have made her upset, angry at me, and this lady still thinks about me and what's good for me. She has always been there for me in one way or the other to support me even when I didn't deserve it.

A mother's love is truly unconditional and my Maa is one perfect example of it. She is my sister, my friend, my mom, my first love (even before I was born), my everything and anything. I THANK GOD every day for giving me such a wonderful, sometimes understanding, fun, loving, and really loving angel in my life. A role model is someone you see on a daily basis, and you learn from them. I could not have asked for a better role model than you Mom. These words are absolutely nothing in comparison to how I feel for my mom Love her like anything!!!!

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY. LOVE YOU MAA.



## Grieving for my Mother



Sardarni Pritam Kaur

*My mother bade adieu to the mortal world,  
Leaving behind a devastating void.  
I cherish her fond memories all the time.  
As her soul took flight, yet I search for her, all  
around.*

*Nobody returns from that realm.  
Many dreams remained unfulfilled,  
As I failed to perform several duties.  
Although there was nothing lacking in my  
mother's love for me.*

*Wherever I go I visualize my Mother.  
Although it's all an illusion.  
Then, reality dawns upon me.  
And I scream in utter grief and pain.*

*Whenever I think of my Mother,  
I feel her nurturing care and love.  
And I can say, with utmost certainty,  
Only a Mother can bestow love, unconditionally.*

*It's difficult for children to endure.  
Yet, the unbearable we shall have to bear.  
Despite realizing that death is a stark reality,  
A mother's love remains undeniably unforgettable.*

*I moved towards the cremation site.  
While setting the funeral-pyre afire,  
I wept and wailed in sheer despair;  
But traditions and ceremonies are a must.*

*My Mother sacrificed herself upon all of her  
children,*

*Whom she loved more than her life.  
Nobody would tell this son now,  
To return home soon, safe and sound.*

*Love your parents wholeheartedly,  
As they would never be found again.  
Says Subhaanpuri "don't ever forget:  
First revere your parents and then venerate your  
Guru".*



Raghbir Singh Subhanpur

**(Originally written in Punjabi.  
Translated into English by Amarjeet Singh Anand)**

## Dr. Renee Mehrra Pays Tribute to her mother Kunti Mehra who passed away on Jan 25, 2021 at 80

**DR. RENEE MEHRRRA**

### Losing Half Your Soul: Ode to. Mom

*Losing Half your Soul  
Your lifeline, every breath you have taken  
A new crippling realization  
As your soul weeps, your heart lacerated.  
Your oxygen is not beside you;  
Moved to a new residence of eternal bliss  
So happy for you my dearest mom  
While I unsuccessfully try to pick up my shattered pieces  
Of our once small, blessed universe;  
Sharing life to the last crumb,  
Day and night belonging only to us;  
Divine and fulfilling,  
One soul, one heart, two bodies  
Only we understood this unique, privileged bond  
How blessed was I  
Thinking this happiness will last forever.  
But your breaths ran out,  
And mine still to go;  
Drowned in my own salty tears,*

*Grace and Grief side by side  
Remembering your 4 Cs:  
Be content with what you have,  
Never compare, complain and criticize  
Love yourself, Love All,  
And above all, keep that luring smile.  
You are now my guardian angel,  
My dearest Mom There and Here*



Renee Mehrra with her mother Kunti Mehra

### My Mom, My Hero

*Simplicity personified,  
Humility exemplary.  
Innocent like a flowering tiny bud,  
You were and always will be my hero.  
The cool wind beneath my rusty wings,  
Gentle aura of a divine soul,  
How much I miss your sweet fragrance,  
Holding tightly to our hidden dreams,  
As they carve new horizons,  
With your quiet divine touch,  
While you lovingly watch over me  
From heavens above.*

## Tough Love - My mother Dhinki

**ASHOOK RAMSARAN**



Ashook Ramsaran with mother Dhinki Ramlochan

**M**y mother was a blessing with a special, loving and caring bond which we, her children, shared with her while we lived in Guyana and continued in USA when she migrated in 1977 with my father. My mother passed away in 2008 while my father a few years earlier.

Although we were farming villagers, my mother taught us love with hard realities of discipline with tough love; she taught us to eat and dress well, and how to be clean and neat. And best, of all she taught us those things in her own way to make us remember. She knew each of us individually and cared for us lovingly.

My mother faced adversity like a champion. She never complained except for medical problems which were gradually more intense as she advanced in age. After my father passed away, I knew that my mother would feel lonely even though she was living with my sister and her family. I made sure I called her each day no matter where in the world I would be. She looked forward anxiously to receiving my telephone calls and would proudly tell others with happiness and smiles.

Her experiences were sometimes harsh and have become memorable for us. She showed us strength and resilience and we learned from her how to cope with difficult situations. No matter how harsh or tough, she persevered and survived, and we are all grateful for that. She taught us well in that respect and we will always have fond memories.

## To me, mother comes before God

**TIRLOK MALIK**

*If you are truly able to say to yourself:  
"I was / am a good son or daughter to my parents, that's the  
greatest reward or award you got in life for yourself.*

**"MERE PASS MAA HAI"  
(I have my mother with me).**

These words spoken by Shashi Kapoor to Amitabh Bachchan in Yash Chopra's movie "DEEWAAR" provokes an emotion in most human beings that the woman who gives you birth and unconditional love throughout your life, and if you have her with you today, it is the greatest real priceless wealth

If she is not alive today and you feel her everlasting love and memories and If you are truly able to say to yourself "I was /am a good son or daughter to my parents, that is the greatest reward or award you got in life for yourself.

Humbly and happily, I can say that for myself that I was there for my parents when they needed me.

I like to suggest to all readers be there for your parents when they need you. Tell them you love them as often as possible.

we all have wonderful loving memories and fights with our mothers, it's good to revisit them quietly in our heart and smile.

I personally put my mother before God.

I recall my childhood memories of her loving care, her teaching me discipline, cooking healthy Indian food, respecting elders and women, about spirituality, about being grateful to the universe for what I was given, and a lot more I learnt from her.

I always felt loved and cared for by my mother, even though many times I was scolded by her even in my adult life for good reasons when my behavior was not to her standard. When I look back at those scolded moments today, I smile. She was married to a great man. Amrit Malik, my loving caring father, my friend, my guide. I also have three good, loving siblings Chander, Raaj and Niru.

My mother Tara Malik left for her spiritual home in heaven in 2004, but here I say to her: Every day is a Mother's Day for me.

I love you very much and I always feel your presence with me. Thank you for all you did for me.



Tirlok Malik with his mother, Tara Malik (right) at a New Year party at his restaurant India Café in Manhattan



# Down Memory Lane

(EXTRACTS FROM THE CHRONICLES OF "A Tribute to my Mother" by Devraj N Aiyar ", a book in honor of his mother C GOMATHY NARAYAN)

**February 7th, 1983**

For the first time in her life, she got dressed to attend a job interview. Earlier her friend Maria had informed, that the only teacher for the kindergarten at the 'Wees English High School' at Thane had left on a family emergency without prior notice. The school authorities were fervently seeking someone to fill that slot.

She wore an old saree, ironed well, matching blouse, faded slippers and handbag

That was the best she could manage. Her hopes of being hired was next to none but she was determined to try

She took the bus from home feeling a little let down. No one at home imagined she stood a chance. With no suitable qualification or experience, barely able to communicate in English, the possibility of her securing the job was unthinkable. They loved her but were reluctant, to accompany her to the school. Her husband Narayan and her two sons Dev and Ganpat, even joked about it.

The bus ride took 30 minutes. Her world was full of insecurities. Financial conditions at home seemed to deteriorate each passing day. Her husband, Narayan, was jobless for the last 3 years, all her jewelry either sold or pawned. Paying rent, their children's school fees and providing food was a daily challenge. They were drowned in debt.

As she alighted from the bus and climbed the stony path, towards the school, feeling extremely nervous, she did, what she always did, in the face of challenging circumstances. She prayed to Lord Ganesha.

HE had never let her down. But today.....

The interview was brief, the school seemed very desperate, yet they asked her to conduct a live class to evaluate. She walked into the classroom, her heart pounding. Earlier her friend had advised to read so loud that all the kids would pay attention. She did just that. She had a pleasing personality with an infectious smile, the children took on immediately.

The principal Mr Raghunath asked her to stay back and continue for the rest of the day. She was too nervous to let him know that she had come unprepared. Her family would be expecting her back. Nor had she carried any lunch.

She held a few more classes, some drawing lessons, generally keeping the kids engaged. The final bell rang at 3.30 pm and the kids started to leave with a "Thank you Teacher". Her heart swelled with pride.

Suddenly, the head mistress Ms Susamma appeared and congratulated her with the good news. The school had decided to hire her. Her eyes welled up with tears. Silently she thanked the Lord. It was His doing.

She climbed down towards the bus stop and what she saw left her stunned and speechless. Her whole family were waiting to receive her.

They had called up the school and found she was conducting a class.

Lots of hugs and handshakes. She had done the unthinkable.

With the minutest of details, she narrated all that had transpired. Her worries vanished as she basked in this unfamiliar terrain of glory. This morning they were all too embarrassed to accompany her. Now they were proudly escorting her back home.

**April 16th, 1983**

It happened just over two months after she was hired at the school, around 11.00pm.

Narayan had gotten a job a month back. It did not pay much but kept him from getting depressed. In the past, he had worked as the Manager at Ace Plastics, Thane a company owned by Mr Sawant, the son in law to Mr

Naik, then Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

Narayan had headed that unit for over a decade and enjoyed several perks at that job. The company shutdown on account of labor strike.

Those days, at home, Narayan always kept ready stock of Haywards, a popular whisky in India. It was a strong brew and priced very reasonably. He used to gulp down more than a few pegs every night. Once Ace Plastics shut down, he developed the habit of drinking both at noon and evening every day, before lunch and dinner. The state of unemployment aggravated his addiction to alcohol.

His health had also suffered immensely due to his drinking habits. In the end, he was forced to quit for both health and financial reasons.

His new job did bring some income to the household but it was a major compromise to his ego. The scaling down in his career bothered him a lot. He never mentioned it to her, but she could sense it every day he returned back from work, at his friend Abraham's office. He had generally become quieter. It also bothered him that she had taken up a job on account of his long spell of joblessness. The family was going through severe financial stress and he silently blamed himself for it.

That night he was lying down watching her as she finished washing the utensils and wrapping up all the chores of the day. She suddenly heard him gasping for breath and rushed to his side. He was struggling to breathe. She screamed, as he laid his head on her lap as if trying to rest. Her elder son Dev in the adjacent room rushed in. She asked him to fetch the doctor.

The next 20 minutes transformed her life forever.

The doctor confirmed, Narayan had suffered a massive heart attack, it was too late. He was gone. She couldn't believe, it was happening to her. He was just 42. With their combined income, they were all geared up to come out of this financial mess and start afresh. It would take time but at least they were all together. Narayan had promised to take all of them to South India, their native place, during the next holidays. She was looking forward to that trip.

One instant, the horizon appeared very colorful. It seemed like life was getting back on track. The next moment it was all over. Her hopes were shattered, dreams crushed.

She was all alone with two sons. They were 17 and 10. She was only 38.

**2021 April 30th, New Jersey**

38 years had passed since Narayan passed away. It didn't seem that long.

These days, she stayed with her younger son Ganpat at his house at Parsippany.

His elder daughter Aishwarya had turned 12 just a week back. His wife Ranjini had delivered a healthy and beautiful baby girl Annanya on September 15th, 2020 and the entire household revolved around her.

Both Dev's wife Usha and Ganpat were born on Sept 15th.

That was a coincidence. Annanya's was planned. Thus, three members of the family celebrated their birthday on Sept 15th.

Dev lived at East Hanover just about 3 miles away. Today he picked her and drove her to the eye specialist at NYU Langone Eye Center at New York. She chatted jovially as they crossed the Holland tunnel into New York. Time and again their conversation would get interrupted with calls from his office. She would wait and then continue exactly from where she had paused. He would listen attentively and ask her questions. Yet she knew his mind was elsewhere, his office and business drew all his attention.



*C Gomathy Narayan, with sons, daughters-in-law, and granddaughter at the office. L to R: Ganpat Aiyar, Ranjini Aiyar, Aishwarya Aiyar, C Gomathy Aiyar, Usha Aiyar, Devraj Aiyar*

He dropped her at the building entrance and returned 20 minutes later.

He had circled several blocks and found no spot to park. Knowing, she was waiting, besides getting late for the Doctor's appointment, he had risked parking at a 'NO PARKING' zone. She was a little alarmed. He casually told her a parking ticket could be the worst that could happen. She simply nodded and did not reveal the displeasure, she felt. For her, it was always black or white, right or wrong.

At the hospital, they asked her to produce details of any medication, she was taking. She had anticipated this and carried a strip in her bag to show the doctor.

To keep her BP under check, she had a tablet of Amlin 2.5 mg, everyday.

They conducted all the routine eye tests and Dr Leila Raju assured her she was doing great. The next checkup was due only after a year. Back in India, they had indicated a possible cataract surgery. This came as a big relief.

On the way back, they stopped at Ganesh Dosas at Newark Ave, Jersey City, to grab her favorite Dahi Vadas. Dev ordered for a masala dosa and medu wada.

The food was very average. They were the only two customers at the restaurant.

Although Dev kept insisting, she didn't feel like having a coffee or tea.

It was past 3.00. Both her sons and Usha worked at the same office. It was their own business and one of the vendors had gifted a "Panchmukhi" Ganesh idol, which was at the office. It had come on a Tuesday and considered very auspicious. She longed to see it. It was a ten minute drive from the restaurant to the office.

The office was always super busy. Every year, she would accompany her sons to the Diwali Pooja and the party after that. She would meet all their colleagues.

The large office and warehouse building never ceased to amaze her.

It always reminded her of the distance they have travelled in life, together.

Ganpat and Usha were busy when she walked in. They came to greet her and all of them chatted for a while as she narrated the events of the day.

It was a big relief to know she did not need a cataract surgery.

Usha made a fresh pot of coffee for her and Dev. Hers would always carry an extra spoon of sugar. She loved her coffee sweet.

It was past 4.00pm. It was planned that Ganpat would leave early and take her home. Dev and Usha would stay back and wrap up pending work.

Before leaving, she took a final look at the altar, the idol of Lord Ganesha.

HE had never let her down.

**The authors note**

So, Mum It's hard to thank those whom we love the most, the family closest to us.

We believe they owe it to us. But before this moments pass, let me express my heartfelt appreciation, respect and love for the awesome mother and human being you are.

Happy Mother's Day!



# Remembering Mom on Mother's Day

**SANGEET SHARMA**

I vividly remember standing at the JFK Airport with flowers in hand and my entire family in tow eagerly anticipating the arrival of my mother from New Delhi.

During the 45 minutes, it took her to clear the immigration and to come out, I experienced a bundle of emotions - excitement, joy, euphoria and anxiety- all at the same time. This was the longest time since I had seen my mom and realized how much I had missed her since moving to New York.

All along, my eyes were glued to the swinging doors and when I saw her emerge from behind a group of tourists,

I could hardly contain myself and started crying uncontrollably with tears of joy. I ran and hugged her, just holding her tightly, long enough to erase any distance or passage of time between us.

Despite her long and tiring journey, her face lit up when she first saw me. The familiar pet name she had given me sweetly echoed in my ears. She included my brother in that long protective embrace like a typical loving mother, blessing both familiar and new members of our respective families with a moist smile.

Now that she has passed on, I can still feel that embrace and see that beautiful smile every night I go to bed!

Memories bring on nostalgia and cherished pleasures. Mom's family famous tasty food, great cup of tea any time of the day/ evening, her friendship, company, thoughtfulness, abundant love and so many other memories pop up every now and then. Her love for music, mountains, has genetically surfaced in me with time.

Miss you Mom and hope you are spreading Smiles and are happy, loved and blessed wherever you are in the Universe now.

Mom, Kamal Bhatia, we are remembering and thanking you today with fondness, love and eternal gratitude.



Mother Kamal Bhatia(right) being welcomed by Sangeet Sharma (center) and Rajiv Bhatia on arrival at the JFK airport in New York in Summer of 1995

Sangeet Sharma - Daughter  
Rajeev Bhatia - Brother

There is nothing like mother's love



Mrs. Santosh Rihal (center) with daughters Mrs. Kanchan Sayal (left) and Indu Jaiswal

God could not be everywhere, so he created mother, especially an angel like you. You were the best teacher in the world. Over the years we have realized how true that is. Thanks for being the BEST MOM and the BEST TEACHER in the world. Words are not enough to express GRATITUDE that you deserve for all that you have done for us all these years. We take this opportunity to thank you for all your unmeasurable contributions to our lives. There is nothing like mother's love that gives us all the strength we need to succeed. Thanks for forgiving me the best things in life, your love, your care and your cooking.

Happy Mother's Day to a wonderful woman who is such an inspiration to all of us. The sacrifices that you have made for us are the most precious gifts that will last with us for the rest of our lives. Happy Mother's Day!

We love her so much and cherish all the time we have been granted to spend with her

**SADHANA BAJAJ, SANDHYA BUDHRAJA, SUJATA SETH**



Daughters with mother. Kanta Malik (mother) is seated. Standing (L to R): Sadhana Bajaj, Sandhya Budhraj, Sujata Seth

Our mother Kanta Malik is almost 90 years old. She married our father Satish Malik and raised three beautiful daughters, Sadhana, Sandhya and Sujata of whom I am the youngest.

It's hard to concisely describe a soul such as hers in just a few short words. Several come to mind. I can start with captivating. She adores singing and her voice is otherworldly. She has a powerful range and keen memory with an encyclopedia of music brewing in her brain.

Humility and Peace Loving is another one of her finer traits. Never one to boast and never one to stir up a peaceful scenario and/or a relationship, she goes with the flow always smilingly.

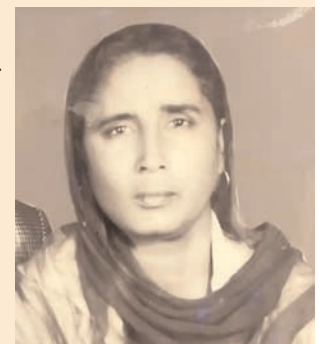
When she's in between her daily routines, you can often catch her humming or singing a classic old Indian song or hymn or mantra. God bless her ??????

We love her so much and cherish all the time we have been granted to spend with her. Posting this article with her picture in The Indian Panorama is such a cute way to wish our blessed mom a very very Happy Mother's Day! NANIMA as we all lovingly call her; May you live long and enjoy seeing your grandkids settle down in their lives and be there to bless them. LOVE YOU!!

I love you and I miss you, Mom

**HARPREET SINGH TOOR**

Mother's Day always brings a mix of emotions for me, just as it does for many others. But mostly it offers a time to reflect on the deep love and gratitude I experience when thinking of her. And to remember the wonderful ways in which she taught me to understand, and to follow, the deepest and highest values of our culture. Values that not only guide me in my interactions with friends and with enemies, with family, and strangers, but also with myself as I deal with the world around me each and every day. Thank you, mom. I love you and I miss you.



Harinder Kaur Toor, mother of Harpreet Singh Toor

My mom is my hero, my teacher and my leader

**BINA SABAPATHY, MOTHER & GRANDMOTHER**

My mother is a God-given gift to me. I cannot imagine my life without my mom. In every child's life both parents are very important, but a mother carries a baby in her womb for nine months, and the bond that is created during those nine months makes her more special than anyone else in the world. She is child's first seen God, and she is the one called first for any help.

My mom is a Stage 3 cancer survivor of 45 years. I never thought my mom will make it out with cancer in those days, but she is a fighter. She fought with cancer like a warrior, and sure that she is a God-given gift to me. My mom is a housewife. Like all other mothers, she is a hardworking, loving, and caring person. But she is very strong-minded and determined. I am grateful for how she molded me into a fine, young, talented, and independent lady. I am who I am today because of my mom. My mom taught me how to be rock solid during any rough time and melt like butter when seeing a less fortunate person. I owe my mom for instilling good values and passing on her looks to me. She taught me the importance of education and the courage to fight for what is right. My mom is my hero, my teacher and my leader. I look to her for guidance on any of my problems. My mother has seen and experienced many tragedies in her life, including losing her husband, only brother, and only son at a very young age. She faced all that hardship and unexpected turns in her life as a challenge without any complaint. My mom has the art of putting a smile on anyone's face with her sweet and soothing words.

My mom is 86+ years and I thank God for having her in my life, and I truly am blessed. I pray to God if there is a life after death, I would love to take birth again and again as daughter to my mother. On this Mother's Day, I wish my mom nothing but happiness and a long healthy life. To all the Mothers, Grandmothers, Great Grandmothers and soon-to-be Mothers-wish you a very Happy, Magical and Safe Mother's Day.



Bina Sabapathy (left) with her mother



# My Mother's Gift - Devotion & Kindness

BY ASHOK VYAS ON MOTHER'S DAY FOR THE READERS OF THE INDIAN PANORAMA

My mother Smt Shakuntala Devi Vyas and I share the habit of reading. I remember having heard stories from her about her childhood days, when she would hide a book in the bed and read with streetlight slipping from the window on her bed. She loved reading and that interest made her continue studies after many many years, when she was taking care of the family with three sons and all family members.

We grew up in Jaipur, she did her bachelor's and Master's in Hindi. She lost her father at a very early age, probably, while she was six years old. He was a police officer and a loving, protective shield for her. She would read newspapers, magazines, novels and later on, her interest shifted towards religious books. A sincere devotee of Lord Krishna in the Pushtimargiya tradition, she has sustained that reading habit for over seven decades.

I was very much attached to her as a child to the extent that I was teased for being 'mother's son'. I had a very nice friend in my mother as a child, probably after I turned 14 or so, things started changing a little bit, earlier, she was interested in

learning about my friends, my activities and I was also eager to share my small success and failures.

