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Will bring out a profusely illustrated special edition to mark the Republic Day of India.

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RECOGNIZE 'HINDUPHOBIA' AND VIOLENCE AGAINST BUDDHISTS, SIKHS TOO: AMBASSADOR TIRUMURTI



India's Permanent Representative to the UN, T.S. Tirumurti speaking at the UNSC, in New York. - File photo / PTI

NEW YORK (TIP): India's Ambassador to the United Nations says global terror strategy is selective, urges against adding right wing extremism, violent nationalism to anti-terror resolutions

Calling on the United Nations to recognize 'Hinduphobia' along with other acts of religious hatred against Buddhism and Sikhism, India's U.N. envoy T.S.Tirumurti said that the U.N.'s latest Global Counter-Terrorism strategy passed last year is full of flaws and is selective, and could reverse gains from the global consensus in the "war on terror" post 9/11. In remarks indicating the government's discomfort with new terms being added to the definition of terrorism, he also said that terms like "violent nationalism" and "right wing

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President Joe Biden warns Russia against invasion of Ukraine



Biden said he believes Vladimir Putin doesn't want full blown war in Ukraine and would pay a "dear price" if he moves forward with a military incursion. - File photo

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): U.S. President Joe Biden also said he believes that Russia is preparing to take action on Ukraine, though he doesn't think Putin has made a final decision.

President Joe Biden said he believes Vladimir Putin doesn't want full blown war in Ukraine and would pay a "dear price" if he moves forward with a military incursion.

Mr. Biden, speaking at a news conference on January 19 to mark his one-year anniversary in office, also said he believes that Russia is preparing to take action on Ukraine, though he doesn't think Putin has made a final decision.

He suggested that he would limit Russia's access to the international banking system if it did further invade Ukraine.

CONTD ON PAGE 32

19-year-old woman sets record for solo global flight

Rutherford will find herself in Guinness World Records book after setting the mark that had been held by 30-year-old American aviator Shaesta Waiz

NEW YORK (TIP): A 19-year-old Belgian-British pilot, Zara Rutherford, set a world record as the youngest woman to fly solo around the world, touching her small airplane down in western Belgium on Thursday - 155 days after she departed.

Rutherford will find herself in the Guinness World Records book after setting the mark that had been held by 30-year-old American aviator Shaesta Waiz since 2017.

The overall record will remain out of Rutherford's grasp, since Briton Travis Ludlow set that benchmark last year as an 18-year-old.

Her global flight in her ultralight Shark plane was supposed to take three months, but relentless bad weather and visa issues kept her grounded sometimes for weeks on end, extending her adventure by about two months.



Belgian-British pilot Zara Rutherford, 19, reacts following her landing at Kortrijk-Wevelgem Airport, after a round-the-world trip in a light aircraft, becoming the youngest female pilot to circle the planet alone, in Wevelgem, Belgium. - Photo / Reuters

In her trek of more than 52,000 kilometers (28,000 nautical miles), she stopped over in five continents and visited 41 nations. "It is an adventure, definitely," she said. (Agencies)

FOREIGN INVESTMENT FLOW INTO INDIA DOWN 26% IN 2021: UN

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to India in 2021 were 26% lower, mainly because large



Photo for representational purpose only.

M&A deals recorded in 2020 were not repeated, the UN trade body has said.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Investment Trends Monitor published on Wednesday, January 19 said global foreign direct investment flows showed a strong rebound in 2021, growing 77% to an estimated \$1.65 trillion, from \$929 billion in 2020, surpassing their pre-Covid level. "Recovery of investment flows to developing countries is encouraging, but the stagnation of new

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GUEST COMMENT

Technology tangle: On 5G services and flight disruptions

THE ROLL-OUT OF 5G SERVICES NEAR AIRPORTS IS POSING A CHALLENGE TO AIRLINES

Almost 11 months after the United States' leading telecommunications companies won bids for \$81 billion worth of C-band radio spectrum to roll out 5G services, the much-awaited introduction hit a major snag this week after the country's leading airlines warned of massive flight disruptions if the wireless technology was put into operation, especially around the nation's airports. In a compromise on the eve of the planned roll-out on January 19, AT&T and Verizon agreed to delay introduction of the new wireless service near key airports. The two major telcos' commitments notwithstanding, several domestic and international airlines flying to the U.S. have announced major rescheduling as well as the possibility of cancellation of flights to several destinations citing warnings from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and aircraft makers that accurate functioning of radar altimeters in some aircraft may be affected by the 5G radio frequencies. The altimeters provide information on an aircraft's altitude and

are a crucial part of flight operations for pilots, particularly while seeking to make low-visibility landings in inclement weather. At the heart of the impasse lies the fact that both the 5G services and some flight equipment operate on the same C-band radio spectrum, with only the frequencies varying. The FAA has said it is working with altimeter manufacturers to evaluate data from the wireless companies to determine how robust each model is, and, if required, have the devices retrofitted or replaced.

The fact that the world's largest economy is now faced with the risk of large-scale domestic and international air travel disruptions as a result of the relatively belated roll-out of 5G telecom services points to the peculiar problems of the U.S. market, including the particular frequencies allotted there for 5G. South Korea, China and Japan and several European nations have already successfully rolled out 5G services and the U.S. telcos have cited the lack of problems in these jurisdictions as

evidence that the FAA and airlines need to do more to find solutions to the deployment of the wireless technology near airports. The FAA on its website has pointed to the specifics of the proposed 5G roll-out in the U.S. with a comparison to the situation in France and asserted that some key differences pose challenges. For one, the aviation regulator contends planned buffer zones for U.S. airports only protect the last 20 seconds of flight, while in France the last 96 seconds of flight are protected from any interruption from 5G signals. Also, 5G power levels are lower in France, with even the planned temporary nationwide lower power levels in the U.S. still expected to be 2.5 times more powerful. U.S. President Joe Biden and his administration will have their task cut out in pushing to hammer out a long-term solution to this impasse so as to minimize any further disruption to the already pandemic-hit global travel and trade sectors.

(The Hindu)

Election Commission of India's Gesture

PUTTING OFF PUNJAB POLLS WELCOME, BUT COVID CONCERNS PERSIST

The Election Commission of India (ECI) deserves praise for accepting a genuine demand by the state government and various political parties to postpone the Punjab Assembly polls in view of Guru Ravidas Jayanti. Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi and other leaders had appealed to the poll panel to reschedule voting, which was initially slated for February 14, so that followers of Guru Ravidas - a revered poet-saint of the Bhakti movement - could travel from Punjab to Uttar Pradesh to celebrate his birth anniversary on February 16. Lakhs of devotees converge on Varanasi, the birthplace of Guru Ravidas, to pay obeisance on Magha Purnima every year.

Unanimity among political parties is rare, especially during the election

season. What has made all stakeholders speak in one voice in this case is the importance of the Ravidasia community as a vote bank. Doaba, which sends 23 MLAs to the 117-seat Punjab Assembly, accounts for lakhs of followers of Guru Ravidas. No party can afford to ignore the interests of this influential group, considering that this is apparently a 'no wave' election which might throw up a hung House. The bottom line is that every seat counts.

However, amid the electoral compulsions, various parties have conveniently chosen to ignore the fact that the celebrations in Varanasi will witness a huge congregation under the shadow of the pandemic. The event could become a coronavirus superspreader if the third wave does not

subside by mid-February. Varanasi is represented in the Lok Sabha by PM Narendra Modi, who has been repeatedly urging citizens of the country to follow Covid protocols. It will be a big challenge for the BJP government in poll-bound UP to make large crowds toe the line, particularly since cancellation of the festivities is not an option in view of the religious sentiments at stake. Last year, the Kumbh Mela in Uttarakhand was one of the contributory factors to the massive surge in infections during the devastating second wave. It remains to be seen whether adequate steps will be taken this time to ensure a Covid-safe pilgrimage.

(Tribune, India)

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NJ based Global Indian Trade and Cultural Council, USA, (GITCC) Team visits India to promote trade and business ties between the US and India



(L to R) Mr. Anand Krishnamurthy CEO, Coolsoft LLC, Sandeep Chakraborty, IFS, Joint Secretary, (Europe West), Dr Rahul Gupta, White House Director of National Drug Control Policy, Mr. H S Panaser President, Global Indian Trade and Cultural Council USA, Shatrughna Sinha, IFS and Mr. Srinath of Epicmind LLP at Hotel Leela Palace in Delhi .



Dr. H. G. Koshia, Commissioner, Licensing Authority (Drug) & Commissioner of Food Safety, warmly hosted with his team, the delegation from Global Indian Trade & Cultural Council-USA, Leadership at Ahmedabad, Gujarat

NEW YORK (TIP): The U.S.-Indian relationship is fast building a strategic partnership and the two sides working together with regional groupings as highlighted by the Indian Prime Minister and the US President including ASEAN and Quad members, to promote shared interests in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond; developing a trade and investment partnership that increases prosperity for working families in both countries; finishing the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and other health challenges; galvanizing global efforts to scale up climate action; strengthening democratic values and institutions in support of our respective peoples; and enhancing people-to-people ties that have made both countries stronger, Mr. H.S. Panaser said in a press note to The Indian Panorama.



Mr. Ravi Nandan Sinha - Director, MSME Delhi welcomes Mr. H.S. Panaser with a bouquet

President Joe Biden has created history by appointing about 60 Indian Americans to key positions in his administration. The latest is the senate approval of The White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, Dr. Rahul Gupta. It was a great pleasure joining him during his first visit to India after his taking over the position.

As President of Global Indian Trade and Cultural Council, USA, (GITCC) Mr. Panaser visited India with Advisors on Board Mr. Suresh Khanna, Chairman of M/s. Stabicon Life Sciences Pvt. Ltd and Member of the Board of Millipore Pvt. Ltd. India, a JV company of Millipore Corporation USA. Mr. Anand. Krishnamurthy, CEO of Coolsoft LLC, USA, Gen. Dilawar Singh. The group visited, Delhi, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, and Chandigarh respectively. They had an



GITCC team in meeting with Dr.HG Koshia along with IDMA - Indian Drug Manufacturers Association at Ahmedabad, Gujarat

opportunity to meet bureaucrats overseeing healthcare, IT and irrigation in the states of Haryana and Punjab. They had meeting and discussions with Industry leaders and Indian bureaucrats on Pharmaceutical and Medical devices manufacturing emphasizing on joint ventures, mergers both for generic and prescription products and API. The visiting team also discussed about new software and usage of AI and ML in the healthcare sector.

Mr. Panaser has a strong network of

Angel Investors, Venture Capitalists and other Financial Consultants. India has very experienced and qualified pool of people who can assist in Formulation Product Development, Compiling dossiers for product registration for markets worldwide, API DMF, SOP Writing, Clinical Data Management, Validation protocols etc. at a very competitive cost. These costs will be affordable by many small and medium scale companies, thereby making them competitive commercially, Mr. Panaser's press note said.

Mr. Panaser also talked to Dr. Rahul Gupta about starting a government private partnership for spearheading campaigns on Drug awareness in border states to fight widespread drug menace in India under corporate social responsibility following the US model.

The visiting team had a fruitful meeting with Mr Ravi Nath Sinha, Director, MSME Business Forum of India and General Dilawar Singh, Director General Skill Development, Member Consultative Committee for New Educational Policy - Member, National Committee on Management of Youth.

Ven Parameswaran Bereaved; pays Tribute to his Dear Departed Sister

Mr. Ven Parameswaran, a former Indian diplomat with the United Nations and a regular contributor to The Indian Panorama lost his younger sister Bhagyalakshmi on January 16, 2022. She was 90.

The staff at The Indian Panorama are grieved at the loss of Mr. Parameswaran. They pray for eternal peace to the dear departed soul.

Mr. Parameswaran in the tribute to his sister said." Bhagyalakshmi was born immediately after me and we grew up and played together. I have many everlasting memories of Bhagyalakshmi.

"Bhagyalakshmi was very loving and affectionate always to relatives and friends. She was a creative cook and enjoyed entertaining them. She took immense pleasure in preparing varieties of food liked by her guests, relatives and friends. Even when she was physically unable to cook, she would sacrifice her health and entertain her guests any time of the day or night.

Whenever Bhagyalakshmi visited us, she would bring all our favorite food.

" Immediately after marriage, Bhagyalakshmi lived with her husband and family in Payyannur, Kerala for a year or so. When I visited her, I found she was not happy in that environment. At my suggestion, she moved to Calcutta with her husband, Krishnan. She lived in Calcutta till 1978, when she immigrated to the USA. She has two children, Balu (mentally handicapped) and Raju. Raju had a successful career at the U.N. and retired as Dy. Director. Unfortunately, stroke hit Raju six years ago and living in his house with his wife Jayanthi. Although my sister's name represents good luck and prosperity, her life has been full of misfortune.

"My brother-in-law expired in 1998. Who would have expected Raju would not become normal 6 years after the stroke hit him? Poor Bhagyalakshmi was attacked by liver cancer and her suffering especially during the last six months was pathetic. My dear sister, Bhagyalakshmi

suffered physically and psychologically for too long. Under these circumstances, I am glad God decided to take my sister Bhagyalakshmi away so that she does not have to suffer more pain.

"Bhagyalakshmi lived in the US for 43 years. Compared to her life in Payyannur and Calcutta, living in the USA was a heaven. We used to visit Bhagyalakshmi very frequently and enjoyed her affection and love. We were also in daily contact by phone irrespective of my location. I had the closest relationship with my dear sister, Bhagyalakshmi, who always gave me courage when I was in distress.

"Life is real, life is earnest; and the grave is not its goal. I pray for Bhagyalakshmi's soul. As long as I live, for me she is not dead because her values and spirits stay alive always. "

:- IN MOURNING :-

Ven Parameswaran (Brother)
Priscilla Sister-in-law)

Prem (nephew) Bhumika (niece -in-law) Trinity, Kayla and Hudson
(Grandchildren to Ven and Priscilla) join me in saluting my sister
Bhagyalakshmi

5 Indian origin scientists among 45 American Mathematical Society Fellows in 2022

PROVIDENCE, RI (TIP): Five Indian origin mathematicians are among 45 American Mathematical Society Fellows for 2022 from around the world chosen for their "outstanding contributions to the creation, exposition, advancement, communication, and utilization of mathematics."

"It is an honor to welcome a new class of AMS Fellows and to congratulate them for their notable contributions to mathematics and to the profession," said Prof Ruth Charney, president of the American Mathematical Society, in a press release.

"We extend our thanks to the nominators and members of the selection committee for their help in highlighting the outstanding achievements of their colleagues. Congratulations 2022 Fellows!"

Jennifer Shyamala Sayaka Balakrishnan of Boston University was recognized "for contributions to arithmetic geometry and computational number theory and service to the profession."

She is known for leading a team that solved the problem of the "cursed curve," a Diophantine equation that was "famously difficult" before their solution.



Five Indian origin mathematicians are among 45 American Mathematical Society Fellows for 2022

Samit Dasgupta, a professor of mathematics at Duke University has been selected "for contributions to number theory, in particular the theory of special values of classical and p-adic L-functions."

Dasgupta's research has focused on the Stark conjectures and Heegner points. In 2009, Dasgupta received a Sloan Research Fellowship.

Santosh Vempala, a Distinguished Professor of Computer Science at the Georgia Institute of Technology has been chosen "for contributions to randomized algorithms, high-dimensional geometry, and numerical linear algebra, and service to the profession."

His main work has been in the area of Theoretical Computer Science.

Vijaya Kumar Murty, an Indo-Canadian mathematician, has been selected for contributions to number theory, including the theory of L-functions associated to modular forms, and arithmetic geometry, and for service to the profession.

He is a professor at the University of Toronto and is the Director of the Fields Institute.

Malabika Pramanik, an Indo-Canadian mathematician who works as a professor of mathematics at the University of British Columbia has been selected "for contributions to complex and harmonic analysis and mentoring and support for the participation of under-represented groups in mathematics."

Pramanik studied statistics at the Indian Statistical Institute, earning a bachelor's degree in 1993 and a master's in 1995. She then moved to the University of California, Berkeley, where she completed a doctorate in mathematics in 2001.

Her interests include harmonic analysis, complex variables, and partial differential equations.

INDIAN-ORIGIN CEO WHO FIRED 900 EMPLOYEES OVER ZOOM LAST MONTH IS RETURNING TO HIS POSITION



Vishal Garg has fired almost 900 employees over a Zoom call just weeks before Christmas last year.

NEW YORK (TIP): Vishal Garg, the Indian-origin CEO of US-based homeownership firm Better.com, who recently fired nearly 900 employees over a Zoom call and triggered widespread outrage, is returning to his position more than a month after "taking time off" from the job. Garg had fired almost 900 employees over a Zoom call just weeks before Christmas last year.

"I come to you with not great news. If you're on this call you are part of the unlucky group that is being laid off. Your employment here is terminated effective immediately," Garg had said, drawing widespread criticism over the way he informed about 9 per cent of the company's employees that they were being let go. Garg had later apologized for the way he handled the layoffs, saying, "I failed to show the appropriate amount of respect and appreciation for the individuals who were affected and for their contributions to Better."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American chemical engineer Poornima Padmanabhan gets NSF CAREER Award

ROCHESTER, NY (TIP): Indian American chemical engineer Poornima Padmanabhan, who is searching for the origins of life based on minute systems of molecules, has received a National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) award.

An assistant professor chemical engineering at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), Padmanabhan was given the five-year, \$478,476 award to discover how chiral structures-or mirror-image, entangled molecules-function, according to an RIT press release.

This process is essential to understanding how different cell types are formulated in biochemical development, the Rochester, New York-based private research university said.

The concepts can provide information about how synthetic materials can be further developed for use in the pharmaceutical industry, in agriculture or food analysis, and in the development of novel materials to enhance sensing and imaging applications, it said.

Padmanabhan received the award from the NSF's division of Materials Research for her study titled "Chirality and polymer thermodynamics: frustration and amplification." Chirality means "handed-ness" and anything in nature that can be identified as right- or



Poornima Padmanabhan, who is searching for the origins of life based on minute systems of molecules, has received a National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) award.

left-handed are essentially mirror images.

Polymers are long molecules made from smaller entities that are bonded together. When these smaller entities are chiral, they form much larger chiral polymers, such as proteins which become the building blocks of life systems. In turn, hundreds or thousands of polymers can come

together to form even larger structures.

"We can think about how proteins fold, how life originated, we can think about how biology forms chiral structures and the reason the work is very exciting is we don't know how these phenomena happen," said Padmanabhan.

In chemical systems where complex interactions lead to formation of molecular structures at a multitude of length scales, chirality may or may not result in each of those length scales.

"We cannot predict when something will be frustrated or when something will be amplified. That is what we are trying to discover with this work," she said.

Understanding when and how chirality is transferred from the smallest to the largest length scale will be explored by studying the underlying thermodynamic principles and interrogating the molecular-level detail.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

INDIAN-ORIGIN SCOTLAND YARD CHIEF INSPECTOR DISMISSED FOR MISCONDUCT



Davinder Kandohla was found to have breached Standards of Professional Behavior and dismissed from Scotland Yard

LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin chief inspector in London's Scotland Yard police force has been dismissed for "gross misconduct" without notice following an investigation by the Metropolitan Police's Directorate of Professional Standards (DPS).

Davinder Kandohla was found to have breached Standards of Professional Behavior, amounting to "gross misconduct", in relation to honesty and integrity, authority, respect and courtesy, duties and responsibilities and discreditable conduct.

"The breaches related to failing to declare a conflict of interest while taking part in his own promotion process, providing a misleading account to professional standards officers during an investigation into expenses he had claimed and conduct towards junior members of staff," the Met Police said in a statement following a misconduct hearing on Sunday.

Three Indian Americans reported among top 25 InsurTech Executives of 2021

NEW YORK (TIP): Three Indian American executives - Art Agrawal, Jack Kudale and Rajeev Gupta - figure among the Financial Technology Report's Top 25 InsurTech Executives of 2021 "at the vanguard of a new era for the rapidly growing InsurTech sector."

Agrawal is the Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Jerry, the car ownership super app, while Kudale is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Cowbell Cyber, the industry's first AI-powered cyber insurance provider. Gupta is the Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer at Cowbell Cyber.

"This year's executives are at the vanguard of a new era for the rapidly growing InsurTech sector, as the next generation of businesses and consumers seeks the highest-quality insurance services that fit their needs for convenience and affordability," New York-based market research firm said in a press release.

"Already well known and staying current with technology trends, the companies represented on this year's list are poised to ascend as major players across a global market which is projected to reach \$11.9 billion by 2027," it said.

"With these leaders more than capable of adapting their operations as industry trends dictate, the evolution of InsurTech will mean record business for their enterprises," the Report added.



Art Agrawal, Jack Kudale and Rajeev Gupta - figure among the Financial Technology Report's Top 25 InsurTech Executives of 2021

Art Agrawal's success, the Report noted, "was truly born of industry disruption, as he formed Jerry to shake up the century-old car insurance process, launching an AI and ML-based insurance comparison service that now saves more than 1.5 million customers approximately \$850 a year."

Jerry "was born of Agrawal's desire to eliminate hassle from his own frustrating, expensive, and time-consuming experiences with car insurance, financing, repair, maintenance, warranties, and parking," it said.

Founded in 2019, Jerry is the #1 rated and most downloaded app in its category.

Agrawal leads with a relentless focus on the customer experience as the company builds additional marketplaces to save customers time and money on all areas of car ownership.

Previously, he had founded on-demand

car repair services provider YourMechanic, the 2012 winner of TechCrunch Disrupt.

As CEO, he grew YourMechanic to the largest company in its industry, with more than 2,000 mechanics across the US. Agrawal, who started his first company at 22, attended Drexel University.

Under Kudale's leadership, Cowbell Cyber has racked up several awards for outstanding performance in 2021, the Report noted.

These include the PropertyCasualty 360 Insurance Innovator, CBInsights' Cyber Defender of the Year, a nomination for Insurance Insider's Disruptor of the Year, and being named in CBInsights' FinTech 250.

Kudale brings 25 years of business experience, having led three venture-backed Silicon Valley cybersecurity and data analytics startups after a long stint

as an executive in charge of distribution at a Fortune 500 software company.

He is a frequent speaker at industry events covering topics such as the future of cyber insurance and the use of AI and technology to enable continuous underwriting for cyber.

Kudale earned an engineer's degree in electronics and telecommunications engineering from the University of Pune.

Co-Founder Gupta comes with 20 years of hands-on experience in software architecture and design of large-scale, secure enterprise applications. Gupta was the GM for the Application Protection business unit at Zimperium, a leader in mobile security.

Previously, at CA Technologies, he was the head of product for the Application Delivery BU, where he mentored several customer teams and led efficient software development strategies for Fortune 500 clients.

Gupta is a judge, mentor, and coach for international youth organization FIRST in addition to volunteering his free time teaching kids advanced electronics, robotics, and hands-on IOT projects.

He earned a Bachelor of Engineering in electronics and communication from the Netaji Subhas Institute of Technology and a Master of Business Administration in finance and marketing from Santa Clara University's Leavey School of Business.