I think, as a teenager, I was developing my own ego and she was becoming more and more devotional with few morning hours exclusively devoted to serve the Lord. I was fascinated by her Keertan singing. I distinctly remember, having seen tears trickling down her cheeks as she would sing, 'Mohe Apne Rang Mein Rang De, Swami He Giridhar Gopal,' It means longing to get merged in the divine colors of Lord Krishna, also known as Gopal who plays flute.

Those tears were beautiful, I used to wonder, what is this longing, how she gets into that zone, where something triggers her and melts her being with beauty and joy. I was perhaps drawn towards reading 'Bhagwat Puran' by her influence. Our family lived religious values as a part of regular flow.

Let me recollect my school days. I used to go by bus and walk from SMS Hospital, Jaipur to Mahavir School. These were exam days, and it was summer. Once, while I was leaving for school, in addition to

money for a bus ticket, she gave me some extra amount to drink sugarcane juice on her own. I was pleasantly surprised and felt how nice of her. Sometimes small gestures of consideration and kindness fills us with joy and gratefulness.

I will skip the middle part of my life and come to the present scene, many events have taken place, many celebrations, moments of joy and success and losing important pillars of our lives. Now that I live in New York, my mother is in Jaipur with my brother Jitendra Vyas. We have become very good friends again through our telephonic satsang. She showed interest in listening to 'Raas Panchadhyayi', a book based on lectures by Swami Akhandananda Saraswatiji Maharaj. We had regular Satsang sessions, where I would share this Hindi book in our language 'Marwari' with her and one of my aunties.

Reading in Hindi, translating in Marwari and listening to their encouraging response to my humble sharing has been a fulfilling experience. The credit goes to my mother's keen devotion and interest in Satsang. She sings well, remembers many Kathas as well as



Ashok Vyas with his mother Shakuntala Devi Vyas

Bhajans. Thanks to technology, I could record her Bhajans online and shared with friends and family members. I am blessed to have a pure soul as my mother. We don't celebrate Mother's Day but this tradition here in USA has given me the opportunity to count my blessings and meditate on the glory of a Vaishnav, who also inspired all my Bhuas to find their structure for the flow of devotion in their heart.

I am also happy that she listens to the series of 'Everyday Gita with Ashok Vyas' presented by me on Heramba Studio, YouTube channel in sequence. Her comments are encouraging. Here is a special pranaam to my mother, who shared her love with everyone and sustains herself with deep devotion. Jai Shri Krishna!

(Ashok Vyas is a Poet, Program Director, ITVGold and founder of Heramba Studio)

## For us, every day is Mother's Day

INDU GAJWANI WITH HER SISTERS



Kanta Makhija's family. L to R: Suresh Makhija, Mimi Chandiramani, Indu Gajwani, Pushpa Gurnani, Kanta Makhija, Preeti Ramsinghani, Bhavana Tribbiani and Vinod Makhija

Whenever anyone gets hurt or is in pain the first words that come to the person's lips is 'Oh Maa'. When any child returns home from anywhere the first thing that he asks is 'where is Maa'. Maa is our first teacher as she teaches us sitting, walking, talking and inculcates values in our life. In absence of father, brother or sister Maa can take their place and we won't feel their absence, but nobody can replace Maa. Such is the importance of Maa in our life.

All children feel that their mother is Best Mother of the world.

Our mother, Kanta L Makhija, who we called "Maa" was really The Best. She was beautiful inside as well as outside with a face of innocent angel. She glowed without any makeup. Her inner beauty gave her glow. She was great grandmother too. All her children and grandchildren miss her dearly till this day. Our mother couldn't complete her school education due to various reasons, but she was super street smart. She saw to it that we all get proper education, and we should all be financially independent. All her life not only she managed her children and home very well but also helped my father financially by running some or the other small business from home to make extra money so that children can get best education and comfortable life. She made so many sacrifices but never ever made us feel that she is sacrificing.

She was loving, caring, helpful and kind and a role model for us. She will feed everyone whoever came to our house. She was so loving and caring that even other small children used to call her Nani that means maternal grandmother. She taught us to respect elders, love everyone. Respect the food that we are eating and not to waste as there are many who are not so lucky to get proper food to eat. She taught us to be grateful for whatever we have and to always say that we are having everything in abundance and by saying so you would have abundance. She was very helpful and will help people in their difficult times even when she had less resources. She taught us the value of hard work. She used to tell us that even when you can't help people with money in their difficult days you can always help them in other ways.

She would always say that never retire from work. So long you are working your body machine will be in proper shape and if you stop working your body machine will get rusted and you will fall ill. So, keep on working till your last breath.

She earned blessings of many people young as well as old and with their blessings she was in good health till her end.

We remember her every day and miss her every moment of our life. For us, every day is Mother's Day.

## Happy Mother's Day to all around the world

RADHU BATHIJA & SIPPY BATHIJA

From - to the world you are a mother, to our family you are our world. Mothers hold a special place in our hearts. They love us unconditionally, protect and give us strength to become who we are. Mothers are kind, selfless, and our number one supporters. They are our best friends and always offer comfort. A mother is someone who can take the place of all others, but no one else can take her place.

Happy Mother's Day to all around the world.

Once a mother is well informed, well educated, the world will be a better place

We humans exist because we have Mothers in this world who carry us in their own bodies, feed us, nurture us and after birth feed us with their own milk for months and years so we can have a long and healthy life.

This human race can never repay debt to mothers ever.

This world exists due to Mothers.

Many of us are good citizens or bad are due to mothers.

Mothers in this era have to take a bigger role and responsibility.

All evil and good, they are equally responsible.

Once a mother is well informed, well-educated this world will be a better place.

Evil males are destroying the world, but this can change if Mothers take responsibility to save this world and make sure these males are under their control as long as they are alive



Chander Bhaga Bathija, mother of Radhu Bathija



Arish K. Sahani





## Randeep Hooda joins Khalsa Aid to help Covid patients

Amid the pandemic situation going on in the country, people are coming out and offering help in all possible ways. Many celebrities have also joined the campaign and came forward to help common people.

Celebrities like Priyanka Chopra Jonas are also trying to raise funds by joining other non-governmental organisations (NGOs). And to join the list is actor Randeep Hooda. He has joined hands with Khalsa Aid and will be providing oxygen concentrators to COVID 19 patients in the country. He shared a video on his official Instagram handle and urged people to come forward and help others.

This is a difficult time and we all be needing everyone's hand in handling this crisis. He wrote, "It's your chance to save lives! With India facing the worst of the pandemic, people are dying due to lack of oxygen. Let's come together to help the country fight #COVID and save precious lives. @khalsaaid\_india is providing oxygen concentrators and we urge you to come forward and do your bit to help India breathe."

## Jacqueline Fernandez serves meals to the needy, Sunny Leone helps migrants

Many are stepping up to help others in these difficult times of the pandemic, and Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez is no exception. The actor, who has set up a foundation to 'create and share stories of kindness' called You Only Live Once (YOLO), on Thursday, May 6, took to her Instagram to share photos of herself as she helped cook and serve food for the needy.

"Mother Teresa once said, 'Peace begins when the hungry are fed.' I was truly humbled and inspired to visit Mumbai @rotibankfdn today, which is run by former Mumbai police commissioner Mr. D Sivanandan. Roti Bank has prepared and distributed meals to millions of hungry people till date, even during the pandemic. They are the perfect example of what #kindnessbrigade aspires to do and I am honored to be of help to them during these times. We only live once! Let's make this life worth it by helping others in need and sharing the #storiesofkindness of those around us!" read the complete caption of the actor's recent post.

Jacqueline had paid a visit to the kitchen of Roti Bank Foundation and tied up with them in order to serve meals to those in need. YOLO works in collaboration with several different non-profit organisations to cater to a variety of causes.

Meanwhile, Sunny Leone is doing her bit by joining hands with PETA in order



to extend support to the Delhi migrant workers. Sunny, in collaboration with PETA, has donated 10,000 vegan meals to the workers. "I'm delighted to join hands with PETA India again - this time, to get protein-packed vegan meals to thousands in need. We are facing a crisis, but together, with compassion and solidarity, we will come out ahead," the actor said in a statement.



## Chhichhore, Good Newwz actor Abhilasha Patil dies due to Covid-19 complications

Actor Abhilasha Patil, who has appeared in popular Hindi films such as Chhichhore, Good Newwz, and Badrinath Ki Dulhania, has died due to Covid-19 complications.

Her co-star Sanjay Kulkarni, who worked with her on a show called BaapManus, confirmed the news of her death.

He told indianexpress.com, "Last evening around six, I got a call from Jyoti Patil, who worked with us in BaapManus, about Abhilasha's poor health. I learnt she had gone to Benaras where she got fever and on her return to Mumbai, she tested positive for coronavirus. I tried reaching out to her, but both of her numbers were switched off. Then around 8.30 pm, actor Anand Prabhu, who played our son on the same show, informed me about her demise. This has been so shocking because she had so much to achieve in life. She had plans. Abhilasha was kind-hearted and such a hardworking artiste. It's a huge loss to the industry."

Actor-director Shashank Udupurkar wrote in a social media post, "Abhilasha Patil, very hard working and energetic co-artist.. We worked together in PRAWAAS. Don't have words to express. RIP Abhilasha Ji."



## Kangana Ranaut to make digital debut as producer

Actress Kangana Ranaut is all set to make her digital debut as producer with the upcoming film "Tiku Weds Sheru", a love story and a satire.

Kangana will dive into web space with her production house Manikarnika Films, and launch its logo on Saturday.

"With 'Tiku Weds Sheru', Manikarnika Films is venturing into digital space. It's a love story and a satire with dark humour. In digital space, we will do more edgy, new-age and niche content," she said.

"We will also launch new talents and take risks with new concepts. We feel the digital audience is slightly more evolved than the regular cinema-going audience," she added.

Details related to the upcoming film are still under wraps.







## John David Washington to star in Gareth Edwards' True Love

Actor John David Washington is set to team up with Rogue One: A Star Wars Story director Gareth Edwards on the upcoming science-fiction film True Love.

The movie will mark Washington's another outing in the genre following Christopher Nolan's Tenet.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the plot details on the New Regency film is being kept under wraps, but it is set in the near future and is from an original idea from Edwards.

Edwards, whose directing credits also include 2014's Godzilla, will write and helm the project.

Washington was last seen in the romantic drama Malcolm & Marie.

## Jennifer Aniston urges fans to support India in its fight against Covid-19 crisis

Hollywood star Jennifer Aniston has appealed to her fans on Instagram to lend a helping hand to India in its fight against the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic. The actor, popular among the Indian audience as Rachel Green from the 1990s hit sitcom Friends, on Tuesday shared three posts on her Instagram Stories bringing the country's worrying scenario amid the health crisis to the attention of her 36.5 million plus followers.

Aniston's first story read, "A severe second wave of coronavirus infections has swept over India, setting global records for new infections each day over the past five days." In her second story, the 52-year-old actor said that Americares "is raising money for immediate relief aid for India" and also shared link details.

Americares is a global non-profit organisation focused on health and development that respond to individuals affected by poverty, disaster, or crisis.

In her third story, Aniston said one doesn't have to donate to help.

"Spread the word with whatever platform you have to help build awareness," she added.

Recently, international entertainment personalities like actor James McAvoy, singers Camila Cabello and Shawn Mendes also appealed to their social media fans to extend support to India during the pandemic.



## Lady Killer: Blake Lively to star in Netflix's Dark Horse Comics series adaptation

It seems as though Blake Lively has an affinity towards playing characters who are 'murderers in secret' if her recent Hollywood projects like The Rhythm Section and A Simple Favor are any inclination. The Gossip Girl star has decided on her next big project; Lady Killer. According to a recent report by Deadline, Blake will be starring and producing Netflix's feature film adaptation of the Dark Horse Comics series.

In Lady Killer, Lively will play the titular role of Josie Schuller, a perfect 1950's housewife by all appearances. However, when not catering to the needs of her family, Josie leads a double life as a highly-trained killer for hire, obviously in secret. Schuller loves her second job and as expected, the husband is clueless about his wife's well-kept skeleton in the closet. Interestingly, Netflix has tapped in Diablo Cody to adapt the comic book series into a feature film.

For the unversed, Diablo is an Oscar-winning writer, who won the Academy Award for Best Original Screenplay for Juno. Her recent work is the upcoming Madonna biopic, which the Grammy-winning singer will direct herself.

Are you excited to see Blake Lively in Lady Killer? Share your excitement with Pinkvilla in the comments section below.



## Robert Downey Jr's right hand man Jimmy Rich dies in crash

Robert Downey Jr's personal assistant Jimmy Rich died in a car accident on Wednesday. He was 52. Robert Downey Jr, Chris Hemsworth, Mark Ruffalo, Josh Brolin, Chris Pratt and Jeremy Renner, among others mourned the death of Rich.

Rich worked on nearly two dozen films with Downey Jr, including every Marvel Studios film. They began their fruitful collaboration with 2003's The Singing Detective.

Downey Jr announced the news on his social media pages. On Instagram, he shared two photos of Rich and wrote in the caption that Rich's death is "not news", instead it is a "terrible and shocking tragedy." He added that Rich was his "brother, my right hand man, an uncle to our kids and beloved by all who experienced his singular character and wit."

"Our thoughts go to his relatives, friends, co-workers, and all the fans who knew him as the man who supported every step of my recovery, life and career. Again, my condolences to his beautiful family, and the legacy of hope and redemption his life will continue to represent. Peace Be Unto You," Downey Jr wrote.





# NJSO SPRING GALA

**NJSO'S YOUTH ORCHESTRAS  
SPRING INTO MUSIC @ 30**

BY MABEL PAIS

## SPRING INTO GALA

**Composers of "The Enchanted Forest" include  
AMEYA SRINIVASAN & ASHITA BIRLA**

**Gala honors BD (Becton, Dickinson and  
Company)**

**Gala honorees include**

**NJSO musicians and founding Youth Orchestras  
coaches**

**Martin Andersen and Robert Wagner**

**VIP Pre-Show: May 12 @ 7 PM, Concert @ 7:30  
PM**

**Online auction (May 3-12): Items from  
Restaurant gift cards to Vacation getaways**

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO) celebrates the 30th anniversary of the NJSO Youth Orchestras and highlights the program's talented students at the virtual "Spring into Music" Gala on May 12.

The event features a free NJSO concert available to the public and a VIP pre-show party for gala supporters.



Hannah Lee, winner, plays flute - Photo / Courtesy NJSO

In the 7:30 pm concert, the Orchestra gives the world premiere of "The Enchanted Forest" - a piece composed by Youth Orchestras students through a creative composition project - and showcases concerto competition winner Hannah Lee, an East Brunswick 12th grader, in the Allegro maestoso from Mozart's Flute Concerto in G Major, K. 313. NJSO Youth Orchestras Artistic Director José Luis Domínguez conducts.

The program also includes chamber performances by the Youth Orchestras' Anne Lieberman Ensemble (with NJSO Music Director Xian Zhang on piano) and Curtland E. Fields Ensemble, plus special guest appearances and a signature cocktail demonstration from Newark's All Points West Distillery.

The concert will be available on demand at [njsymphony.org/springintomusic](https://njsymphony.org/springintomusic) and on the NJSO's YouTube channel beginning at 7:30 pm.

"The Enchanted Forest" grew out of a season long NJSO Youth Orchestras creative composition project in which all students collaborated in small groups to

explore their own musical voices and compose new works drawing from all the genres that inspire them. NJSO musician coaches guided each group, and Domínguez orchestrated and arranged the works.



José Luis Domínguez conducts the NJSO - Photo / Courtesy NJSO

Domínguez says: "The professional orchestra, the hall, the scores, the lights, the cameras - so many people dedicated so much work to these students' ideas. That is touching beyond description. That is unforgettable."

Self-dubbed the 'Chromatic Creators,' the young composers who teamed up to pen "The Enchanted Forest" include Ameya Srinivasan (seventh grade, Edison), Amy Zarebczan (11th grade, Passaic), Ashita Birla (10th grade, Jersey City), Kevin Yang (sixth grade, Edison), Natalie Sokolov (ninth grade, Holmdel), Samantha Huerta (10th grade, Wayne). NJSO flutist and piccolo player Kathleen Nester coached the group.

Ashita Birla says: "Composing an original piece by collaborating with my peers in the Chromatic Creators was an experience of a lifetime. When I heard that the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra would be playing 'The Enchanted Forest,' it felt surreal. I was amazed and honored to hear that our piece would come to life at the hands of accomplished musicians. It inspires me to continue composing and playing violin to express my voice through music."

The winner of the annual NJSO Youth Orchestras' Henry Lewis Concerto Competition traditionally gives a solo performance with the Youth Orchestras' most advanced orchestra at its annual spring concert. Hannah Lee won the 2020 competition, but the Youth Orchestras' spring concert was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the NJSO invited her to perform with the professional orchestra for this year's gala.

"I am so thankful that in spite of the pandemic I had a chance to perform with the NJSO. It was such an honor," Lee says. "It still feels like a dream that I performed, and I'll definitely feel that way watching the performance as well!"

"Hannah gave such a professional, musical performance. She has a brilliant future with the flute," Domínguez says. "I can only imagine how encouraged she must feel as she embarks on her path towards a professional future."

A 7 pm VIP pre-show party offers opportunities for gala supporters to virtually mingle with NJSO musicians and special guests. Iachetti's Kitchen in Glen Rock will demonstrate how to make a delicious appetizer to savor.

The Spring into Music Gala online auction, open from May 3-12, offers items from restaurant gift cards to vacation getaways.

The gala honorees are BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company), a longtime NJSO Youth Orchestras funder, as well as NJSO musicians and founding Youth Orchestras coaches Martin Andersen and Robert Wagner. Michelle Merchant, an NJSO supporter and NJSO Youth Orchestras parent, and Dr. Philip Neches,

an NJSO trustee and Amadeus Circle leader, co-chair the event.

### GALA SUPPORT

Opportunities to support the gala can be accessed by visiting [njsymphony.org/springintomusic](https://njsymphony.org/springintomusic)

NJSO President & CEO Gabriel van Aalst says: "The students' triumphs in the past year-from virtual learning and performances to the impressive new works they have composed-are an incredible testament to their talent and perseverance, and we are proud to showcase the students at this gala."

NJSO Music Director Xian Zhang says: "This gala concert is a true showcase for the incredible achievements of the NJSO Youth Orchestras students. Our musicians have a deep love for coaching and working with students, and the program has reached new heights under the leadership of José Luis Domínguez. I am thrilled to see these young musicians blossoming and sharing their own musical voices."

Spring into Music is part of NJSO Virtual 20-21, the Orchestra's digital season. For more information, visit [njsymphony.org/virtual](https://njsymphony.org/virtual).

### PROGRAM: SPRING INTO MUSIC GALA

**Virtual VIP Pre-Show Party | Exclusive to Gala  
Supporters**

**Wed, May 12, at 7 pm on Zoom**

**Gala Concert | Free to the Public**

**Wed, May 12, at 7:30 pm**

**José Luis Domínguez, conductor**

**Hannah Lee, flute**

**New Jersey Symphony Orchestra**

**MOZART Allegro maestoso from Flute Concerto in G  
Major, K. 313**

**CHROMATIC CREATORS OF THE NJSO YOUTH  
ORCHESTRAS "The Enchanted Forest"**

**Anne Lieberman Ensemble**

**Xian Zhang, piano**

**DVOŘÁK Allegretto scherzando from Bagatelles, Op.  
47**

**Curtland E. Fields Ensemble**

**DAY "Tango D'amour"**

**ONLINE AUCTION | Open to the Public**

**May 3-12**

The online auction offers fabulous items for everyone-from restaurant gift cards to vacation getaways.

To learn more, visit [njsymphony.org/springintomusic](https://njsymphony.org/springintomusic)

The Orchestra's online hub for free musical content is [njsymphony.org/virtual](https://njsymphony.org/virtual)

### The NJSO Youth Orchestras

The NJSO Youth Orchestras have not only continued virtual instruction but have introduced an entirely new dimension to the program. Students are working together on a yearlong creative composition project-a uniquely engaging opportunity for students to explore their own musical voices and shape new works that draw from all the genres that inspire them.

### The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO)

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Facebook, Twitter and Instagram: @NJSymphony

YouTube: @NewJerseySymphony

Email: [information@njsymphony.org](mailto:information@njsymphony.org)

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



# NJPAC MEETS BROADWAY

BY MABEL PAIS

## "BROADWAY BY THE YEAR"

SEE TWO OUTSTANDING BROADWAY PERFORMANCES

IN THE COMFORT OF YOUR HOME

THE KANDER & EBB YEARS (May 10-12) and

THE SIR ANDREW LLOYD WEBER YEARS (May 24-26)

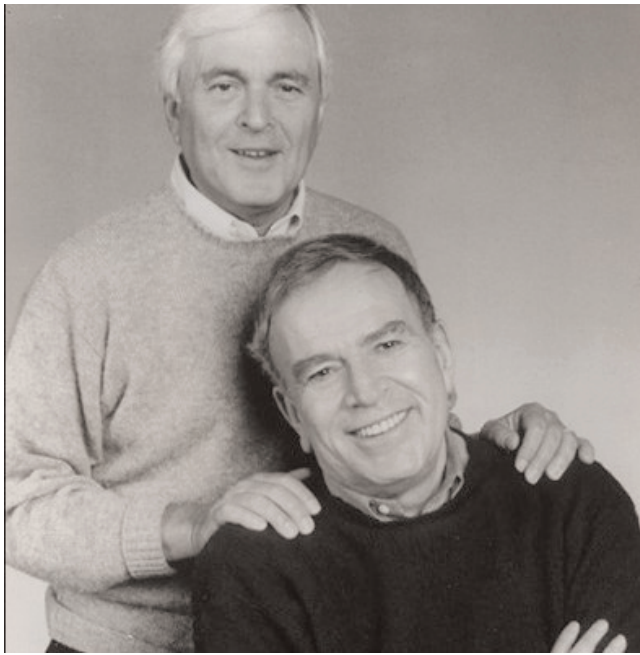
The Town Hall's signature series in association with the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), present "Broadway by the Year®," takes a "Pandemic Pivot," going both virtual and national. In its legendary 20-year history, it has featured everyone from Robert Goulet to Santino Fontana and from Jessie Mueller to Tonya Pinkins.

In its new virtual edition, the star power continues with an extraordinary cast list that dazzles with (so far) one Tony Award Winner, Beth Leavel ("The Drowsy Chaperone"), and four Tony Nominees, Lilli Cooper ("Tootsie"), Ethan Slater ("SpongeBob: The Musical"), Liz Callaway ("Baby"), Max Von Essen ("An American in Paris"), plus international jazz star, Nicole Henry, and internationally famous chanteuse Ute Lemper!

Created, written, and hosted throughout its entire history by Scott Siegel - who has also produced, written, and directed concerts for Michael Feinstein at Jazz at Lincoln Center - and is well on his way to creating more than 400 major concerts all over the world - join us for this unusual season.

The two new Broadway by the Year virtual concerts conceived for this year by this collaboration, take this series in a new and exciting direction. The shows: BROADWAY BY THE YEAR: THE KANDER & EBB YEARS (May 10-12) and BROADWAY BY THE YEAR: THE SIR ANDREW LLOYD WEBER YEARS (May 24-26) at a cost per screen and can be viewed within three days.

BROADWAY BY THE YEAR: THE KANDER & EBB YEARS (May 10-12), featuring songs from such shows as "Flora," "The Red Menace," "Chicago," "Cabaret," "Steel Pier," "Woman of the Year," "Kiss of the Spider Woman" and "The Rink." Cast includes Danny Gardner, Ute Lemper, Tony Yazbeck, Beth Leavel and Natascia Diaz. This virtual show can be purchased per screen and is available for 3 days from start time. Reserve tickets at



(standing) John Kander & Fred Ebb



Broadway Performers. - Credit: Courtesy, NJPAC.

njpac.org/event/broadway-by-the-year-the-kander-ebb-years or by visiting NJPAC.org.

BROADWAY BY THE YEAR: THE SIR ANDREW LLOYD WEBER YEARS (May 24-26), featuring songs from such shows as "Song & Dance," "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," "Sunset Blvd.," "Evita," "The Phantom of the Opera," "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Aspects of Love" and "Cats." Cast includes Liz Callaway, Ethan Slater, Max Von Essen, Ali Ewoldt,

Emily Larger and more! Tickets for the virtual show are per screen and viewing is available for 3 days from start time. Tickets can be purchased by visiting NJPAC.org or at [njpac.org/event/broadway-by-the-year-the-andrew-lloyd-webber-years](http://njpac.org/event/broadway-by-the-year-the-andrew-lloyd-webber-years)

Each video concert will be approximately 9-10 songs in length, performed by four stars, plus - as is a feature of all Broadway by the Year concerts - at least one additional, thrilling dance number starring and choreographed by Danny Gardner (star of the "2017 Radio City Summer Spectacular").

This is a video premiere of a full concert. It was recorded live, remotely, in March and April 2021.

## MAKING MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL WITH HOME ALONE 3: YO MOMMA BE THERE

"Home Alone 3: Yo Momma Be There"

By Michael McDonald

Friday, May 7, 2021 at 9:00 p.m.

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents Michael McDonald Presents Home Alone 3: "Yo Momma Be There" - Virtual Event on Friday, May 7, 2021 at 9:00 p.m.

Make Mother's Day weekend extra special when you invite Michael McDonald into your living room! You know and love the unofficial captain of Yacht Rock for his contributions to the Doobie Brothers and Steely Dan, including his hits "What a Fool Believes," "Minute by Minute" and "Takin' It to the Streets." This intimate Livestream concert will feature songs from Michael's solo career, a few Doobies classics, and some select covers. Buy a ticket for yourself, or get a two-pack for you and the special lady in your life. The show will stream live on Friday, May 7th, and be available to watch or re-watch all weekend long.

### TICKETS

Tickets & Bundles are available at [boxoffice.mandolin.com/collections/michael-mcdonald?utm\\_source=ef&utm\\_medium=aff&utm\\_campaign=121&oid=121&affid=16](http://boxoffice.mandolin.com/collections/michael-mcdonald?utm_source=ef&utm_medium=aff&utm_campaign=121&oid=121&affid=16)

# Straight No Chaser: Virtual Insanity

Harmonize along with 'Straight No Chaser,' the acapella sensation!

Join NJPAC for a weekend of livestream concerts featuring fan favorite songs and lots of surprises.

The male vocal group 'Straight No Chaser' (SNC) revolutionized a capella for the modern age when their viral YouTube video landed them a deal with Atlantic Records. Now, they delight fans around the world with their sophisticated harmonies and captivating charm.

Join SNC for Virtual Insanity, a three-show live stream concert series with special guests. Each show in the series will have a unique setlist that includes SNC fan favorites and at least one never-before-performed song. For super fans, add a virtual meet and greet or soundcheck viewing. With five showtimes to choose from, you can enjoy SNC live from the comfort of your own home!

### PROGRAM



SNC Singers. - Credit: [sncmusic.com](http://sncmusic.com)

Live on Mandolin  
Fri, May 14 @ 8:30PM  
Sat, May 15 @ 3PM & 8PM  
Sat, May 16 @ 7:30PM

### TICKETS

For tickets and to learn more, visit [njpac.org/event/straight-no-chaser-virtual-insanity](http://njpac.org/event/straight-no-chaser-virtual-insanity)

### NJPAC

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), located in downtown Newark, N.J., is America's most diverse performing arts center, and the artistic, cultural, educational and civic center of New Jersey - where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day. NJPAC brings diverse communities together, providing access to all and showcasing the state's and the world's best artists while acting as a leading catalyst in the revitalization of its home city. Through its extensive Arts Education programs, NJPAC is shaping the next generation of artists and arts enthusiasts. NJPAC has attracted nearly 10 million visitors (including over 1.7 million children) since opening its doors in 1997, and nurtures meaningful and lasting relationships with each of its constituents. To learn more, visit [njpac.org](http://njpac.org)

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



# Legal status of Hindu, Muslim marriages in South Africa under spotlight in Green Paper

**JOHANNESBURG (TIP):** The difficulties experienced by partners in marriages conducted under Hindu and Muslim religious rites in South Africa are under consideration in a Green Paper that has been released for public comment.

The controversial issue of polyandry, where women can have more than one husband, is also under discussion.

"The issue of the recognition of Muslim, Hindu and Jewish marriages arose and stakeholders raised the urgent need for the State to recognise these marriages through legislative means," the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) said in the paper, which was prepared after months of extensive discussions with diverse stakeholders.

"Despite the efforts of the State to redress the injustices of the past, the current marriage statute still deprives certain cultural and religious communities from concluding legally recognised marriages," it said.

This includes Islamic and Hindu marriages, customary marriages concluded in some African communities and marriages of transgender persons, according to the paper.

Under the current Marriage Act, Hindu, Muslims and other religious marriage officers may conduct marriages, but



unless the marriage is also registered with DHA, the religious marriage has no legal validity.

"The issue of polygamy and polyandry also was topical and controversial during the engagements. While some stakeholders believed in the practice of polygamy, there were also those who opposed it," the DHA said.

"This equally applies to the practice of polyandry. Ironically, stakeholders who believed in the practice of polygamy (polygamy) were opposed to the practice of polyandry," it said.

A discussion with stakeholders revealed that the courts have extended many

marriage-like rights and processes to spouses in Muslim marriages. There has been less litigation on behalf of adherents of Hindu and other faiths, with the result that these religious marriages have fewer and weaker rights than Muslim marriages.

"In most respects, spouses in unrecognised religious marriages are in the same position as unmarried intimate partners. The failure to recognise these religious marriages is untenable and discriminatory," DHA said.

Islamic marriages are automatically out of community of property. When such marriages are dissolved, either by death

or divorce, women and children suffer the consequences, since they are not protected by the marriage law. The divorce process is concluded through religious and not court processes.

The DHA said divorce in Hindu marriages is a taboo, which leaves women in limbo when the man decides to leave the family. What complicates the situation is that such marriages are not protected by the law.

To redress these and other issues, the Green Paper proposes three options for a new marriage act for the protection and equitable treatment of all recognised cultural and religious rights.

In the first option, amendments to the current Marriage Act could cater for all polygamous marriages irrespective of race, cultural and religious persuasions.

Option two allows for a marriage regime that does away with categorising marriages along racial, religious and cultural lines, with a dual system of recognising either monogamous or polygamous marriages.

The final option is similar to the second option, except that it would also accommodate both polygyny and polyandry. The Green Paper is now open for public comment until the end of next month. — PTI

## Rio police draws international ire as 25 killed in drug gun battle

**RIO DE JANEIRO (TIP):** At least 25 people were killed in a shootout between suspected drug traffickers and police in Rio de Janeiro on Thursday, one of the state's deadliest police raids, police said.

People targeted in the raid in the poor Jacarezinho neighborhood tried to escape across rooftops as police arrived in armored vehicles and helicopters flew overhead, television images showed. The firefight forced residents to shelter in their homes.

The victims included one police officer, and the remainder were suspected members of the drug-trafficking gang that dominated life in the slum, including some of its leaders, police said.

It was the deadliest single police operation in 16 years for Rio state which has suffered for decades from drug-related violence in its numerous favelas.

The bloodbath prompted criticism from human rights groups including Amnesty International, who lambasted the police for the "reprehensible and unjustifiable" loss of life in a neighborhood mostly populated by Black and poor people.

"The number of people killed in this



Policemen aim their weapons during an operation against drug dealers in Jacarezinho slum in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil May 6, 2021. Reuters

police operation is reprehensible, as is the fact that, once again, this massacre took place in a favela," said Jurema Werneck, executive director of Amnesty International Brazil, referring to the

informally organized neighborhood with few public services. A 2005 raid in the Baixada Fluminense in Rio's violent northern outskirts killed 29 people.

"This is one of the largest death tolls in

a police operation in Rio, surpassing 19 at Complexo do Alemão slum in 2007, except we did not lose one of ours then," police chief Ronaldo Oliveira told Reuters.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) said that Rio de Janeiro prosecutors have a constitutional obligation to oversee the police and pursue criminal investigations of police abuses. It called for a thorough and independent investigation into the deaths.

According to HRW, Rio police killed 453 people and at least four police officers died in police actions during the first three months of the year, despite a Supreme Court ruling prohibiting operations in communities during the COVID-19 pandemic except in "absolutely exceptional cases." Police said in addition to drug trafficking, the gang robbed trucks of cargo and held up commuter trains to steal from passengers.

Police displayed an arsenal of seized weapons at a news conference: six assault rifles, 15 handguns, a machine gun, 14 grenades and a round of artillery ammunition. Reuters



# China suspends economic dialogue with Australia

Beijing/Sydney (TIP): China "indefinitely" suspended all activity under a China-Australia Strategic Economic Dialogue, its state economic planner said on Thursday. This is the latest setback for strained relations between the two countries.

**It's Cold War mentality: Beijing's reform panel**  
**China's National Development and Reform Commission has said some Australian Commonwealth Government officials recently launched a series of measures to disrupt the normal exchanges and cooperation between China and Australia out of Cold War mindset and ideological discrimination. 'Response Necessary'**  
**It was a necessary response to Australia for abusing the concept of national security. - Wang Wenbin, Foreign Ministry Spokesman**

China also rejected criticism of its human rights and economic record by G7 members.

"Recently, some Australian



Commonwealth Government officials launched a series of measures to disrupt the normal exchanges and cooperation between China and Australia out of Cold War mindset and ideological discrimination," China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said in a statement on the decision. The commission did not say what specific measures prompted the action.

China's foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said at a daily conference that the suspension was a "necessary and legitimate response to Australia for abusing the concept of national security

to pressure cooperation with China. "Australia must bear full responsibility," he said.

The Australian dollar fell sharply on the news and was as low as 0.7701 to the United States dollar from Wednesday's \$0.7747.

Bilateral ties were strained in 2018 when Australia became the first country to publicly ban Chinese tech giant Huawei from its 5G network.

Relations worsened last year when Australia called for an independent investigation into the Covid origin, prompting trade reprisals from China.

Australian Trade Minister Dan Tehan said the commission's decision was disappointing because the economic dialogue was "an important forum for Australia and China to work through issues relevant to our economic partnership". "We remain open to holding the dialogue and engaging at the ministerial level," he said in a statement. The last meeting was in Beijing in 2017, when Australia's trade minister signed an agreement on cooperation on Belt and Road projects in third-party countries. Australia has, however, declined to sign agreements on direct participation in China's flagship foreign policy initiative. — Reuters

## 1st in-person attendance at EU summit this year

LISBON (TIP): On the list of things not to do during a pandemic is holding big international gatherings, but European Union leaders and diplomats are meeting in Portugal on Friday for two-day talks sending a signal that they see the Covid threat on their continent as waning.

Their talks hope to repair some of the damage Covid has caused in the bloc in areas such as welfare and employment. In a late addition to their agenda, EU leaders will also discuss Thursday's US proposal to share the technology behind Covid vaccines to help speed the end of the pandemic. The leaders will also take part in an unprecedented meeting, via videoconference, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, whose country needs more help with a devastating virus surge.

This is the 27-nation bloc's first face-to-face summit in five months, after an exceptional meeting in Brussels last December to discuss post-pandemic spending. — Agencies

## 3 Indian-origin men arrested for extortion in Canada

TORONTO (TIP): Three Indian-origin men have been arrested in Canada for allegedly trying to extort money from an 80-year-old in the name of revenue agency. Taranveer Singh (19), Ranveer Singh (19) and Chamanjyot Singh (21) from Brampton were charged with extortion, conspiracy to commit an indictable offence and possession of property obtained by crime. pti

## Chinese rocket re-entering Earth poses 'risk to humans'

San Francisco/Beijing (TIP): A 100-foot-tall, 22-metric-tonne Chinese rocket is re-entering the Earth this weekend and according to the US Space Command, it poses low risk to humans. The "out-of-control" Chinese Long March 5B rocket will likely splash down in the ocean on Saturday, according to a report in The Verge.

The US Space Command said in a statement that "its exact entry point into the Earth's atmosphere cannot be pinpointed until within hours of its re-entry".

The US, however, would expect China to pay for any damage caused by its rocket stage, the report mentioned. "Much of the earth is covered in water, so there's almost no risk," said Dan Oltrogge, founder of the Space Safety Coalition. The Long March 5B rocket can't be maneuvered or controlled. "It's orbiting Earth diagonally at a 41.5-degree inclination (or tilt) from the equator. That means it passes over a large swath of Earth, anywhere as far south as Chile and the top half of New Zealand, and as far north as New York and Madrid," the report said on Thursday. IANS

## 20 dead in Rio de Janeiro shootout

RIO DE JANEIRO (TIP): At least 20 people, including a police officer, died on Thursday in a shootout during a police operation against drug traffickers in Rio de Janeiro's Jacarezinho shanty town, O Globo newspaper reported on its website.

Two passengers on a metro train were also wounded in the shooting in the northern Rio neighbourhood, the newspaper said. — Reuters

## France sends patrol boats as fishing tensions flare with UK

LONDON (TIP): Vessels from Britain's Royal Navy and French police boats patrolled Thursday near the English Channel island of Jersey, where French fishermen angry about losing access to waters off their coast gathered for a maritime protest.

The irate mariners set off flares and entered the island's main harbour, in the first major dispute between France and Britain over fishing rights in the wake of Brexit.

The European Union appealed for calm, but also accused the UK of not respecting the terms of the post-Brexit trade deal agreed to by the two sides.

The naval policing boats Athos and Themis were sent to keep watch on waters between France and Jersey, French maritime authorities for the English Channel and North Sea said. AP

## Johnson's party sweeps aside Labour in northeast



LONDON (TIP): Voters in an Opposition stronghold turned en masse to British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservatives, boosting his parliamentary majority on Friday despite a high Covid death toll, last year's record economic slump and cronyism charges.

Conservative Jill Mortimer beat Labour's candidate in Thursday's ballot by 15,529 votes to 8,589 to take the parliamentary seat for Hartlepool, a victory once unthinkable in a northeast

English port town that for decades backed UK's main Opposition.

The overwhelming victory for an often-criticised governing party increases pressure on Labour leader Keir Starmer, who has struggled to revive his party's fortunes since a disastrous national election in 2019.

Johnson celebrated by quickly visiting Hartlepool when he ascribed his party's success to its policies of delivering Brexit and ploughing money into areas where voters felt neglected. — Reuters



*UK unveils "green list" of countries for foreign travel from May 17*

The British government on Friday announced a "green list" of countries from which travellers are not required to quarantine upon return to England.

Portugal, Israel, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand are among 12 countries and regions on the "green list" of travel destinations from May 17 for people in England, British Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said.

Speaking at a press conference at Downing Street, Shapps said COVID tests will still be required before and after travel to these destinations.

Shapps described the step as "tentative" as concerns remain "about resurgence of COVID".

Under the new traffic light system, Turkey, the Maldives and Nepal have been added to the "red list", which means travellers from those countries will have to quarantine in a hotel for 10 days on their return.

Shapps said the government's latest decision was "necessarily cautious". "We must make sure the countries we reconnect with are safe," he added.

Countries on the green, amber and red lists would be reviewed every three weeks from May 17, according to Shapps.

The British government is only responsible for coronavirus restrictions in England. The devolved governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are responsible for their own policies in relation to public health matters. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have not said when they might ease their strict travel restrictions.

Another 2,490 people in Britain have tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the total number of coronavirus cases in the country to 4,431,043, according to official figures released Friday.

The country also reported another 15 coronavirus-related deaths. The total number of coronavirus-related deaths in Britain now stands at 127,598. These figures only include the deaths of people who died within 28 days of their first positive test.

More than 35 million people have been given the first jab of the coronavirus vaccine, according to the latest official figures.

Earlier Friday, Public Health England declared a coronavirus strain first detected in India, known as B1617.2, as "variant of concern".

Experts have warned that despite progress in vaccine rollout, Britain is "still not out of the woods" amid concerns over new variants, particularly those first emerged in South Africa, Brazil and India, and the third wave of pandemic on the European continent.

To bring life back to normal, countries such as Britain, China, Russia, the United States as well as the European Union have been racing against time to roll out coronavirus vaccines.

# Global Covid-19 caseload tops 156.4 mn

WASHINGTON (TIP): The overall global Covid-19 caseload has topped 156.4 million, while the deaths have surged to more than 3.26 million, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

In its latest update on Saturday, May 8, morning, the University's Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) revealed that the current global caseload and death toll stood at 156,472,669 and 3,264,720, respectively.

The US continues to be the worst-hit country with the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 32,649,677 and 580,870, respectively, according to the CSSE.

In terms of infections, India follows in the second place with 21,491,598 cases.

The other countries with more than two million confirmed coronavirus cases are Brazil (15,082,449), France (5,808,421), Turkey (4,998,089), Russia (4,808,133), the UK (4,446,752), Italy (4,092,747), Spain (3,567,408), Germany (3,507,730), Argentina (3,118,134), Colombia (2,968,626), Poland (2,824,425), Iran (2,627,094), Mexico (2,358,831) and Ukraine (2,160,809), the CSSE figures showed.

In terms of deaths, Brazil comes second with 419,114 fatalities.

Nations with a death toll of over 50,000 are India (234,083), Mexico (218,173), the UK (127,858), Italy (122,470), Russia (110,735), France (106,262), Germany (84,498), Spain (78,792), Colombia (76,867), Iran (74,241), Poland (69,445), Argentina (66,872), Peru (62,976) and South Africa (54,687).

## TRACKING THE VIRUS

### GLOBAL

Cases | Deaths  
**156,472,669** | **3,264,720**

### INDIA

Cases | Deaths  
**21,892,676** | **238,270**



## WHO validates China's Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine for emergency use

The World Health Organization (WHO) validated on Friday the BBIBP-CorV COVID-19 vaccine developed by China's Sinopharm for emergency use.

"This afternoon, WHO gave emergency use listing to Sinopharm Beijing's COVID-19 vaccine, making it the sixth vaccine to receive WHO validation for safety, efficacy and quality," said WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus at a press briefing.

"This expands the list of vaccines that COVAX can buy, and gives countries confidence to expedite their own regulatory approval, and to import and administer a vaccine," he said.

In an official press release, WHO Assistant-Director General for Access to Health Products Dr. Mariangela Simao said that the addition of the Sinopharm vaccine has "the potential to rapidly accelerate COVID-19 vaccine access for countries seeking to protect health workers and populations at risk."

The vaccine produced by Beijing Bio-Institute of Biological Products Co Ltd, a subsidiary of the China National Biotec Group, is an inactivated vaccine with easy storage requirements, which makes it highly suitable for low-resource settings.

It is also the first vaccine that will carry a vaccine vial monitor, a small sticker on the vaccine vials that change color if the vaccine is exposed to heat, letting health workers know whether the vaccine can be safely used.

According to WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE), the Sinopharm vaccine is recommended for use in adults 18 years and older; in a two-dose schedule with a spacing of three to four weeks.

Though few older adults over 60 years were enrolled in clinical trials and efficacy could not be estimated in this age



group, WHO is not recommending an upper age limit for the Sinopharm vaccine, because reviewed data have suggested that the vaccine is likely to have a protective effect in older persons, according to the WHO press release.

"There is no theoretical reason to believe that the vaccine has a different safety profile in older and younger populations," said the WHO press release, which recommends that countries using the vaccine in older age groups conduct safety and effectiveness monitoring.



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# Didi in the saddle for third time

Mamata takes oath, becomes one of the longest-serving woman CMs in India

Nation's Didi Mamata Banerjee, the firebrand leader of West Bengal politics, once again proved a master strategist, decimating the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and new Congress-Left-ISF alliance christened as "Samyukta Morcha" all of whom sought to checkmate her return to power.

After a phenomenal victory in the Assembly polls, Trinamool Congress (TMC) spremo Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday, May 5, was sworn in as West Bengal Chief Minister for third consecutive term.

Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar administered her the oath of office and secrecy at a low-key ceremony at Raj Bhawan held amid the raging COVID pandemic.

Banerjee took the oath in Bengali language.