Indian American soil scientist Rattan Lal up for a key role



President Joe Biden intends to appoint leading Indian American soil scientist Dr. Rattan Lal as a member of Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD).

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): President Joe Biden intends to appoint leading Indian American soil scientist Dr. Rattan Lal as a member of Board for International Food and Agricultural Development (BIFAD).

Established in 1975, BIFAD advises the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on agriculture, higher education issues and food insecurity in developing countries.

Biden's intent to appoint Lal, a Distinguished University Professor of Soil Science and Director of the CFAES Rattan Lal Center for Carbon Management and Sequestration at The

Ohio State University (OSU), in a key role was announced by the White House on Jan 14.

Dr. Lal, 77, is also Adjunct Professor of the University of Iceland and of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, as well as a Visiting Professor at Pontifical Catholic University, according to his White House profile.

He is widely recognized as a pioneer in soil-centric agricultural management to improve food security globally and develop climate-resilient agriculture through soil carbon management and sequestration, sustainable management of soils, and soil health.

Dr. Lal served as President of the World Association of the Soil and Water Conservation (1987-1990), the International Soil Tillage Research Organization (1988-1991), the Soil Science Society of America (2005-2007), and the International Union of Soil Sciences (2017-2018).

He is Chair in Soil Science and Goodwill Ambassador for Sustainable Development Issues of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin Soumitra Dutta to become dean of Oxford business school

ITHACA, NY (TIP): Soumitra Dutta, a Distinguished Alumnus of the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, will leave Cornell University this summer to become dean of the Saïd Business School of the University of Oxford on June 1.

Currently professor of management at Cornell, Dutta joined the Ithaca, New York-based private Ivy League research university in 2012 as the Anne and Elmer Lindseth Dean at the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management.

"Cornell has been a wonderful experience," Dutta said in a Jan 12 press release. "And certainly, the thing that I will miss the most is the community of friends and colleagues at Cornell."

"Soumitra has made major contributions to Cornell for nearly a decade: He helped establish the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business as one of the premier business schools in the nation and expanded the college's programs in New York City, particularly at Cornell Tech, and internationally,"



Soumitra Dutta will leave Cornell University this summer to become dean of the Saïd Business School of the University of Oxford on June 1.

Provost Michael I. Kotlikoff said.

"His contributions and accomplishments have fundamentally advanced Cornell, and we wish him success as he takes the reins at the Saïd Business School at Oxford."

Andrew Karolyi, dean of the SC Johnson College, said Dutta's impact on the college will be felt for a long time.

"Soumitra brought a unique and compelling global perspective, from which we will continue to benefit,"

Karolyi said. "This is a tremendous honor for Soumitra, and I have every confidence that he will excel in this new role." During his second two-year term as Johnson dean, Dutta was tasked by then-President Elizabeth Garrett with leading the integration of Cornell's three business schools - Johnson, the Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management, and the Peter and Stephanie Nolan School of Hotel Administration - into one unified college of business.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation Ensuring AAPI-Inclusive Curriculum is Taught in New Jersey Schools

TRENTON, NJ (TIP): Governor Phil Murphy, on January 18, signed legislation (S4021/A6100 and S3764/A3369) that will ensure that the contributions, history, and heritage of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are included in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies for students in kindergarten through Grade 12. S4021 will create an AAPI curriculum requirement for schools and S3764 will establish the Commission for Asian American Heritage within the Department of Education.

"The members of our Asian American/Pacific Islander community have contributed so much to our state and nation," said Governor Murphy. "By teaching students about the history and heritage of our AAPI community, we can ensure that the diversity of our state is reflected in our curriculum and create a more tolerant and knowledgeable future for New Jersey. I am proud to sign these bills into law."

"By incorporating instruction on the history and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, New Jersey schools can provide a curriculum that reflects the diversity of our state," said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education. "In addition, the establishment of the Commission on Asian American Heritage will serve as an invaluable resource to enhance classroom instruction throughout the state."

"Though Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders continue to make significant and positive contributions to our state, they remain misunderstood and are often targeted for race-based violence and bigotry," said Senator Vin Gopal. "With these new laws, and implementation of learning standards that do more to highlight the history and achievements of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, I am confident we will be able to better educate students about Asian American culture and foster greater understanding across the many diverse communities of our state."

"Members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community have made countless contributions to our state and country, yet they are made virtually invisible by our history books. This erasure of AAPI history is unacceptable and incredibly harmful for young people who are being robbed of valuable representation that could have a positive impact on their lives," said Assembly sponsors Raj Mukherji, Mila Jasey, Britnee Timberlake, and Sterley Stanley in a joint statement regarding S4021/A6100. "Excluding the rich history of the AAPI community from our schools' curriculum not only prevents students from gaining a full understanding of



NJ Governor Phil Murphy - File photo

our nation's history, but also opens the door for racial biases that can turn into violence and hatred. One of New Jersey's best qualities is its diversity, which we should be highlighting in our schools. By expanding the K-12 curriculum to include lessons on the history and contributions of the AAPI community, we can help break down persisting negative stereotypes and show the over 140,000 Asian American and Pacific Islander students in our state that their stories and experiences matter."

"People of Asian descent experienced discrimination long before 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic clearly exacerbated acts of hatred and bigotry," said Assemblyman Gordon Johnson, prime sponsor of S3764. "Even more frightening is the fact that many incidents go unreported, leaving open the question of just how many people have experienced harassment, or even violence. Hate has no home in New Jersey, and we have a responsibility to teach our children the importance of tolerance and acceptance."

"The Asian American and Pacific Islander community has enriched every corner of New Jersey's culture, economy, schools, arts, businesses, and so much more," said Assemblyman Sterley Stanley, the first person of South Asian descent from Middlesex County to join the New Jersey General Assembly and sponsor of S3764. "The programs developed under this bill will reinforce to students that our state's diversity is our strength."

"Representation matters. This bill will ensure people of Asian descent are included in our students' curriculum, potentially bringing in-depth Asian history to some classrooms for the first time," said Assemblyman Rob Karabinchak said of S3764. "There's never been a more important moment for us to broaden children's

understanding of the world around them and promote inclusivity and respect."

"The New Jersey Asian American community applauds Governor Murphy and the Legislature for their bold and timely leadership incorporating the Asian American experience as part of our public-school curriculum," said Dr. Kani Ilangovan of Make Us Visible NJ. "All children deserve to know they belong. All children deserve to feel safe. This law will help ensure Asian Americans are represented in our great American story. According to the latest Stop AAPI Hate report, 1 in 3 AAPI parents stated that their child experienced a hate incident in school in this past year. With the rise of anti-Asian violence, education is the best antidote to hate."

"I am looking forward to having New Jersey schools include Asian American history and contributions in the public-school curriculum. We will be able to feel more visible and safer, and that we are valued in our shared history, in the country we have built and continue to build together. The most important result of these legislations, moving forward, is that it will set the stage for inspiring more younger students to participate and contribute to the movement," said Russell Fan, Cofounder of Livingston AAPI Youth Alliance.

"The Sikh community is excited to see the State of New Jersey leading the country by passing this legislation. According to SALDEF's National Sikh Survey, 58% of the Sikh community has experienced bullying or harassment and this is a positive step to help reduce that discrimination," said Amman Deep Singh Seehra, Vice Chair of SALDEF. "Students now will start to learn about the contributions of the AAPI community in the United States, which better reflects our true history and showcases the contributions by everyone."

"These laws exemplify our New Jersey values and we are so grateful to Governor Murphy and the Legislature," said Amber Reed and Jeffrey Chang of AAPI Montclair. "Amidst the tide of anti-Asian hate, we found hope in joining a diverse coalition of parents, advocates, students, and legislators to use the best tool we have to fight hate: education. All children deserve to know they matter, that they belong, and they too are part of our country and state's history. In our own community we have seen how swiftly the lives and mental health of children can improve when their stories are taught in their classrooms. We will continue to work with our partners to ensure that the promise of these laws is realized and that all New Jersey children grow up with acceptance, belonging, and love."

Indian-origin Sikh taxi driver's hate crime attacker charged

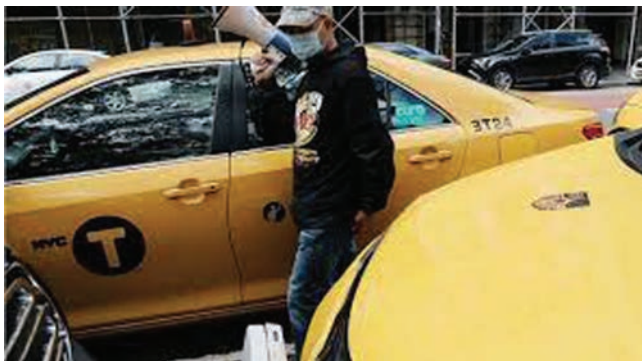
NEW YORK (TIP): Authorities in the US have arrested and charged with hate crime a man, who attacked an Indian-origin Sikh taxi driver at JFK International Airport here, knocked off his turban and yelled at him "turbaned people, go back to your country".

Mohamed Hassanain was arrested on Thursday, January 13, for the January 3 attack on the Sikh taxi driver, who is being identified only as Mr. Singh out of respect for his request for privacy.

It's not enough to say that we need to fight AAPI hate. We actually need our elected officials to get involved with consequences for those who commit acts of violence against our community. @GregMeeksNYC @NYCMayor@AdrienneToYou @yuhline @rontkimpic.twitter.com/Dkk23lQw0g

- Navjot Pal Kaur (@navjotpkaur) January 4, 2022

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Police Department (PAPD) confirmed on Friday that Hassanain was arrested for the attack against Singh, said community-based civil and human rights organization The Sikh Coalition.



Mohamed Hassanain was arrested on Thursday, January 13 for the January 3 attack on the Sikh taxi driver, who is being identified only as Mr. Singh out of respect for his request for privacy.

The incident is being considered a hate crime, given that Hassanain shouted "go back to your country" and called Singh "turbaned people" in a derogatory manner while repeatedly punching and shoving him, it said.

Hassanain is being charged with Assault in the Third Degree as a Hate Crime, Assault in the Third Degree, and

Aggravated Harassment in the Second Degree, and will be arraigned on Saturday, it added. "I am thankful to law enforcement, the Sikh Coalition, and all those in the community who have offered their strength in this difficult time," Singh said in a statement to The Sikh Coalition. "No one should experience what I did-but if they do, I hope they receive the same overwhelming amount of support and quick, professional action by the authorities in response," he said.

On January 3, New York City resident Singh was physically attacked and berated near his cab at JFK International Airport. Singh had parked his cab at the Terminal 4 taxi stand when another driver blocked his vehicle. When Singh picked up a customer, he stepped out of his car to ask the other driver to move. The other driver attempted to hit Singh with his own car door; he then began repeatedly punching Singh in the head, chest, and arms, causing his turban to become unraveled and fall off, the statement said.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



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Neglecting cultural czar Munshi's efforts

BY VAPPALA
BALACHANDRAN



"A MASSIVE EFFORT OF REWRITING INDIAN HISTORY FROM OUR TRADITIONAL PERSPECTIVE WAS DONE BETWEEN 1951 AND 2003. THIS WAS BY THE DOYEN OF CULTURAL RENAISSANCE, THE LATE DR KM MUNSHI, WHO WAS ALSO A NOTED LITTERATEUR, EDUCATIONIST, HISTORIAN, FREEDOM FIGHTER AND CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF PATEL. IN 1938, MUNSHI FOUNDED THE BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN, WHICH HAS DONE MUCH TO SPREAD AWARENESS OF OUR CULTURE."

On February 17, 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the 'injustice' perpetrated by historians "against those who made history" was being corrected by the 'new India'. The occasion was the Maharaj Suheldev memorial foundation stone-laying ceremony in Uttar Pradesh, which is going to the polls next month. He added that history is not just what was written by those "who enslaved the country" or who wrote it with the "mindset of slavery".

Several RSS leaders, too, had called for 'rewriting our history' to free us from the distorted narration that is being taught in schools. They wanted our history to "study evolution of Indian culture from 12,000 years ago."

On March 6, 2018 Reuters reported that



Credible archivist: Why is the govt ignoring the massive work done by Munshi and others?

Photo / Facebook

a committee of scholars was "quietly appointed" by the government "to use evidence such as archaeological finds and DNA (tests) to prove that today's Hindus are directly descended from the land's first inhabitants many thousands of years ago and make the case that ancient Hindu scriptures are fact not myth."

Reuters interviewed nine of the 12 members who confirmed that they were tasked with "matching archaeological and other evidence with ancient Indian scriptures or establishing that Indian civilization is much older than is widely known."

Lack of transparency on the composition and working of this committee gave rise to needless controversies. A report on October 18, 2020 said that 32 Members of Parliament had written to the President to disband the committee which "has no South Indians, Northeast Indians, minorities, Dalits, women and experts in languages other than Sanskrit."

Confirmation on the committee came on September 14, 2020 when the then Culture Minister Prahlad Singh Patel said that an expert panel was set up for the "holistic study of origin and evolution of Indian culture since 12,000 years ago." However, a reply to an RTI query on October 11, 2021 conveyed that the committee had not submitted any report to the ASI.

The present government and its theologians seem to be embarking on this Sisyphean task, being ignorant that a massive effort of re-writing Indian history from our traditional perspective was already done between 1951 and 2003. This was by the internationally acclaimed doyen of Indian cultural

renaissance, the late Dr Kanhaiyalal Maneklal Munshi, who was also a noted litterateur, educationist, historian, freedom fighter and close associate of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

In 1938, Munshi founded the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, which in the course of time, has done much more than government organs to spread awareness of our traditional culture at the grassroots level in India and abroad. Presently, the Bhavan has 119 centers in India, including 100 schools, seven foreign branches and 367 associated institutions.

Munshi set up the Bhavan for "the propagation of Bharatiya Vidya (education), which in essence is Dharma in its triple aspects of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram (truth, goodness and beauty), as his closest colleague, the late S Ramakrishnan, would say. Munshi initiated the process by retelling Krishnavatara (Lord Krishna's lives) in eight volumes. He set up a 'Book University', with the first book written by Bharat Ratna C Rajagopalachari, his peer, on the Mahabharata and the Ramayana.

Millions of Indian children have grown up reading these classics and Munshi's fortnightly messages in Bhavan's Journal since 1954. The journal is published even now.

In 1951, Munshi released 'The Vedic Age', the first part of Bhavan's Book University's 11-volume series 'The History and Culture of the Indian People'. He said that although efforts to prepare this massive history-writing had started in 1938, it could assume concrete shape only in 1944 with generous help from GD Birla and the Shri Krishnarpan Charity Trust. The last volume was

released in 2003, 32 years after Munshi's death. Each volume is nearly 1,000 pages. Some of these volumes had gone for seven to eight reprints,

Munshi enlisted the services of renowned historian RC Majumdar, former Vice-Chancellor of Dacca University, as full-time editor to the series. Others who wrote chapters were famous archaeologist HD Sankalia and renowned Advaita scholar TMP Mahadevan, to mention a few.

The 11-volumes series are the 'Vedic Age', 'The Age of Imperial Unity', 'The Classical Age', 'Imperial Kanauj', 'The Struggle for Empire', 'The Delhi Sultanate', 'Mughul Empire', 'The Maratha Supremacy', two volumes on 'The British Paramountcy - Indian Renaissance' and, finally, 'The Struggle for Freedom'.

Munshi felt that the central purpose of history is to investigate and unfold the values of the people which had inspired age after age their collective will. Also, "to be a history in the true sense of the word, the work must be the story of the people inhabiting a country." He also explained the difficulties in this enormous endeavor.

For example, in the past, "Indians laid little store by history." Munshi felt that the works of ancient Indian authors throwing light on history 'were few'. At the same time, the Puranas and Kavyas had not "yielded up their chronological or historical wealth." On the other hand, observations by foreign visitors like Megasthenes, Hiuen Tsang, Al-Masudi, Manucci and Bernier, although 'superficial', had "immense value in reconstructing the past". Thus, he was of the firm opinion that we cannot ignore the foreigners' writings.

At the same time, our history books did not explain how India resisted the Turkish, Afghan and Moghul incursions and how a "renaissance sprang up out of the impact of Indian with Persian and Turkish cultures." In the same way, the British period read like an 'unofficial report' of their conquest and not how we resisted and suffered nor how we reacted to foreign influences or "of the values and organization's we created out of the impact with the West."

Perhaps, one reason why our present government is ignoring this massive collection by such credible archivists is because of Munshi's theory of cultural assimilation in his foreword to Volume 1 ('The Vedic Age'). Also, while discussing the existing history on the Delhi Sultanate, he had said: "Gruesome stories of Muslim atrocities are narrated, but the harmony which was evolved in social and economic life between the two communities remains unnoticed."

(The author is Ex-Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat)

India's watchwords in a not so bright 2022

BY M.K.
NARAYANAN



There are risks that could be both domestic and geopolitical and New Delhi must take care to read the signals properly.

DIPLOMATICALLY, IN 2022, INDIA MAY FIND ITSELF VULNERABLE IN DEALING WITH THE TURMOILS WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN TWO AREAS OF STRATEGIC INTEREST TO IT, VIZ. CENTRAL ASIA AND WEST ASIA. BOTH AREAS ARE UNDERGOING A CHURN - NOT ALL OF IT TO INDIA'S LIKING.

An intense debate is on among political strategists and commentators about what is in store in 2022. Most hew to the view that a rules based international order is a

remote possibility. Instead, uncertainty and impermanence are likely to be the dominant aspect in world affairs.

Risks in 2022 could be both domestic and geopolitical, with many precepts that the world has been accustomed to being at risk. Democracy itself could face serious headwinds this year.

A paramount issue as 2022 begins, is the future of democracy. Admittedly, the world has recently seen the rise of authoritarian rulers in many countries - though by itself this can hardly be viewed as a new phenomenon. What is worrisome is that democratic tenets which have been under attack in recent years appear set to face more onslaughts this year. Adding grist to concerns about democracy's future, is that the United States, which was widely viewed as a major bulwark for democracy, appears to have developed certain pathological infirmities. This situation does not augur well for the future of democracy worldwide.

China as disruptor

Equally daunting as we enter 2022 are the geopolitical challenges and risks. The role of China is possibly the most disrupting one, given the challenge it poses to the existing international order. With a GDP of \$15.66 trillion in 2020, its net worth today is estimated to be higher than that of the U.S.; and, hence, it demands to be recognized as much. Militarily, China is openly challenging U.S. supremacy in many areas, including 'state-of-the-art weaponry' such as hyper-sonic technology.

China has abandoned the 'one country two systems' policy, stripping Hong Kong of its freedom and inviting international opprobrium. It is now threatening Taiwan, which could well become one of the flash points of conflict in 2022. The West meanwhile does not realize what could happen if the stakes of 'cross-strait relations' between China and Taiwan get higher in 2022. It might well be that in order to 'save face' with regard to Taiwan (which China regards as its territory); China could provoke a serious conflict.

The dip in China's economic profile in the past year and more (which China hardly acknowledges) could also lead to new tensions in the Asia-Pacific region in 2022. To outsiders, the Chinese economy has entered a period of relative uncertainty and is looking more vulnerable. Under Chinese President Xi Jinping, however, China is unlikely to acknowledge that this would entail any reduction in its military capabilities, at least as far as the Asia-Pacific is concerned. Instead, it might well be tempted to demonstrate that it still has the ability to get the better of the U.S. in the Pacific region - where it holds more cards than the U.S. - and also demonstrate that it has the ability to ramp up its military capabilities, while the U.S. is reducing its forces in the Indo-Pacific region. Uncertainty per se, could constitute a serious risk.

Russia-Ukraine conflict

The other major risk of a war in 2022, stems from the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine - the latter being backed by the U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces. It is difficult to discern as to which side is indulging in provocation, but what is not contested is that during the past three decades, NATO has expanded its reach almost 1,000 miles to the east in violation of an earlier tacit understanding. Russian President Vladimir Putin appears determined that Ukraine should be the 'last frontier' and, if need be, ensure this through military force. The situation has grave possibilities and could result in a series of cyclical outcomes with considerable damage potential.

Apart from the grave risk of a possible war or conflict, what is also evident is that 'peace is not at hand' across vast regions of the globe in 2022. The current unrest in Kazakhstan, which till recently was one of the more stable Central Asian nations, is perhaps symptomatic of what is in store. Whether recent events in Kazakhstan reflect a new round of 'color revolutions' or not, it demonstrates a sharper cleavage between the U.S.-led West and its principal opponents, Russia and China. This bodes ill for a world already wracked by a series of coups or internecine strife as in Ethiopia, Libya and certain regions of West Asia and North Africa.

Return of the Taliban

Of particular significance to India is that the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan has led to a material shift in the balance of power in an already troubled region on India's periphery. Notwithstanding the general belief that the Taliban's return to power represents a significant victory for Pakistan, it has become evident, more lately, that this comes with a great deal of baggage - both for Pakistan and much of Asia. Developments in Afghanistan have fueled the ambitions of quite a few 'anti-state militant groups' across the region. Even in Pakistan, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has become energized and is enlarging its sphere of action to other parts of Asia, notably Kazakhstan. More important is that it is well known that the TTP is a by-product of al Qaeda jihadi politics and still has covert links with the al Qaeda. This will have an unsettling effect across large parts of Asia.

Adding to such concerns is new evidence that on India's eastern flank, viz. Indonesia, a resurgence of radical Islamist activities is taking place. The Jemaah Islamiyah has reportedly become more active in Indonesia. All this provides fertile ground for other radical Islamist terror groups to enlarge their activities across the Asian region, providing a fillip to groups like the Islamic State, especially the Islamic State of Khorasan.

Border issues for India

As 2022 dawns, India's problems are only likely to intensify. The most serious issue that India confronts today is how to deal with a China that has become more confrontational. The transgressions across the Line of Actual Control in different sectors in Ladakh - which were till now seen as merely an attempt by China to restrict and limit India's options - could well be expanded in 2022. India's membership of the four nation Quad (the U.S., Japan, Australia and India) still rankles as far as China's psyche is concerned, and during 2022, may well result in China embarking on new adventurist actions at many more points on the Sino-Indian border compelling India to react. Hence, 2022 is unlikely to see any reduction in tensions across Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh and the Middle Sector.

Additionally, India will need to determine how best to respond to China's saber-rattling. India will need to develop a strategy on how to counter the publicity given by China to its low-yield nuclear weapons meant for battlefield use even during conventional military operations and against conventional targets. India would need to strengthen its military posture, both as a means to deter China and also to convince India's neighbors that it can stand up to China. Simultaneously, India cannot avoid, in 2022, suitably positioning itself on how best to deter China's naval force projection in the Indian Ocean Region and the publicity it has given to the additions made of new type nuclear power ballistic missile submarines to their existing fleet. In the battle of wits and strength, much will depend on how India responds to the situation.

Diplomatically, in 2022, India may find itself vulnerable in dealing with the turmoils which have occurred in two areas of strategic interest to it, viz. Central Asia and West Asia. Both areas are undergoing a churn - not all of it to India's liking. In Central Asia, India will be challenged on how best to manage its traditional friendship with Russia with the pronounced tilt seen more recently in India-U.S. relations. In West Asia, the challenge for India is how to manage its membership of the Second Quad (India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the U.S.) with the conflicting interests of different players in the region. Membership of the Quad makes India a key player in a region which has become a quagmire of intense rivalries notwithstanding the 2020 Abraham Accords. Indian diplomacy will be under severe test to manage the extant situation in both regions.

Path to tread

It is easy to say that what India and India's foreign policy need to do is to demonstrate more flexibility to manage the contradictions that exist. However, this is hardly feasible in practical terms, in most instances. There is a limit to the kind of balancing act that India can perform, whether it be with regard to buying S-400 missile systems from Russia, risking potential sanctions from Washington under Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) or maneuvering between the Arab States, Israel, Iran and the U.S. in West Asia.

For India, the outlook is, hence, not particularly bright in 2022. No grand strategy is evident as of now but it is important that India finds rational answers to a rash of problems that it cannot keep on the back burner for much longer. What India must do is avoid blind spots that arise due to cognitive bias and take care to read the signals properly. Facing a host of unprecedented challenges, India's leaders and diplomats must not only take stock of the dangers that exist but also be ready on how to manage the risks that are well evident.

(The author is a former Director, Intelligence Bureau, a former National Security Adviser and a former Governor of West Bengal)

India's N-project going strong

CAPABLE OF MEETING CHALLENGES FACED BY NATIONAL SECURITY

BY G
PARTHASARATHY



"CHINA NOW POSSESSES 350 NUCLEAR WARHEADS, WHILE PAKISTAN HAS 165, AND INDIA 156, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST ASSESSMENT OF THE STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE INSTITUTE (SIPRI). APART FROM ITS LAND-BASED NUCLEAR MISSILES, INDIA LAUNCHED ITS THIRD NUCLEAR SUBMARINE BARELY A MONTH AGO. IT IS SAID TO HAVE A CAPABILITY TO LAUNCH EIGHT BALLISTIC MISSILES. THE TWO EARLIER SUBMARINES CAN REPORTEDLY LAUNCH FOUR MISSILES EACH. INDIA NOW HAS THE CAPABILITY OF 'CANISTERISING', OR STORING THE MISSILES IN A SEALED, CLIMATE CONTROLLED TUBE TO PROTECT THEM DURING TRANSPORTATION. THIS WOULD APPLY TO THE ENTIRE RANGE OF MISSILES, INCLUDING THE RECENTLY TESTED AGNI-P AND THE AGNI-V, WHICH HAS A RANGE OF 5,500 KM. MANY STUDIES ALLUDE TO AN IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE FRENCH-BUILT MIRAGE 2000 AND RAFALE, AS CARRIERS OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS."

An important feature of India's nuclear deterrent has been the calibrated secrecy surrounding its growth. This is essential, as India's nuclear weapons and missile programs have a large involvement of dedicated scientists and engineers from the DRDO, the Department of Atomic Energy,

academic institutions, and commercial organizations from the public and private sectors. India's nuclear weapons programme is under continuing worldwide scrutiny, including by specialist organizations like the Federation of American Scientists and similar organizations in the UK, France, Russia, and doubtless, China and Pakistan.

India has produced three nuclear-powered submarines, and could induct the fourth next year.

While Indian scientists have made discreet statements about our ballistic missile tests, one finds more details of our nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles in studies by American scientific publications like the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists and other organizations like the MacArthur Foundation. Such studies are carefully researched and counterchecked. These are not significantly different from what one periodically finds in writings in India.

According to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, India has enough weapons grade plutonium to produce 150 to 200 nuclear weapons, with a current estimated stockpile of 150 nuclear weapons. There is potential to step up production of fissile material significantly through the growing numbers of fast breeder and other plutonium reactors. According to the infamous Dr AQ Khan, Pakistan provided China with the centrifuge technology for enriched uranium, whose details he had purloined in Europe in the 1970s and 1980s. China, in turn, provided Pakistan the knowhow to utilize enriched uranium produced in Pakistan for nuclear weapons. The then US President Jimmy Carter looked the other way at these developments after he was swept off his feet by his 'friendship' with Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping.

China now possesses 350 nuclear warheads, while Pakistan has 165, and India 156, according to the latest assessment of the Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI). Apart from its land-based nuclear missiles, India launched its third nuclear submarine barely a month ago. It is said to have a capability to launch eight ballistic missiles. The two earlier submarines can reportedly launch four missiles each. India now has the capability of 'canisterising', or storing the missiles in a sealed, climate controlled tube to protect them during transportation. This would apply to the entire range of missiles, including the recently tested Agni-P and the Agni-V, which has a range of 5,500 km. Many studies allude to an important role of the French-built Mirage 2000 and Rafale, as carriers of India's nuclear weapons.

China has provided Pakistan with the designs for its nuclear weapons and a wide range of missiles. The missiles provided by China to Pakistan extend from the short range (320 km) Ghaznavi



Catching up: China has 350 nuclear warheads, Pakistan 165, and India 156. - Photo / PTI

missiles to Shaheen 2 (2,500 km) and Shaheen 3 (2,750 km). The Chinese nuclear weapons designs given to Pakistan were transferred by AQ Khan to Islamic countries with nuclear ambitions, like Libya and Iraq. While India now has produced three nuclear-powered submarines, there are reports that a fourth submarine could be inducted next year. There are also reports that India is developing the technology for multiple warheads on its missiles. A recent report by the Federation of American Scientists noted that India carried out the second test of its Agni-P missile. The first test of the missile was reportedly carried out in January 2020. This could lead to the missile being berthed in the growing fleet of India's nuclear submarines. This would be complemented by submarine-launched Agni-V missiles with multiple warheads.

China will inevitably continue to pretend it has no interest in having any nuclear dialogue with India. India is, in the meantime, also developing a K-4 submarine-launched missile, with a 3,500-km range. It is a naval version of Agni-3, an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM). The K-4 has undergone a number of tests but it has yet to be deployed. The missile was tested in January 2020. Though the DRDO did not confirm the test, media reports, quoting officials, claimed that the launch was successful. While Pakistan has not formally enunciated a nuclear doctrine, the long-time head of the Strategic Planning Division of its Nuclear Command Authority, Lt Gen Khalid Kidwai, told a team of physicists from Italy's Landau Network in 2002 that Pakistan's nuclear weapons were 'aimed

solely at India'. Kidwai added that Pakistan would use nuclear weapons if India conquers a large part of Pakistan's territory, or destroys a large part of Pakistan's land and air forces, or if India tries to 'economically strangle' Pakistan, or pushes it to political destabilization.

This elucidation, by the man who has been the de facto custodian of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal for over a decade and a POW in India in 1971-73, was a precise formulation of Pakistan's nuclear thresholds. It is now clear that a bankrupt Pakistan facing pressure from international finance organizations will have to think carefully before resorting to support for terrorists seeking to destabilize India. With the Taliban supporting Pashtun aspirations on issues like the Durand Line, India's readiness to provide essential economic assistance to Kabul should be taken forward. Defense Minister Rajnath Singh recently noted that while India presently stood by its commitment of 'no first use' of nuclear weapons, 'what happens in future depends on the circumstances'.

The nation needs to always remember the contribution of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, his team of engineers and scientists, and the distinguished scientists in the Department of Atomic Energy for developing the country's nuclear and missile potential to meet the challenges to national security, posed jointly by China and Pakistan. There is also need to remember those in the private sector, who discreetly played a key role in this effort.

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

Will Punjab Model be the Key Issue in Assembly Elections 2022?

BY PRABHJOT SINGH



IN THE LAST 55 YEARS, POLITICS IN PUNJAB HAS MAINLY REVOLVED AROUND POLITICS OF DOLES AND APPEASEMENTS THAT IN TURN WREAKED HAVOC WITH THE ECONOMY OF THE STATE BRINGING IT DOWN FROM THE TOP SPOT IN THE COUNTRY TO THE ALSO RAN CATEGORY.

"AFTER WITNESSING TWO PARTITIONS SINCE 1947, THE STATE IS WITHOUT ITS OWN CAPITAL, BESIDES IT HAS LOST CONTROL OVER THE PRESTIGIOUS HYDEL PROJECTS LIKE BHAKRA AND BEAS, ITS RIVERS WATERS ARE BEING DIVERTED IN UTTER VIOLATION OF THE CONVENTIONAL RIPARIAN LAWS AND SEVERAL OTHER PRESTIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS THE STATE EITHER ACQUIRED AS A PART OF PARTITION SETTLEMENT OR BUILT ON ITS OWN AFTER 1947 LIKE PANJAB UNIVERSITY, POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, PUNJAB ENGINEERING COLLEGE, ETC., ETC. ARE MANAGED BY THE UNION GOVERNMENT OR THE CENTRE."



Navjot Sidhu had been going around and promising Punjab with his 13-point Punjab model

For those, who are worried about the deteriorating fiscal health and social fabric of this border agrarian State, yes, "Punjab Model" should be a guiding factor for its electors in determining their future ruling political parties or leaders.

But then what is the "Punjab Model"?

Both the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee chief Navjot Singh Sidhu and the Aam Aadmi supremo Arvind Kejriwal are going around with their "Punjab Model" in soliciting support of the worried voters as the State is on the verge of both political and financial bankruptcy.

Their models may not be in line or consonance with what Punjab needs today. They are mostly talking about models broadly to appease some sections of voters without dealing with the issues that have scripted tormenting history of the State since the 1947 partition in general and the reorganization in 1966 in particular.

In the last 55 years, politics in Punjab has mainly revolved around politics of doles and appeasements that in turn wreaked havoc with the economy of the State bringing it down from the top spot in the country to the also ran category.

After witnessing two partitions since 1947, the State is without its own capital, besides it has lost control over the prestigious hydel projects like Bhakra and Beas, its rivers waters are being diverted in utter violation of the conventional Riparian laws and several other prestigious institutions the State either acquired as a part of partition settlement or built on its own after 1947 like Panjab University, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Punjab Engineering College, etc., etc. are managed by the Union



Kejriwal is promising justice in sacrilege cases, jobs to youths and corruption-free governance

government or the Centre.

In addition, there are other issues, like inclusion of Punjabi speaking areas, that prompted the State to demand "autonomy" through the Sri Anandpur Sahib resolution. Many elections have come and gone but these core issues or demands never made it to the top of the agenda or election manifesto of any political party. The coming elections are no different.

When and who is going to fight for these long-standing demands of Punjab?

Looking through the history of the State after Independence in general and reorganization in 1966 in particular, grabbing power has been the only agenda of the political parties or their leadership.

None other than Darshan Singh Pheruman of Akali Dal (Pheruman) made a sacrifice to press for acceptance of these demands. His sacrifice, however, went waste for lack of support from the mainstream parties.

Unfortunately, these issues still do not figure in any of the "Punjab Models" being projected by Congress or AAP leaders. Should voters presume that these issues stay consigned to the history books and would not be raised or fought for?

Let us talk about the Kejriwal or AAP's "Punjab Model" of governing the state after polls. Like Sidhu's model, it is primarily about the current issues facing the State. He is promising justice in sacrilege cases, jobs to youths and corruption-free governance. With his model, he asserts, will help hard working people of the State to bring his party to power to break the friendly "partnership" between the Badals and the Congress. He maintains that his Punjab model will have a 10-point agenda that will include free power to people up



Sukhbir Singh Badal has not yet come up with any model

to 300 units per billing cycle and controlling the drug menace. The AAP, while trying to lure women voters, also wants regular financial support for them saying each woman above the age of 18 would be given Rs 1000 each every month.

On the other hand, Navjot Sidhu had been going around and promising Punjab with his 13-point Punjab model. His mainstay is restructuring the economy of the State by pulling it out of debt trap. His concept of a healthy fiscal model is to use internal resources in not only generating new revenue channels but also solving the problem of unemployment. For Sidhu, liquor, sand and bajri (gravel) could serve as wonder commodities in filling the empty coffers of the State. He has been promising to set up state-owned liquor besides sand and bajri corporations for mobilizing revenue enough to make the State cut its annual borrowing and be on its way to great financial recovery. Sidhu feels convinced that from liquor alone, Punjab could generate about Rs 25,000 crore of revenue.

His model also includes setting up a regulatory commission to control the cable sector.

Other major contestants, including the Shiromani Akali Dal-Bahujan Samaj Party alliance, Bharatiya Janata Party-Punjab Lok Congress-Sanyukta Shiromani Akali Dal alliance, and the Samyukt Samaj Morcha have so far refrained from making public their "Punjab Models".

Even if all the contestants - political parties or alliances - make public their models, what legal sanctity these pronouncements will have in the post-election scenario remains a million-rupee question.

(The author, a former editor of The Tribune, is a senior journalist. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)

Major airlines cancel, change flights to United States over 5G dispute

5G SERVICE USES A SEGMENT OF THE RADIO SPECTRUM THAT IS CLOSE TO THAT USED BY RADIO ALTIMETERS, WHICH ARE DEVICES THAT MEASURE THE HEIGHT OF AIRCRAFT ABOVE THE GROUND AND HELP PILOTS LAND IN LOW VISIBILITY

DUBAI/ NEW YORK (TIP): Major international airlines cancelled flights heading to the US or changed the planes they're using Wednesday, the latest complication in a dispute over concerns that 5G mobile phone service could interfere with aircraft technology.

Some airlines said they were warned that the Boeing 777, a plane used by carriers worldwide, was particularly affected by the new high-speed wireless service. The aircraft is the workhorse for Dubai-based Emirates, a key carrier for East-West travel, and its flight schedule took one of the biggest hits.

It was not clear how disruptive the cancellations would be. Several airlines said they would try to merely use different planes to maintain their service.

The cancellations and changes came a day after mobile phone carriers AT&T and Verizon said they would postpone new wireless service near some US airports planned for this week.

The US Federal Aviation Administration has cleared a number of aircraft to fly into airports with 5G signals, but the Boeing 777 is not on the list.

Similar mobile networks have been deployed in dozens of other countries - sometimes with concessions like reducing the power of the networks near airports, as France has done.

But in the US, the issue has pitted the FAA and the airlines against the Federal Communications Commission and the telecoms companies.

The 5G service uses a segment of the radio spectrum that is close to that used by radio altimeters, which are devices that measure the height of aircraft above the ground and help pilots land in low visibility.

The FCC, which set a buffer between the 5G band and the spectrum that planes use, determined that it could be used safely in the vicinity of air traffic. AT&T and Verizon have said their equipment will not interfere with aircraft electronics.

But FAA officials saw a potential problem, and the telecom companies agreed to a pause while it is addressed.

On Wednesday, Emirates announced it would halt flights to several American cities due to "operational concerns associated with the planned deployment of 5G mobile network services in the US at certain airports." It said it would continue flights to Los Angeles, New York and Washington.



Photo for representation. Reuters

"We are working closely with aircraft manufacturers and the relevant authorities to alleviate operational concerns, and we hope to resume our US services as soon as possible," the state-owned airline said.

Of particular concern appears to be the Boeing 777. Emirates only flies that model and the Airbus A380 jumbo jet.

Japan's All Nippon Airways said that the FAA "has indicated that radio waves from the 5G wireless service may interfere with aircraft altimeters."

"Boeing has announced flight restrictions on all airlines operating the Boeing 777 aircraft, and we have cancelled or changed the aircraft for some flights to/from the US based on the announcement by Boeing," ANA said.

It cancelled 20 flights over the issue to cities such as Chicago, Los Angeles and New York.

Japan Airlines similarly said that it had been informed that 5G signals "may interfere with the radio altimeter installed on the Boeing 777".

It said it will stop using the model in the continental US for now. Eight of its flights were affected Wednesday - three passenger trips and five for cargo. Taiwan's EVA Air also said the FAA specifically said 777s may be affected, but it did not spell out how it would adjust its schedule.

But Air France said it planned to continue flying its Boeing 777s into American airports. It did not explain why it didn't change its aircraft as many other carriers

have.

Chicago-based Boeing Co. did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Air India also announced on Twitter it would cancel flights to Chicago, Newark, New York and San Francisco because of the 5G issue.

But it also said it would try to use other aircraft on US routes - a course several other airlines took.

Korean Air, Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific and Austrian Airlines said they substituted different planes for flights that were scheduled to use 777s.

Korean Air spokeswoman Jill Chung said the airline was also avoiding operating some kinds of 747s at affected airports.

Germany's Lufthansa also swapped out one kind of 747 for another on some US-bound flights.

British Airways cancelled several planned US-bound Boeing 777 flights and changed aircraft on others.

The FAA has said it will allow planes with accurate, reliable altimeters to operate around high-power 5G. But planes with older altimeters will not be allowed to make landings under low-visibility conditions.

Part of the problem, according to the FAA, are the signal strength of the 5G towers and the orientation of their antennae.

"Base stations in rural areas of the United States are permitted to emit at higher levels in comparison to other countries which may affect radio altimeter equipment accuracy and reliability," the FAA said in December.

The FCC's chairwoman said in a statement that the 5G "deployment can safely co-exist with aviation technologies in the United States, just as it does in other countries around the world." However, Jessica Rosenworcel urged the FAA to conduct its safety checks with "both care and speed." AT&T and Verizon spent tens of billions of dollars for the 5G spectrum known as C-Band in a government auction last year.

Choi Jong-yun, a spokeswoman of Asiana Airlines, said the company hasn't been affected so far because it uses Airbus planes for passenger flights to the US. However, Choi raised a new wrinkle, saying airlines have also been instructed by the FAA to avoid automatic landings at affected US airports during bad weather conditions, regardless of plane type. Asiana will redirect its planes to nearby airports during those conditions, she said. (Agencies)



Sunil Shah is elected Chairman

Federation of Indian Associations Chicago elects Sunil Shah as Chairman



CHICAGO, IL (TIP): FIA Founder President Sunil Shah has been conferred the title of the Chairman of the FIA Board in recognition of his services to the organization.

The meeting was a significant one, not just because it was the first meeting under the leadership of President Hitesh Gandhi, but it also marked a new beginning for the entire Team FIA, as it passed a long pending motion, and unanimously appointed Sunil Shah as FIA Chairman.

(Based on a Press release by FIA)

FIA Team
Photographs / courtesy Asian Media USA

Supreme Court allows January 6 committee to get Trump documents

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The Supreme Court has allowed the release of presidential documents sought by the congressional committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection.

The justices on Wednesday, January 19 rejected a bid by Trump to withhold the documents from the committee until the issue is finally resolved by the courts. Trump's lawyers had hoped to prolong the court fight and keep the documents on hold.

Following the high court's action, there is no legal impediment to turning over the documents, which are held by the National Archives and Records Administration. They include presidential diaries, visitor logs, speech drafts and handwritten notes dealing with Jan. 6 from the files of former chief of staff Mark Meadows.

The committee already has begun to receive records Trump wanted kept secret, said Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., and Rep. Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., the committee chairman and vice

chairwoman, respectively.

"The Supreme Court's action tonight is a victory for the rule of law and American democracy," Thompson and Cheney said in a statement pledging to "uncover all the facts about the violence of January 6th and its causes." White House spokesman Mike Gwin called the ruling "an important step forward" for the investigation, "and in ensuring accountability for an unprecedented assault on our democracy and the rule of law." The House committee agreed to defer its attempt to get some documents, at the request of the Biden White House. The current administration was concerned that releasing all of the Trump administration documents sought by the committee could compromise national security and executive privilege.

Alone among the justices, Clarence Thomas said he would have granted Trump's request to keep the documents on hold.

Trump's attorneys had asked the high court to reverse rulings by the federal

appeals court in Washington and block the release of the records even after President Joe Biden waived executive privilege over them.

In an unsigned opinion, the court acknowledged there are "serious and substantial concerns" over whether a former president can win a court order to prevent disclosure of certain records from his time in office in a situation like this one.

But the court noted that the appeals court determined that Trump's assertion of privilege over the documents would fail under any circumstances, "even if he were the incumbent." It said the issue of a former president's ability to claim executive privilege would have to wait for another day.

The court took issue with the conclusion of the appeals court that downplayed a former president's interests, suggesting that the current president could in essence ignore his predecessor's claims.

Justice Brett Kavanaugh, who worked



Donald Trump - File photo

in the White House under President George W. Bush, wrote separately to argue that "a former President must be able to successfully invoke the Presidential communications privilege for communications that occurred during his Presidency, even if the current President does not support the privilege claim." But Kavanaugh, a Trump appointee, did not object to the outcome Wednesday, and neither did the other two justices Trump selected, Neil Gorsuch and Amy Coney Barrett. (Agencies)

SENATE COMMITTEE CONFIRMS GARCETTI NOMINATION AS US AMBASSADOR TO INDIA



Garcetti's nomination has been confirmed by the Senate Committee - File photo

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, who played a key role in the city landing the hosting rights for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, has moved a step closer to being appointed the United States Ambassador to India. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee this week confirmed the nomination of Garcetti to the role. It now needs to be approved by a majority of the US Senate, which is expected to be a formality.

Garcetti had been widely tipped to be appointed as the US Ambassador to India before President Joe Biden announced the nomination on July 9.

The 50-year-old had considered standing for President last year but decided against putting his name forward and instead threw his support behind Biden, becoming part of his inner circle. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Expert CEO Forum at 15th AAPI Global Healthcare Summit 2022 Urges Modi Govt. to Appoint an Indian Preventive Task Force (IPTF)



HYDERABAD / NEW YORK (TIP): The Healthcare industry in India and worldwide is rapidly changing, leading to many describing the healthcare environment as dynamic, complex, and highly uncertain. How the health care environment is perceived and characterized is vital for several reasons. In this context, continuing with the traditions on the successful experiences of the past Global Health Summits, the largest ethnic medical organization in the United States, The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) organized the next edition of the influential Healthcare CEOs Forum on January 7th in Hyderabad during the 15th annual Global Healthcare Summit 2022.

During the much anticipated CEOs Forum, a panel of healthcare experts, health industry leaders, opinion makers, and community organizers discussed the significance of promoting Preventive healthcare in India.

The CEO Forum Unanimously approved "An Appeal by AAPI to the Government of India to initiate efforts for creating an Indian Preventive Task Force (IPTF) and conduct annual preventive healthcare screenings nationwide," benefitting the 1.4 billion people in India.

"We are excited to welcome you to the 15th Global Healthcare Summit and this elite panel of experts and physicians and healthcare industry leaders from India and the United States, offering an excellent platform to brainstorm and explore ways to focus on the theme, "Transformation of Healthcare through Telehealth and Technology usage during this post-Covid Era," and to have an opportunity to recommend possible ways to plan and implement preventive medicine that will save resources and precious human lives," said Dr. Anupama Gotimukula, President of AAPI. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

CDC MOVES 22 NEW DESTINATIONS INTO ITS HIGHEST-RISK LEVEL FOR TRAVEL



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention moved a whopping 22 nations into its highest-risk travel category for Covid-19 on Tuesday, January 18. By contrast, it moved only two nations to Level 4, or "very high" risk, last week, according to a CNN report.

Adding to the impact: The CDC also moved 22 additional nations to its Level 3 category, which is considered "high" risk for Covid-19.

Among the nations moved to Level 4 this week were Argentina and Australia, which have maintained some of the strictest borders controls during most of the pandemic.