Apart from senior TMC leaders like Partha Chatterjee and Subrata Mukherjee, poll strategist Prashant Kishor, who played a key role in TMC's victory, and Banerjee MP nephew Abhishek Banerjee were present.

Banerjee has said her first priority after resuming office will be to tackle the COVID-19 situation.

Defeating all odds, the 66-year-old feisty leader, who had single-handedly wrecked the red bastion in West Bengal in 2011 ousting Left Front's uninterrupted 34-year-old rule, coasted to a two third majority in this year election, winning 213 seats, bettering its performance of 211 in the outgoing Assembly.

The 'daughter of Bengal' also faced an all out attack by the BJP, which fielded top party stalwarts led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Amit Shah, J P Nadda a battery of Union Ministers and state leaders, for campaigning but they finally found that there was no way to stop her Trinamool Congress from romping home to victory.

It is the Bharatiya Janata Party that trespassed her dominion after gaining overwhelming results from the state in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. And, the emergence of the Left-Congress-ISF alliance has made the situation more complicated for her.

Banerjee is serving as the 8th and current Chief Minister of West Bengal since 2011, the first woman to hold the office. She founded the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC or TMC) party in 1998 after separating from the Indian National Congress, and became its first chairperson. She is often referred to as Didi by her followers and as Pishi (meaning paternal aunt in Bengali) by many of her critics.

Banerjee is now one of the longest-serving woman chief ministers in the history of India. Besides her, only former Delhi CM Sheila Dixit had won three consecutive terms, staying in office for 15 years.

She is also the only woman chief minister in the country at the moment. Having come to power in 2011 after defeating the Left that was ruling the state for 34 long years, Banerjee has been challenged by the Opposition at point and the current election shows how she has overcome hurdles put forward by the



Mamata Banerjee in her office at the state secretariat building in Kolkata after taking oath as the chief minister of West Bengal for a third term. Pic source: AFP

Left, Right and Centre to come out on top.

## What went in her favor

The mercurial leader, however, lost by 1956 votes in Nandigram to former protege-turned-BJP adversary Suwendu Adhikari.

The TMC won 208 seats and is leading in five more polling 47.94 per cent votes till 3.30 am, while the BJP clinched 76 seats and is leading in one, bagging 38.13 per cent votes.

Elections were held in 292 constituencies of the 294-member assembly. Polling was countermanded in two constituencies after candidates fell victim to a raging COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's a victory for Bengal's people...it's Banglar joy' (Bengal's victory)," Banerjee told TMC workers, while her party approached the Election Commission with demand to order recounting of votes in Nandigram which was rejected.

Though the BJP failed in its effort to dislodge Banerjee from power, it's for the first time that it will be the main opposition party in the state assembly, rising from a measly three seats in 2016 to at least 76 now.

It is also for the first time that the Left and the Congress, which ruled the state for decades, will have no representation.

In the run up to the elections, the BJP had Banerjee on the defensive by aggressively campaigning against corruption allegedly involving TMC leaders and the 'cut money' (bribery) culture affecting everyday life of people.

The party also tried to gain traction with its Hindutva pitch as slogans of "Jai Shri Ram" reverberated at rally venues and leaders tried to openly woo the Dalit Matua and Rajbongshi communities.

Just when she appeared to be losing ground, Banerjee shifted gear and coined the slogan 'Bangla nijer meyekei chay' (Bengal wants her daughter). Banerjee

raking up the insider-outsider debate was part of the strategy to appeal to Bengali subnationalism, something hitherto alien to West Bengal politics.

Banerjee's appeal to 'Bangaliana' (Bengaliness) cultural identity, which transcends divisions of caste and religion, seemed to have worked in her favour.

The 'Duare Sarkar' (government at your doorstep) programme under which benefits of a host of welfare schemes, including scheduled caste certificates, were delivered to the homes of the beneficiaries, also boosted her standing among the poor.

The West Bengal government's UN award winning 'Kanyashree' programme, where money is transferred to the bank accounts of girls so they could study further and early marriages could be prevented, was highlighted during the campaign.

The strategy to extend the 'Swasthya Sathi' health insurance scheme to the entire population in December 2000 was welcomed by all. The scheme was launched by Banerjee in 2016.

It is a basic health cover for secondary and tertiary care up to Rs five lakh per annum for every family.

Months ahead of the elections, the Banerjee government transferred Rs 10,000 each to 9.5 lakh students in class 12 government schools to help them buy computer tablets and mobile phones for online classes. But, for many families, it came as relief amid economic hardships triggered by the lockdown.

She promised that women heads of 1.6 crore households will receive basic income benefit under which women of general category will get Rs 500 monthly allowance and those of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Rs 1,000. She said it was pocket money for the women who otherwise have to depend on their husbands.

"The chief minister remains extremely popular with women, the

campaign stressing pro-women initiatives went down well....their (women's) high turnout helped," said Prof.

Ranabir Samaddar, well-known political scientist and former head of Maulana Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata.

Another factor that went in her favour was the near total consolidation of Muslim votes in favour of the TMC.

Parties such as the AIMIM and Abbas Siddiqui's ISF, which were seen as having the potential to deal a blow to the TMC's minority support base, failed to make an impression as the minorities threw their weight behind Mamata Banerjee.

The prime minister's repeated taunts of "Didi, O Didi" in his speeches, too, did not go down well with voters in a state where women traditionally enjoy a high social and economic status and are a major vote bank for the TMC.

The clincher for Banerjee came when she mounted an aggressive assault in the last three phases of polling on Prime Minister Modi for leaving India unprepared for the second COVID wave.

She went on to blame an influx of "outsiders brought by the BJP" for the spread of the pandemic in the state, and the saffron party suddenly found itself trying to defend itself against charges of mismanagement of the COVID-19 crisis.

The victory for Banerjee, by far the biggest mass leader since the redoubtable Jyoti Basu who ruled West Bengal with an iron fist from 1977 to 2000, will not only help fortify her position in the state but also enhance her standing at the national level where voices from the opposition are getting feeble with time.

Speculation is rife already that Banerjee, who reached out to several national and regional parties opposed to the BJP a few months ago, will now try to forge a common front with them to mount a challenge to the saffron party in the 2024 general elections.



# Journey of Bengal's daughter to nation's Didi

All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) supremo Mamata Banerjee, also known as Didi (elder sister in the Bengali language), sworn in as the Chief Minister of West Bengal for the third term on 5 May 2021 after she pulled off a landslide victory in the West Bengal Assembly Elections 2021. Ahead of the oath-taking ceremony, she resigned as the Chief Minister of West Bengal at Raj Bhavan in the presence of Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar (as per the practice) and took the oath of the office and secrecy again. She lost the Nandigram Assembly Constituency to Suvendu Adhikari (BJP) in 2021.

After her separation from the Indian National Congress, she founded the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC or TMC) in 1998. She spearheaded the AITC alliance to a landslide victory in the 2011 West Bengal Assembly Elections, defeating the 34-year-old Communist Party of India (Marxist). She was a member of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly from the Bhabanipur Assembly Constituency from 2011-2021.

Apart from serving as the Chief Minister of West Bengal, she has held key positions in the Union Cabinet such as first female Minister of Railways, first female Minister of Coal, and Minister of Human Resource Development, Youth Affairs and Sports, Women and Child Development. She has served as the Minister of Railways on two occasions.

Mamata Banerjee rose to prominence after opposing the erstwhile land acquisition policies for industrialisation of the Communist government in West Bengal for Special Economic Zones at the cost of agriculturalists and farmers at Singur.

Throughout her political career, she has maintained a publicly austere lifestyle. She can be seen dressed in a traditional Bengali saree. Though many don't know, she is a self-taught painter and a poet. Her 300 paintings were sold for Rs. 9 crores.

## Early life, and education

Mamata Banerjee was born in Calcutta (present-day Kolkata), West Bengal to a Bengali Hindu family to Promileswar Banerjee and Gayetri Devi. She lost her father at the age of 17 due to a lack of medical treatment.

She attended Deshbandhu Sishu Sikhshalay and completed her senior secondary studies in 1970. She earned her Bachelor's degree in History from Jogamaya Devi College and received her Master's degree in Islamic history from the University of Calcutta. She further earned a degree in Education from Shri Shikshayatan College and a law degree from Jogesh Chandra Chaudhuri Law College, Kolkata. She received an honorary doctorate from the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, Bhubaneswar and an honorary Doctorate of Literature (D.Litt.) from Calcutta University.

At the age of 15, she became involved in politics and established Chhatra Parishad Union, the student wing of the Congress (I) Party, defeating the All India Democratic Students Organisation affiliated with the Socialist Unity Centre of India (Communist).

## Political career

She started her political career with the Indian National Congress in the 1970s. She earned huge attention from the media after dancing on the car of



socialist activist and politician Jayaprakash Narayan as a protest against him. From 1976-1980, she served as the General Secretary of the Mahila Congress, West Bengal. In the 1984 General Election, she became one of the youngest parliamentarians of India, defeating veteran Communist Party politician Somnath Chatterjee, to win the Jadavpur Parliamentary Constituency in West Bengal.

In 1984, she became the General Secretary of the Indian Youth Congress. In the 1989 General Elections, she lost her seat to Malini Bhattacharya of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). In the 1991 General Elections, she was re-elected from Calcutta South constituency and retained this seat in 1996, 1998, 1999, 2004, and 2009 General Elections.

During P. V. Narasimha Rao administration from 1991-1996, she held key positions in the Union Cabinet. She was appointed the Union Minister of State for Human Resources Development, Youth Affairs and Sports, and Women and Child Development.

After indicating her resignation and protesting at a rally against the Government's indifference towards her proposal to improve sports in the country at the Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata, West Bengal, she was discharged of her portfolios in the year 1993.

In 1997, Mamata Banerjee parted ways with the Indian National Congress over the difference in political views with the then West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee President Somendra Nath Mitra. In 1998, she along with Mukul Roy founded AITC which quickly became the opposition party to the Communist Government in West Bengal.

On 11 December 1998, she held a Samajwadi Party MP, Daroga Prasad Saroj, by the collar and dragged him out of the well of the Lok Sabha, preventing

him from protesting against the Women Reservation Bill.

In 1999, she joined BJP led NDA Government and served as the Minister of Railways. She presented her first Railway Budget in 2000 where she introduced 19 new trains for the FY 2000-2001 and fulfilled many of her promises to her home state West Bengal.

In early 2001, after Tehelka Magazine's exposure of Operation West End, she walked out of the NDA and allied with the Indian National Congress for the 2001 West Bengal elections and also to register her protest against senior ministers of the government over the corruption charges levelled by Tehelka.

In September 2003, she again allied with the NDA Government and served as a Cabinet Minister without any portfolio. On 9 January 2004, took charge as the Minister of Coal and Mines and held the portfolio till 22 May 2004.

In the 2004 General Elections, her party aligned with the BJP but lost the elections. She suffered major setbacks when the sitting mayor Subrata Mukherjee defected from her party. Her party was defeated in the 2006 West Bengal Assembly Elections. On 4 August 2006, she hurled her resignation papers at the Dy. Speaker Charanjit Singh Atwal in Lok Sabha. Banerjee was provoked by Speaker Somnath Chatterjee who rejected her adjournment motion on illegal infiltration by Bangladeshis in West Bengal on the grounds of improper format.

On 20 October 2005, she rose to prominence after opposing the erstwhile land acquisition policies for industrialisation of the Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee government in West Bengal for Special Economic Zones at the cost of agriculturalists and farmers at Singur.

In November 2006, she was forcibly stopped on her way to Singur for a rally

against the proposed Tata Motors car project. She reached the West Bengal assembly, protested, addressed a press conference, and announced a 12-hour shut down by her party. The MLAs of AITC vandalized the West Bengal Legislative Assembly building and a major strike was called on 14 December 2006, but no gain was registered.

In 2007, armed police personnel stormed the rural area of Purba Medinipur district to quash protest against the then Government of West Bengal. The Government had plans to expropriate 10,000 acres (40 km<sup>2</sup>) of land for a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) to be developed by the Indonesian-based Salim Group. As per the reports, at least 14 villagers were shot dead while over 70 were wounded, leading to a large number of people protesting on the streets.

Soon after this incident, Mamata Banerjee wrote letters to the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Union Minister Shivraj Patil to stop the violence in Nandigram which she termed as 'State-sponsored violence' promoted by CPI(M).

Before the 2009 General Elections, her party forged an alliance with the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA). After the elections, Banerjee became the Union Minister of Railways.

Upon becoming the Union Minister of Railways for the second time, she introduced a number of non-stop Duronto Express trains connecting large cities as well as a number of other passenger trains, including women-only trains.

## As a Chief Minister

She spearheaded the AITC alliance to a landslide victory in the 2011 West Bengal Assembly Elections, defeating the 34-year-old Communist Party of India (Marxist). She assumed the position of Chief Minister of West Bengal and has been serving the position for the third term in a row.

She is the first and to date the only female Chief Minister of West Bengal. Soon after assuming the office, she returned the 400 acres of land to Singur farmers, set up Gorkhaland Territorial Administration and brought in many reforms in the education and health sectors.

In a bid to improve the law and order situation in the state, she created police commissionerates at Howrah, Barrackpore, Durgapur-Asansol and Bidhannagar. The total area of Kolkata Municipal Corporation was brought under the control of the Kolkata Police.

On 16 February 2012, she received an appreciation letter from Bill Gates of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for achieving a full year without any reported cases of polio, stating it as a milestone not only for India but for the world as well.

In the 2016 West Bengal Assembly Elections, her party won 211 of 293 seats. She took oath as the CM of West Bengal for the second time.



# Ayurvedic remedies to keep dandruff away

**D**andruff is a common scalp disorder affecting a majority of the population. Various factors increase the risk of developing dandruff, including a person's age, the weather, stress levels, medical conditions, and choice of hair products, along with some allergic reactions, psoriasis, and dermatitis.

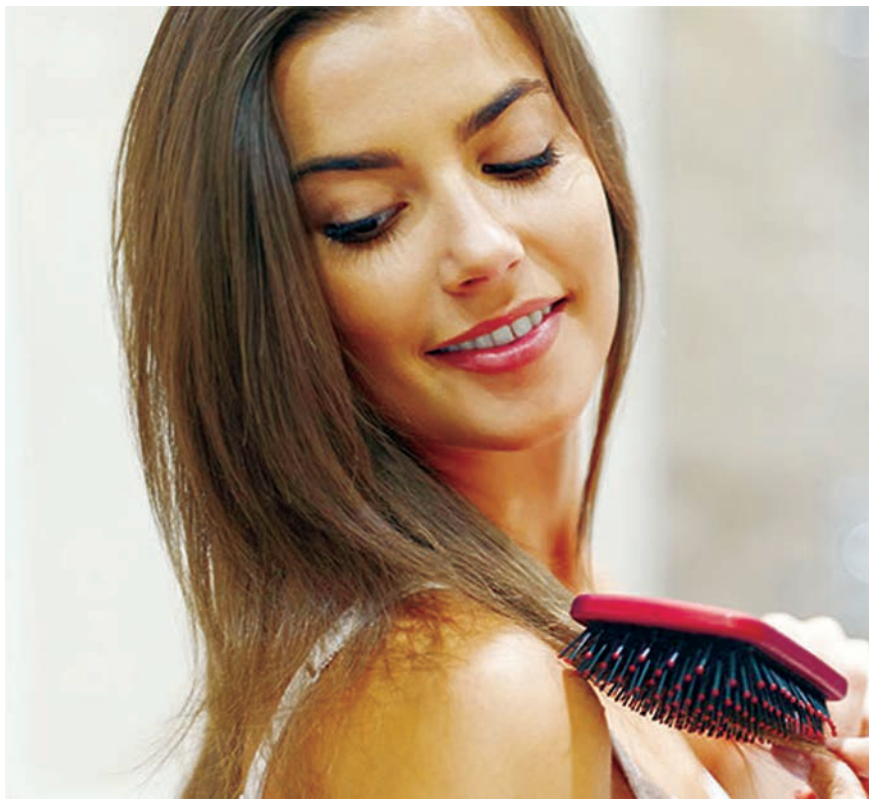
Poor hygiene is also a factor, but the flakes may be more visible if a person does not wash or brush their hair often.

Sharing more, ayurvedic practitioner Shyam VL described some Ayurvedic tips and home remedies that one can follow.

"Our skin cells are forever renewing themselves. When the skin cells on our scalp are renewed the old ones are pushed to the surface. For a person with dandruff the renewal is faster and more dead skin is shed. Dandruff may be associated with dry skin conditions that aggravate in winter," he shared on Instagram.

"Some of the other reasons for dandruff are lack of regular hair wash that leads to oils and skin cells build up; skin disorders like psoriasis and eczema; shampooing too often or using too many styling products that irritate your scalp, too much oil on your scalp, changes in hormones, stress, a suppressed immune system — all of these may contribute to the development of dandruff," he added

- Keep hair and scalp clean so as to minimise the accumulation of dead skin cells; shampoo-wash twice or thrice weekly. Switch between 2 different shampoos



- Massage and rinse with plain water on the other days
- A healthy diet plays an important role in the treatment of dandruff
- Severe dandruff may require internal medication.

**Here are some simple remedies to follow**

- Heat coconut oil with a handful of neem leaves and curry leaves. Once cooled, use on the scalp every alternate day. Mild shampoo wash after 30 minutes.
- Soak fenugreek seeds

overnight, grind and apply on the scalp the next day.

- Amla powder or triphala chooran can also be applied on scalp, prior to shower.
- Mix coconut milk with lemon juice and apply it on the scalp before a head bath.
- Mix warm coconut oil with amla powder and gently massage the scalp.
- Mix one tablespoon green gram powder with three tablespoon yogurt. This mixture can be used as a hair wash.

Source: Indian Express

**FOOD CORNER**

## Tomato Fish

**INGREDIENTS**

250 gm tomato, 1 large onion, 2 teaspoon turmeric, 2 teaspoon ginger paste, 1 teaspoon coriander powder, 1 pinch salt, 1 tablespoon coriander leaves, 500 gm fish, 2 tablespoon yoghurt (curd), 1 teaspoon red chilli, 1/2 teaspoon cumin, 1/2 teaspoon sugar, 3 tablespoon refined oil.

**Method**

- Remove any pin bones from the fish fillets and cut into large chunks. Rub 1 ½ tsp turmeric powder and 1 tsp salt over the fish and set aside for 10 minutes.
- Boil water in a pan. Make a cross cut on the stem side of the tomatoes. Plunge the tomatoes in boiling water for 30 seconds and remove. Peel the tomatoes and chop them finely. Also, chop onions very finely.
- Heat oil in a large pan. Spread the fish pieces on the pan and fry till golden in color. Turn and fry on the other side as well. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.
- Add the onions to the same pan. Saute for 5-6 minutes till soft and cooked. Add the turmeric powder, red chilli powder, cumin powder, coriander powder, ginger paste, sugar and chopped tomatoes. Mix well and cook for 4-5 minutes till the tomatoes are tender.
- Remove from fire, cool slightly and blend in a blender to get a coarse paste. Return the paste to the pan on the fire. Add 1 cup water and bring to a boil.
- Reduce the heat and allow to simmer for a minute. Whisk the yoghurt and add to the simmering curry.
- Add the fish pieces along with any juices and simmer for 4-5 minutes. Add the chopped coriander and mix well.
- Remove from fire and serve hot with rice or rotis.



## Doctors warn against 'sunscreen contouring'

**A**s we start heading into the summer, it is more important than ever to protect your skin against sun damage and wearing always sunscreen to keep safe.

However, a TikTok trend has caused some concern as doctors warn users that attempting this trend could lead to skin cancer.

The trend was started by LA model Eli Withrow, who posted a video showing how she applied her sunscreen in order to 'achieve snatched all summer'.

"Haters will say it doesn't work, but I am convinced that if you put a base sunscreen of SPF 30 on and SPF 90 on all the spots that you would put highlighter on, the sun will contour your face where you put bronzer and you will be naturally snatched all summer" she explained in the video, which has over 1 million views.

However, experts have warned that there is "no safe or healthy way to get a tan" and by and that by not using an SPF correctly and not covering



your whole body, you could risk

sunburn or damaging your skin.

Speaking to MailOnline, Dr Simran Deo at Online Doctor, Zava, explained that you can use make up to achieve the contoured look, rather than damaging your skin.

"Although using SPF to contour may lead to temporary tan lines in areas where you would usually use make-up to create the same effect, once those tan lines fade you can be left with more permanent skin damage, which presents at a later age and is not so easy to reverse" she said.

"The harsh UVA, UVB and UVR rays of the sun can lead to early signs of ageing such as wrinkles and fine lines, areas of hyperpigmentation such as lentigo or deeper pigmentation known as melasma" she continued.

"It can result in damage of the skin cells leading to skin cancer and pre-cancerous changes, as well as having an effect on your immunity", she added.

## Make your make-up melt-proof by dunking your face in water

**W**hen it comes to beauty, Koreans are never afraid to try new things. From snail-slime face packs to volcanic clay masks, Korean women love to experiment with their beauty techniques. And the latest Korean trend will just surprise you! Women are now submerging their faces in water to achieve flawless make-up.



This technique is called 'jamsu' which translates to diving in Korean. The jamsu beauty trick involves coating your face with baby powder and then submerging the made-up face in the cold water for 30 seconds.

Wondering why beauty buffs are swearing by this trick? The trick of using baby powder (which works like baking) and water dunking seals the make-up—which means you'll get long lasting melt-proof make-up. So, if you want matte, oil-free skin in summers, this trick might come handy.



## Study links fish oil supplements with heart rhythm disorder

According to a new analysis by the European Society of Cardiology, omega-3 supplements are associated with an increased likelihood of developing atrial fibrillation in people with high blood lipids.

The findings were published in European Heart Journal -- Cardiovascular Pharmacotherapy, a journal of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC).

Author of the study, Dr Salvatore Carbone of Virginia Commonwealth University, US said: "Currently, fish oil supplements are indicated for patients with elevated plasma triglycerides to reduce cardiovascular risk."