The CDC places a destination at Level 4 when more than 500 cases per 100,000 residents are registered in the past 28 days. The CDC advises travelers to avoid travel to Level 4 countries.

Egypt, where the Giza Pyramids are a huge tourist draw, moved into the CDC's highest-risk category for travel on Tuesday.

The 22 new destinations, with at least one entry from every continent but Antarctica, at Level 4 are:

- o Albania
- o Argentina
- o Australia
- o Bahamas
- o Bahrain
- o Bermuda
- o Bolivia
- o British Virgin Islands
- o Cape Verde
- o Egypt
- o Grenada
- o Guyana
- o Israel
- o Panama
- o Qatar
- o Saint Kitts and Nevis
- o Saint Lucia
- o São Tomé and Príncipe
- o Sint Maarten
- o Suriname
- o Turks and Caicos Islands
- o Uruguay



India successfully tests new BrahMos version with higher indigenous content

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India on Thursday, Jan 20, successfully tested a variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile with higher indigenous content and improved performance from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur off the Odisha coast, the defence ministry said.

"The flight test is a major milestone for BrahMos programme. The highly manoeuvrable missile cruised at supersonic speed for its maximum range and all mission objectives were met," a statement from the ministry said. The launch was conducted by BrahMos Aerospace and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

The BrahMos missile, an Indo-Russian joint venture, has a range of 290 km and is the fastest cruise missile in the world with a top speed of Mach 2.8 (nearly three times the speed of sound).

"The missile (tested on Thursday) was equipped with advanced indigenous technologies and followed a modified optimal trajectory for enhanced efficiency and improved performance. The missile with the modified control system has been fine tuned to achieve an enhanced capability," the statement added.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh complimented the BrahMos, DRDO teams and industry for the successful flight test.

BrahMos was in the news last week after the Philippines confirmed it will acquire three batteries of the missile in a deal worth almost \$375 million, a development expected to boost India's efforts to become a major exporter of defence hardware.

BrahMos variants can be launched from land, air, sea and under water.

In 2020, the country upgraded its capabilities to keep a watch on the strategically-important Indian Ocean Region and deliver an offensive option swiftly, if necessary, with the air force basing its front-line Sukhoi-30 fighters in southern India for the first time.

The Su-30 fighter jets, based at Thanjavur air force station in Tamil Nadu, are equipped with the air-launched version of the BrahMos missile.

'Reservation not at odds with merit': Supreme Court upholds 27% OBC quota in NEET

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Supreme Court on Thursday, Jan 20, said that reservation for backward classes is not at odds with merit but furthers its distributive impact while upholding the 27 per cent quota for Other Backward Classes (OBC) in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) undergraduate and postgraduate medical admissions (all-India quota).

On January 7, a bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and A S Bopanna in a brief order upheld the constitutional validity of the OBC reservation and approved for the current admission cycle, the Rs 8 lakh annual income limit set for identifying those eligible for the quota for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS). The court had then said that it would soon come out with a detailed order giving reasons for its decision.

In the detailed order pronounced Thursday, the bench said that competitive exams do not reflect the economic social advantage accrued to some classes over a period of time and that merit should be socially contextualised.

"Articles 15(4) and 15(5) are facets of substantive equality. Competitive exams do not reflect (the) economic social advantage which is accrued to some classes. Merit should be socially contextualised. Reservation is not at odds with merit but furthers its distributive impact," the court said.

Upholding the Centre's decision to



allow the quota, the court said that the government was not required to seek its permission before granting reservation in the all-India quota seats and its decision was therefore correct.

Pointing out that any intervention by the court would have further delayed the admission process for the current year, the bench said that judicial propriety would not permit it to stay the quota when the counselling is pending, especially when constitutional interpretation is involved.

The court underlined the dire need to have more doctors working in hospitals given the Covid-19 pandemic situation and said that any change in the eligibility qualification would have delayed the admission process and led to cross litigation.

The court will hear the question of the EWS reservation in detail in the third week of March.

Petitioners in the matter had challenged the July 29, 2021 notification

of the Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) providing 27 per cent reservation for OBCs and 10 per cent quota to the EWS category in the NEET UG and PG (all-India quota) admissions.

Hearing the petitions, the Supreme Court had asked the Centre to explain what exercise it had undertaken to arrive at Rs 8 lakh criteria.

Responding to this, the Centre told the court on November 25, 2021, that it would revisit the criteria and sought four weeks to complete the exercise.

Subsequently, the Centre appointed a three-member committee comprising former finance secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey, member secretary ICSSR V K Malhotra and principal economic advisor to the Indian government Sanjeev Sanyal.

The committee submitted its report on December 31 recommending that the Rs 8 lakh limit which has continued since 2019 be retained, but suggested some changes to how to apply the same.

It also favoured continuing with the existing system as the admission process was already on and that if disturbed at the end or fag-end of the process, it would create more complications than expected both for the beneficiaries as well as for the authorities.

The petitioners opposed the recommendation saying the report was an admission that the government had not conducted any study before fixing the Rs 8 lakh limit for the EWS in 2019.

Amend IPC, CrPC to deal with hate speech: Home panel chairman to Shah

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Amid an increase in incidents of hate speech, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, Anand Sharma, has written to Home Minister Amit Shah and urged the government to consider "legislative action", including amendments to the IPC and CrPC, to deal with all manifestations of hate speech.

Pointing out that there is a "growing and disturbing trend" of hate speech targeting certain sections, Sharma said, "Actions of certain organisations and individuals in different parts of the country aimed at minorities and women, are a matter of serious concern."

Seeking the Home Minister's intervention, Sharma wrote that "it is requested that Home Secretary be advised to sensitize the Chief Secretaries and DGPs of the states to take prompt and firm action to enforce the law and secure order".

He wrote, "...the Government may consider legislative action, including amendments in the Indian Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure to effectively counter all manifestations of hate speech in the larger national interest."

It is learnt that the Standing Committee on

Home has also written to the Home Ministry seeking a report on incidents of hate speech.

Sharma's letter comes against the backdrop of a political row over hate speeches delivered at an event in Haridwar organised by Yati Narsinghanand, and another in Delhi by 'Hindu Yuva Vahini'.

Sharma stated that "recent incidents and orchestrated acts of violence" are making headlines in both national and global media. "They also tarnish the image of our great country, which is the world's largest democracy. Free speech, though quintessence of democracy and enshrined in the Constitution, cannot be allowed to be misused to advocate, incite, promote or justify hatred and violence against a person or community. It is an imperative that the spirit of the Constitution is reaffirmed and protected," he wrote.

Hate speech, he stated, is being used as a tool to promote enmity and disharmony between different groups on grounds of religion, caste and ethnicity. "In my opinion, if left unchecked, this will severely undermine the rule of law and threaten the fundamental right of life, liberty and dignity of our citizens. India's rich diversity is the strength of our mature democracy. This must be nurtured and preserved," he said.

Probe agency arrests man with Chinese links in Rs 84 cr fraud case

The ED on Thursday said it arrested an Indian man with "Chinese links" who is alleged to have cheated depositors to the tune of ? 84 crore through "fraud" mobile applications. Anas Ahmed was lodged in judicial custody at the Puzhal central prison, Chennai, after he was arrested by the crime branch CID of the Chennai Police sometime back, it said. The ED was granted six days custody of Ahmed by a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Bengaluru on Thursday for "enquiring into the fraud committed", the federal probe agency said in a statement. It said an anti-money laundering probe was launched into the "operations of accused entities that induced the public to invest a certain amount through fraudulent mobile apps."

First convict in Delhi riots gets 5 years in jail for putting house on fire

NEW DELHI (TIP)

A Delhi court on Thursday sentenced Dinesh Yadav, the first person convicted in connection with the February 2020 riots, to five years in jail.

Last month, Additional Sessions Judge Virender Bhat had convicted him of being part of a riotous mob that set a house on fire.

This is the first sentencing in the riots cases.

Yadav had also been directed to pay a fine of Rs 12,000, said advocate Shikha Garg, who had represented him during the trial. A detailed order on sentencing is awaited.

As per the prosecution, Yadav was an "active member of the riotous mob" and participated in vandalising and putting on fire the house of a 73-year-old woman named Manori on February 25 night.

Covid 3rd wave reaches South: Kerala logs 46,387 cases; Karnataka over 47K

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The third wave of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, which is believed to have crossed its peak in Delhi and Mumbai, has hit hard Karnataka and Kerala as both the southern states reported a record surge in the last 24 hours. India on Thursday reported over 3 lakh cases, the highest in the ongoing third wave of the pandemic. The impact of the Omicron-driven third wave was felt first in Delhi and Mumbai, but now the wave has shifted the south with Kerala reporting 46,387 fresh cases on Thursday which is the highest-ever single-day spike.

Given the fact that Kerala was one of the worst-affected states in the pandemic, the tally of the last 24 hours is significant. During the second wave, Kerala reported 43,529 Covid cases in a day, the highest before Thursday. The rate of hospitalisation remains low.

Kerala health minister Veena George said on Wednesday that the state has already started witnessing the third wave of the pandemic. The minister said both Delta and Omicron are contributing



to the surge in the state. If the range of spread was 2.68 per cent during the second wave, it was 3.12 per cent these days and the next three weeks would be crucial for the state, the minister said.

Karnataka too witnessed a massive spike on Thursday recording 47,754 fresh cases. Out of these cases, 30,540 are from Bengaluru, the state bulletin said.

The third wave of the pandemic has been different from the first and the second waves in India. Experts said previous waves moved from west to east,

but this wave moved from metro cities to other districts. The peaks of the wave have been projected to come around different dates between the 2nd and the 4th week of January.

Last week, Kerala health ministry warned that the peak of the third wave will come in another week as the Omicron spread started a little late in the state.

At 3.18 lakh, daily rise in Covid cases in India highest in 8 months

India logged 3,17,532 new coronavirus infections, the highest in 249 days, taking the total tally of Covid cases to 3,82,18,773, which includes 9,287 cases of the omicron variant, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday.

The active cases rose to 19,24,051, the highest in 234 days, while the death toll climbed to 4,87,693 with 491 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

There has been a 3.63 per cent increase in omicron cases since Wednesday, the ministry said.

5G rollout: Boeing clears Air India for flights to US



NEW DELHI (TIP)

Amid 5G rollout by the US, Air India has resumed B777 operations to the country on Thursday, Jan 20, after approval from the US authority, said Airline officials.

Due to the 5G rollout, Air India had earlier cancelled more than eight flights to the USA.

"Boeing has cleared Air India to operate in the USA on B777. Accordingly, the first flight has left this morning to John F Kennedy. Other flights leaving in the day are to Chicago and San Francisco. Arrangements to carry stranded passengers are being worked out. Matter regarding B777 flying into the USA has been sorted," said Air India.

Earlier on Wednesday, after the rollout of 5G wireless networks in the United States, India has cancelled eight Air India flights to and from the US.

"Due to deployment of the 5G communications in the USA, we will not be able to operate the following flights of January 19, 2022," Air India said.

Recently, the Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP), with a strength of 6,000 pilots, has

expressed concern over possible interference of 5G wireless signals with sensitive aircraft equipment such as radio altitude meters, threatening aviation safety.

"It is important to fully understand and reduce potential 5G signal interference with radio altimeters that are integral to aircraft security systems. We understand that the activation of these services is a part of India's select Coming soon in cities," reads the January 4 FIP letter.

Further FIP mentioned in the letter that if 5G deploys pilots may face safety issues while operating flights.

"5G signals could interfere with the Radio Altimeters that airliners, bizjets and general aviation aircraft rely on low altitude flight that it issued a Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) on the 'Risk of Potential Adverse Effects on Radio Altimeters' of 5G deployment. In response, the largest network carriers in the US, including Verizon and AT&T agreed to temporarily pause the advent of 5G service to allow the FAA more time to address concerns about interference," the FIP letter reads.

PM Modi to host India-Central Asia Summit on January 27

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India has announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will host the first India-Central Asia summit in a virtual format on January 27 as part of the country's engagement with the extended neighbourhood.

The development follows the government's decision to go ahead with Republic Day celebrations on January 26 without any foreign leader as chief guest because of a surge in Covid-19 infections. Earlier, the Indian side had invited the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to be chief guests, though no formal announcement was made by any of the countries.

The external affairs ministry said the presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan will participate in the virtual summit, described as the "first engagement of its kind between India and the Central Asian countries at the level of leaders."

The summit reflects New Delhi's growing engagement with the Central Asian states, part of India's "extended neighbourhood", and is symbolic of the importance attached by leaders of India and Central Asia to a comprehensive and enduring partnership, the ministry said.

At the summit, the leaders are expected to discuss steps to take India-Central Asia relations to newer heights, and exchange views on regional and international issues, "especially the evolving regional security situation," the ministry added.

Modi had visited all the Central Asian states in 2015, and there have been exchanges at high levels at bilateral and multilateral forums. The India-Central Asia Dialogue at the level of foreign ministers, the third meeting of which was held in New Delhi in December, has given impetus to relations between the two sides.

"The participation of the secretaries of National Security Councils of Central Asian countries in the Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan held in New Delhi on 10 November 2021 outlined a common regional approach on Afghanistan," the external affairs ministry said.



India in history this Week

JANUARY 21, 2022, TO JANUARY 27, 2022

21 JANUARY

2008 India successfully launched an spy satellite of Israel and installed it in Polar Orbit.
1958 Copyright Act enacted.



1945 Renowned lawyer and freedom fighter Ras Bihari Bose died.

22 JANUARY

1965 Steel factory started in Durgapur, West Bengal.
1966 Mughal emperor Shah Jahan died.



1963 The National Library for the Blind was established in 1963 in Dehradun.

23 JANUARY

1897 India's freedom fighter Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose was born in Cuttack, Odisha.
1926 Bal Thackeray, Indian politician and founder of Shiv Sena was born.



1966 Indira Gandhi became the third Prime Minister of India.

1977 Janata Party was formed.
2009 The ban on smoking scenes in film and television programs is over.

24 JANUARY

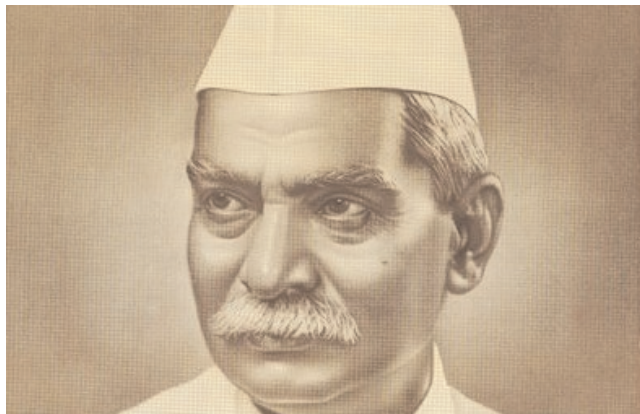
1950 On this day, the Constituent Assembly elected

the first President of the country. Apart from this, the National Anthem was adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 24 January 1950.

1966 Air India's Boeing 707 crashes near the summit of Monblan in the hills of the Alps. 117 people died in it.

1950 Jana Gana Mana was accepted as the national anthem.

1857 University of Calcutta was established.



1950 Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the first President of independent India.

1950 Jana-gana-mana got the status of national anthem of India in 1950.

1951 Prem Mathur became India's first female commercial pilot in 1951.

1952 The first International Film Festival was held in Bombay in 1952.

2002 The Indian satellite INSAT-3C successfully orbited in 2002.

25 JANUARY

1971 Himachal Pradesh came into existence as a state.

1980 The Indian Brahmo Samaj was started in 1880 by the famous social reformer Keshav Chandra Sen.

1980 After a gap of three years, in 1980, Padma Vibhushan, Bharat Ratna, etc. civil honors started being awarded again.

1980 The famous philanthropist Mother Teresa was awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1980.



2002 In 2002, Arjun Singh became the first Air Marshal of the Indian Air Force.

2009 The Central Government announced the Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri awards in 2009.

26 JANUARY

1956 In the year 1956, Humayun, son of Mughal emperor Babur, died.

1930 Swaraj Day was celebrated for the first time in India under British rule.

1931 Mahatma Gandhi was released for talks with the British government during the 'Civil Disobedience Movement'.

1949 The Constitution of India was made to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of Constituent Assembly. The Constitution of India was prepared on this day.

1950 India is declared a sovereign democratic

republic and the Constitution of India comes into force.

1950 Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, the first and last Governor General of independent India, resigned from his post and Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the first President of the country.

1950 Ashoka Pillar was adopted as the national emblem.

1963 The Government of India declared it a national bird on 26 January due to the peacock's amazing beauty.

1972 The National Memorial Amar Jawan Jyoti was established at India Gate in Delhi.

1981 Keeping in mind the ease of air traffic in Northeast India, Air service Vayudoot started.



1955 The first parade of Republic Day took place on 1955 at Rajpath in Delhi.



1930 The Indian Constitution was implemented on 26 January keeping in mind the full Swaraj Day (26 January 1930).

27 JANUARY

2008 Bird flu spread in 13 districts of West Bengal.

1974 President VV Giri dedicated the Nehru Memorial Museum at Teen Murti in New Delhi to the nation.

1988 The helicopter postal service was inaugurated for the first time.



1922 Famous Indian actor Bharat Bhushan passed away.

2009 The eighth President of India, Shri. R. Venkataraman died.

February 4, 1938 -- January 17, 2022

Birju Maharaj: An artist of rare caliber

Throughout his career, legendary dancer Birju Maharaj, who passed away in New Delhi on January 17, mesmerized people with speed, grace, skill, fluidity and technique of his steps.

Born in Lucknow on February 4, 1938, he was the son of prominent Kathak master Jagannath Maharaj and became a leading exponent of the Lucknow Kalka Bindadin gharana.

The young Birju was destined to follow in his father's footsteps who trained him in his early years after recognizing the boy's potential.

However, his father died when the boy was just nine years old. He was then trained by his uncles, the legendary dance masters Shambhu Maharaj and Lacchu Maharaj. At age 13 he became a dance master at the Sangeet Bharati in New Delhi.

He eventually became the Head of Faculty and director at the Kathak Kendra (a unit of Sangeet Natak Akademi) from where he retired in 1998. He then opened his own dance school, Kalashram.

At the school he used the traditional parameters to choreograph new presentations to convey to the audience that even classical style can be very appealing, interesting and dignified.

Well versed in Hindustani Classical, he was also a trained singer in Thumri and Dadra. In addition, he knew how to play the tabla, naal and violin.

A master of his craft, each step he took to the sound of a musical note and varying rhythms was nothing short of precise and complex mathematical calculations.

Known for his precision, grace, perfect rhythm/taal and expressive abhinayas, Birju Maharaj had the rare ability to create a whirlwind of emotions through his footwork and movements whether it be raw of simplicity of the human desire or the sheer complexity of the expression that is human society.

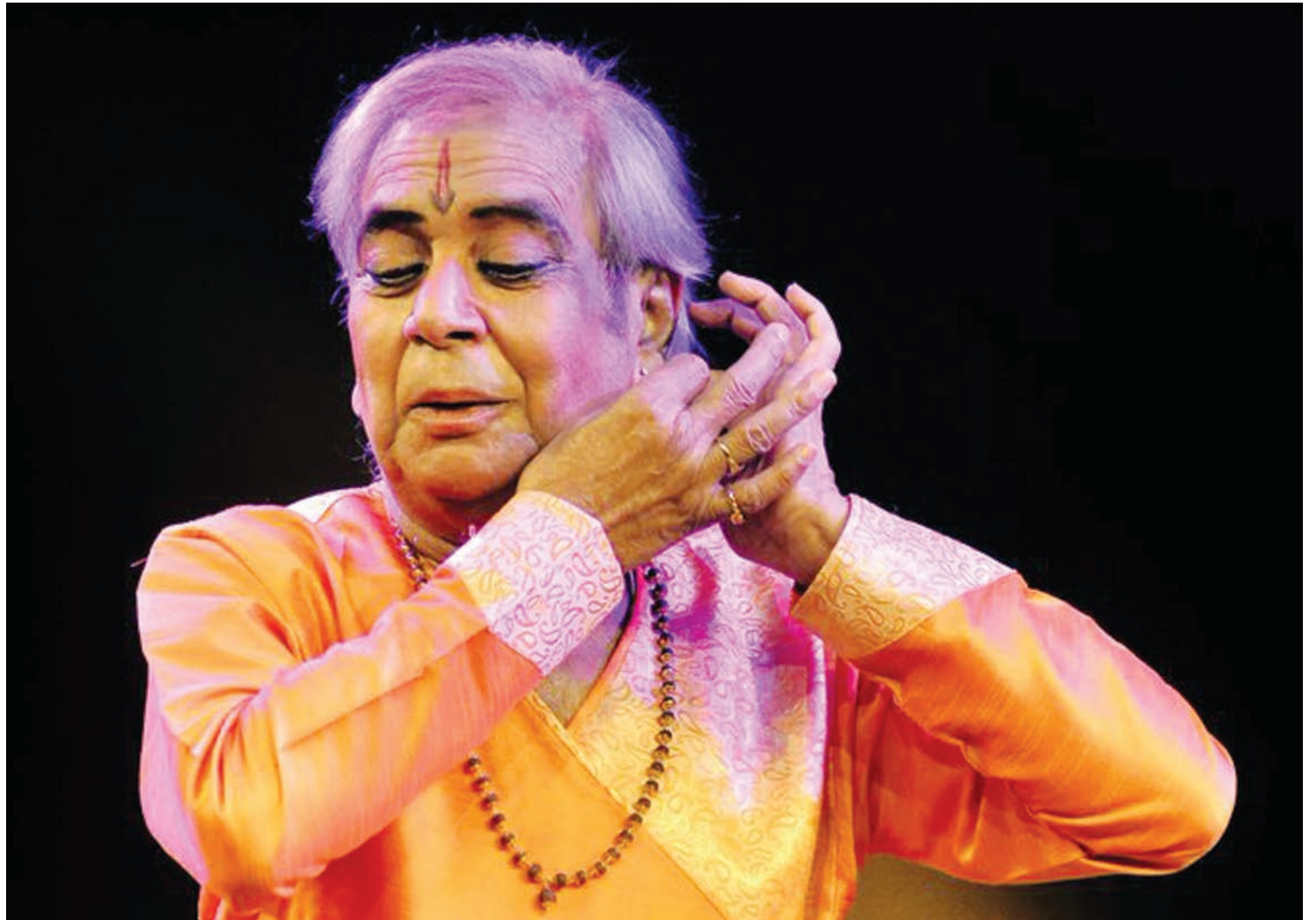
His style was a blend of elements from different schools, inheriting the stylized fluidity from his uncles, and the precision of footwork and play of face from his father.

He made his first foray into the world of cinema with Satyajit Ray's 1977 film "Shatranj Ke Khilari" where he was asked to choreograph the dances in the court of Wajid Ali Shah, the last nawab of Awadh who was a lover of arts.

Ray did not want any 'filmi kathak' rather 'pure kathak' was his ask from Birju Maharaj, who fulfilled his demand by being as meticulous as he could looking up to the body movements, eye glances, angles, expressions, footwork, twirls and head turns in order to capture the real life essence of the raw classical kathak so as to instill a sense of serenity in the nawab.

The dance was done by Saswati Sen, one of his long time associates who was also one of his senior most disciples.

He also choreographed other dances pieces in Bollywood such as the song 'Kahe Chhede Mohe...' from Sanjay Leela Bhansali's film 'Devdas'. In this song, Madhuri Dixit danced wearing a heavy lehenga. Birju Maharaj believed that Madhuri is also a great dancer like Meena Kumari and Waheeda Rehman.



He choreographed the song 'Mohe Rang Do Lal' for another of Bhansali's blockbusters "Bajirao Mastani" featuring Deepika Padukone. He taught Kathak to Deepika.

One of his most celebrated choreographed performances was of the Roopmati-Baz Bahadur love affair of 16th century which he performed in both India and abroad. With only a few dancers, he orchestrated movement and pace and filled the stage creating a powerful and enthralling presence.

Birju Maharaj won several awards. He was honored with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1964, Padma Vibhushan in 1986, the Kalidas Samman in 1987, Soviet Land Nehru Award, the Lata Mangeshkar Puraskar in 2002, Honorary Doctorate from Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya and from Banaras Hindu University.

He won the 2012 National Film Award for Best Choreography for Unnai Kaanaathu (Vishwaroopam) and the 2016 Filmfare Award for Best Choreography for "Mohe Rang Do Laal" (Bajirao Mastani).

Tributes pour in

Tributes poured in from across the country on the dance veteran's demise.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi called Birju Maharaj's death an "irreparable loss to the entire art world" and expressed his condolences to his family and fans.

President Ram Nath Kovind said the dancer's death leaves "a deep void in the Indian music and cultural space". In a tweet, Kovind said that Birju Maharaj was an icon who made "unparalleled



contribution to popularize Kathak globally".

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu said he was "deeply saddened" by the death of the Kathak dancer. "The world renowned Kathak exponent with his unique style was an institution and an inspiration across the globe," Naidu tweeted. "His death is a huge loss to the world of performing arts."

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi offered his condolences to the dancer's family and friends. "His contribution to the field of Indian classical dance is unparalleled and he will be remembered for it," Gandhi tweeted.

Actor Hema Malini tweeted: "The nation mourns the passing of a true legend, Shri Birju Maharaj, Kathak exponent par excellence. His ghungroos were on his ankles till he breathed his last. I always admired and respected him as a giant of the medium of Kathak & will miss his presence on the firmament of dance."

Sarod player Amjad Ali Khan said Birju Maharaj's death was a personal loss to him. "He was loved immensely by my family and his memories live in our hearts forever," Khan tweeted. "The heavens will dance for him today and everyday."

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, an icon of patriotism

Considered one of the most revered freedom fighters of India, Netaji's birth anniversary falls on January 23



Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's life is a story of struggle. It is the story of a young dreamer that tells the saga of consciousness, struggle and success in every eye; one who has the power to rip the ground with his arms; one who talks about making a hole in the sky; one who is anxious to achieve his goals; one who does not accept anything for free; and if he wants freedom, he is ready to spill his blood. Thousands of people sacrificed their lives on Netaji's call. He created an army against the British in no time.

Netaji was born in Cuttack in Odisha in 1897, graduated from Kolkata, and proved his mettle by becoming an Indian Civil Services (ICS) officer. But he was not accustomed to a life of comfort and amenities that came with his job. He was a warrior, who had to wage the freedom struggle. Not only did he embrace the freedom movement wholeheartedly, but also became an inspiration for freedom. With the slogan "Give me blood and I will give you freedom", he started preparing to awaken the country. Such was the charisma of his philosophy and personality that whoever listened to him was attracted to him. His popularity skyrocketed and he became "Netaji" to the general public.

He was so fond of Bharat Mata that his country tied to the chains of slavery did not let him live peacefully. People beyond India's borders also developed a fascination for him. Heads of states of important countries stood by him and Netaji lit the fire of the freedom struggle beyond India's shores. He built a force and presented that force before the enemies of the country as the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army). He gave the slogan of "Dilli Chalo" with a new spirit. Thousands of soldiers of his 60,000-strong army sacrificed their lives for the country.

"Success always stands on the pillar of failure." Bose lived with this philosophy and also inspired others. Netaji encountered failures several times, but he converted those failures to triumph with his struggle. Whether it is municipal politics, the journey from a common Congressman to the Congress president's position, the formation of the Forward Bloc or the struggle of the Indian National Army, he passed every test with distinction.

Bose accepted the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi,



but ironically, Gandhiji himself became the cause of him leaving the Congress. But the two leaders always had respect for each other.

At the time of India's independence, Clement Attlee was the British Prime Minister. He came to Kolkata in 1956. At that time, his host, governor and former Calcutta high court chief justice PB Chakravarti, tried to find out from him the reason behind the British decision to grant freedom to India. In response, Attlee said that the loyalty of the Indian army and navy to the British state was declining due to the increasing military activities of Bose's Azad Hind Fauj. This was one of the major reasons. This acknowledgement proves the great contribution of Bose to India's independence. It finds a mention in a letter written to the publisher by Justice Chakravarti in the book "A History of Bengal" by RC Majumdar.

Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh had a major contribution in the life of Netaji. The banks of the Narmada transformed his life. The Tripuri Congress session was held from March 4-11, 1939 in Jabalpur. Despite poor health, Netaji had arrived on a stretcher to participate in it. Thereafter, he came again to Jabalpur on July 4, 1939 to form the Forward Bloc. The people of Madhya Pradesh have a deep relationship with Netaji. In every town of the state, there's a ward in his name. Subhas Chandra Bose's message to his colleagues was: "Success may be distant, but it is

Netaji's birth anniversary to now be part of Republic Day celebrations

Republic Day celebrations from this year will start on January 23 instead of January 24 to include the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, in line with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi government's "focus to commemorate important aspects of our history and culture," an official said.

It was not immediately clear what this will entail. One possibility is that the government will count events to commemorate Bose's birth anniversary held every year to be part of the Republic Day celebrations.

Last year, the central government announced that January 23 will be celebrated as Parakram Diwas, or day of valor.

Other such days, observance of which has become a yearly affair, are August 14 as Partition Horrors Remembrance Day, October 31 as National Unity Day (birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel), November 15 as Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (Birsu Munda's birth anniversary), November 26 as Constitution Day, and December 26 as Veer Baal Divas (a tribute to the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh), the official said, requesting anonymity.

Although it was a good decision, the government needs to understand and implement his ideology to really honour the freedom fighter, according to Chandra Bose, kin of Netaji.

"Subhas Chandra Bose is extremely relevant in 21st century India. We see all across the country, I don't suggest any specific political party, all parties are engaged in divisive politics. This must stop," he said. "Netaji envisioned a united India. If Netaji had returned to India, there would not have been a partition of India or partition of Bengal. India will again get divided, unless you bring Netaji's ideology into the national mainstream of politics."

Ahead of Netaji's 125th birth anniversary this year, Chandra Bose, who is a member of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, asking him to have the freedom fighter's image on currency notes. He also suggested declaring January 23 a national holiday.

imperative". Bose used to say, "If a person is not obsessed, he can never become great. But he should also have something else inside him." Bose is credited with giving global identity to the Indian leadership. Earlier, Swami Vivekananda had enlightened the world about India's spiritual and cultural superiority and identity.

Netaji was also fluent in many Indian languages. Bose's struggle for freedom proved to be an inspiration not just for India, but also for all Third World countries. The Indian freedom struggle and the war of independence led by Bose had a profound impact on those countries. Netaji's status establishes him as the "hero of freedom" globally.

Lala Lajpat Rai: The Lion of Punjab

Lala Lajpat Rai was a prominent nationalist leader who played an important role in India's struggle for freedom. His birth anniversary falls on January 28

Lala Lajpat Rai was a prominent nationalist leader who played an important role in India's struggle for freedom. He was a prominent member of the famous 'Lal Bal Pal' firebrand trio during the independence movement. His fierce brand of patriotism and potent vocalism against the British rule earned him the title of 'Punjab Kesari' or the Lion of the Punjab. He also initiated the foundation of Punjab National Bank. In 1897, he founded the Hindu Orphan Relief Movement to keep the Christian missions from securing custody of these children. He was badly injured in police lathi-charge on the activists, who were protesting the arrival of Simon Commission, and died a few days later due to the injuries.

Early Life

Lala Lajpat Rai was born on January 28, 1865 to Munshi Radha Krishna Azad and Gulab Devi at Dhudike village in Ferozpur District. Munshi Azad was a scholar of Persian and Urdu. Lala's mother was a religious lady who inculcated strong moral values in her children. His family values allowed Lajpat Rai the freedom of having different faiths and beliefs.

He received his elementary education in the Government Higher Secondary School, Rewari where his father was posted as teacher. Lajpat Rai joined the Government College at Lahore in 1880 to study Law. While in college he came in contact with patriots and future freedom fighters like Lala Hans Raj and Pandit Guru Dutt. He studied law from Government College in Lahore and thereafter started his legal practice in Hissar, Haryana. Since childhood he had a desire to serve his country and therefore took a pledge to free it from foreign rule. In 1884 his father was transferred to Rohtak and Lala Lajpat Rai came along. He married Radha Devi in 1877.

In 1886 the family shifted to Hissar, where he practiced law. During the 1888 and 1889 annual sessions of the National Congress, he participated as a delegate. He moved to Lahore to practice before the High Court in 1892.

Ideas of Nationalism

Lala Lajpat Rai was a voracious reader and everything he read left a great imprint on his mind. He was deeply impressed by the ideals of patriotism and nationalism outlined by Italian revolutionary leader Giuseppe Mazzini. Inspired by Mazzini, Lalaji became indoctrinated into the revolutionary way of attaining freedom. He, together with other prominent leaders like Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh from Bengal, and Bal Gangadhar Tilak from Maharashtra, began to see the negative aspects of moderate politics advocated by many leaders of the Indian National Congress. They voiced their strong opposition to the Congress' demand for gradual progress to dominion status and



began voicing the need for complete independence or 'Purna Swaraj'. In personal views he was a great believer in inter-faith harmony, but he did not think right of the trend by Congress leaders to sacrifice Hindu interests to appease the Muslim section of the party. Lala was one of the few leaders who realized the difficulties of a united anti-colonial struggle and a possible source of religious conflict between the Hindus and Muslims of the country. His proposal for "a clear partition of India into a Muslim India and non-Muslim India" on December 14, 1923, in The Tribune, met

with major controversy.

Political Career

Lajpat Rai gave up his legal practice and put all his efforts towards freeing his Motherland from the shackles of the British Imperialism. He recognized the need for presenting the state of affairs in the Indian Freedom struggle to prominent countries in the world in order to highlight the atrocious nature of the British rule in India. He went to Britain in 1914 and then to the USA in 1917. In October 1917, he founded the Indian Home Rule League of America in

New York. He stayed in the USA from 1917 to 1920.

In 1920, after his return from America, Lajpat Rai was invited to preside over the special session of the Congress in Calcutta, (now Kolkata). He led fiery demonstrations against the British in Punjab in protest for their brutal actions at Jallianwallah Bagh. When Gandhi launched the non-cooperation movement in 1920, he plunged into action leading the movement in Punjab. When Gandhi decided to suspend the movement post Chauri Chaura incident, Lajpat Rai criticized the decision and went on to form the Congress Independence Party.

The Simon Commission visited India in 1929 with the aim to discuss constitutional reforms. The fact that the Commission was comprised solely of British delegates greatly angered the Indian leaders. The country erupted in protest and Lala Lajpat Rai was in the forefront of such demonstrations.

Death

On October 30, 1928, Lala Lajpat Rai led a peaceful procession to oppose the arrival of the Simon Commission in Lahore. Intercepting the march, Superintendent of Police, James A. Scott ordered his police force to 'lathi-charge' at the activists. The police targeted Lajpat Rai, in particular, and hit him on the chest. This action left Lala Lajpat Rai with severe injuries. He died of a heart attack on November 17, 1928. His followers squarely placed the blame on the British and vowed to avenge his death. Chandrasekhar Azad along with Bhagat Singh and other associates plotted the assassination of Scott but the revolutionaries shot J.P. Saunders, mistaking him as Scott.

Role as an Influencer

Not only Rai was this heavyweight leader of the Indian Nationalist Movement, his views on patriotism and nationalism earned him the status of a venerated leader. He inspired young men of his generation and kindled latent spirit of patriotism in their hearts. Young men such as Chandrasekhar Azad and Bhagat Singh were driven to dedicate their lives for the sake of freedom of their Motherland following his example.

Legacy

Lala Lajpat Rai made lasting impression in the minds of his countrymen not only by his leadership abilities, but made his presence felt in fields of education, commerce and even healthcare. He was a follower of Dayanand Saraswati and helped establish the nationalistic Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School. He initiated the establishment of a bank which later evolved as the 'Punjab National Bank'. He established a trust in his mother Gulabi Devi's name in 1927 and oversaw the opening of a tuberculosis hospital for women named Gulabi Devi Chest Hospital.



Sushmita Sen says she isn't 'lost'

Sushmita Sen shared a new Instagram post on Monday, and in her own style, spoke about love and finding the right person in life. The actor recently ended her relationship with boyfriend Rohman Shawl.

Sushmita picked a picture from one of her photoshoots and in the caption wrote, "I am not lost sweetheart...you just haven't found me yet' I love you guys!!!"

Sushmita has been sharing several thoughts on Instagram, most of the time hinting at her current state of mind. Sushmita, who's riding high on the success of the the second season of Aarya on Disney+ Hotstar, announced of parting ways with her longtime boyfriend Rohman Shawl recently. "We began as friends, we remain friends!! The relationship was long over...the love remains!! #nomorespeculations #liveandletlive #cherishedmemories #gratitude #love #friendship I love you guys!!! #duggadugga," she had written.

Zareen Khan says she 'can't be a monkey on Salman Khan's back' forever

Zareen Khan made her acting debut in 2010's *Veer*, opposite Salman Khan. As the actor continues her journey in the film and entertainment industry, there have been continuous rumours that Salman has been helping her in her career. In a recent interview, Zareen opened up about the conjecture. Agreeing that she is thankful to him for launching her in Bollywood, she added that she cannot piggyback on him forever.

"I'm thankful to Salman because I would've never entered the industry if it was not for him. He gave me an entrance to the industry. But my struggle started after I became a part of the industry because then I knew nothing. Salman is an amazing person but he is also a busy man. I cannot be a monkey on his back and bother him for little things," she told Hindustan Times.

She added that a lot of people, to this day, think that all the work she gets is through him. "And that's not true. Salman is a friend and just a phone call away but I'm not pestering him. And that undermines the struggle, the hard work that I've done," she said.

After *Veer*, Zareen Khan went on to do films such as *Housefull 2*, *Hate Story 3*, *Aksar 2*, and *1921*, among others. She was last seen in the Disney+ Hotstar film *Hum Bhi Akele Tum Bhi Akele*, in which she played a homosexual person.



Deepika Padukone says working on Gehraiyaan director Shakun Batra's set is 'exhausting'

Deepika Padukone's filmography for the coming year is quite impressive as she headlines big projects alongside Hrithik Roshan (*Fighter*), Prabhas (*Project K*) and Shah Rukh Khan (*Pathan*), among others. She will also be seen in the remake of *The Intern* that she is also producing.

But before that, she is set to take over the screens with Shakun Batra's *Gehraiyaan*, which will stream on Amazon Prime Video. The film marks her first project with the director. In a chat with Anupama Chopra, Deepika Padukone, who has collaborated with Sanjay Leela Bhansali in three of his films, spoke about how Shakun's working process is so different than that of SLB. In fact, she stated that anyone who has worked on a Shankun Batra's set is qualified enough to step inside SLB's world of cinema.

"We basically say or I have started saying to him now that if you work with Shakun Batra, you can work on a Sanjay Leela Bhansali film because he's just not happy. I am joking about the complaining part of it but I love his process because it's exhausting. Literally from the time you are on the set to the time you leave, actors are on their feet the whole time, except the lunch break," Deepika said, adding that the whole process was extremely 'nimble,' which urged her to know her lines so well that the setting or director's last-minute changes wouldn't throw her off guard.



Ayushmann Khurrana to begin shoot of Aanand L Rai's An Action Hero in London

Bollywood star Ayushmann Khurrana will be heading to London later this month to commence the shoot of his upcoming film *An Action Hero*, the producers announced on Tuesday, Jan 18.

Backed by Bhushan Kumar-led T-Series and filmmaker Aanand L Rai's Colour Yellow Productions, the movie is billed as a slick actioner with an offbeat satirical sense of humour.

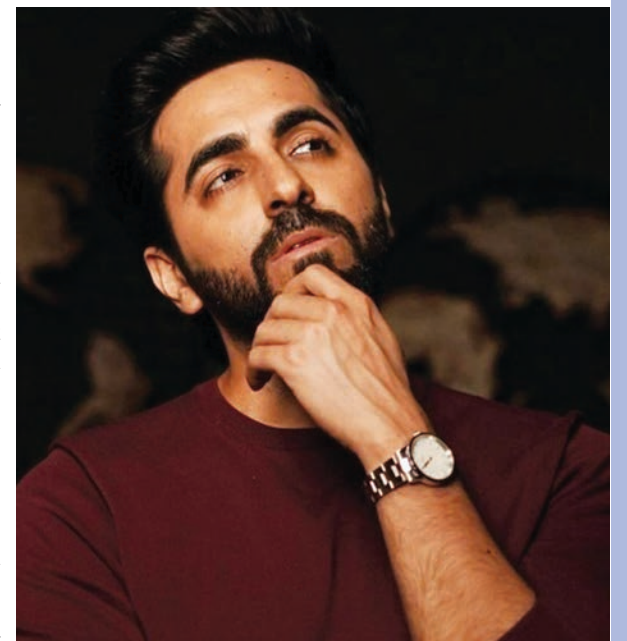
The film marks the directorial debut of Anirudh Iyer, who previously served as an assistant director on Rai's *Tanu Weds Manu Returns* (2015) and *Zero* (2018).

Rai, who announced the movie in October last year, said the team is excited to kickstart shoot of the film, which he described as an out-of-the-box entertainer.

"We are excited about *An Action Hero* finally going on the floors and seeing Ayushmann breathe life into the character. The movie is going to be an out-of-the-box entertaining story!" the filmmaker said in a statement.

Kumar, chairman and managing director of T-Series, said the film has a "quirky and fresh storyline".

"We are enthralled to commence its shoot in London and can't contain our excitement for audiences to witness this entertainment from Aanand L Rai's stable," he added.





Moon Knight actor Gaspard Ulliel dies at 37 after ski accident

Actor Gaspard Ulliel who was cast as the character of Anton Mogart in the upcoming Marvel mini-series Moon Knight died at the age of 37. The incident happened following a ski accident.

According to Deadline, the Cesar-winning actor was hospitalised on Tuesday after suffering a head injury and did not recover, the actor's family and local agent have said. He was transported by helicopter to a hospital in Grenoble following a collision on the slopes in the Savoie region. Mountain police have been responding to multiple accidents in the region due to hard snow and ice on the slopes. According to a tweet by Variety, Gaspard collided with another skier and suffered serious brain trauma. Local authorities have opened an investigation into the accident.

As soon as the news came to light, people started reacting to it. One person tweeted, "Man, finally gets on a series the whole world is gonna see and tragedy strikes."

The Batman: New posters tease Riddler's threat, romance between the Bat and Catwoman

The release of the upcoming DC movie The Batman is still a ways away, but Warner Bros' marketing and promotion machinery is in full swing. And no wonder, for the Caped Crusader remains one of the most profitable comic-book characters.

Two new posters of the film have been unleashed. One shows a close-up of Robert Pattinson's cowl'd and masked face. The other features Pattinson and Zoe Kravitz's Catwoman.

Warner Bros and DC's social media handles shared the posters. WB India also shared them with the name of the movie written in Indian languages.

The Batman's promos are teasing the romance between Batman and Catwoman, which is indeed a big thing in comics. Usually, Catwoman is a character who is teetering on the edge of good and bad, and is not an out and out villain or hero. She also fights crime and helps people, but normally does not have a fixed code of not killing people like the Batman.

Both Pattinson and Kravitz have proved their acting chops in the past and we cannot wait to see them together in the movie.

In the film, Batman is still a young superhero, struggling with his rage. He faces a sinister new enemy in Riddler (Paul Dano), not the colourful, clownish villain you know, but a serial killer who is modelled over the real-world Zodiac killer. The Penguin and Carmine Falcone also face-off against the Dark Knight.



Andrew Garfield lied to Emma Stone as well about starring in No Way Home

Andrew Garfield lied about starring in Spider-Man: No Way Home not just to his fans and the media but also to his ex-girlfriend and The Amazing Spider-Man co-star, Emma Stone. In a new interview, Andrew has revealed that despite her repeated questions, Andrew never let Emma know how he was indeed a part of the movie.



On Josh Horowitz's Happy Sad Confused podcast, Andrew revealed how Emma kept on texting him about it. "Emma kept on texting me. She was like, 'Are you in this new Spider-Man film?' And I was like, 'I don't know what you're talking about.' She was like, 'Shut up. Just tell me.' I'm like, 'I honestly don't know' — I kept it going, even with her. And then she saw it. She was like, 'You're a jerk.'"

This is also how most Spider-Man fans felt when they witness Andrew step out of the space portal during No Way Home. Except, all the lying and deceit was quickly forgiven and a new wave of adoration for Andrew has swept over film lovers. Fans are making Reels and TikToks and petitioning to get Andrew his own, third The Amazing Spider-Man movie.

In Spider-Man: No Way Home, Andrew joined forces with first Peter Parker Tobey Maguire from Sam Raimi's series of Spider-Man movies and the current Spider-Man,

Bella opens up about her mental health struggles: 'Had depressive episodes'

Supermodel Bella Hadid recently opened up about her mental health struggles and described them as 'excruciating and debilitating'. Bella also talked about her crying pictures that went viral last year.

The 25-year-old model spoke to WSJ. Magazine for the publication's My Monday Morning series, where she candidly talked about her mental health issues, reported People magazine.

When asked by the publication what her secret is to putting together her outfit in the morning, Bella explained that she hasn't had a stylist "in a long time, maybe two years now," and she was "in such a weird place mentally that it was really complicated for me to get out of the house and put an outfit together, especially with the anxiety of (paparazzi) being outside and all that."

But, after learning to deal with her anxiety and other mental health struggles, Bella said she learned to embrace her fashion and dress in a way that makes her happy. "In the last year, it was really important for me to learn that even if people talk about my style or if they like it or if they don't, it doesn't matter, because it's my style," she noted. She added, "When I leave the house in the morning, what I think about is: Does this make me happy? Do I feel good in this and do I feel comfortable?"