"Due to the high prevalence of elevated triglycerides in the population, they can be commonly prescribed. Of note, low-dose omega-3 fatty acids are available over the counter, without the need for a prescription."

Some clinical trials have suggested that omega-3 fatty acids may be associated with an increased risk for atrial fibrillation, the most common heart rhythm disorder. People with the disorder have a five times greater likelihood of having a stroke.

These studies tested different formulations of omega-3 fatty acids at different doses. The authors, therefore, performed a comprehensive meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials to



answer the question of whether fish oils were consistently related to a raised risk for atrial fibrillation.

The analysis included five randomised controlled trials investigating the effects of omega-3 fatty acid supplementation on cardiovascular outcomes.

Participants had elevated triglycerides and were either at high risk for cardiovascular disease or had established cardiovascular disease. A total of 50,277 patients received fish oils or placebo and were followed up for between 2 and 7.4 years. The dose of fish oils varied from 0.84 g to 4 g per day.

The researchers found that omega-3 fatty acid supplementation was associated with a significantly

increased risk for atrial fibrillation compared to placebo with an incidence rate ratio of 1.37 (95 per cent confidence interval 1.22-1.54; p<0.001).

Dr Carbone said, "Our study suggests that fish oil supplements are associated with a significantly greater risk of atrial fibrillation in patients at elevated cardiovascular risk." "Although one clinical trial indicated beneficial cardiovascular effects of supplementation, the risk for atrial fibrillation should be considered when such agents are prescribed or purchased over the counter, especially in individuals susceptible to developing the heart rhythm disorder," Carbone added.

Source: ANI



## Air pollution linked to high BP in children, young adults

Exposure to high levels of air pollutants during childhood increases the likelihood of high blood pressure in children and adolescents, and their risk for high blood pressure as adults, according to a meta-analysis of 14 studies.

The findings showed that short-term exposure to PM10 was significantly associated with elevated systolic blood pressure (the top number on a blood pressure reading) in young adults.

Long-term exposure to PM2.5, PM10 and nitrogen dioxide were also associated with elevated systolic levels as well as diastolic level (the bottom number on a blood pressure reading). The results are published in the Journal of the American Heart Association.

"Our analysis is the first to closely examine previous research to assess both the quality and magnitude of the associations between air pollution and blood pressure values among children and adolescents," said lead author Yao Lu, Professor of the Clinical Research Centre at the Third Xiangya Hospital at Central South University in Changsha, China.

"The findings provide evidence of a positive association between short- and long-term exposure to certain environmental air pollutants and blood pressure in children and adolescents," Lu said.

This systematic review and meta-analysis pooled information from 14 studies and included data for more than 350,000 children and adolescents (mean ages 5.4 to 12.7 years). The team explored the impact of long-term and/or short-term exposure of ambient air pollution on blood pressure levels of adolescents and/or children in China, US and Europe.

"To reduce the impact of environmental pollution on blood pressure in children and adolescents, efforts should be made to reduce their exposure to environmental pollutants," said Lu.

"Additionally, it is also very important to routinely measure blood pressure in children and adolescents, which can help us identify individuals with elevated blood pressure early," Lu noted.

Source: IANS

## Single COVID vaccine dose boosts protection against variants in previously infected: Study

A single dose of COVID-19 vaccine boosts protection against SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus variants, but only in those previously infected with the disease, according to a study.

The researchers looked at the UK and South Africa variants, however, they think it possible that the findings will apply to other variants in circulation, such as the Brazil (P.1) and India (B.1.617 and B.1.618) variants.

The findings, published in the journal Science, show that in those who have not previously been infected and have so far only received one dose of vaccine, the immune response to coronavirus variants of concern may be insufficient.

The researchers at Imperial College London, Queen Mary University of London and University College London, looked at immune responses in UK healthcare workers at Barts and Royal Free hospitals following their first dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine.

They found that people who had



previously had mild or asymptomatic infection had significantly enhanced protection against the Kent and South Africa variants, after a single dose of the mRNA vaccine.

In those without prior COVID-19, the immune response was less strong after a first dose, potentially leaving them at risk from variants.

"Our findings show that people who have had their first dose of vaccine, and who have not previously been infected with SARS-CoV-2, are not fully protected against the circulating variants of concern," said

Rosemary Boyton, Professor of Immunology and Respiratory Medicine at Imperial College London, who led the research.

"This study highlights the importance of getting second doses of the vaccine rolled out to protect the population," Boyton said.

The researchers analysed the blood samples for the presence and levels of immunity against the original strain of SARS-CoV-2, as well as the Kent (B.1.1.7) and South Africa (B.1.351) variants of concern.

Along with antibodies, the researchers also focused on two types of white blood cell: B-cells, which 'remember' the virus, and T cells, which help B cell memory and recognise and destroy cells infected with coronavirus.

They found that after a first dose of vaccine, prior infection was associated with a boosted T cell, B cell and neutralising antibody response, which could provide effective protection against SARS-CoV-2, as well as the Kent and South Africa variants.

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## Google Photos to offer only 15GB free space from June 1

Google Photos, which currently offers unlimited free storage for "high quality" photos for all users, will only offer 15GB of free storage space for new photos and videos starting next month.

However, this change doesn't apply to those who own a Pixel 2 or later, XDA Developers reported.

Pixel users will continue to get unlimited free "high quality" photo backups on Google Photos. However, those who don't own a Pixel phone will have to get a Google One subscription, which starts at \$1.99 per month (\$19.99 per year) for 100GB.

The company, last year in November, announced that it would no longer offer unlimited free storage for "high quality" photos on Google Photos starting June 1, 2020.

The company had revealed that it would limit free storage on Google Photos to 15GB and users would have to pay for a monthly Google One subscription for any additional storage.

Since photos and videos uploaded to Google Photos before the deadline won't count towards the new 15GB limit, users should probably upload all their precious memories right away and avoid paying for the Google One subscription, the report said.



## SpaceX Starship rocket prototype achieves first safe landing



SpaceX achieved the first successful touchdown of its prototype Starship rocket during the latest test flight of the next-generation launch vehicle in south Texas on Wednesday, May 5, after four previous landing attempts ended in explosions.

The feat marked a key milestone for the private rocket company of billionaire tech mogul Elon Musk in its development of a reusable heavy-lift launch vehicle to eventually carry astronauts and large cargo payloads to the moon and Mars.

The Starship SN15 blasted off from the SpaceX launch site in Boca Chica, Texas, along the Gulf Coast and reached its planned maximum altitude of 10 kilometers (6 miles), then hovered momentarily before flying nose-down under aerodynamic control back toward Earth.

Maneuvering itself back into vertical position under rocket thrust as it approached the ground, the 16-story, three-engine vehicle descended to a gentle touchdown on its landing

gear.

"We are down, the Starship has landed," SpaceX principal integration engineer John Insprucker said during live commentary for the flight.

A video feed of the landing showed flames continuing to burn at the base of the rocket after the engines cut off, but an automated fire-suppression system trained a steady stream of water onto the landing pad, eventually extinguishing the blaze.

The flight came on the 60th anniversary of the first spaceflight by an American astronaut - Alan Shepard's launch on a 15-minute suborbital mission atop NASA's Mercury-Redstone rocket from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

Musk declared success on Twitter, posting a terse message in the understated parlance of spaceflight: "Starship landing nominal!"

Four previous test flights of Starship prototypes - SN8 in December; SN9 in February and SN10 and SN11 in March - all blasted off successfully but blew to pieces.



Twitter rival Koo announces 'Talk to Type' feature for Indian languages

Twitter rival Koo has launched its "Talk to Type" feature for Indian languages and said it is the first social media platform to roll out such capability.

The move would enable and empower those users who feel uncomfortable using the keyboard.

"Anybody who wants to share their thoughts can now do so easily without having to type. They can speak their thoughts out loud and the words will show up magically on the screen. All at the click of a button and without using a keyboard," the company said in a statement.

This will happen in all the Indian languages Koo is currently available in, and will be the "easiest way to share thoughts with people in a native Indian language".

"Koo is the first social media platform in the world that is using this 'Talk to Type' feature, that too in Indian regional languages, apart from English. This will enable regional language creation in the easiest way possible for millions of Koo users," the statement said.

## PUBG to return as Battlegrounds Mobile India

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Amid rumours around PUBG's comeback in India, South Korean video game developer Krafton on Thursday, May 6, confirmed the return of its much-anticipated game for the Indian users.

The company of its social media accounts and its websites mentioned that the game is coming soon in India. However, the game will not release as PUBG Mobile India but as Battlegrounds Mobile India.

"With privacy and data security being a top priority, Krafton will be working with partners, to ensure data protection and security, at each stage," the video game developed said in a statement.

"This will ensure privacy rights are respected, and all data collection and storage will be in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations in India and for players here," it added.

According to the company, the game will offer a world-class multiplayer gaming experience on mobile.

Battlegrounds Mobile India will release with exclusive in-game events like outfits and features and will have its own esports ecosystem with tournaments and leagues. The game will launch as a free-to-play experience on mobile devices.



## Virgin Hyperloop shows off the future: mass transport in floating magnetic pods

In the desert just north of Las Vegas, a long white metal tube sits at the base of the mountains, promising to one day revolutionise travel. That is where Virgin Hyperloop, whose partners include Richard Branson's Virgin Group, is developing the technology for passenger pods that will hurtle at speeds of up to 750 miles an hour (1,200 kph) through almost air-free vacuum tunnels using magnetic levitation.

"It will feel like an aircraft at take-off and once you're at speed," said co-founder and Chief Executive Josh Giegel, who gave Reuters an exclusive tour of the pod used in its November test run, where it was propelled along a 500 meter (1,640 ft) tunnel.

"You won't even have turbulence because our system is basically completely able to react to all that turbulence. Think noise-canceling but bump-canceling, if you will." Off-white materials and a back mirror make the pod seem bigger and more "inviting" for new users, Giegel said.



"This pod was really the embodiment of 'How do we take something that's an idea and make it into something that's a reality for us to sit in?' Giegel said. The pods will seat 28 passengers and could be customised for long and short distances, and for freight.

While it is still at an early stage, Giegel predicts commercial operations as early as 2027. It could be the first form of transport in 100 years to revolutionise travel, just like cars, trains and planes did, Giegel said.





## Melinda Gates gets billions in shares from Cascade

Cascade Investment, the holding company created by Bill Gates, transferred stock in two of Mexico's largest companies to Melinda French Gates, bringing the total amount she's received in the past few days to more than \$2 billion.

Cascade moved stock worth more than \$500 million in Coca-Cola Femsa and Grupo Televisa to her control, according to regulatory filings dated May 3, the same day the Gateses announced they were ending their 27-year marriage. Cascade shifted about \$1.8 billion of shares in Canadian National Railway Co. and AutoNation Inc. this week to French Gates, Bloomberg reported.

Their separation is expected to involve a wealth transfer on a scale that's only been seen in a few other divorces, though few details have yet emerged. It could also have ramifications for one of the most important philanthropic organizations on the planet. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has given away more than \$50 billion to support health care, education, gender equality and efforts to combat climate change.

## US spending may spur modest rate hike: Yellen

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said interest rates may have to rise modestly to prevent the U.S. economy from overheating due to higher levels of government spending.

"It may be that interest rates will have to rise somewhat to make sure our economy doesn't overheat," Yellen said in an interview with the Atlantic recorded Monday that was broadcast on the web on Tuesday. "It could cause some very modest increases in interest rates." Stocks extended their losses on Tuesday and the dollar briefly touched session highs after Yellen's remarks.

Yellen's comments come amid a debate on whether President Joe Biden's raft of proposed and enacted government spending could spur a surge in price pressures. Administration officials have consistently argued that there's little concern about a damaging inflation acceleration, given the tools policy makers have to head off such an outcome.

# India to breach fiscal deficit target in FY22: Fitch Solutions

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** India is likely to breach its fiscal deficit target in the financial year to March 2022 mainly due to revenue shortfall, Fitch Solutions said Friday, May 7.

The government is targeting a deficit between revenue it earns and what it spends at 6.8 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in FY22 (April 2021 to March 2022).

"We at Fitch Solutions forecast the Indian central government deficit to come in at 8.3 per cent of GDP in FY22," it said.

"Revenue shortfall remains the main driver of our wider deficit view, as we expect the government to maintain its spending targets."

Fitch Solutions had previously projected a fiscal deficit of 8 per cent.

"The main driver of our deficit forecast revision is a downward revision to our outlook for revenues, given that the flare-up in Covid-19 cases in India and containment measures in place will hamper India's economic recovery, which will have a negative impact on fiscal revenues," it said.

Central government expenditure is likely to be around the project of Rs 34.8 lakh crore as it looks to maintain its high pandemic-period spending so as to bolster pace of economic recovery.

Against this, revenue are likely to come in at Rs 16.5 lakh crore, down from government estimate of Rs 17.8 lakh crore on the back of an impaired outlook for India's economic recovery in FY22 as a result of the ongoing health crisis.



It did not expect the government to significantly expand spending beyond what has been budgeted.

Based on the FY22 Union Budget, key spending areas planned for were infrastructure (transport, urban development, and power), healthcare, agriculture, and rural development.

"However, given the flare-up in Covid-19 infections in India, which has since overwhelmed the Indian healthcare system, we expect there to be reallocation of spending in favour of healthcare spending this fiscal year," Fitch Solutions said adding healthcare spending is projected to be Rs 74,600 crore, 2.1 per cent of total planned FY22 expenditures, and

this will likely come in higher than projected.

Another area expected to see increased spending is on the rural employment scheme - Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREG) scheme.

"During the Union Budget announcement in February, it had appeared as though India had managed to contain its domestic Covid-19 outbreak and that economic activity was turning a corner on to higher growth. We believe that this was what prompted the government to slash funding for the MGNREG scheme from Rs 1.1 lakh crore in FY21 to Rs 73,000 crore in FY22.

## Non-residents to be taxed in India if transaction value exceeds Rs 2 cr

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Non-residents undertaking transactions with Indian parties will trigger taxability under the domestic law in India even if they do not have physical presence in the country and operate digitised businesses.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes has notified new rules for operation of business by non-residents under which any transaction over Rs 2 crore (apex \$27,100) in respect of any goods, services or property carried out by them with any person in India, including provision of download of data or software in India, will attract tax in India.

The provisions of Significant Economic Presence (SEP) that become the base for taxability of non-residents in India will also apply if the number of users with whom systematic and continuous business activities are solicited (or who are engaged in interactions) exceeds 3 lakh. The provisions of SEP were introduced in the legislation in 2018 with intent to tax non-residents operating digitised businesses which function without a physical presence. It meant that SEP of a non-resident in India shall constitute a 'business connection' in India.

These provisions were further amended vide Finance Act, 2020 which defined SEP as transaction in respect of any goods, services or property carried out by a non-resident with any person in India including provision of download of data or software in India, if the aggregate of payments arising from such transaction or transactions during the year exceeds a threshold or systematic and continuous soliciting of business activities or engaging in interaction with a defined number of users in India.



## China suspends economic dialogue with Australia as relations curdle

**BEIJING (TIP):** China "indefinitely" suspended on Thursday all activity under a China-Australia Strategic Economic Dialogue, its state economic planner said, the latest setback for strained relations between the two countries.

"Recently, some Australian Commonwealth Government officials launched a series of measures to disrupt the normal exchanges and cooperation between China and Australia out of Cold War mindset and ideological discrimination," China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said in a short statement on the decision.

The commission did not say in the statement what specific measures prompted the action.

The Australian dollar fell sharply on the news, and was as low as 0.7701 to the U.S. dollar from Wednesday's \$0.7747.

Bilateral ties were strained in 2018 when Australia became the first country to publicly ban Chinese tech giant Huawei from its 5G network. Relations worsened last year when Australia called for an independent investigation into the origins of the novel coronavirus, prompting trade reprisals from China.

Australian Trade Minister Dan Tehan said the decision by the commission was "disappointing" because the economic dialogue was "an important forum for Australia and China to work through issues relevant to our economic partnership".

"We remain open to holding the dialogue and engaging at the ministerial level," he said in a statement. The last meeting was in Beijing in 2017, when Australia's trade minister signed an agreement on cooperation on Belt and Road projects in third-party countries.



# Kerala: Pinarayi Vijayan secures a historic second term

CPM-led LDF wins 98 seats, UDF 41; BJP draws a blank

Kerala took a left turn again with Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan bucking the four-decade-old electoral trend of the state that sees power alternating between the two main groupings.

Winning 98 out of 140 seats, the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) has made history.

For Vijayan, who led the coalition from the front, it is a personal victory that will strengthen his position (as well as that of the Kerala unit's) in the party, said political observers. The CPI(M) has been left licking its wounds in West Bengal, but the party can take cheer in the fact that the only Communist government in the country bounced back to power.

Party general secretary Sitaram Yechury lauded the people of the state for reposing faith in the government. "The country is facing twin dangers, livelihood issues arising out of pandemic and threat to secular and democratic values. People of Kerala gave us immense support and will uphold these values," he said in New Delhi.

Though the government faced many scandals and corruption charges, including the sensational gold smuggling case, arrest of party secretary Kodyeri Balakrishnan's son in drug and money laundering cases, and a controversy over alleged back-door entry in government services, the CM steered the coalition through the crises. His government also had to deal with two health crises (Nipah and Covid-19) and floods, which almost became an annual affair.

Vijayan, political theorist and writer J Reghu said, has successfully managed to brand himself as a competent leader. The party has amplified this, he added, pointing out that much more than ideological, this victory is a personal one for the CM.

Vijayan campaigned extensively in all 14 districts, denied seats to many senior leaders such as finance minister Thomas Issac, law minister A K Balan and public works department minister G Sudhakaran in the guise of instilling fresh blood, and saw off a factional feud following the retirement of his long-time party rival V S Achuthanandan.

The Opposition Congress-led UDF said it accepts the people's verdict with humility. "It was least expected. We will go through factors that led to our defeat and take corrective steps," said opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala.

Though party leader Rahul Gandhi, an MP from the state, and his sister Priyanka Gandhi campaigned for the UDF, they failed to control the Left's surge. "It seems cosmetic changes in the form of young candidates and the campaign of the Gandhi family failed to help. The party will have to be restructured," said G Pramod Kumar, a political analyst and former senior adviser of the United Nations Development Programme.

The BJP-led NDA also drew a blank. It forfeited its lone seat in the outgoing

Pinarayi Vijayan



house. "Metro Man" E Sreedharan, who was inducted into the party a month before election, and made the news more for his controversial statements than anything else, failed to retrieve the party's fortunes. He was defeated in Palakkad by sitting legislator Shafi Parambhil of the Congress by a margin of over 3,000 votes.

## BJP remains distant third

In red surge in Kerala on Sunday, May 2, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was washed out and it failed to save its lone seat Nemom in Thiruvananthapuram which the BJP often dubbed as 'Kerala's Gujarat'. But even in such a hostile climate, the wounded BJP is eyeing the space vacated by the Congress.

Two years ago, the party had announced its grand plan of a "Congress Mukt Bharat" and often poached disgruntled leaders and allegedly toppled governments, the last time being in Puducherry.

"It is a fact that before election, some leaders were approached. But the political climate in Kerala is unlike that of north India and other parts of the country. Let the party first save its depleting space before poaching on other parties," said a senior Congress leader, who did not want to be named.

Many senior Congress leaders have urged an overhaul in the party. Party workers took to social media to highlight this and sought elevation of Kannur strongman K Sudhakaran MP as PCC president to lift workers' morale. Senior leader and former minister Thiruvanchur Radhakrishnan later endorsed it too.

Out of 95 seats the Congress contested, it got 21 and the BJP drew a blank, losing all 113 seats it contested. A close look at the results shows that the BJP's high-credible campaign that it is the only credible alternative in bipolar politics fell flat.

What is more embarrassing for the party is that it roped in Metro Man E Sreedharan at the eleventh hour (he joined the party three weeks before the election) and projected him as the CM candidate and tried to highlight his "clean image and integrity". Almost all national leaders descended onto the state, including Prime Minister Modi, and lauded the expertise of the 88-year-old civil engineer to curry favour but voters were least convinced. Before results, Sreedharan even opened an office of the legislator in Palakkad.

Sreedharan did put up a spirited fight in Palakkad till the last round before admitting defeat at the hands of sitting Congress legislator Shafi Parambhil by over 3,000 votes. Party district president E Krishnadas said there was rampant cross-voting to block Sreedharan's victory. "All teamed up to ensure his defeat. The CPI(M)'s total votes came down to 8,000," he said.

Though party candidates came second in eight seats, the vote share of BJP+ was 14% in comparison to that of Lok Sabha elections' 15.3%, latest statistics show. It was aiming for a jump of 5% and a couple of seats but it failed. Its second big alliance partner the Bharatiya Dharma Jana Sena, a political outfit of backward Ezhavas, also failed to make a mark. In the last assembly elections, the BJP alone had 12.6% vote share which

came down to 11.30% this time and BDJS vote share dipped from 3% to 1.75% this time.

To add to its woes, party state president K Surendran lost in two constituencies-Mancheswaram in north Kerala and Konni in Pathanamthitta. He shuttled between two constituencies on a chopper which evoked much criticism. "There was only a single point agenda to prevent blooming of the lotus. Parties were in a race to ensure this. A big communal polarisation in favour of the ruling CPI(M) took place," said Surendran.

BJP national leaders had raised many issues like love jihad, Sabarimala temple issue, the gold smuggling case and arrest of party secretary Kodyeri Balakrishnan's son in drug and money laundering cases but they failed to enthuse voters.

"Due to Kerala's unique demography, it is difficult for the party to get a strong foothold. It tried its best to rake up the Sabarimala temple issue but results show it failed to make any impact. Infighting in the state unit also played its role," said political commentator Sunnykutty Abraham, adding the party will remain a distant third in the state.

Chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan also came down heavily on party's belligerent campaign. "We promised to close the single account of the BJP and we managed it. Such forces have no place in a state like Kerala, which swears by communal harmony. It is better for its national leaders to understand it at least now," he said in Kannur (north Kerala) on Sunday, reacting to the BJP's performance.