RUSSIA MOVES MORE TROOPS WESTWARD

MOSCOW (TIP): Russia is sending troops from the country's far east to Belarus for major war games, officials said on January 18, in a deployment further beefing up Russian military assets near Ukraine amid Western fears of an invasion. Deputy Defence Minister Alexander Fomin said the drills are intended to practice a joint response to external threats by the alliance of Russia and Belarus, which have close political, economic and military ties. Fomin didn't say how many troops and weapons were being redeployed for the exercises, or give the number of troops that will be involved in the war games. Ukrainian officials have warned that Russia could launch an attack from various directions, including from the territory of its ally Belarus. — AP

MALLYA CAN BE EVICTED FROM LONDON HOME OVER UNPAID LOAN, UK COURT ORDERS

LONDON (TIP): Embattled businessman Vijay Mallya on Tuesday lost a legal battle to hold on to his plush London home after a British court refused to grant him a stay of enforcement in a long-running dispute with Swiss bank UBS. The 18/19 Cornwall Terrace luxury apartment overlooking Regent's Park in London, described in court as an "extraordinarily valuable property worth many tens of millions of pounds", is currently being occupied by Mallya's 95-year-old mother Lalitha.

Delivering his judgment virtually for the Chancery Division of the High Court, Deputy Master Matthew Marsh concluded there were no grounds for him to grant further time for the Mallya family to repay a GBP 20.4-million loan to UBS – the claimant in the case. "The claimant's position was a reasonable one... further time is not likely to make any material difference," Deputy Master Marsh ruled. "I would also add from my review of the correspondence, I can see no basis whatever for the suggestion that has been made that the claimant has misled the first defendant [Vijay Mallya]... in conclusion, I dismiss the first defendant's application," he said.

The judge also declined permission to appeal against his order or to grant a temporary stay of enforcement, which means UBS can proceed with the possession process to realise its unpaid dues. "I will refuse permission to appeal and therefore it follows that I will not be granting a stay," said Marsh. Mallya's barrister, Daniel Margolin QC, indicated that the 65-year-old businessman plans to pursue an appeal before a High Court Chancery Division Judge as it has "serious consequences" for his clients, including Mallya's elderly mother who currently resides at the address. (PTI)

'Partygate' allegations: UK PM Johnson's allies accused of blackmailing rebels

LONDON (TIP): In the latest round of "partygate" allegations threatening Boris Johnson's leadership, the British Prime Minister's allies were on January 20 accused of blackmailing rebel members of Parliament expressing a lack of confidence in him as Conservative Party leader.

William Wragg, a Conservative Party MP and Chair of the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee, said a "number of MPs have faced intimidation" in recent days after declaring, or assumed to have declared, their desire for a vote of confidence in Johnson.

Wragg claimed the reports "would seem to constitute blackmail" and advised his affected colleagues to contact the police or the Speaker of the Commons.

"It is of course the duty of the government whips office to secure the government's business in the House of Commons. However, it is not their function to breach the ministerial code in threatening to withdraw investments from members of Parliament's constituency which are funded from the public purse," said Wragg.

Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle admitted these were "serious allegations" and told MPs with such concerns that they may write to him.

"It is contempt to obstruct members in the discharge of their duty or to attempt to intimidate a member in their parliamentary conduct by threats," said Hoyle.

Asked about the allegations, Johnson told reporters he had seen "no evidence" of such incidents but that his office would look into any claims.

"We are not aware of any evidence to



support what are clearly serious allegations. If there is any evidence to support these claims, we would look at it very carefully," a Downing Street spokesperson said.

It comes a day after dramatic developments in Parliament, when a Tory MP walked across the floor of the Commons to join the Opposition Labour Party in protest against Johnson's leadership.

Besides the defection, a veteran Tory MP and former Brexit ally of Boris Johnson, David Davis, rose to demand that it was time for him to resign as prime minister amid a string of damaging allegations of lockdown rule breaches.

However, the defection and rebel plots somewhat subdued on Thursday as the majority of Conservative Party MPs are hesitant to trigger a leadership crisis that could prove disastrous for the Tory government.

Johnson, who announced an end to

Plan B lockdown restrictions as he declared that the Omicron variant was in retreat, seems to have been galvanised by this mild reprieve within the party and seems determined to fight on.

However, there are reports of some nervousness within Downing Street ranks amid fears that top civil servant Sue Gray, investigating the partygate scandal, may have found damning evidence against the UK prime minister which may show that he misled Parliament over how much he knew about parties being held in his office in apparent breach of lockdown rules.

At the heart of these claims lies a May 20, 2020, garden party in Downing Street for which he apologised to the Commons last week.

Johnson has said that he will return to Parliament to make another statement once the internal investigation into wider breaches of lockdown rules within government quarters files its report next week. — PTI

Malta legislator Roberta Metsola 3rd woman EU Parliament prez

Brussels (TIP): Christian Democrat Roberta Metsola of Malta was elected president of the European Union's parliament January 19, taking over for a two and a half years term following the death of Socialist David Sassoli last week.

Metsola is only the third woman elected to the post. Her birthday was Tuesday, and at age 43, she is the European Parliament's youngest president. Sassoli, 65, had been sick for several months, and before his death the Italian politician declined to seek another term. Metsola was the candidate of the



Parliament's biggest group, and she received 458 of the 616 votes cast on Tuesday.

She had already been acting president since Sassoli's January 11 death. — AP

SAUDI ARABIA-LED COALITION STRIKES SANAA, 20 DEAD

ADEN (YEMEN) (TIP): Air strikes by the Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Houthi group on the capital Sanaa killed over 20 persons overnight, including civilians, Houthi media and residents said, in one of its deadliest attacks since 2019.

Around 14 persons were killed when coalition planes struck the home of a high-ranking Houthi military official, including his wife and son, according to neighbours and a medic.

The air strikes followed January 19 drone and missile attack on coalition partner the United Arab Emirates that was claimed by the Iran-aligned Houthis and killed three persons. — Reuters

Snowstorm strands motorists, grounds planes in eastern US, Canada

TORONTO / ONTARIO (TIP): A winter snowstorm creeping up the East Coast of the United States into Canada on January 19 was expected to dump more than two feet (60 cm) of snow in some areas, grounding planes and stranding motorists.

More than 4,200 flights in the United States were canceled or delayed on Monday, according to FlightAware. Nearly 90,000 homes and businesses between Georgia and Maine lacked electricity, according to PowerOutage.US.

Traffic was snarled in Toronto, Canada's largest city, as the snowstorm brought visibility to near zero, shut subway lines and left motorists stranded on local highways for hours.

Buses were at a standstill and passing pedestrians helped push cars up a street at a main commuter route in central Toronto. The region was predicted to get up to 2 feet of snow, and an extreme weather warning was in effect. Authorities asked residents to stay off the roads.

In neighboring Quebec, the weather caused traffic accidents, including pileups involving dozens of vehicles that forced authorities to close some highways, according to the Canadian Broadcasting Corp (CBC).



In the eastern United States, officials likewise urged residents to stay off snowy roads on the holiday honoring slain civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr.

Ashtabula, Ohio, on Lake Erie, recorded 27 inches of snow, according to the National Weather Service, while parts of New York state, Pennsylvania and North Carolina received more than 20 inches.

Atlanta saw its first snow in four years, according to the NWS, and some regions in North Carolina had record snowfalls.

As the storm swept north, northern Maine and New Hampshire were still due for another 2 to 4 inches of ice and snow Monday evening, the weather service said. Blustery conditions were predicted across much of the region into Tuesday. -Reuters

STAMPEDE AT RELIGIOUS CEREMONY IN LIBERIA KILLS 29 PEOPLE

MONROVIA (LIBERIA) (TIP): At least 29 people in Liberia, including 11 children and a pregnant woman, have died in a stampede of worshippers at a Christian ceremony in a densely populated area of the capital, Monrovia, officials said January 20.

The stampede erupted when a gang of thugs armed with knives attacked some of the hundreds attending the ceremony at about 9 pm on Wednesday night, police spokesman Moses Carter told The Associated Press.

One person has been arrested, he said.

The bodies have been taken to the morgue of Redemption Hospital, close to where the incident occurred in a beach area called New Kru Town.

Street gangs have become an increasing problem in Monrovia and other Liberian cities in recent years, according to residents.

President George Weah was expected to visit the scene Thursday, according to Liberian media reports. —AP

FRENCH ACTOR GASPARD ULLIEL DIES AT 37 AFTER SKI ACCIDENT

PARIS (TIP): French actor Gaspard Ulliel, known for appearing in Chanel perfume ads and portraying fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent in a 2014 biopic, has died at 37 following a ski accident in the Alps, French media reported on January 19.

Ulliel, who won a French Cesar award for best actor for his role in "It's Only the End of the World", a film by director Xavier Dolan in 2017, was the face of the Bleu de Chanel men's fragrance.

"French cinema is losing a huge talent, full of charm and energy," French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire posted on Twitter. —Reuters

CANADA WOMAN CALMLY TAKES SELFIE ON TOP OF HER FAST-SINKING CAR AS PEOPLE RUSH TO SAVE HER

TORONTO (TIP): This woman crashed while she was driving on a frozen river in Canada. But she made it to the headline for she found time to take a selfie while her car sank in the icy water.

The woman, name not know, was photographed standing on top of her yellow car and taking pictures of herself as her vehicle continued to sink under the ice of the Rideau river in Manotick on January 18 afternoon, reports the Daily Mail.

While locals in the area were worried and rushed to rescue her, she stood calmly on top of her sinking car.

A video shared online shows just the top of the car visible as people rushed to her aid with kayaks and was rescued by them. (TNS)

In Greece, unvaccinated older people now face monthly fines

ATHENS (TIP): Greece on January 19 imposed a vaccination mandate for people over age 60, as coverage remains below the European Union average and a recent spike in infections has sustained pressure on hospitals.

Older people failing to get vaccinated will face penalties, starting at a 50-euro (\$57) fine in January and followed by a monthly fine of 100 euros (\$114) after that.

About two-thirds of Greece's 10.7 million population is currently fully vaccinated — the EU average is just over 70%. The rate of death and daily hospitalisations has increased following the recent spread of the omicron variant, though pressure on ICU capacity has eased slightly.

Health Minister Thanos Plevris said fines would be collected through the tax office with the money to be used to help fund state hospitals.

"The age factor is important because of its impact on the public health service," Plevris told private Open TV on Sunday.

A vaccination mandate was imposed for healthcare workers last year. And starting February 1, vaccination



certificates for adults will expire after seven months unless the holder receives a booster shot.

New infections sharply surged in early January, and have eased over the past week.

The mandate for over-60s was announced in late December and,

according to government data, some 41.5% of the 5,30,000 people targeted by the measure are now fully vaccinated.

Greece has the seventh oldest population in the world, as measured by share of residents aged 65 and over, according to the US-based Population Reference Bureau. —AP

AFGHAN WOMEN LOSING JOBS FAST AS ECONOMY SHRINKS AND RIGHTS CURTAILED

KABUL (TIP): In a small tailoring workshop in Kabul, 29-year-old Afghan entrepreneur Sohaila Noori looks on as her dramatically reduced workforce of around 30 women sew scarves, dresses and baby clothes. A few months ago, before the hardline Islamist Taliban movement seized power in August, she employed more than 80 people, mostly women, across three different textile workshops. "In the past, we had so much work to do," said Noori, who was determined to keep her business running in order to employ as many women as she could.

"We had different types of contracts, we could easily pay a salary to our master tailors and other workers, but currently we have no contracts."

With Afghanistan's economy deep in crisis - billions of dollars in aid and reserves have been cut off and ordinary people have little money even for basics - enterprises like Noori's are struggling to stay afloat.

Making matters worse, the Taliban will only allow women to work subject to their interpretation of Islamic law, prompting some to leave jobs out of fear of punishment by a group that severely restricted their freedom the last time it ruled. Hard-won gains in women's rights over the last two decades have been quickly reversed, and reports from international rights experts and labour organisations this week painted a bleak picture for female employment and access to public space. Though the economic crisis is hitting the entire country - some agencies predict it will leave almost the entire population in poverty in the coming months - the effect is disproportionately felt by women.

"The crisis in Afghanistan has made an already challenging situation for women workers even worse," said Ramin Behzad, Senior Coordinator of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for Afghanistan.

"Work in key sectors has dried up while newly imposed restrictions on women's participation in some economic areas are also hitting home."

Afghan women's employment levels fell by an estimated 16% in the third quarter of 2021, according to an ILO report released on Wednesday, relative to 6% for men.

Women's employment was expected to be 21% lower than it was before the Taliban takeover by mid-2022 if current conditions continued, according to the ILO. For the workers at Noori's workshop, the opportunity to make some money outweighed other worries. "Mostly our families are worried about our safety. They repeatedly call us when we don't reach home on time, but we all continue to work ... because we have economic problems," said Lailuma, who only gave one name out of fear for her safety. (Reuters)

Non-residents will now have to pay in foreign currency for services in Sri Lanka, says central bank

Colombo (TIP) : Tourists travelling to Sri Lanka will now have to pay for their goods and services in foreign currency, the Central Bank announced on Thursday, as part of its efforts to inject more liquidity in the economy and build up the country's depleted foreign exchange reserves.

The directives were taken by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka with a view to strengthening macroeconomic stability.

Consequently, the apex bank has instructed registered tourists' establishments to accept foreign exchange only in respect of services rendered to persons residing outside Sri Lanka.

"All registered tourist establishments must accept foreign exchange only in respect of services rendered to persons residing outside Sri Lanka," said the monetary policy review for the month of January, released by Sri Lanka's Central Bank.

This comes in the backdrop of the Central Bank hiking the standing deposit facility rate and the standing lending facility rate by 50 basis points each to 5.50 per cent and 6.50 per cent respectively to control inflation rates, curb imports, and avoid a potential default later in the year.

In its statement, it said the "measures will curtail the possible build-up of underlying demand pressures in the economy, which would also help ease pressures in the external sector, thus promoting greater macroeconomic stability".



The pandemic has also dealt a blow to the economy dependent hugely on tourism, with the government estimating losses to the tune of USD 14 billion over the last two years.

The economy is also estimated to have contracted by 1.5 per cent in July-September 2021.

Sri Lanka has underlined its commitment to repaying the USD 4 billion owed to investors in this year, even though analysts reckon it could face its first-ever default unless it increases dollar inflows.

"We want to give a very clear message that we want to see inflation being dealt with," Central Bank governor Ajith

Nivard Cabraal told reporters on Thursday.

He also ruled out an IMF bailout. "People have a fixation on the IMF. Our programmes have a huge amount of merit," he asserted.

These measures come barely a week after New Delhi had announced a USD 900 million loan to Colombo to build up its depleted foreign reserves and for food imports amid a shortage of almost all essential commodities in Sri Lanka.

India on Tuesday announced a USD 500 million credit line to help Sri Lanka purchase petroleum products as the island nation struggles with a massive fuel and energy crisis. (PTI)

3 killed, 20 injured in blast at Lahore's Anarkali market

LAHORE (TIP): At least three people were killed and 20 others injured on Thursday in a powerful blast at the Paan Mandi in Lahore's famous Anarkali market, where Indian commodities are sold, police said.

Lahore police spokesperson Rana Arif confirmed the death of three persons in the blast that shattered windows of nearby shops and buildings, Dawn newspaper reported.

According to police, the blast took place near the Paan Mandi, where Indian commodities are sold.

No group has claimed responsibility for the blast so far.

"We are ascertaining the nature of blast. Over 20 people have been injured in blast and shifted to hospitals," Deputy



Inspector General Police Operation Dr Mohammad Abid told reporters at the site of the blast near Lahore's historic Walled City.

Abid did not rule out the possibility of a time device implanted in a motorcycle or placed at the market.

"The crater at the blast site indicated the possibility of a time device. However,

at this stage we can't confirm this," he said.

The Counter Terrorism Department and Bomb Disposal Squad officials have reached the spot and are examining the nature of the blast, he said.

According to the Rescue 1122, the injured have been shifted to the Mayo Hospital where two succumbed to their injuries.

Mayo Hospital medical superintendent Dr Iftikhar said that two persons including a boy succumbed to their wounds. He said the condition of four injured brought to the hospital is critical.

A good number of motorcycles and vendors' stalls were also damaged on the blast. Police have cordoned off the area. The whole Anarkali Bazaar is shut after the blast. PTI



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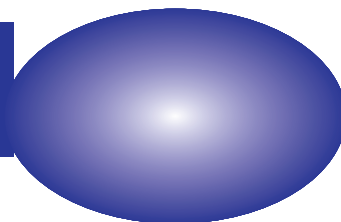


CORONAVIRUS HELPLINE

Dr. VK Raju and Dr. Leela Raju of the Eye Foundation of America will be glad to answer any eye related concerns of the readers of The Indian Panorama during this difficult period of Coronavirus onslaught



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6 new skincare trends that'll be everywhere in 2022



The year 2021 has been splendid for skincare trends. The mood board of the year has a major impact on the skincare trends that develop each year, such as skinimalism in 2021. Following the stressful events of 2021, 2022 will see more relaxing and eco-conscious trends. This year, our approach to beauty, particularly skincare, will be slightly different than in prior years. Here's all you need to know.

In 2022, the way we approach skincare will be very different. Here are some of the industry's most experienced experts' predictions for the biggest, most innovative skincare trends to look out for in 2022.

Popular and unique skincare trends to look out for in 2022:

Cryotherapy at home will continue to reign supreme

After spending a significant amount of time in lockdown with all salon doors closed, at-home skincare treatments have been a popular trend for quite some time now and will continue to do so in the future. Cryotherapy is one such at-home treatment.

The notion behind cryo-treatments, which are often performed in clinics, is similar to skin icing in that freezing temperatures cause our blood vessels to contract and tighten the pores, giving us a firmer and healthier appearance. You can use ice globes or items made especially for this therapy.

The rise of anti-stress over anti-ageing skincare. Stress generates an increase in the hormone cortisol, which has been linked to skin conditions such as acne, skin dryness, and wrinkles, according to a study. After a stressful year of navigating multiple lockdowns and adjustments to our routines, 2022 will see a massive shift from anti-ageing skincare to anti-stress skincare.

The goal of anti-stress skincare is to minimise inflammation induced by stress and restore the damaged skin barrier. There will also be a lot of use of Hyaluronic acid to soothe the skin, potent antioxidants to protect, and peptides to stimulate collagen.

Souped-up SPF with blue light protection

Forget about pore-clogging creams and barely-there sprays. SPF mousse with blue light protection is the most recent innovation that is being improved to protect our skin not just from UV radiation but also

from HEV (high-energy visible) light. There will be a rise in this new type of SPF product to protect us from blue light exposure given that we spend so much of our time in front of screens and digital devices. Furthermore, blue light has been linked to oxidative stress-induced skin problems such as premature ageing and hyperpigmentation. Get on board with the trend and go get your SPF mousses now.

The domination of waterless beauty

With the rising concerns about water shortages and the need for high-efficacy goods, more and more skincare products with waterless formulas are arriving on the market. Because there is no water, a breeding ground for germs, these formulations contain little to no preservatives, which are known to affect hormones.

Furthermore, these are more concentrated and require just a small amount to have noticeable benefits. They are most commonly seen in powder or solid form. While the western world has fully embraced this trend, we've also witnessed homegrown brands implementing this approach into their formulations.

High-potency with fermented skincare

Driven by Korean and Japanese markets, the demand for potent ingredients that linger longer is driving interest in fermented beauty aka kombucha for the skin. But don't be put off by the word "fermented." It is thought that the naturally occurring bacteria present in fermented skincare ingredients extends the shelf life of formulae, allowing your skincare to last longer.

Micro-Treatments

'Microdosing,' which involves utilising little amounts of potent ingredients like vitamin C, retinol, and exfoliating acids on a daily basis to minimise irritation, was a fad in 2020. Micro-treatments, such as tiny facials, will be trendy this year.

Instead of scheduling expensive and time-consuming treatments, it may be beneficial for both your skin and your mental health to practise a tiny facial every now and then. Given the pandemic, including face tools into your regimen as well as premium skincare products will rule supreme this year.

Source: Lifestyle Asia

Chicken in coconut milk with mango chutney

Ingredients

2 mangos peeled and diced, 1 onion finely chopped, 1/2 a cup of water, 2 tablespoons of brown sugar, A pinch of curry powder, 1 tablespoon of freshly squeezed lime juice, A pinch of black pepper, Few crushed pieces of fresh ginger, 1/4 teaspoon of salt, 1 teaspoon of healthy olive oil, 2 minced garlic cloves, 1 bowl of boneless chicken breasts, diced, 1 cup of light coconut milk, 2 tablespoons of brown sugar, A pinch of salt, 2 teaspoons of red curry paste, A few drops of thai fish sauce, 7 to 8 pieces of broccoli florets, 7 to 8 pieces of cauliflower florets, 1 tablespoons of chopped green onions for garnishing

Method

- In order to prepare the chicken, take a big non-stick pan and let it heat on a high flame. Add oil, garlic and chicken in the pan and saute it for 5 minutes. Now add brown sugar, salt, red curry paste and thai fish sauce in the pan and cook it through. After sauteing them thoroughly, make sure that the chicken is fully covered with the mixture. Add the coconut milk and simmer the flame.
- Now, add all the vegetables and let it cook for 7 to 10 minutes. Make sure you are stirring occasionally and keep on adding water to the dish if and when required. Garnish with green onions and you are good to go!



Ragi paratha

30 grams ragi flour (finger millet/nagli), 30 grams whole wheat flour, 1 teaspoon Oleev olive pomace oil, Salt as per taste, 30 grams paneer, grated, 1 green chilli, finely chopped, Few mint leaves (pudina), finely chopped, 1/4 teaspoon cumin powder (jeera), 1.5 teaspoon of Oleev olive pomace oil,

Method

- Start with kneading the dough by mixing ragi and wheat flour. Knead paratha dough for a couple of minutes until it gets smooth and elastic.
- Next, add a teaspoon of oil to coat the dough and knead a little more.
- Cover the ragi paratha dough and allow it to rest until you get the filling ready.
- The next step is to make the paneer filling. In a mixing bowl, combine the grated paneer, green chillies, mint leaves, salt, cumin powder and mix all the ingredients well.
- Divide into equal portions.
- Finally, stuff the filling into the ragi paratha dough.
- Dust the ragi paratha dough in flour, flatten it with your finger and place it on a flat surface. Roll it out thin. Take a portion of paneer filling and place it in the centre. Next, gather the sides of the paratha dough and bring all the sides together.
- Dust the filled dough with some flour and roll it gently until you get desired thickness
- Preheat the skillet on medium heat and grease it with a little oil. Place the filled ragi paneer paratha. Allow it to cook on medium heat for 30 to 45 seconds and flip over. Spread a little oil over the paratha and keep pressing the ragi paneer stuffed parathas to cook it evenly from every side.

Omicron wave may cut future severity of coronavirus: Study

A strong wave of coronavirus infections driven by the omicron variant could hasten the end of pandemic disruptions as it appears to cause less severe illness and provides protection against the delta variant, South Africa-based researchers said.

A laboratory study that used samples from 23 people infected with the omicron variant in November and December showed that while those who previously caught the delta variant can contract omicron, those who get the omicron strain can't be infected with delta, the researchers said.

While omicron is significantly more infectious than delta, hospital and mortality data in countries including South Africa -- the first country to experience a wave of omicron infections -- appears to show that it causes less severe disease. The study shows that omicron can displace delta, the researchers led by Alex Sigal of the Africa Health Research Institute said.

"The implications of such displacement would depend on whether omicron is indeed less pathogenic than delta," the researchers said. "If so, then the incidence of Covid-19 severe disease



would be reduced and the infection may shift to become less disruptive to individuals and society."

In South Africa, deaths during the omicron wave peaked at about 15% of the rate seen during the delta-driven surge, while hospitalizations peaked at 60% of the influx caused by delta, according to the National Institute for Communicable Diseases. Of the 23 participants, 14 were admitted to the hospital, but

only one needed supplemental oxygen, the researchers said. Ten had been vaccinated, either with shots produced by Pfizer Inc. or Johnson & Johnson, but still got infected with omicron.

Omicron was also tested against 18 samples taken from 14 people previously infected with delta and showed "extensive escape" from antibodies, the researchers said.

Source: Bloomberg



Nanotherapy offers ray of hope for the treatment of Type 1 diabetes

A team of researchers at Northwestern University have discovered a technique to help make immunomodulation more effective. The method used nanocarriers to re-engineer the commonly used immunosuppressant rapamycin.

Their paper was published in the journal 'Nature Nanotechnology'.

The Northwestern team was led by Evan Scott, the Kay Davis Professor and an associate professor of biomedical engineering at Northwestern's McCormick School of Engineering and microbiology-immunology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, and Guillermo Ameer, the Daniel Hale Williams Professor of Biomedical Engineering at McCormick and Surgery at Feinberg. Ameer also serves as the director of the Center for Advanced Regenerative Engineering (CARE).

Individuals living with Type 1 diabetes have to carefully follow prescribed insulin regimens every day, receiving injections of the hormone via syringe, insulin pump or some other device. And without viable long-term treatments, this course of treatment becomes a lifelong sentence.

Islet transplantation emerged over the past few decades as a potential cure for Type 1 diabetes. But transplantation efforts faced setbacks as the immune system continued to eventually reject new islets. Current immunosuppressive drugs have offered inadequate protection for transplanted cells and tissues and have been plagued by undesirable side effects.

Now, using the rapamycin-loaded nanocarriers, the team of researchers from Northwestern generated a new form of immunosuppression, capable of targeting specific cells related to the transplant, without suppressing wider immune responses.

Ameer had been working on improving the outcomes of islet transplantation by providing islets with an engineered environment, using biomaterials to optimize their survival and function. However, problems associated with traditional systemic immunosuppression remained a barrier to the clinical management of patients and hence, had to be addressed to truly have an impact on their care, said Ameer.

Source: ANI

Scientists find potential diagnostic and therapeutic target for lung cancer

Chinese scientists recently reported the key role of histone acetylation-regulated long noncoding RNA termed as lysosome cell death regulator (LCDR) in tumour survival, providing a potential diagnostic and therapeutic target for lung cancer.

Led by Prof. GAO Shan from the Suzhou Institute of Biomedical Engineering and Technology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), these scientists revealed that knockdown of the LCDR in lung cancer cells could promote apoptosis.

The results of the study were published in 'PNAS'.

Lysosome is involved in cellular homeostasis and its dysregulation has been linked to various human diseases, including cancer. LncRNAs are noncoding RNAs with lengths longer than 200 nucleotides, whose dysregulation is associated with cancer hallmarks. They drive cancer growth and survival by interacting with DNA, RNA, and protein assemblies, including the heterogeneous ribonucleic acid protein (hnRNP) family, which functions as alternative splicing, RNA stability, and translation etc.

However, whether lncRNAs and/or hnRNPs are involved in lysosome-mediated cancer survival has not been elucidated.

In this study, LCDR binds to heterogeneous nuclear ribonucleoprotein K (hnRNP K) to regulate the stability of lysosomal-associated protein transmembrane 5 (LAPTM5) transcript that maintains the integrity of the lysosomal membrane.

According to the researchers, knockdown of LCDR, hnRNP K or LAPTM5 promoted lysosomal membrane permeabilization and lysosomal cell death, thus resulting in apoptosis. LAPTM5 overexpression or cathepsin B inhibitor partially restored the effects of this axis on lysosomal cell death in vitro and in vivo.



Similarly, targeting LCDR significantly decreased tumor growth of patient-derived xenografts of lung adenocarcinoma (LUAD) and led to significant cell death using nanoparticles (NPs)-mediated systematic siRNA delivery.

Moreover, LCDR/hnRNP K/LAPTM5 were upregulated in LUAD tissues, and their co-expression showed increased diagnostic value for LUAD.

These findings shed light on LCDR/hnRNP K/LAPTM5 as potential therapeutic targets and lysosome targeting is a promising strategy in cancer treatment.

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Portals, Whatsapp groups assisting crypto investors

With a sizeable chunk of the Indian populace getting interested in cryptocurrency, there is demand for information.

After dedicated websites and portals, many WhatsApp groups have emerged which are not only educating masses on cryptocurrency but are also sharing latest news, information and buying types on crypto.

India has the highest number of crypto owners in the world at 10.07 crore, according to broker discovery and comparison platform BrokerChooser.

The United States and Russia were ranked a fairly distant second and third, respectively. In terms of number of crypto owners in terms of population, India has the fifth-highest crypto ownership rate.

Also, according to the stats, cryptocurrency investments in India has increased from \$923 million in April 2020 to a whopping \$6.6 billion by May 2021 which is a growth of about 400% in only one year.

According to research, the top five nations that majorly own bitcoin (one of the most popular cryptocurrencies) are located in Asia.

According to insiders, there are hundreds of WhatsApp community across the country which is disseminating information and tips to the potential investors.

Tonga's volcanic eruption may harm environment for years

Tonga's massive underwater volcanic eruption could deliver long-lasting damage to coral reefs, erode coastlines and disrupt fisheries, say scientists studying satellite images and looking to the past to project the future of the remote region.

Acid rain

Since the initial eruption, the volcano has been releasing sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide — two gases that create acid rain when they interact with water and oxygen in the atmosphere.

With Tonga's tropical climate, "there is likely to be acid rain around Tonga for a while to come," said volcanologist Shane Cronin at the University of Auckland.

Acid rain causes widespread crop damage, and could ruin Tongan staples like taro, corn, bananas and garden vegetables. "Depending on how long the eruptions last, food security could be compromised," Cronin said.

Satellite imagery shows the plume spreading westward, which means Tonga could be spared some of this acid rain though Fiji could then be in its path.

In a bulletin, the UN humanitarian affairs office said Fiji was monitoring its air quality, and has advised people to cover their household water tanks and stay indoors in the event of rain.

Fish die-offs

Tonga's exclusive economic zone of nearly 700,000 marine square kilometres is 1,000 times larger than its land area. And most Tongans get their food — and livelihood — from the ocean.

While scientists have yet to investigate on the ground, "the few pictures that are available seem to show a blanket...of ash" on land, said Marco Brenna, a geologist at the University of Otago in New Zealand.

In the ocean, that ash can be harmful to marine life. Weeks before Saturday's eruption, Tonga Geological Services had warned that nearby seawater was contaminated with toxic volcanic discharge, and that



fishermen should "assume fish in these waters are poisoned or poisonous." Inevitably, the eruption has made the situation worse. Murky, ash-filled water near the volcano will deprive fish of food and wipe out spawning beds.

Some fish will perish, and survivors will be forced to migrate, scientists said. Further changes in the structure of the sea floor could create new obstacles for fishing vessels. "It will be a while before the same or new fishing grounds will be restored," Brenna said.

Smothered corals

Falling ash can also smother coral reefs, which in Tonga are the mainstay of a tourism industry that brought in up to \$5 million per year before the coronavirus pandemic. Even before the eruption, Tonga's reefs were threatened by disease outbreaks and the effects of climate change including coral bleaching and increasingly strong cyclones.

Now, "vast areas of the reefs in the immediate impact area at Hunga Tonga are probably buried and smothered by large deposits of volcanic ash," said Tom Schils, a marine biologist at the University of Guam who has studied volcanic eruptions and corals in the Northern Mariana Islands.

Source: Reuters

Europe narrows hunt for next astronauts, eyes crewed flights

The European Space Agency has narrowed the candidate list for its next generation of astronauts, including dozens who have a physical disability.

The agency announced last year that it had received a record number of 22,589 applications from people hoping to become the continent's next generation of space travelers.

ESA said on Jan 18, Tuesday it has reduced these to fewer than 1,400 — 29 of whom have a physical disability — and hopes to cut the shortlist down to several tens of candidates by the end of the year for the four to six positions on its astronaut training program.

The agency's director-general, Josef Aschbacher, said the selection process would be accompanied by a feasibility study to determine the implications of choosing candidates with disabilities "but, yes, we are committed at ESA to open space to everyone."

ESA has for decades relied on its Russian and American counterparts to launch astronauts into space. Currently the agency has several places booked on American commercial launches. But Aschbacher said Europe may finally get its own crewed spacecraft if ESA member states approve the idea at a meeting later this year.

"We are not only talking of launches, we



FILE - Astronaut Luca Parmitano of Italy, seen on screen, flashes a thumbs up, as he controls the Space Rover, rear, which successfully picked up a rock during a training exercise of the European Space Agency, ESA, in Katwijk, near The Hague, Netherlands, Monday, Nov. 25, 2019. (AP)

are talking of human exploration," he said, adding that future missions would seek to send astronauts to the moon "and beyond."

In the meantime, the agency will continue to develop its robotic capability, including a spacecraft capable of carrying large loads to the Moon that would support joint missions with partners such as NASA.

ESA is also in the early stages of working on a probe that would fly to an ice moon, such as Saturn's Enceladus, to recover a sample and bring it back to Earth.

"It could be that there's very simple, primitive life in the water underneath the ice cover," said Aschbacher. Source: AP

All iPhone 14 models to feature 120Hz displays, 6GB RAM: Report

Apple is expected to announce the iPhone 14 series in or around September and now a new report suggests that all four iPhone 14 models would sport 120 Hz screens, not just the two Pro devices.

According to a research note by analyst Jeff Pu for Haitong International Securities, all four iPhone 14 models will also have the exact same RAM amount: 6GB. This too is in contrast to the current situation, where the iPhone 13 mini and iPhone 13 have 4GB, while the Pro and Pro Max have 6GB, reports GSMarena.

Recently, Apple analyst Ming-Chi Kuo also claimed that the 2022 iPhone 14 Pro and 14 Pro Max would be shifting over to a hole-punch cutout for the camera.

Apple has reportedly advised major US carriers to prepare for the launch of eSIM-only smartphones by September this year.

It is possible that Apple might remove the physical SIM card slot starting with some iPhone 14 models, rather than some iPhone 15 models as originally rumoured.

It is also said that there will be support for two eSIM cards, ensuring dual SIM functionality. The removal of the SIM card slot could further



improve water resistance.

The next flagship series, the iPhone 14 line-up, will come with up to 2 TB of storage.

Apple will adopt QLC flash storage for next year's iPhone and that, thanks to the newer storage technology, it will increase capacity to 2 TB. Source: IANS



India, Tesla in 'weird stalemate' on tax cut demands with no investment pledge

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Tesla is desperate to import and sell its electric vehicles in India and has for nearly a year lobbied officials in New Delhi to reduce tariffs, which the company's billionaire CEO Elon Musk says are among the highest in the world.

But Indian official sources said they have been unconvinced by Tesla's lobbying as the company has not yet shared any firm plan to invest in the country, something that would be in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Make in India" vision to boost local manufacturing and create jobs.

A third person with direct knowledge of Tesla's thinking said the discussions with the Indian government have reached a "weird stalemate situation".

"Things are not moving ahead (for Tesla)," said the person.

The sources declined to be identified as the discussions are private.

The apparent deadlock could upset the electric carmaker's ambitions for the South Asian country as it was pinning hopes on lower import taxes to make its cars more affordable and the business viable.

Currently, India levies an import tax of as high as 100 percent on electric vehicles which have a so-called landing cost - a car's price plus inbound shipping charges - of \$40,000 (roughly Rs. 30 lakh) or more.

This would make India the most expensive market for Tesla cars in the world, putting them well out of reach for most Indian consumers.

The third source said Tesla has told officials it is open to sourcing more auto components locally and eventually moving towards manufacturing, but the government sources have indicated they want firm commitments.

"If they do not want to invest anything here, how is that model going to work," said one senior Indian government official, who added that a cut in the import duty was "highly unlikely" anytime soon.

Tesla did not respond to a request for comment.

PM Modi's office and India's ministries of finance and industries, which are all reviewing Tesla's demands, did not respond to a request for comment. *Source: Reuters*

China cuts lending rates, boosting property firms

BEIJING (TIP)

China further reduced bank lending costs Thursday in the latest move to boost its stuttering economy, providing some much-needed support to the country's beleaguered developers.

Property firm shares and bonds surged on the fresh rate cut from People's Bank of China -- the second in two months -- days after Beijing reported slower growth in the final months of 2021.

The slowing real estate industry has put downward pressure on growth, with several large companies including debt-laden development giant Evergrande defaulting in recent months.

The central bank said it had lowered the one-year loan prime rate (LPR) to 3.7 percent, from 3.8 percent in December.

It had reduced the LPR -- which guides how much interest commercial banks charge to corporate borrowers -- in December, for the first time in 20 months, as the economy was threatened by the real estate crisis and coronavirus flare-ups.

The launch of a regulatory drive last year to curb speculation and leverage had cut off avenues to crucially needed cash, sparking a crisis in the property sector.

But investors regained confidence amid expectations of regulatory easing with shares in Hong Kong-listed Agile Group up more than six percent and Country Garden climbing 7.4 percent.

Property developer bonds also surged Thursday on news of the rate cut, in what Bloomberg said was a record-breaking rally, highlighting the huge sums of



money primed to flow into distressed securities if the property sector crackdown was eased.

Thursday's move comes after the world's second-biggest economy reported strong 8.1 percent growth in 2021, but with the first half of the year accounting for much of that growth.

The central bank also cut the interest rate on its one-year policy loans on Monday -- the first drop in the key rate for loans to financial institutions since early 2020.

China was the only major economy to expand in 2020, after quickly bringing the outbreak under control.

But the country is now battling several localised virus clusters as it deals with the ongoing property market slump and fallout from a wide-ranging regulatory

crackdown last year.

"Today's reductions to both the one-year and five-year Loan Prime Rates (LPR) continue the PBOC's efforts to push down borrowing costs," said Sheena Yue, China economist at Capital Economics.

She said the cuts mean "mortgages will now be slightly cheaper, which should help shore up housing demand."

"Targeted support for property buyers does appear to be limiting one of the more severe downside risks facing the economy."

Hong Kong-listed China Aoyuan Group became the latest major developer to miss bond payments, saying in a filing it would be unable to pay two notes due Thursday and Saturday, amounting to \$688 million in total. *Source: AFP*

FDI flows to India slip 26 per cent in 2021: UN report

UNITED NATIONS (TIP)

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to India in 2021 were 26 per cent lower, mainly because large M&A deals recorded in 2020 were not repeated, the UN trade body has said.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Investment Trends Monitor published on Wednesday said global foreign direct investment flows showed a strong rebound in 2021, growing 77 per cent to an estimated USD 1.65 trillion, from USD 929 billion in 2020, surpassing their pre-Covid level.

"Recovery of investment flows to developing countries is encouraging, but the stagnation of new investment in the least developed countries in industries important for productive capacities, and key Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) sectors - such as electricity, food or health - is a major cause for concern," said UNCTAD Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan.

The report said developed economies saw the biggest rise by far, with FDI reaching an estimated USD 777 billion in 2021 - three times the exceptionally low level in 2020.

FDI flows in developing economies increased by 30 per cent to nearly USD 870 billion, with a growth acceleration in East and South-East Asia (+20 per cent), a recovery to near pre-pandemic levels in Latin America and the Caribbean, and an uptick in West Asia. *Source: PTI*



Nod to equity infusion of Rs 1,500 cr in IREDA

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The government on January 19 approved Rs 1,500 crore for equity infusion in the public sector renewable energy lending company IREDA to enhance its capacity to offer financial support to the industry.

Sharing the details of the decision taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Information & Broadcasting (I&B) Minister Anurag Thakur said, the fresh equity infusion in the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) Ltd., a PSU under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, would enable it to lend loans up to Rs 12,000 crores to the sector. Thakur further said, "The IREDA plays a big role in the field of renewable energy. This agency was established to finance renewable energy. Its portfolio has increased from Rs 8,800 crore to Rs 28,000 crore in the past six years." The minister said, "But according to RBI, the loan can only be lent on 20% of the net worth."



Shree Ganeshaya Namah



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

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The Indian Panorama brings you Weekly and Birthday Horoscope by NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JAN 24 TO JAN 30, 2022



Aries

This week, Endurance is the answer; perseverance will pay off. This week, you'll be patient and tranquil. This week, your troubles will not disturb you. You will dominate your coworkers at work. You will easily perform the assignment that has been assigned to you. This week, you'll outperform your coworkers. Your compassionate side will take center stage during the second half of the week. You're going to give some money to the underprivileged. This week, your romantic life will bloom for sure. Your partner and you are more likely to bond over the common professional difficulties you have been facing lately. You shall have a conversation regarding your marriage in the latter half of the week. Regarding your health will be alright throughout the week and you do not need to worry at all.



Taurus

You've made blunders earlier when it comes to your professional decisions, but this week you'll correct them. This week, you'll lay the framework by generating a list of employment prospects based on your academic talents and experiences. This week is all about planning and strategizing. By the end of the week, you'll have a solid strategy in place. This week, you'll pat yourself on the back and be pleased with yourself. This week, talk to your guide or idol about your worries, and they will assist you. This week your romantic facades are likely to suffer due to the negative transition of the Venus in your zodiac. Your partner will overreact to everything that goes wrong between you both. Don't worry positive energies will make things better by the end of the week. Your health will not suffer a lot this week but, you must still be careful due to weather conditions.



Gemini

This is the week to stand firm in your decisions. Your judgment abilities are impetuous, but you will work on improving them this week. This week, you will provide monetary assistance to someone. You'll be able to shoulder some of their weight. Your Jupiter will be delighted and move to a favorable position as a result of the person's blessing. This step will help you grow as a person. The assistance will be returned to you in a greater and better method. This week your partner will make you feel proud of yourself and this will boost your morale. If you are a patient with blood pressure or diabetes, you must take extra care this week of yourself this week.



Cancer

This week, fortune plays a significant part in your life. You'll handle a challenging circumstance with aplomb. For your efforts, you will be praised. This week, your family relationships will begin to improve. This week, your problems will take a back seat. Your first half of the week will be occupied by wonderful deep insights. Your family members will make you feel cherished and significant throughout the second part of the week. In your family's life, it's been a nice week. This week your relationship will flourish a little bit. You have to be more careful while taking any upfront decision regarding your marriage. Your health will have to be taken care of in the latter half of the week.



Leo

Your week will be dominated by religious activities. Your religious instincts will be satisfied this week. You'll feel more connected to the cosmos and the all-powerful. The week will need you to be charitable. You will correctly allocate your task to your office workers. Your week will be productive and rewarding. Your relationship will be well set this week. If your parents are looking for a potential match for you, the latter half of the week is the right time to fix the meeting. Your health will not go through any issues this week. Your children must stay away from dangerous sports.



Virgo

This week you're feeling inventive! This week, you'll spend your time creating and making. This will be a mental workout for you. To note down your thoughts and emotions, you'll learn a new journaling style. Your loved ones will seek your advice on how to manage their finances, and you will be able to assist them appropriately. Your romantic life will not go through any issues this week. You will have to be extra careful while dealing with your children's romantic issues. This week you must listen to your parental instincts a lot. Your health will be alright until the middle of the week, In the latter half of the week, you must take charge of your food habits.



Libra

Your astrological configurations this week will encourage you to take control of your life and environment. You'll be optimistic for the entire week, and you'll share it wherever you go. This week, you'll brighten up your coworkers. This is the week

in which you choose to be cheerful. Simple pleasures will bring you delight. You will treat everyone with respect. This week, you'll show off your charitable side. Your workdays will be extremely efficient and satisfying this week. Your love life will be blessed throughout the week. You might not get a chance to meet your partner but you will stay connected to them and create a stronger bond. Your health facades will suffer a little bit; therefore, you must be really careful this week. Do not skip your daily routine.



Scorpio

This week, you'll be treated to a pleasant and revitalizing get-together. You will meet folks who are agreeable and enthusiastic. You'll discover something new and sights. Participate in the discussion, create friends, and connect with them. This event will expand your horizons in many ways. By the end of the week, all of your job tension will have dissipated, and you will feel more secure in yourself. There are chances of marital disputes this week as Venus will transit in an unfavorable position 4 wedded couples. If you are likely to meet someone you hold your romantic interest with, you must not plan this meeting in the first half of the week. As far as your health is concerned, minor back pain and occasional stomach issues will bother you this week. Try to keep yourself detoxed the entire week.



Sagittarius

This week, we'll delve into all of the difficulties and concerns you've been pondering under your covers. This week, you'll summon the guts to confront the facts. You'll devise a strategy for dealing with each problem one at a time. Taking little steps toward each challenge can assist you in solving it. This week, you will make smart and essential life judgments. During the first part of the week, you will demonstrate your worth to your coworker. It'll be a strategic victory. Your domination over your adversary will help you gain more ground at work. This week, you'll be appreciative of yourself. You will behave a little bit more dominant with your partner this week. You must try to keep yourself calm discussing anything with your partner. In the latter half of the week, your partner and you both will ease out yourself a little in this will be good for your relationship. Your health will be sailing in a pink pot of wellness. Therefore, be carefree.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JAN 24 TO JAN 30, 2022

January 24

Ganesha says today you will be provided with a lot of opportunities to prove yourself at work which, in turn, may also lead to your promotion. Your hard work will pay off today, if you're looking for monetary gains you're likely to get a high paying client today. If you're planning a new business venture, a new important prospect is very likely to arise immediately as you launch your new venture.

January 25

Ganesha says great opportunities will knock on your door today, be diligent about them, they can work in your favour shortly. Try to worship lord shiva by chanting the mantra 'Om Namah Shiva, it will be beneficial for your personal as well as professional life. Today will be a content day for you. The possibility of taking the next step in your relationship is quite high today. You will have a day full of doing things you love and spending time with your favourite person in the lap of nature.

January 26

Ganesha says you are doing amazing health-wise. You will feel like a new person today as you go through the day full of energy and

enthusiasm. Your health has finally healed and you're doing great. A chain of new opportunities will suddenly open for you professionally. You need to think out of the box as well as go the extra mile to reap maximum benefits. Once you start being decisive outcomes will be positive for you.

January 27

Ganesha says your health is improving a lot, today you will feel more energized and healthy and ready to take on any task that comes your way. You will have a day full of love and surprises today. You will receive a lot of attention from your favourite people that will have you feeling like you're on cloud nine today, if that wasn't enough, you're very likely to make a profit from a new prospect.