Source: HT



# Stalin takes oath as Tamil Nadu CM

DMK chief's perseverance pays off as 'sun' and son rise in TN

**D**ravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leader MK Stalin took oath as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on Friday, May 7, morning.

Governor Banwarilal Purohit administered the oath of office and secrecy to 68-year old Stalin, for whom this would be the first stint as CM, in a simple ceremony at the Raj Bhavan.

Along with the DMK chief, 34 ministers of his party also took oath to be appointed in the state cabinet.

The names include 19 former ministers and 15 new faces. It has two women. Stalin's son Udhayanidhi does not figure in the list of ministers.

AIADMK top leader O Panneerselvam, leaders from alliance parties including Congress's P Chidambaram, MDMK chief Vaiko and top state officials took part in the ceremony.

DMK had fought the elections with its allies and got an absolute majority on its own by bagging 133 seats in the 234-member assembly.

Stalin will hold several portfolios including Home, General Administration, Special Initiatives, Special Programme Implementation and Welfare of Differently -Abled Persons.

While he has been branded as the 'son who rose', Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) president MK Stalin cannot be called so anymore after ensuring his party's victory in the 2021 Tamil Nadu Assembly election. Ever since his father, M Karunanidhi, passed away in 2018, Stalin has managed to consolidate the DMK.

The party's sweep in the 2019 Lok Sabha election was seen as his personal achievement. But the victory, which will make Stalin walk inside St. Fort George as Tamil Nadu's chief minister, is the reward for his perseverance of over 50 years.

As Stalin himself had recalled in a recent interview to India Today TV, he started his political career as a teenager at a barbershop.

"We youngsters started an outfit called DMK Elaingar Mandram (DMK youth wing)," he had said. Stalin later campaigned for his uncle Murasoli Maran in the 1967 elections.

During the Emergency, he was arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) for taking part in protests. MK Stalin came to the forefront when he was beaten up in police custody. C Chittibabu, a DMK leader, who was his cellmate died protecting him.

Since then, Stalin eventually grew in the party and became secretary of its youth wing in 1982. In his own words, as Stalin told India Today, "They kept calling me heir. But, I came up in the party on my own, in a step by step process."

Stalin was first given a ticket to contest from the 'Thousand Lights constituency in Chennai but lost the election. However, he won from the same constituency in 1989.

In 1996, MK Stalin became the Mayor of Chennai. This post, he has said several times, gave him "great experience". His slogan of converting Chennai into 'Singara Chennai' (beautiful Chennai) became popular.

MK Stalin



Stalin went on to become Tamil Nadu's Deputy Chief Minister in his father's cabinet in 2009. The same year, when this journalist in an interview asked M Karunanidhi about Stalin's next elevation, he said, "DMK is a democratic party. Every decision will be taken with consent of the general council."

Karunanidhi did not project MK Stalin as the chief ministerial candidate in 2016 even though he himself was unwell.

A senior DMK leader said, "Kalaingar didn't handover the position so easily to Stalin. He was made to wait for a really long time and his has been a long battle."

In 2014, MK Stalin was criticised by political analysts for not leading the DMK to victory in the Lok Sabha elections.

"They said his strategy failed. But he didn't wear out and continued to tour the state," said the senior DMK leader on condition of anonymity.

While dynasty politics has been an allegation levelled against MK Stalin by his opponents and critics, he also faced trouble from his brother MK Alagiri.

Over the years, Stalin worked towards creating a niche for himself in the party. At one point, Karunanidhi was forced to handover powers of Tamil Nadu's southern districts to MK Alagiri.

Nevertheless, 'Thalapathy', as MK Stalin is called by his supporters, toured across Tamil Nadu to garner support.

In his first interview to India Today TV (then Headlines Today) in 2013, said, "State autonomy is very important for DMK. We believe in self-rule in the state."

He had lashed out at then Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa for not keeping

up the promises made to the people. Stalin had spoken about his vision for Tamil Nadu and to strengthen the DMK.

This was the time things went sour between Alagiri and his father Karunanidhi. After many struggles, Madurai which was seen as MK Alagiri's bastion came under the wings of MK Stalin.

The 2016 assembly election saw a close fight. Stalin was the one who had spearheaded DMK's campaign and alliance strategies.

After losing a closely fought battle, Stalin had to wait to live his dream of becoming the chief minister.

But the massive victory in this election has finally paved way for the 68-year-old Stalin to occupy the chief minister's chair.

However, challenges are far from over for the chief minister elect. He is taking over the mantle in the midst of a raging pandemic and is inheriting the state's financial burden from the previous government.

Some AIADMK leaders have openly said in debates that it might not be easy for Stalin's government to get help from the central government.

For now, 'Team Stalin' is getting ready to decide the cabinet and handle the pandemic on priority, sources say.

Governor Banwarilal Purohit appointed DMK president M K Stalin as Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu after he submitted a letter on his election as legislature party leader, the Raj Bhavan said on Wednesday. Stalin called on Purohit at the Raj Bhavan and "submitted a letter intimating of his election as the leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam Legislature

party."

Governor Purohit appointed him as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and invited him to form the ministry and to have the swearing-in ceremony on 7 May at 9 am at Raj Bhavan, an official release said.

On Tuesday, Stalin was unanimously elected as legislature party leader of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK). "Party president @mkstalin was elected leader of the DMK legislature party," the DMK said on its official twitter handle.

The meet to elect him was held at headquarters 'Anna Arivalayam' and it witnessed participation of 133 newly elected MLAs, including eight from alliance parties like the Vaiko-led MDMK who fought the polls on DMK's 'Rising Sun' symbol. A DMK release said Stalin was unanimously elected as the legislature party leader after his name was proposed by party general secretary Duraimurugan and seconded by principal secretary KN Nehru.

The DMK has won 133 of the total 234 Assembly seats that went to polls on April 6. Some more seats were won by allies, including the Congress that bagged 18 constituencies.

Garnering two-thirds of the 234 seats, the 68-year old Stalin, through his sustained campaign yet again ushered in a victory similar to that of the 2019 Parliamentary election win. The victory did not, however, land in Stalin's lap and he worked towards it by reaching out to people systematically by targeting the Centre and state governments on many issues.

Source: Live Mint, India Today and News 18



*Eid ul Fitr is the prime festival of 1.8 billion Muslims across the world. We wish our readers a happy and festive Eid.*

# EID MUBARAK

**E**id means festivity and celebration. It is a joyful moment for Muslims to observe 30 days of fasting of every aspect of human life. They abstain from thinking, saying, doing bad things that hurt fellow humans, and abstaining from any intake of food or liquids from sun-up to sun-down. It is time to celebrate a successful month of training in becoming an excellent disciplined human being.

It is purifying oneself bodily by getting rid of the toxins and spiritually by shedding the arrogance and feeling as equals with fellow humans. Spirituality is not wearing certain clothes but feeling that we are merely a speck in the universe; we simply one in 8 billion people. It is a great feeling to have. Humility builds bridges among fellow humans, and arrogance destroys.

Festivals are expressions of joy. Religious societies have designed the festivities to bring people together. Holi, Diwali, Ramadan, Bakrid, Christmas, Easter, Paryushana, Rosh Hashana, and Jayanthies. Then we have the civil society festivities, designed for the same purpose as the New Year, July 4th, Thanksgiving, and so many other days. In India, we celebrated all festivals together, and I hope that tradition begins here in the diaspora communities.

When we live as neighbors or live in the same town, we might as well learn about each other. The best way to build secure, cohesive societies is for its members to understand each other's sorrows and joys, and festivities and commemorations.

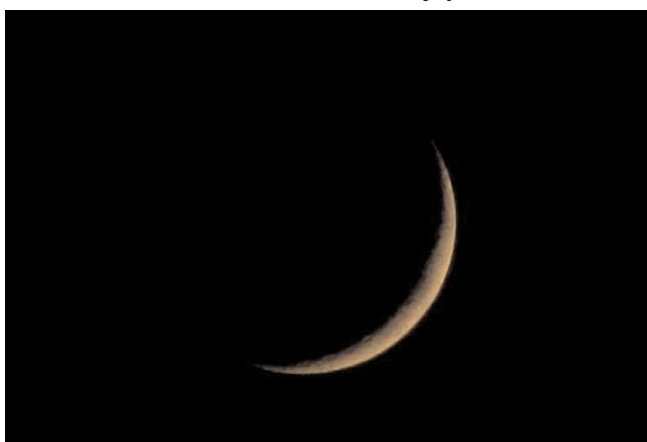
It is this good feeling that Muslims celebrate or reward themselves on Eid.

This year, the Indian Muslims have much more to feel good about being a good caring human being. My Hindu friend today pointed out that the Sikhs and Muslims trained to serve fellow humans. He said it is in-built in them; they don't need the Gurdwara or the Mosque to organize things for them.

A few of them gather on their own and serve fellow humans. Since covid started taking tolls on human life, Muslims in India have taken the responsibility to perform the last rites of dead bodies of Hindus and others, as the families of the deceased persons did not want to touch or be near them. There are thousands of such cases, including a few BJP leaders who died; a few examples are here in this link. <https://gooddeeds.info/category/funerals/> and <https://Youtube.com/GoodDeedsbyMuslims>.

## Eid Begins with Chand Raat

The moon cycle is 28, 29, or 30 days. After observing 28 days of fasting, Muslims will start looking for the appearance of the moon. Once it is spotted - Chand Raat and festivities begin, shops open up, and people go on a buying frenzy. It is like shopping for Diwali or Christmas at the last minute. It is a joyous moment.



Also, most of the perishable items for cooking had to be purchased a day earlier, determined by moon sighting. It is a tradition as refrigeration was not available in South Asia until 50 years ago. Nasa predicts the moon sighting accurately, but tradition is tradition (the song in the movie Fiddler on the roof).

I am sharing the practice in South Asia: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka with some variations.

## Mehendi

Women and girls gather up from the neighborhood and do the Mehendi/Henna on their hands and feet. The men and boys will have few spots on their hands. It is not a religious thing but a part of the culture.



## Eid Day

One of the first things Muslims do is meet their obligation towards needy fellow humans and pay their dues.

## New Clothes

Wearing new clothes is always a celebration, particularly for children. It is one reason people donate to families in advance so the have-nots can also feel the festival. Eid multiplies when everyone around you is happy, and it behooves us to ensure that it happens.

## Fitra

Before the Eid gathering (usually) around 9 AM, every Muslim who possesses food and funds over their needs donates to charity to help the needy. It is called Fitra or Fitrana. It is about \$5 in the United States, and you can multiply that by 3 million going into the pot for the deserving. There is no ceiling to give, but one must give. That is how we help the needy. But most people pay it out much earlier.

## Zakat

It is an obligation one has towards fellow humans to donate a specific portion of his/her wealth to the needy. The customary practice is 2.5% on capital assets and a higher amount on precious metals and livestock. The funds usually go to Bait-ul Maal, an organization set up

to receive such funds, and you can give directly to any family or charity. Baitul Maal distributes the funds to life-sustaining, educational and humanitarian aid to the underserved populations.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "Let the left hand not know what the right hand gives." Its profound wisdom is that don't boast or brag about your giving, and let the receiver of the charity not be humiliated or lose his freedom in your presence to speak up if he/she differs from you. Such is the emphasis placed on giving and liberty.

## Breakfast

Each family has a different practice. Rotis and Kuftas were a tradition in my home; it was usually a lighter breakfast compared to the lunch.



## Eid gathering

Practices vary, first in my town and Bangalore and then the patterns in the United States.

Around 9 AM, Muslims of the town gather at the Mosque and then March to the Eid-Gah, which is about a mile reciting "God is great and thank him." Eid-Gah is a place built to pray in large numbers, and it is usually at the edge of a Khabrastan (cemetery). In Dallas, Louisville, and other Cities, they rent the convention center to accommodate the large gathering.

## Eid Prayers

Time to gather up for the prayers. The Imam or the guest speaker gives a short sermon reminding Muslims of their duties to fellow humans and congratulating them for being good Muslims - aka Good citizens. Namaz follows the speech ending with the words Eid Mubarak.





CONTD FROM PAGE 44

**Hugging**



It is time to put our difference and hug each other. It is three hugs, and my interpretation for each hug is the non-verbal "forgive me," "I forgive you," and "Let's start with a clean slate." After the hugs, you feel purged from ill-will towards the other, and it is also a time to make up with the people you carried the burden of ill-will. By now, you have purified yourselves from ill-will, malice, jealousy, and other things that are negative thoughts about fellow humans. Eid is celebration and happiness.

**Khabrastan/Cemetery**

One of Muslims' most beautiful inclusive prayers is to ask the creator to forgive all the dead and the alive humans and shower them with His peace and blessings. The Eid-Gah in my home town is attached to the Khabrastan. We visited each grave of the family and friends and collectively prayed for all people. In the US, we can recite the same prayer from wherever we are. It is also time to seek forgiveness from those you were rude to and said the wrong thing.



Real happiness comes from repentance and forgiveness. It releases one from the built-in known and unknown tensions.

**Eidi**

When you reach home, the family earner gifts the other members with cash. When I was a kid, my father gave me 4 Annas (like 1/4th of a Rupee), my cousin Munawar and I dashed to the store behind our home and bought an Orange Soda each, and that was our joy!

**Eid Lunch**

You visit families and friends and, in each place, taste a little bit of food. Every home is an open house for much of the afternoon. You can taste such a wide variety of foods!

Eid Mubarak! Ramadan Mubarak, Happy Eid, Eid Blessings are the different phrases to wish your friends.



**Time to thank the men and women in the uniform.**

When you see a policeman, fireman, and those who serve in the army, navy, air force, marines, and others, please express your gratitude to them to ensure our safety and protect our freedoms. They put their life at risk for us. I had a beautiful experience in Louisville. I thanked the police officer at the convention center as I entered the facility and showed him my thank you note. He was excited and asked me to forward the email, and after the Eid prayer, he told me that he had shared it with the entire police department in Louisville with an appreciation for Muslims.

*(The author is a public speaker, author, commentator and an interfaith wedding officiant. He is the founder and president of the Center for Pluralism and offers pluralistic solutions on issues of the day to the media and the policymakers. More about him at [www.TheGhouseDiary.com](http://www.TheGhouseDiary.com))*





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UP PANCHAYAT POLL

# SP emerges as frontrunner, BJP suffers setback in strongholds

The Uttar Pradesh Panchayat Election Results, touted as the semi-final of a high-stakes assembly election next year, have set the alarm bell ringing with for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Though the BJP leadership was claiming that their candidates have won in over 60 per cent of the seats, but the result declared in the districts shows a different scenario.

Among the 3 tier panchayat polls the contest of the District Development Council (DDC) member was the crucial for the political parties in which BJP lagged in almost in majority of districts including PM's constituency of Varanasi, Ayodhya of Ram Temple, Krishna Janamsthan Mathura and in state capital Lucknow.

However in Gorakhpur, the native of chief minister Yogi Adityanath, the BJP was successful in winning majority of seats.

BJP president Swantra Deo Singh has claimed that party candidates have won over 918 DDC seats and were leading in 456 other places of the total 3050 at stake.

However the ruling BJP would get an edge during the election of the DDC chairman, as several independents, who have won the polls, could support the BJP nominee.

As no political party symbol were used in this poll it will also benefit the ruling party to rope in the winning candidates of the opposition.

According to reports in the state capital Lucknow, of the announced 25 seats, 10 were won by Samajwadi Party (SP), 4 by Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), 3 by BJP and Independent and others 8.

In PM Narendra Modi's, Varanasi district, seven DDC seats were won by BJP, 10 by SP, 4 by BSP, one of Congress, 2 by SBSP, 3 by Apna Dal (Sonelal) and 11 by Independents.

In Ayodhya, of the 40 seats, 22 were won by SP, 8 by BJP, 4 by BSP and 6 by others.

Of the 33 DDC seats announced in Mathura district, 12 were won by BSP, 9 by BJP, 8 by Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), one by SP and others 3.

In Auraiya district, of the 23 seats announced 5 were won by BJP, 10 by SP, 4 by BSP and 4 by others. While in Kanpur Dehat district of the 32 seats announced, BJP, 12 by SP, 7 by BSP and 9 by others.

In Shamli district of the 19 seats announced 4 were won by BJP, 2 by SP, 5 by RLD and 8 by others. In Hathras district, of the 24 seats declared 5 were won by BJP, 4 by SP, 2 by BSP, 3 by RLD and 10 by others.

A report from Baghpat said RLD won 8 seats of the 20 followed by 4 of BJP, 4 of SP, one of BSP and 3 others.

In Jalaun district, in the total 25 seats, 7 were won by BSP, 6 by BJP, 4 by SP, One by Congress and 7 by others.

In Etawah district, of the 24 seats announced so far, 18 were won by SP, 2 by BJP, one by BSP and 3 others while



**"BJP's dream of forming a third engine government in villages has been shattered. The BJP has to face defeat in PM Modi's as well as chief minister's constituencies. Even in Lucknow, people have rejected the BJP"**  
- SP chief Akhilesh Yadav



**If the common man was furious with the Yogi government's mismanagement of the second deadly surge of coronavirus infections, the chief minister was also let down by the sulking BJP cadre.**

in Balrampur district 6 were won by BJP, 9 by SP, 6 by BSP, one by Congress and 2 by others.

In Mainpuri, 12 were won by SP, 8 by BJP one by Congress and 9 by Independents.

### What it means for BJP

Considered mainly an urban party, the BJP had never directly entered panchayat polls and had rather avoided village polls. The setback comes after massive preparations including announcing the candidates list.

In January, the BJP set up high-level committees for each of its six regions in the state, with each committee including a minister, a senior leader as in-charge and local office bearers. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, BJP in-charge of Uttar Pradesh Radha Mohan Singh and national general

secretary Arun Singh themselves held reviews of the preparations.

The party had announced that office-bearers willing to contest these polls would have to resign from their posts if elected. Many did so, hoping it would give them a better chance at upcoming Assembly elections.

Yet the results included losses in most seats in even Ayodhya and Varanasi. This comes in the backdrop of claims that the BJP has started construction of Ram Temple and also released huge funds for overall development of Ayodhya and Varanasi.

While the losses in the majority of the 3,050 zila parishad seats might not formally count as BJP defeats, it will have dented the party's confidence ahead for Assembly polls. On the other hand, it will still look forward to the election of zila panchayat

chairpersons, who enjoy huge administrative powers.

### What it means for SP

Samajwadi Party leaders are talking about how they have defeated BJP candidates in large numbers, but are avoiding putting exact numbers to these victories. The party had not officially declared all candidates and left the decision to support candidates to local cadre; in many places there was more than one active party member willing to contest. While the SP has gained significantly, its next test would also be turn these numbers into victory for zila panchayat chairpersons.

### What next

All parties will now focus on the election of 75 zila panchayat chairpersons posts and 826 block pramukhs. The BJP has announced that it would officially declare the list of candidates for these posts too. It is confident because most of the grassroots representatives traditionally go with the ruling party. Its next challenge would be to select right candidates. And the SP and the BSP will be expected to put up a tough fight.

The independent winners include a large number of rebels of the BJP itself, who were not given tickets but won. The BJP will do all it can to woo such candidates back into the party fold ensure victory. Zila panchayat chairpersons have powers to approve and sanction proposals of gram panchayats, impose taxes and even frame or sanction bylaws for any gram panchayat.



**CONTD FROM PAGE 3****Three Indian-American CEOs join task...**

Others who were added to the list on May 6 are Mark Suzman, CEO, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Joshua Bolten, president and CEO, Business Roundtable; and Suzanne Clark, president and CEO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The task force is a newly formed public-private partnership organized by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and supported by Business Roundtable. It is working with the Chamber's U.S.-India Business Council and the U.S.-India Strategic Partnership Forum to take immediate actions to help address the COVID-19 surge in India.

The U.S. corporate sector so far has committed more than 25,000 oxygen concentrators for India. The first 1,000 oxygen concentrators, provided by Deloitte, arrived in India on April 25, with critical logistical support from FedEx. These concentrators will be shipped to designated healthcare facilities for immediate use, the task force said.

The first shipment of ventilators landed in India early this week. All 1,000 ventilators are expected to reach India by June 3. Medtronic will provide end-to-end support for the initiative. As many as 16 businesses have joined the task force's ventilator initiative.

Together, these businesses will provide over \$30 million in support for India's healthcare response - joining the dozens of businesses which have pledged their support in efforts to provide oxygen concentrators, develop information and best practices to support employees in India and more, the task force said.

According to the task force, while the country has been reporting over 4,00,000 cases daily, the actual case rate in India is estimated to be much higher.

Experts forecast the crisis will only worsen, with India's peak not expected until mid-May, it said.

Other members of the steering committee include Julie Sweet, CEO of Accenture; Andy Jassy, CEO of Amazon; Tim Cook, CEO of Apple; Brian Moynihan, Chairman of the Board and CEO, Bank of America; Raj Subramaniam, president of FedEx; and Arvind Krishna, Chairman and CEO, IBM.

Gail McGovern, president and CEO, American Red Cross; Mike Parra, CEO Americas, DHL Express; Jim Fitterling, Chairman and CEO, Dow; Alex Gorsky, chairman of the Board and CEO, Johnson & Johnson; Michael Miebach, CEO, Mastercard; Geoff Martha, chairman and CEO, Medtronic; Brad Smith, president, Microsoft; Ramon Laguarta, Chairman of the Board and CEO, PepsiCo; Carol Tomé, CEO, UPS; Sanjay Poonen, COO, VMware; and Judith McKenna, President and CEO, Walmart International are also members of the task force.

Till date, over 45 U.S. businesses and associations have contributed to the Global Task Force's activities. While the task force is focusing initial efforts on the pressing need in India, additional working groups will be formed to address COVID-19 surges in other countries.

Through its steering committee, the task force will work to concentrate efforts where corporate support will be most beneficial, it said. (Source: PTI)

**India's welfare 'critically important' to...**

India, USAID official Anjali Kaur, Virginia State Senator Ghazala Hashmi, physician and volunteer Gunisha Kaur, entrepreneurs and philanthropists Lata Krishnan and M.R. Rangaswami.

"The surge of COVID-19 infections and deaths in India is nothing short of heartbreaking," Ms. Harris said, as she offered her condolences.

"As soon as the dire nature of the situation became apparent, our Administration took action," she said. While U.S. lawmakers and private citizens had been vocal for support to India as the second COVID-19 wave broke across the country, the Biden administration was widely criticized for being slow to act, with administration officials keeping largely silent days

after other countries had stepped in to offer help to India.

However, since then, the U.S is sending, by its count, more than \$100 million in assistance to India. Assistance of various forms has been mobilized on a massive scale by private citizens and the administration. There has been a public outpouring of grief and calls to help India, that have continued weeks into the outbreak in India.

"On Monday, April 26, President Joe Biden spoke with the Prime Minister to offer our support. By Friday, April 30, U.S. military members and civilians were delivering relief on the ground," Ms. Harris said, outlining the material help that had been sent (N-95 masks, oxygen cylinders) and saying more was on the way.

"Meanwhile, we have announced our full support for suspending patents on COVID-19 vaccines - to help India and other nations vaccinate their people more quickly," Ms. Harris said. Earlier this week the Biden administration said it would support a temporary waiver of intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines, an unprecedented move.

"At the beginning of the pandemic, when our hospital beds were stretched, India sent assistance. And today, we are determined to help India in its hour of need. We do this as friends of India, as members of the Asian Quad, and as part of the global community," Ms. Harris said.

"This has hit everyone in the diaspora on a personal basis," said Mr. Rangaswami, founder of Indiaspora, an organization that works on diaspora engagement and philanthropy. "Someone has lost a relative, a friend, a sibling, a child to this dreaded pandemic in India," he said.

Both Ms. Krishnan, who founded the philanthropic organization the American India Foundation, and Ms. Anjali Kaur spoke about the importance of transparency in the use of assistance.

**'SUB-GRANTING' OF FUNDS** : Mr. Rangaswami said the government should consider permitting the "sub granting" of money, which was prohibited after the Foreign Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) was amended last year. "In this time of need, I would definitely say that is a good thing for the Indian government to take at pretty quickly," he said, calling for a limited-time waiver for last-mile organizations which were at greatest risk if they did not have access to sub-grants. (Source: The Hindu)

**US urges citizens to return home...**

from India to the US, a State Department health alert said.

Additional flight options remain available on Air France, Lufthansa, and Qatar Airways via transfers in Paris, Frankfurt, and Doha.

US citizens who wish to depart India are encouraged to book tickets through the airlines, the health alert said.

It is mandatory for anyone travelling to the US (2 years and older) to take a COVID-19 test no more than 3 days before travel and show a negative result to the airline before boarding the flight, it said.

The passengers should be prepared to show documentation of recovery from COVID-19 (proof of a recent positive viral test and a letter from a healthcare provider or a public health official stating clearance for travel).

Travelers are encouraged to follow post-travel guidance once in the US, it said.

The US this week reissued its travel advisory on India, urging its citizens not to travel to the country due to an unprecedented surge in the COVID-19 cases there.

"Do not travel to India due to COVID-19. Exercise increased caution due to crime and terrorism," the State Department said on Wednesday in its latest travel advisory that looked identical to the one issued on April 28.

Both the travel advisories have been marked 'Level 4' which is the highest warning level.

On April 28, the Department approved the voluntary

departure of family members of US government employees.

On May 5, the Department approved the voluntary departure of non-emergency US government employees.

"US citizens who wish to depart India should take advantage of available commercial transportation options," it said.

Last week, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a Level 4 Travel Health Notice for India due to COVID-19, indicating a very high level of COVID-19 in the country. (Source: PTI)

**Australia offers more aid, refuses to...**

generous support extended by Australia for India's fight against the second Covid wave, said a PMO statement.

The two leaders agreed on the need to ensure an affordable and equitable access to vaccines and medicines for containing Covid-19 globally, it said.

The Australian government, for the first time has imposed a temporary ban on its citizens from returning home if they have spent time in India up to 14 days before flying back. Those who attempt to return via third countries will be prosecuted with five years of imprisonment or a fine of nearly \$ 50,000. During his telephonic conversation with Morrison, the PM conveyed his appreciation for the prompt and generous support extended by Australia for India's fight against the second Covid wave, said a Prime Minister's Office (PMO) statement.

The two leaders agreed on the need to ensure an affordable and equitable access to vaccines and medicines for containing Covid-19 globally, it said. "We agreed on the importance of ensuring affordable and equitable access to vaccines and medicines, and discussed possible initiatives in this regard," said the PM.

**US withdraws proposed biometrics...**

applicant, petitioner, sponsor, beneficiary, or individual filing or associated with an immigration benefit or request, including US citizens, must appear for biometrics collection without regard to age.

Secondly, the DHS had proposed to authorize biometric collection, without regard to age, upon arrest of an illegal immigrant.

The formal announcement revoking the biometrics rule comes days after US Citizenship and Immigration Services announced that beginning May 17, it will suspend biometrics requirements for H-4, L-2, and certain E non-immigrant categories.

Such a move was welcomed by a large number of Indian-Americans who were impacted by the biometrics requirement.

The DHS said it will continue to require submission of biometrics where appropriate and remains committed to national security, identity management, fraud prevention and program integrity. (Source: PTI)



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# Varuthini Ekadashi

**V**aruthini Ekadashi, also known as Baruthani Ekadashi, holds great significance and importance for Hindus. On the day of Varuthini Ekadashi, devotees worship and offer prayers to Lord Vamana, who is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

According to the North Indian Purnimant calendar, Varuthini Ekadashi is observed during Krishna Paksha of Vaishakha month and, according to the South Indian Amavasyant calendar, Krishna Paksha of Chaitra month. However, both North Indians and South Indians observe it on the same day.

According to the Gregorian calendar, the day falls in the month of April or May. Read on to find out more about Varuthini Ekadashi.

This year, Varuthini Ekadashi Vrat will be observed on May 7.

## Puja vidhi

Vaishnava Varuthini Ekadashi is dedicated to Lord Vamana - the fifth incarnation of Lord Vishnu. On this day, devotees worshipped Lord Vishnu with dhoop, sandalwood paste, fruits, incense sticks, and flowers in order to evoke the deity.

The fasting begins from the day of Dashami tithi and is broken on Dwadashi tithi after praying to Lord Vishnu. It is believed that any person who devotedly observes fast on this day can change their bad luck and attain prosperity, abundance and good luck in their lives.

By performing various acts of donations and charities on this particular day, the devotees get blessed with the divine blessings of their ancestors and the deities.

Among the twenty-four Ekadasis of the year, Varuthini Ekadashi is considered as the most efficacious, as it confers amazing benefits to the devotees who observe fast on this day.

## Significance

The greatness and glories of Vaishnava Varuthini Ekadashi finds mention in several religious scriptures like 'Bhavishya Purana' in the form of conversation between Sri Krishna and King Yudhisthira, the eldest of Pandavas. Various Maharajas observed this sacred fast and obtained uncountable benefits. The merits of the Vaishnava Varuthini Ekadashi outpowers all kinds of charities including 'Kanyadaan' that is believed to be most pious of all the 'daans'. The word 'Varuthini' in Hindi signifies 'protected or armoured' and hence by observing a religious vrat on Vaishnava Varuthini Ekadashi a person will be shielded from all the evils and misfortunes and in the end gain good fortune.

## Rituals

Fasting on Vaishnava Varuthini Ekadashi is believed to be highly rewarding for Hare Krishna followers. The rituals start right from the previous day 'dashami' and the observer of this vrat eat selective meal once before sunset. Eating on bell metal plates is also not allowed on this day. This is done to make sure no traces of food are left in the stomach on the ekadashi day.

On ekadashi, devotees do not eat anything or even take a sip of water all day. However if someone cannot keep a strict vrat, partial fasting or even fasting from morning till sunset is also allowed. While keeping the fast, the person should not sleep during the daytime and stay away from sinful thoughts and actions. It is popular belief that one who stays awake all night chanting religious hymns on ekadashi will gain freedom from all their sins.

Ekadashi is meant for spiritual attainment and therefore the day is spent chanting mantras or singing bhajans in praise of Lord Vishnu. Devotees worship Lord Vamana, the fifth incarnation of Sri Hari Vishnu, on this day and make several offerings to their beloved deity. It is also important to visit temples of Lord Vishnu in the evening and witness the celebrations of the day.

Vaishnava Varuthini Ekadashi vrat is broken next day on 'dwadashi' (12th day) after praying to Lord Vishnu and offering food and money to some respectful Brahmins.



## Varuthini Ekadashi Vrat

Devotees observing Varuthini Ekadashi vrat are recommended to fast from sunrise in Ekadashi to sunrise in Dwadashi. Since a complete fast is recommended, one can start fasting from the previous day's sunset to ensure that no undigested food remains in the stomach. Observing Varuthini Ekadashi vrat is not just abstaining food. One should not indulge in gambling, lying, criticizing others, violence, sports, and sexual activity. The devotee on vrat should not succumb to sleep, anger and greed too. Thus, by resisting the feelings and temptations, vrat purifies the mind, body, and soul. Certain activities such as shaving, smearing oil on the body, etc. are also prohibited on Varuthini Ekadashi.

Parana or breaking the fast should be done on the next day (Dwadashi) after the sunrise. It is necessary to do Parana on the next day unless Dwadashi is over before sunrise. Also, one should take care not to do Parana on Hari Vasara period, which is the first quarter of the Dwadashi tithi. Pratahkal is considered as the most auspicious time to break the fast while breaking the fast in Madhyahna is not recommended. So, if one couldn't do Parana in Pratahkal, then he/she should do it after Madhyahna.

Two types of Ekadashi Vrats are recommended; one for Smarthas, those with family, and the other for Sanyasis and Moksha seekers. While a one-day fast is recommended for Smarthas or normal devotees, alternate fasting or a two-day fast is suggested for Sanyasis and Moksha seekers.

Though full fasting is recommended on Varuthini Ekadashi, those who can't bear it due to health issues can observe a partial fast by eating once, at midday, or in the evening. In that case, a devotee should avoid non-veg food (meat, fish, egg, etc.), beverages (tea, coffee, cola, and other energy drinks), mushrooms, grains, onion, peas, beans, black gram, spinach, betel nut, paan, red lentil, honey, sesame seeds, mustard, asafoetida, cloves, fenugreek, cardamom, nutmeg, fennel, tulsi, tamarind, custard, salt, baking soda, baking powder, etc.

Eating in bell metal utensils and eating from other houses are also prohibited. The devotee can choose to eat the Havishyanna food offered to Yajna on the previous day. It is said that even those who are not observing the vrat should avoid consuming grains, pulses, and non-vegetarian foods on Ekadashi.

## Fasting Procedure

- A complete fast is recommended. So, a devotee can start fasting from the previous day's sunset to avoid any undigested food remaining in the stomach.
- On Ekadashi day, the devotee should wake up before sunrise, take a bath and worship Lord Vishnu.
- Visiting a Vishnu temple, chanting prayers, and reciting Vishnu Sahasranama or Bhagavad Gita will intensify the spiritual drive.
- Breaking the fast or Parana should be done on the next day (Dwadasi) after taking a bath and worshipping Lord Vishnu. It should be done in the Parana time, which varies with each Dwadasi.
- Parana or breaking the fast shouldn't be done during Hari Vasara period, the first quarter of Dwadashi.
- The most auspicious time for Parana is Pratahkal. If the devotee couldn't do it during Pratahkal, then he/she should do it after Madhyahna.

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"If Hindus don't maintain Hinduism, who shall save it?"

"If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard it?"

"Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one."



# The 'Little Guyana' Sign

## Liberty Avenue and Lefferts Boulevard



We are pleased to inform you that the Co-Naming of Liberty Avenue and Lefferts Boulevard will take place on:

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(Following a short program at Leo Kearns Parking Lot at 103-33 Lefferts Boulevard, South Richmond Hill, New York, 11419).

*We thank the New York City Council, Councilwoman Adrienne Adams (District 28), and District Leader, Richard David, and others, for making 'Little Guyana' possible.*

Please join us for a truly historic event, of which all should be proud.

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# Coastal Karnataka: A journey through stunning beaches, temples

**K**arnataka is majestically bestowed with the lush green Western Ghats and the lovely white sandy beaches. At places both wonders meet and present the visitors with gorgeous and serene spots tailor made just for your retreat. Coastal Karnataka comprises of regions like Karavali and Udupi.

## Mangalore

Start your Coastal Karnataka trip in Mangalore because this is where you will probably arrive by flight or train. Mangalore is one of the best places to visit in Coastal Karnataka because of its rich history, culture, Mangalorean cuisine and stunning beaches.

There are some unique temples that you can visit in Mangalore. Kudroli Gokarnatha Temple is one of them. Built in 1912, this temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and hosts the colorful Mangaluru Dasara every year. There are several smaller temples in the complex, all adorned in gold and silver. This makes the temple a wonderful Coastal Karnataka destination.

You can also visit the Mangaladevi Temple, explore Sammilan Shetty's Butterfly Park, and relive some history at Sultan's Battery when in Mangalore.

## Udupi

The next stop on our coastal Karnataka adventure trip was the city of Udupi. Home to many iconic South Indian temples, Udupi is sometimes referred to as the temple city. Therefore, you cannot miss visiting one when you are here. Take a tour of Udupi Sri Krishna Temple which is thronged by thousands of tourists every year for a sneak peek at the baby boy idol of Lord Krishna [Balakrishna]. There are many interesting legends surrounding the temple including one of the Balakrishna statue turning around on its own to be viewed by Krishna's lesser-privileged devotees.

## Malpe Beach

When in Udupi, do not forget to spend some time at one of Udupi's most gorgeous beaches – the Malpe Beach. Located only about 6kms from Udupi, Malpe beach coupled with St. Mary's Island makes for an amazing one-day getaway from Udupi or Mangalore.

There are tons of things to do at Malpe beach. If you are feeling adventurous, indulge in parasailing, jet-skiing, and banana boat rides. If not, just lounge in the sun and soak in the colors of the place. Try some tasty sea food at Fisherman's Bay Beach Cafe right by the sea. And watch a traditional Yakshagana performance in an open-air amphitheater to end your day.

## St. Mary's Island

Right next to the Malpe beach, only a 15-minute ferry ride away, is the unique St. Mary's Island. This island is



also called the Coconut Island or Thonsepar and makes for an offbeat getaway from the mainland.

What is interesting about St. Mary's Island is the fact that it was formed when Madagascar rifted away from India more than 88 million years ago. The rift gave rise to columnar basalt rocks that are hexagonal in shape. They give the island a distinctive character today.

You will get some amazing views of the sea from here apart from walking on soft white sand and treading through millions of sea shells. 1-2 hours on the island is sufficient for you to completely explore the place. Plastic bags and bottles are not allowed on the island – so make sure you don't carry any.

## Varanga

As you travel up north from Udupi, you can take a slight detour to get to the sleepy hamlet of Varanga. Here, you can visit one of the most picturesque Jain temples in the world.

The Jain temple, also called Kere Basadi, is located in the middle of a beautiful lake. You can reach the temple only on a small boat that can accommodate around 10 people at a time.

It was a 5 minute boat journey from land to the temple. Yet, this was one of the most beautiful journeys in my entire Coastal Karnataka trip.

## Baindur

Baindur (or Byndoor) is yet another idyllic town facing the sea. The white sand beaches, lush green hills, and plethora of water sports make Baindur one of the best places to visit in Coastal Karnataka. Also, one of the most offbeat ones.

Spend a couple of days at Baindur and enjoy the unspoiled beaches in the region. For example, book a stay at the pristine Sai Vishram Beach Resort, indulge in surfing or banana boat rides, ride an airboat through the Maravanthe backwaters, or simply sip a drink under a thatched cabana and watch the world go by!





## Shree Ganeshaya Namah

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**WEEKLY HOROSCOPE**  
May 10 - May 16, 2021

**ARIES:** Ganesha says A beautiful week is awaiting you. Your week will be full of lessons, learning, and doing things that you love. You will spend the week feeling content and happy because you will equally work hard this week as well. You will have the motivation to do everything that you set out to do this week because Saturn is very dominant in your sign, it will help you guide through all the obstacles that you face during this week. Your relationship will slightly suffer because you will be very busy this week, you're starting to see some behavior patterns in your partner that are unpleasant to you and you won't be able to ignore them. Do not rush yourself in expressing your feelings and emotions. Contemplate your choice of words and then have a decent talk with your partner in this week itself.

**TAURUS:** This week is a week full of realization for you. You will be learning through losses you face in your business or in your personal life that will force you to think deeper and seek solutions instead of just going through life passively. You will have to focus on becoming a better version of yourself this week because fate has left you with no other option than that, if you still chose to be resistant to change you will have difficulty just going through the week successfully. This week does not seem favorable for your business to make progress. You will find it tough to meet deadlines and focus on your work because you will be overwhelmed with a lot of deadlines and a lot of work, on top of that you will be distracted by the relationship problems that you are facing. You are likely to be working throughout this week.

**GEMINI:** Some sort of exciting and unexpected news will come your way this week. You will have an adrenaline-filled week today. You need to try and calm your nerves this week which you can do by starting your day with meditation and yoga, do whatever you need to do that helps you calm your thoughts and process everything at a slower pace today. You will have a fun week spending time with your loved ones as well this week. Do not overwork beyond your capacity as it may cause headaches and trouble with the eyes. Working without taking breaks could also lead to headaches and migraines. Drink warm water every day this week and long walks will provide you with the positive energy you need.

**CANCER:** You will realize that this week you have had the most varied experiences, some changes in the planetary motions mid-week will help you gain more confidence and will make your life easier. At the start of the week, you will have trouble navigating through the obstacles and more importantly handling the overwhelming emotions that you face during this week. You will have to maintain consistent work and

consistent efforts in your current relationships. Do whatever you can to make yourself emotionally stable this week.

**LEO:** You will have one heck of a week this week. A lot of joy and happiness enters your life this week without much effort or even results. You have been working hard for the past few days but this week is all about resting and relaxing. You will face some challenges when it comes to handling politics at work because you are a genuine person who doesn't play games at work while other people do hence even though you need to maintain your originality you also need to keep an eye open for malpractices that might hamper your work and decrease your chances of getting a promotion this week.

**VIRGO:** You might experience a positive shift in your love life this week. You are loving and caring towards your partner and you will feel that that is reciprocated as well. Hence a great week for you and your partner this week. Your health is perfectly fine as well. Mentally you will feel your best this week as your partner will make you feel like the best person in the world. Physically you might need some help to get you through all the obstacles this week as it will be a little tiring, but you will receive all the help you need easily. Your love life is taking a highly positive turn and you are about to discover new ways to express your sentiments towards the person you love. This is a great week for your relationship to flourish into the next big thing.

**LIBRA:** You are very likely to find that person that will support you in everything that you do and any decision that you make this week. You need to be kind and open-minded when you come across new prospects this week. Be very patient with some co-workers who try to make you angry. You should not lose your sanity, do not get carried away by their actions and words. They will try to make you lose your job, don't fall for provocations, and be consistent with your work this week. Wake up and meditate the first thing in the morning, it will be beneficial for your personal as well as professional life. You will make great profits in your business hence you will have a good week.

**SCORPIO:** There are people around you at home that make you feel a lot better about yourself this week. With the love and care, you receive this week and the people you receive them from, you will feel amazing from other people's positive vibrations. Your love life is doing just as well as your professional life. Enjoy every moment of it. You might tend to overthink how good things are in your life right now. Do not worry about the future. Living in the moment will help you navigate through this week very easily. Your

business is doing great this week. You'll receive an unexpectedly huge amount of money from a prospect. Your passion for your business speaks volumes to you; you are always fearless and inspiring. All those calculated risks that you took turned out to be in your favor and are paying off this week.

**SAGITTARIUS:** This week is all about giving for you. You may have some new responsibilities, which you will carry out successfully. Donating to the needy will be very helpful to you as you build great karma. You will come across an opportunity to expand your business to new horizons. You know exactly what you want in your business. Go ahead and make important decisions this week as this will keep your passion alive. Expect a lot of obstacles at the beginning of the week. Know that things will ease down as the week goes by. You need to focus on your happiness the most this week.

**CAPRICORN:** You have been procrastinating for a while now and the consequences of that are showing up this week. While it might seem like a negative thing, it is actually the biggest positive for you this week and will help you in the long run. A great day for you at your workplace this week. You're likely to make a lot of profit this week that will keep you happy throughout the week. You're also very likely to meet a new love interest this week that will spark feelings inside you that you never knew you had.

**AQUARIUS:** You will learn this week that you are very compatible with your partner; it is because you both believe in love, kindness, and acceptance more than anything else. You might have fights with your partner this week too, but you will try to accept your partner for what they are, which will save you a lot for efforts in the future. This week might be full of fight drama and trouble for you, do not make it worse by making any significant decisions today. Lay low and focus on how to get through the day without any trouble.

**PISCES:** You will feel extremely satisfied when it comes to your love life this week. Everything will work out exactly how you wanted it to be. The chance of getting good news regarding your love life is there this week. You might get an opportunity for some real adventure with your beloved this week. You would aim for a partner who holds a high position in society. Your reputation means everything to you and you shall find yourself satisfied with you and your partner's status this week. You will gain a lot of profit in your business this week which will satisfy you for the week. You won't need to do things that you hate in terms of work anymore. You will have the time, space, and affordability to follow your passion this week.



**BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE**  
May 10 - May 16, 2021

**May 10**

You will have a great day today with your friends and family indoors. You might feel really demotivated and sad for no reason at the beginning of the day but as you socialize more and more you will feel less gloomy and lost in your thoughts. Make sure that you keep yourself occupied even if you're alone by the end of the day because you should not be stuck in a vicious cycle of negative thoughts.

**May 11**

You will find out the purpose of the struggle you have faced in the past few days today. You will understand why you have been through what you have been through. Today is all about results because you will receive them if you have worked hard in the past few days today. You need to find ways to keep yourself grounded because you will tend to be boastful, which is understandable considering the hard work that you have been doing. Stay humble and share the joy of today with everyone that has supported you and has been there for you to date.

**May 12**

Someone that you have had fallout with might reach out to you today in a very kind and civil

manner. You tend to be someone who holds grudges for a long amount of time and all you will be thinking about today is whether you will be able to forgive this person or not. Other than that, your day will be pretty normal and happy but you will be subconsciously somewhere else which will make you not enjoy your day to the fullest.

**May 13**

Today is an average day for you which might be disappointing in the beginning for you. You will understand the importance of your friends and family today even though they might be going through tough times themselves they will make sure that you have a good day and you know that you are loved and cared for. You will also enjoy the day-to-day once you realize that you're blessed and you have people in your life who genuinely love you and care for you.

**May 14**

You will be very happy today even though there are no big surprises for you today. You will simply be content in your own company and the little amount of love you receive from your close family and a small circle of friends. You will have no trouble focusing on the good things in your life today. With the planetary motions in your favor, you are content

send satisfied with whatever goes on in your life today, even if it is full of turbulences you won't be touched or moved by it.

**May 15**

You will enjoy being lazy today. You're usually someone who always goes the extra mile and puts in a lot of hard work which won't be the case today because your partner will force you to take the day off today. Even though you will be upset about missing work and anxious about tomorrow as the day goes on you will start to realize that breaks are an essential part of being productive as well. You will have to understand that the more you decide to let go and relax the more you will enjoy today.

**May 16**

Today is a good day for you to reflect on your past so that it helps you contemplate your future decisions. You have been making some mistakes since the past few days which have been causing you a lot of loss in your business. You will have to work really hard today to get yourself out of the mess that you're in because you have been focusing on your goals and not the journey that leads to those goals, hence make sure you work really hard today and only rely on yourself to get out of the mess that you're in.

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# Daniel Smith Takes Charge as US Ambassador in India, Pledges Support amid COVID-19 Crisis



US Ambassador to India Daniel Smith  
Photo / courtesy  
@usaid\_india/@USAmbIndia/Twitter

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** Daniel B. Smith on May 3 was appointed as US Charge d'Affaires to India and said that he is 'ready to work'. He was the former US acting Secretary of State and in 2018,

**US Ambassador in India not only noted the 'difficult times' that India is currently facing with resurgence of COVID-19 but also pledged to help the nation.**

he took the role as the director of the Foreign Service Institute. Prior to this, Smith has also been the Career Ambassador in the United States and in 2014, he was Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research. In 2010, the present US envoy to India was Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary (Greece). Smith entered the US government in 2007 as Executive Secretary.

Further, Smith not only noted the "difficult times" that India is currently facing with the resurgence of COVID-19

and shortage of medical supplies but also pledged to help the nation as New Delhi assisted Washington. Smith's maiden remarks on Twitter after taking over the position came as United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) fifth emergency shipment in five days landed in India on May 4. The consignment carried more than 500 oxygen concentrators to help the hospitals overwhelmed with COVID-19 patients along with more than 100,000 N95 masks to ensure the safety of the frontline workers.

While US Ambassador in India pledged to enhance US-India cooperation amid COVID-19, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met in person with Minister of External Affairs (MEA) Dr S Jaishankar in London on May 2 when both senior diplomats the cooperation over COVID-19 resources along with other issues such as Indo-Pacific landscape and the United Nations (UN) Security Council. Further, even the US Department of Defense has said the final two flights of essential supplies for India have been delayed and will arrive by May 5.

## 4 ex-cops indicted on US civil rights charges in Floyd death

**MINNEAPOLIS (TIP):** A federal grand jury has indicted the four former Minneapolis police officers involved in George Floyd's arrest and death, accusing them of violating the Black man's constitutional rights as he was restrained face-down on the pavement and gasping for air, according to indictments unsealed Friday, May 7.

The three-count indictment names Derek Chauvin, Thomas Lane, J. Kueng and Tou Thao. Specifically, Chauvin, Thao and Kueng are charged with violating Floyd's right to be free from unreasonable seizure and excessive force. All four officers are charged for their failure to provide Floyd with medical care. Chauvin was also charged in a second indictment, stemming from the arrest and neck restraint of a 14-year-old boy in 2017.

Thomas Lane, Tou Thao and J. Kueng appeared via videoconference in US District Court in Minneapolis. Chauvin was not part of the court appearance.

Chauvin was convicted last month on state charges of murder and manslaughter in Floyd's death and is in Minnesota's only maximum-security prison as he awaits sentencing. The other three former officers face a state trial in August, and they are free on bond. They were allowed to remain free after Friday's federal court appearance.

Floyd, 46, died May 25 after Chauvin pinned him to the ground with a knee on his neck, even as Floyd, who was handcuffed, repeatedly said he couldn't breathe. Kueng and Lane also helped restrain



George Floyd died on May 25 after Chauvin, who is white, pressed his knee against Floyd's neck for several minutes as Floyd said he couldn't breathe. - File photo

Floyd - state prosecutors have said Kueng knelt on Floyd's back and Lane held down Floyd's legs. State prosecutors say Thao held back bystanders and kept them from intervening during the 9 1/2-minute restraint.

Chauvin's attorney, Eric Nelson, argued during his murder trial that Chauvin acted reasonably in the situation and that Floyd died because of underlying health issues and drug use. He has filed a request for a new trial, citing many issues including the judge's refusal to move the trial due to publicity.

Nelson had no comment on the federal charges Friday. Messages left with attorneys for two of the other officers were not immediately returned, and an attorney for the fourth officer was getting in an elevator and disconnected when reached by The Associated Press.

Floyd's arrest and death, which a bystander captured on cellphone video, sparked protests nationwide and widespread calls for an end to police brutality and racial inequities. (Source: Agencies)

## US-India Political Action Community Experts address violence and hatred against Asian Americans

**WASHINGTON (TIP):** US House members Raja Krishnamoorthi and Judy Chu joined an expert panel hosted by the US-India Political Action Committee (USINPAC) to address violence and hatred against Asian Americans and what's being done to keep them safe. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic last year, there has been a serious increase in the amount of anti-Asian rhetoric and violence throughout the country, noted a USINPAC press release.

The May 1 panel discussion was part of its bi-weekly series of panels addressing issues of importance to the Indian American community. "It is deeply disturbing, this rise of hate," said Krishnamoorthi, Indian American House member from Illinois noting, "The rise in hate crimes has been 169 percent in just the last year."

"That number has also been going up steadily in the past five years," he said. "Combined with domestic, violent extremism, driven largely by white nationalism, this is an issue that we have to be worried about." "We have to fight discrimination, bigotry, intolerance, prejudice and hate wherever it rears its ugly head," said Krishnamoorthi.

"This has been an incredibly difficult year for all of us as our country has struggled with a dangerous pandemic, an economic recession and historic grappling with issues of systemic racism, prejudice and violence," said Chu. "Since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic, there have been over 3,800 reported anti-Asian hate crimes and incidents, fueled by Donald Trump's usage of the terms 'China Virus' and 'Kung Flu,' fanning the flames of xenophobia."

Both Krishnamoorthi and Chu



addressed specific instances of violence toward Asian Americans that have been widely publicized, including the shootings in Indianapolis and Atlanta. They both also spoke about legislation Congress is taking up to tackle this pressing issue. Krishnamoorthi discussed his bipartisan Hate Crimes Commission Act which is co-sponsored by 150 US representatives. Chu mentioned her meeting with President Joe Biden in the Oval Office to discuss his plan and the US Senate's 94-1 passing of the Covid-19 Hate Crimes Act, which includes the text from her bill, the No Hate Act. "The world is facing a lot of challenges, especially in the United States as the pandemic has spiraled out of control and, as a consequence of that, we have seen actions that have impacted the Asian American community," said USINPAC Chairman Sanjay Puri.

"We brought together this distinguished panel to discuss this issue and inform Indian Americans, and all Asian Americans, about what is being done to keep them safe." Experts joining the panel included Dr. Pawan Dhingra, Professor of American Studies at Amherst College; Shawn Singh Ghuman, Co-Founder of the National Sikh Campaign; Dr. Maria Hwang, Professor of East Asian and Gender Studies at McGill University in Montreal; Aarti Kohli, Executive Director for Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus.



# US based Organization AAPI airlifts 1,000 Oxygen concentrators to Covid-19 hit India

**NEW YORK (TIP):** As India's health-care system faces a crisis amid a deadly second wave of coronavirus pandemic, American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) is leading several efforts to bring relief to India.

The largest ethnic medical organization in the US, representing the 80,000 strong Indian American physician community in the US, airlifted the first batch of 1,000 Oxygen Concentrators on April 29 through SEWA International, according to a press release.

In collaboration with its partners on ground in India, AAPI has also identified destinations based on urgency and acute need for the medical equipment, AAPI president Dr. Sudhakar Jonnalagadda stated.

"We have no doubt, this is just the beginning of a long road ahead," he said. "We are assessing the situation on the ground constantly and coordinating with various local task forces and teams."

Dr. Sajani Shah, chair of AAPI Board of Trustees urged members to stay engaged and provide feedback to help AAPI tackle problems in a more effective and efficient manner

Educating the public and the physicians in India is vital to combat the virus," says Dr. Anupama Gotimukula, president-elect of AAPI.

She has reached out to the Indian media across the



AAPI airlifted the first batch of 1,000 Oxygen Concentrators on April 29 through SEWA International, according to an AAPI press release.

platform offering regular series of educational materials to be published in India for the use and implementation of effective ways to treat patients who are impacted by Covid-19.

Dr. Ravi Kolli, AAPI vice president urged members to help secure much needed ventilators, which will also be critically scarce as the morbidity and hospitalization surge, out matching the supplies.

"AAPI is facilitating interaction between US and Indian doctors to advise them about the evidence-

based protocols to treat Covid-19 patients," Dr. Jonnalagadda said.

AAPI has evaluated 3 HIPAA compliant telehealth platforms to treat patients in India: <http://Mdtok.com/dr/Covid> and [www.eGlobalDoctors.com](http://www.eGlobalDoctors.com).

AAPI is also working on relaxing the restrictions on US physicians to treat patients in India, he said.

AAPI, Dr. Jonnalagadda said encourages using this route because they give global malpractice coverage and help Indian American physicians to register in India by renewing their India licenses.

AAPI is in constant touch with Indian Embassy and Indian Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan to see how best "we can help our motherland during this horrific pandemic," he said.

AAPI has written a letter to Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lock down the country to contain the spread of the virus, and to ramp up the vaccinations.

"AAPI has been in the forefront to help India to combat the pandemic," said Dr. Satheesh Kathula, treasurer, thanking members and non-members for their donations.

AAPI would like to help India in a big way, said Dr. Jonnalagadda urging all community leaders to educate their members to be on alert to avoid spread of the virus.

## Indian American organizations raise millions to mobilize resources for Covid-19 relief in India

**NEW YORK (TIP):** From cash to medicines to oxygen supplies, Indian American organizations are mobilizing resources for Covid-19 relief in India hit by a devastating second wave of the pandemic with 260,000 new cases in last seven days. The total case load is nearing a staggering 20 million.

Indiaspora, a nonprofit community of global Indian diaspora leaders, are launching their ChaloGive for India campaign which began with an initial \$1 million raised through their private donor network of members.

"Our hope is that this urgent ChaloGive campaign for India will inspire the broader community to give generously and support India's fight against Covid-19," said Ashish Shah, Senior Director, Philanthropy and Community Engagement at Indiaspora.

The grassroots initiative ChaloGive for India will facilitate donations to trusted and vetted high-impact nonprofits that are working on the ground during the second wave of Covid-19 relief, the organization said.

Visitors to [ChaloGive.org](http://ChaloGive.org) will have an option to give toward three major areas of Covid-19 relief.

First, they can give for creation of urgently needed Covid-19 care centers and makeshift hospitals through nonprofit WISH Foundation.

Second, make direct cash transfer to families who have lost a primary earning member through nonprofit GiveIndia.

Third, they can provide food relief and livelihood assistance for migrant workers and other underserved populations

through EdelGive Foundation to nonprofits Goonj and Jan Sahas.

Donors from anywhere in the world can either choose one area to donate to or make a contribution that will be evenly split between the three areas listed. US donors also will receive a tax exemption.

"India needs all the help it can get and many I know are impacted. This is the time for all of us who can to give generously," said Indiaspora member, Jay Vijayan, founder and CEO of California-based Tekion Corporation, who donated toward the campaign.

Starting with its inaugural ChaloGive giving campaign in October 2019, Indiaspora launched its second campaign, ChaloGive for Covid-19 in April 2020 during the first wave of the Covid-19 crisis.

Another leading community organization, the American India Foundation, has received a donation of \$8.9 million, its largest ever gift, from Mastercard for Covid-19 relief efforts.

The donation will be used to buy and place portable hospitals in areas of greatest need across India.

AIF will install "2000 portable beds in India, addressing the immediate healthcare needs of the nation," which "will help an estimated 2.5 million Indians to gain access to healthcare," the organization said.

Earlier, AIF said it was sourcing & delivering 500 oxygen concentrators to Delhi hospitals in the next three days to swiftly shore up supplies of oxygen in the capital.

Houston-based Sewa International has

ramped up their fundraising goal to \$10 million to fight the pandemic's second devastating wave.

The nonprofit organization said its volunteers in the US and in India, are working round the clock to rush medical equipment and essential supplies to hospitals, institutions, and individuals in India.

Sewa International is seeking the advice of a team of doctors in the US on procuring the appropriate medical equipment and supplies to be shipped to India.

Gitesh Desai, President, Houston Chapter of Sewa International, told ABC 13 News-Houston that 400 oxygen-concentrators have been already shipped to India, and 2,184 more would be shipped shortly.

Sewa which has started 'Help India Defeat Covid-19' campaign to ship oxygen concentrators to Indian hospitals, is also providing food and medicines to about 10,000 families and more than 1,000 orphanages, and senior citizen centers across the country.

"Sewa is building a Digital Helpdesk to provide critical information on ambulance services, hospital bed availability, and blood and medicinal supplies to people," aid Swadesh Katoch, Sewa's Vice President for Disaster Recovery.

The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) is also rushing 200 oxygen concentrators to Indian hospitals with the help of nonprofit SEWA International.

The largest ethnic medical



organization in the US also plans to offer tele-Consult services in India in local languages and organize webinars to educate AAPI members and their counterparts in India on zoom.

**AAPI has also identified three telehealth platforms that would offer free service to physicians from India/US and patients:**

1. EglobalDoctors.com;
2. <http://Mdtok.com>;
3. Click2clinic.com. Apps are available on iOS and Android.

Dr. Anupama Gotimukula, President-Elect, who is leading the AAPI Initiative to help India said groups of physicians will form smaller groups with Indian physicians in their own state/region and do it yourselves (DIY) in their own language for Tele-Consult.

The Google sheet prepared by AAPI has a list of volunteers that would be updated regularly.

In addition, with the purpose of educating AAPI members and their counterparts in India, AAPI is organizing educational webinars with small groups of doctors on zoom.

(Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))



## Pfizer and BioNTech to donate vaccines for Olympic athletes

Vaccine developers Pfizer and BioNTech will donate doses to inoculate athletes and officials preparing for the Tokyo Olympics, the IOC said on Thursday, May 6.

Delivery of doses is set to begin this month to give Olympic delegations time to be fully vaccinated with a second shot before arriving in Tokyo for the games, which open on July 23.

It's the second major vaccination deal for the International Olympic Committee. An agreement was announced in March between the IOC and Olympic officials in China to buy and distribute Chinese vaccines ahead of the Tokyo Games and next year's Beijing Winter Games.

The new Pfizer offer gives the IOC greater coverage worldwide ahead of Tokyo with most countries yet to authorize emergency use of Chinese vaccines.

"We are inviting the athletes and participating delegations of the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games to lead by example and accept the vaccine where and when possible," IOC President Thomas Bach said in a statement.

## Indian archers to miss Swiss World Cup

India's Olympic-bound archers will not get to compete in the Stage 2 World Cup in Lausanne as their short-term visa application has been rejected by the Switzerland Embassy.

India has been battling a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic that has forced many countries to ban travellers from India.

The Indian archers will now directly compete in the Stage 3 World Cup in Paris which will be the last Olympic qualification event for the Indian women's recurve team. The seven-day competition will begin on June 23.

"Swiss Embassy did not allow any short-term visa and we had little time for the Stage 2 World Cup (May 17-23). Our focus is solely on the Paris World Cup now," Archery Association of India secretary general Pramod Chandurkar told PTI.

India so far have men's team and women's individual berths for Tokyo. The national federation may also seek a relaxation in the 10-day quarantine rule for its archers when they reach Paris. "We are mulling to write to the French federation to allow the archers to travel at least for practice during the 10-day quarantine," he said.

Chandurkar further said that the federation would also send the compound team to Paris. The team had missed out on World Cup Stage 1 following their head coach's "false positive report".

# Chelsea beat Real Madrid, to face Man City in final on May 29

LONDON (TIP): Chelsea's decision to fire a club legend suddenly doesn't seem so callous after all.

While Frank Lampard's name has hardly been forgotten by the Chelsea fans — there were chants outside Stamford Bridge before kickoff last evening — new manager Thomas Tuchel is quickly creating his own legacy after leading the London club into the Champions League final against Manchester City.

Chelsea made record 13-time European Cup champions Real Madrid look ordinary as goals from Timo Werner and Mason Mount sealed a 2-0 victory that ousted Madrid 3-1 on aggregate.

Perhaps the stragglers leaving the bars near Stamford Bridge could hear the roar Tuchel let out on the field inside the empty stadium long after his players had departed the field. "I am very grateful to have this opportunity," said Tuchel.

## Man United book place in Europa League final despite defeat to Roma

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer reached a major final as Manchester United manager for the first time after a 3-2 defeat to AS Roma at the Stadio Olimpico was enough to earn his side an 8-5 aggregate win in the Europa League semi-finals on Thursday, May 6.

United will face Villarreal in the final in Gdansk on May 26 after the Spaniards beat Arsenal 2-1 on aggregate.

Solskjaer had lost his last four semi-finals during his Old Trafford reign and



Manchester United's Edinson Cavani celebrates scoring their second goal with Bruno Fernandes.

despite Thursday's defeat in Rome, the Norwegian's side progressed comfortably thanks to last week's commanding 6-2 first leg win.

"It's a great achievement to get to the final. We didn't win the game and that's disappointing but we did the hard work in the first leg," United captain Harry Maguire told BT Sport.

"We started the game a bit edgy. It was end-to-end like basketball and we gave them too many chances in second half.

Now we've got to go to the final and win it."

Edinson Cavani fired home a powerful finish after 39 minutes to open the scoring, but Roma found the net twice in the space of three second-half minutes through Edin Dzeko and Bryan Cristante to turn the game on its head.

United had goalkeeper David de Gea to thank for not going further behind as the Spaniard produced a string of superb saves.

## Future uncertain as postponed IPL seeks a window

It was supposed to be an IPL that would fetch BCCI bigger sponsorships than ever before, beating the virulence of the virus and the pessimism surrounding it. In 2020, when IPL went to the UAE, the cricket board had lost title sponsors Vivo, filled the slot with value halved, barely retained three official partners and had to make do with an approximate sponsorship of R400 crore.

This year, Vivo was back, BCCI had five official partners and was expected to make a record R700 crore plus from sponsorships. Add the massive R3,270 crore annual broadcast deal and this was to be a bumper IPL despite the pandemic.

But with the virus creeping inside the IPL bio-bubble and the season postponed midway, there is a fear now that almost half of the R4,000 crore BCCI would have made may never come into its kitty. The franchises that share 40% of these proceeds will take a proportionate hit, and player salaries will be halved.

Unless the Indian board finds an alternative window this year. "We will take a call later if we can find a window to complete IPL," is all its chairman Brijesh Patel said, a day after the league was put off after more



positives.

Finding another three weeks to complete the league in a year India hosts the T20 World Cup would be much tougher. With boards still figuring out ways to stage cricket by creating bio-bubbles, IPL had emerged the most lucrative property for players looking to make up losses from the absence of cricket. Once the T20 World Cup was postponed, every cricket board made way.

Source: HT

## Virat Kohli, wife Anushka Sharma donate Rs 2 crore in COVID-19 fight

India captain Virat Kohli and his actor wife Anushka Sharma have donated Rs 2 crore to a fund-raising project, which will raise a total of Rs 7 crore to support the country's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The two are raising money through crowd-funding platform Ketto.

"...Virat Kohli and Bollywood superstar Anushka Sharma are aiming to raise Rs. 7 crore for COVID relief in India," a press release from the celebrity couple stated.

"They are kickstarting a fundraising campaign #InThisTogether on the crowd-funding platform Ketto and are putting Rs. 2 crore for this initiative." The campaign will run for seven days on Ketto and the proceeds will be directed to ACT Grants.





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Vision of Dr. V.K. Raju, the Eye Foundation of America and Goutami Eye Institute

- \* 3.5 million + served
- \* 350 thousand + surgeries
- \* 30 thousand + on children



**Message from Peter J. McDonnell, M.D. Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University, USA on the occasion of laying the foundation stone on December 10, 2020**



"On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MO, I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautiful facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctors, nurses and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion. Best wishes, Peter"



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**PRE SURGERY**

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The work by the Eye Foundation of America team started in 1977 and has spread from India to 21 different countries. Additionally, EFA Focuses on teaching and training of health professionals who receive the Foundation's support at every level.  
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"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children". - Nelson Mandela

To know more about the work of Eye Foundation of America or to donate, visit [www.eyefoundationofamerica.org](http://www.eyefoundationofamerica.org)

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah,  
सर्वे सन्तु नरिमायाः । Sarve Santu Niramayah  
May all be prosperous and happy!  
May all be healthy!

The Eye Foundation of America  
695, West View Avenue, Morgantown, WV 26505  
Phone: 304-599-0705  
[www.eyefoundationofamerica.org](http://www.eyefoundationofamerica.org)