January 28

Ganesha says you will feel blessed to have your partner today. As they will be your biggest support system through all thick and thin. You will realize today that they are a keeper and you will immediately start planning for your future. Today you will be drawn towards genuine people in your life as you feel unimpressed by the people who show off today. Meeting up with

old friends will lift your spirits. New equations are forged at work. Be wary of enemies who might try to defame you because you're very outspoken today.

January 29

Ganesha says you will notice greatness in your day if you look out for the little good things that keep happening throughout the day. It is advised to not get into heated arguments with them as it may negatively impact the relationship which in turn will negatively impact your health as well. You will have a day full of doing things you love and spending time with your favourite people i.e. your friends and family in the lap of nature. A lot of exercises in form of games will make you happy too.

January 30

Ganesha says you will go through a positive shift when it comes to your mental and physical health. This positive shift will help you to participate and indulge more in social events. You will have an overall fun day today. You will gain a lot of profit in your business today which will set a positive tone for the day. 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.

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JAN 24 TO JAN 30, 2022

CONTD FROM PAGE 30



Capricorn

A new week comes with its new changes and adversities; the location of your new moon indicates that you will have some positive encounters this week. You have a full week of thrills and discovery ahead of you. It will be the successful first part of the week. At work, you will perform all of your tasks. The second half of the week is going to be fantastic. If you communicate with your family, you'll be able to organize a fun activity at the conclusion of the week. In the second half of the week, you'll hear some positive news from abroad. As far as your romantic life is concerned, you will be blessed with the transition of the Sun in the 7th House of your Zodiac and this could be the most fortunate event for your love life that could have happened in this month. Cold and cough might bother you in the latter half of the week, be careful.

Aquarius



This week, your main aim is to spend time in leisure. You'll spend more time pondering and soaking up as much pleasant energy as possible. You'll appreciate whatever the world has bestowed upon you. This week, pay attention to the smallest things. Nature will teach you important life skills in the most basic of ways. All of your time spent with yourself is preparing you for something large and excellent that is about to happen. It'll be a quiet week as

far as your love life is concerned. Your partner will be happy to give you out some personal space so that you can understand yourself better. As your 7th house will be influenced by Venus on Thursday, your romantic life will start to improve. You will enjoy yourself a lot this week this leisure time will have you act a little carefree regarding your health.



Pisces

This week will be a nice one for you. In your profession, you will see a lot of great changes. Your bosses will compliment you on the excellent work you've done. If you have invested in the share market in the last two weeks, this week will be a very fortunate period to sell your equity and profit. Your romantic life is maturing. It will become

stronger if you give it enough time. Your desired job or college may respond positively to your application. This week, you are more likely to meet someone you might get married to in the future. Therefore, keep your heart open and nurture the emotions you feel this week. If you are facing any issues regarding breathing or any pulmonary issues you must take them seriously this week. Avoid traveling distant places this week.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN WARNS RUSSIA AGAINST INVASION OF UKRAINE

"I'm not so sure that he is certain what is he going to do," Mr. Biden said. He added, "My guess is he will move in." With critical talks approaching, the United States and Russia on Wednesday showed no sign either will relent from entrenched positions on Ukraine that have raised fears of a Russian invasion and a new war in Europe.

Speaking in Kyiv, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken accused Russia of planning to reinforce the more than 1,00,000 troops it has deployed along the Ukrainian border and suggested that number could double "on relatively short order." Mr. Blinken did not elaborate, but Russia has sent an unspecified number of troops from the country's far east to its ally Belarus, which also shares a border with Ukraine, for major war games next month.

Ukraine, meanwhile, said it was prepared for the worst and would survive whatever difficulties come its way. The President urged the country not to panic.

Mr. Blinken's visit to the Ukrainian capital came two days before he is to meet in Geneva with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. That follows a series of inconclusive talks last week that failed to ease rising tensions.

Russian military activity has been increasing in recent weeks, but the U.S. has not concluded whether President Vladimir Putin plans to invade or whether the show of force is intended to squeeze the security concessions without an actual conflict.

In Kyiv, Mr. Blinken reiterated Washington's demands for Russia to de-escalate the situation by removing its forces from the border area, something that Moscow has flatly refused to do. And, Mr. Blinken said he wouldn't give Russia the written response it expects to its demands when he and Mr. Lavrov meet in Geneva.

Meanwhile, a top Russian diplomat said Moscow would not back down from its insistence that the U.S. formally ban Ukraine from ever joining NATO and reduce its and the alliance's military presence in Eastern Europe.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Moscow had no intention of invading Ukraine but that its demands for security guarantees were non-negotiable.

The U.S. and its allies have said the Russian demands are non-starters, that Russia knows they are, and that Mr. Putin is using them in part to create a pretext for invading Ukraine, which has strong ethnic and historical ties to Russia.

The former Soviet republic aspires to join the alliance, though has little hope of doing so in the foreseeable future.

Mr. Blinken urged Western nations to remain united in the face of Russian aggression. He also reassured Ukraine's leader of NATO support while calling for Ukrainians to stand strong.

Mr. Blinken told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy that the U.S. and its allies were steadfast in backing his country and its democratic aspirations against Russian attempts to incite division and discord through "relentless aggression." "Our strength depends

on preserving our unity and that includes unity within Ukraine," he told Mr. Zelenskyy. "I think one of Moscow's long-standing goals has been to try to sow divisions between and within our countries, and quite simply we cannot and will not let them do that." The Mr. Biden administration had said earlier it was providing an additional \$200 million in defensive military aid to Ukraine. Mr. Blinken said more assistance is coming and that it would only increase should Russia invade.

Mr. Zelenskyy thanked Mr. Blinken for the aid, which was approved in late December but not confirmed until Wednesday.

"This [military] support not only speaks to our strategic plans of Ukraine joining the alliance, but more importantly to the level of our military, our military supplies," he said, referring to Kyiv's desire to join NATO.

"Your visit is very important," Mr. Zelenskyy said. "It underlines once again your powerful support of our independence and sovereignty." Mr. Zelenskyy released a video address to the nation on Wednesday evening, urging Ukrainians not to panic over fears of a possible invasion. But he said the country has been living with the Russian threat for many years and should always be prepared for war.

"Ukraine doesn't want a war, but must always be prepared for it," Mr. Zelenskyy said.

From Kyiv, Mr. Blinken plans a short trip to Berlin for talks with German and other European allies on Thursday before meeting with Lavrov.

On Wednesday, French President Emmanuel Macron called on the European Union to draw up a plan to ease tensions with Russia. "We should build it among Europeans, then share it with our allies in the framework of NATO, and then propose it for negotiation to Russia," he said.

Washington and its allies have kept the door open to possible further talks on arms control and confidence-building measures to reduce the potential for hostilities. (Agencies)

FOREIGN INVESTMENT FLOW INTO INDIA DOWN 26% IN 2021: UN

investment in the least developed countries in industries important for productive capacities, and key Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) sectors - such as electricity, food or health - is a major cause for concern," said UNCTAD Secretary-General Rebeca Grynszpan.

The report said developed economies saw the biggest rise by far, with FDI reaching an estimated \$777 billion in 2021 - three times the exceptionally low level in 2020.

FDI flows in developing economies increased by 30% to nearly \$870 billion, with a growth acceleration in East and South-East Asia (+20%), a recovery to near pre-pandemic levels in Latin America and the Caribbean, and an uptick in West Asia. (Source: PTI)

RECOGNIZE 'HINDUPHOBIA' AND VIOLENCE AGAINST BUDDHISTS, SIKHS TOO: AMBASSADOR TIRUMURTI

extremism" must not be included to resolutions on terrorism, as they would "dilute" them.

"In the past two years, several member states, driven by their political, religious and other motivations, have been trying to label terrorism into categories such as racially and ethnically motivated violent extremism, violent nationalism, right wing extremism, etc. This tendency is dangerous for several reasons," Mr. Tirumurti said, delivering a keynote address at a virtual conference organized by the Delhi-based Global Counter-Terrorism Centre (GCTC), where he said he spoke as Ambassador of India to the U.N. and not in his capacity as Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) at the U.N. Security Council for 2022.



India assumed the chair of the CTC this month, and Mr. Tirumurti's strong remarks suggest that India will oppose any expansion of the terms that are included in the UNSC's discussions on terrorism, until it demits the UNSC seat in December this year.

Mr. Tirumurti pointed out that only religious phobias against "Abrahamic religions": Islam, Christianity and Judaism had been named in the "Global Counter Terrorism Strategy's" 7th review passed by the U.N. General Assembly in June 2021. "The emergence of contemporary forms of religiophobia, especially anti-Hindu, anti-Buddhist and anti-Sikh phobias is a matter of serious concern and needs attention of the U.N. and all member states to address this threat," Mr. Tirumurti said, without pointing out any examples.

In comments that appeared to counter recent criticism in western press of "right-wing" ideology in India, the envoy said that putting "labels" to "so-called" threats was "misleading and erroneous".

"It is important to understand that in democracies right-wing and left-wing are part of the polity primarily because they come to power through the ballot reflecting the majority will of the people and also since democracy by definition contains a broad spectrum of ideologies and beliefs," Mr. Tirumurti said, adding that national or regional narratives must not become part of global narratives.

Mr. Tirumurti said that attempts to characterize the motivation behind terror groups were another danger that could take the world "back to the pre-9/11-era" where groups were labelled as "your terrorists and my terrorists". At the UNSC, India also chairs the 1988 Taliban Sanctions Committee, and would have to preside over any requests on easing or waiving sanctions against Taliban leaders.

"Terrorists are terrorists; there are no good and bad ones. Those who propagate this distinction have an agenda. And those who cover up for them are just as culpable," he said, calling on the Security Council "to be on guard against new terminologies and false priorities that can dilute our focus". (Source: The Hindu)

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Sankashti Chaturthi

If there is one god in the Hindu pantheon who is a marker of auspicious beginnings, it is Lord Ganesha. The elephant-headed god is worshipped at the beginning of seasons and rituals for this reason. And there is one day in every month of the year when this worship is said to be at its peak. Known as Sankashti Chaturthi or Sakat Chauth, this day is even more auspicious, especially if it falls on a Tuesday or Friday.

Celebrated across India, Sankashti Chaturthi is observed on the fourth day, or chaturthi, of every month in the Hindu calendar. The day is also linked with the Krishna Paksha, or the waning phase of the moon. While people in many states of India celebrate this day, especially in Maharashtra, it is known by a number of different names. Known as Sankat Hara Chaturthi in Tamil Nadu, the day is also celebrated as Angaraki Chaturthi when it falls on a Tuesday.

Sakat Chauth 2022

Friday, 21 January 2022

Chaturthi Tithi Begins: 21 January 2022 at 08:51 am

Chaturthi Tithi Ends : 22 January 2022 at 09:14 am

Did you know : This fast is famous by many names, such as Sakat Chauth, Sankta Chauth, Tilakut Chauth etc.

The Sanskrit word "sankashti" means deliverance from troubled or difficult times, so worshipping Lord Ganesha on this day means you'll be blessed with peace and prosperity in the coming times. Devotees usually keep a fast to be free of obstacles on this day.

Rituals that are followed on Sankashti Chaturthi

- Devotees keep a partial or day-long fast on this day. They eat only fruits, vegetables and root plants throughout the day. Peanuts, potatoes and sabudana khichdi are prepared especially to mark this day's fasting. The day's fasting is broken only after the main puja is done.
- The main puja of the day is done in the evening, after the moon is visible. The idol of Lord Ganesha is worshipped with Durva grass, fresh flowers and incense sticks. Lamps are lit, and devotees read the "vrat katha" specific to the month in which the Chaturthi is. The rituals for this day end with the sighting of the moon.
- Special sweets or naivedya, including modaks, are offered to the deity during the puja. After the katha and aarti, these sweets are distributed as prasad.
- Apart from worshipping Lord Ganesha, the moon is also worshipped on Sankashti Chaturthi. Water, chandan or sandalwood paste, rice and flowers are offered in the direction of the moon.
- Reciting the Vedic hymns or mantras devoted to Lord Ganesha garners blessings on this day. Devotees chant the Ganesha Ashtothra, Sankashtnashana sthouthra and Vakrathunda Mahakaya especially on Sankashti Chaturthi.



Sankashti Ganesh Chaturthi Vrat Katha

The katha of Sankashti Ganesh Chaturthi dates back to the time of Satyuga. However, the Pandava queen, Draupadi also listened to this katha. Once a rishi, who was known to be the guardian of the Kuru dynasty, visited the home of Pandavas when they were in exile. And, Draupadi, who went through the cheer haran by Dushasan and was humiliated by Duryodhana, was wondering about what kind of sin she had committed that she is getting a treatment like this. To answer her questions, Maharshi started telling her the story of king Chandrasena and his queen Ratnavali.

According to the story, King Chandrasena and Ratnavali were going through a rough time as their enemies looted and plundered their kingdom and they were looking for a shelter in a forest. The royal couple was wandering in the woods for food and shelter. One day, they unknowingly entered Markandeya Rishi's hermitage in search of water. And after learning about the place that they had accidentally visited, the king sought the blessings of the sage and narrated his ordeal. However, like Draupadi, he wondered if he had committed sins to endure such hardships.

Hence, to help him find answers to his question, Markandeya Rishi reminded Chandrasena about his

deeds during his previous birth. In his previous birth, King Chandrasena went to a forest hunt, where he came across a few Nag Kanyas, who were dressed in red, and asked them what were they doing on the banks of the lake. To this, they replied that they were observing the Adhik Maas Sankashti Chaturthi Vrat that will help them in getting rid of all their problems. Inspired by the Nag Kanyas, the king decided to observe the vrat. However, after getting rid of all problems, the king no longer remained grateful to God and had turned arrogant and unjust.

Subsequently, he died. However, he once again took birth in a royal household and to reap the benefits and to endure the curse of the misdeeds of his previous birth. After listening to the story, Chandrasena realised that he made a huge mistake and he committed a crime and that he will not repeat such a mistake ever again. He observed a vrat along with Ratnavali on the day of Chaturthi, Krishna Paksha, Adhik Maas wholeheartedly. His devotion and faith worked wonders and he got his lost kingdom and glory back.

However, with this story, Draupadi got all her answers and so did Pandavas and they realised that Karma plays an important role in one's life as what you sow is what you reap.



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Uttarakhand's jaw-dropping Kumaon Valley

Kumaon is home to the heavenly districts of Almora, Bageshwar, Champawat, Nainital, Pithoragarh and Udham Singh Nagar – each sustaining a plethora of hill stations, some maddeningly popular, the others unspoiled and waiting to be explored. So grab your camera, and your friends, hoard your car with chips and cola, and psych up for a journey through towering hills, pine forests, the bluest of skies and a brisk lingering mountain breeze.

The route

Our journey starts from Delhi. After seven hours and 305 kilometres, we reach Uttarakhand's village of Pangot. We head to the town of Almora next and after an hour or so, arrive in the pristine valley of Binsar via the NH309A. Through Sheraghat and Berinaag, we reach Munsiyari and then drive towards the Pithoragarh district. Herein, lies Chaukori, two hours away from Kausani, in Kumaon's Bageshwar district. Next up, is Mukteshwar and then, Ranikhet from where we head back to Delhi.

This is a suggested route for the Kumaon region road trip:

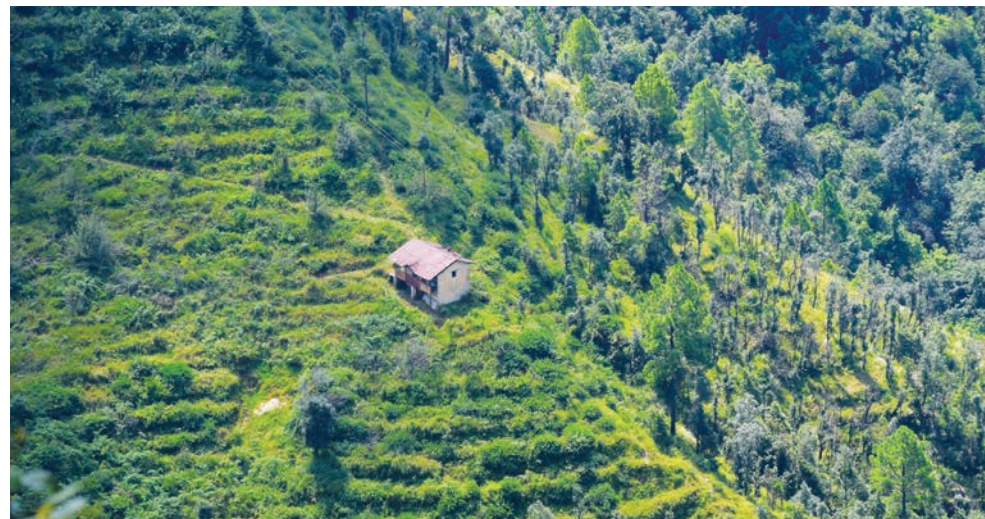
Delhi – Pangot – Almora – Binsar – Sheraghat – Berinaag – Munsiyari – Chaukori – Kausani – Mukteshwar – Ranikhet – Delhi

Almora

A small cantonment town in the scenic Kumaon Valley, a visit here will not leave any history buff disappointed. Its renowned and ancient Katermal Sun Temple and Jageshwar Temples, including the Archaeological Museum, offer an insight into its quaint scriptures. Spots such as Zero Point here are perfect for enjoying a splendid view of the Himalayas. Catering to every adventure seeker's interests, many resorts and travel companies also organise treks to Pindari and Milam glaciers and also mountain-bike trips around the hills of Almora. Another attraction here is the Kumaon Regimental Centre Museum, dedicated to military mementos weapons, especially the decorated Indian Infantry regiment, Kumaon Regiment. One can also visit Lal Bazaar, adorned with sophisticatedly-carved traditional wooden shops from where one can shop for a variety of things. Places such as Kasar Rainbow Cafe, Baba Cake, Glory Restaurant and Bansal Cafe are known non-vegetarian, vegetarian and bistro dishes. Don't forget to try the various kinds of milk sweets here – bal mithai, choklate (not chocolate) with a fudge-like consistency and singauri, a sweet wrapped in a green Malu leaf.

Binsar

A perfect refuge for those who crave for solace away from the humdrum of the cities and crowds, this picturesque and quiet little hamlet lies tucked away in the Kumaon Himalayas. Nestled in a beautiful valley, the village is a trekker's paradise, where exploring meadows and dense pine flanked pathways is as



dreamy as it sounds. Its main attraction is the Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, spread over 300 kms, giving stunning views of renowned Himalayan summits such as Shivling, Kedarnath Peak, Trisul and Nanda Devi. It is a haven for bird enthusiasts, where species such as forktail, parakeets, nuthatches, blackbirds, laughing thrush, monal, magpies, eagles, koklas, woodpeckers and Eurasian jays can be observed. Its vast habitation of flora and fauna includes leopards, Himalayan goral, chital, musk deers, Sumatran serows,

jungle cats, wild boars, black bears, red foxes, red giant flying squirrels and many more.

Chaukori

It is a small hill station located in the Kumaon region, to the north of which is Tibet and to the south in Terai. It's 2010m with a picturesque view.

Kausani

In the last couple of years, this quiet hill station has become quite popular with tourists from across the world.

Leaving behind crowded hill stations, travellers are now making their way to this retreat. Home to waterfalls, lush green meadows and stunning walking trails, there is not much to see or do besides enjoying nature in Kausani. Mahatma Gandhi stayed here for a brief period and penned down the memorable 'Gita-Anashakti Yoga' here. There is a museum dedicated to Gandhi's life here and is a must visit. So is the lovely Baijnath Temple and the waterfalls next to it. Do visit the Kausani Shawl Factory and take back shawls as souvenirs. Besides this, there is not much to shop here at Kausani. Finding a place to stay here is also a little tricky since most hotels are usually booked and there aren't too many options. If you are coming from Delhi, it should take you about 15 hours when travelling by bus. Alternatively, you can also take a train till Kathgodam and then take the bus till Kausani. Do remember that it can take about 2 to 3 hours extra depending on the conditions of the road.

Mukteshwar

Mukteshwar is a hill station in Uttarakhand that is popular for its wide assortment of adventure sports such as rock climbing and rappelling. Overlooking the peaks of Nanda Devi, Mukteshwar is also a celebrated scenic spot that is perfect for long walks and some quiet time in the closeness of nature. The Mukteshwar Temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and is a revered shrine of the region. Located near this temple is the Chauthi Jaali, which is a picturesque precipice of lattice rocks. These rocks present an enchanting view of the green grasslands down below.

Ranikhet

Self-proclaimed Army brats will get a thrill out of this place, for it is home to one of the most badass regiments of the Indian Army, the Kumaon Regiment. The Military Museum is a must visit for an insight into the history of this highly-decorated infantry regiment and the country's brave warriors. This town in Almora is tailor made for those who simply wish to unwind in the hills. But still to keep its adventurous visitors busy, Ranikhet is home to many resorts which organise activities such as paragliding, camping, river-crossing and trekking. The forests encircling this cantonment town are home to several wildlife species such as leopards, Red-faced Monkeys, jackals, Red Foxes, Indian Hares and Pine Martens. The monastery in Ram Mandir is a quaint attraction where one can witness students being taught the long obliterated ancient Vedas and Vedic Mathematics. Take a blissful walk in the Chaubatia Gardens, which are abundant with fruit orchards and meadows adorned with flowers all around. Cuisines from Indian, international to simple cafe food are highly recommended from places such as Rainbow Restaurant, Glory Restaurant and Embassy.

Source: Tripoto



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Temba Bavuma, Rassie van der Dussen tons help South Africa beat India in first ODI

PAARL (TIP)

Captain Temba Bavuma and Rassie van der Dussen scored centuries and shared a partnership of 204 as hosts South Africa beat India by 31 runs in the first ODI on January 19.

The home side elected to bat and posted 296/4 in their 50 overs, with Bavuma's 110 from 143 balls the anchor to go with an unbeaten 129 not out off 96 from van der Dussen, who scored his maiden ODI ton.

India started well as opener Shikhar Dhawan scored 79 from 84 balls and former captain Virat Kohli 51 from 63, but when they were dismissed the touring side struggled to keep up with the required run-rate and finished on 265/8.

Shardul Thakur provided resistance with an unbeaten 50 from 43 balls, but many of the Indian batsmen struggled for fluency on the slow wicket.

Andile Phehlukwayo (2/26) was the pick of the home attack and claimed the key wicket of Rishabh Pant (16), but Tabraiz Shamsi (2/52) and Lungi Ngidi (2/64) also played their part. "It was a nice game actually. There was so much to learn," new India captain KL Rahul said. "We started off well but couldn't get wickets in the middle (of the South African innings). And then when we batted, our middle-order couldn't get going. I thought we would chase it down quite easily but the South Africans came back well," he added.

The home side's innings was shaped by Bavuma, who was patient from the start after they were in trouble at 68/3 in the 18th over.

His stunning partnership of 204 from 183 balls with van der Dussen, who was the aggressor with nine fours and four sixes, laid the platform for their above-par score.

They were particularly impressive in negating the Indian spinners, with seamer Jasprit Bumrah (2/48) the pick of the tourists' attack.

"We played close to the perfect game. We can take a lot of confidence from what we did out there," Bavuma said. "The partnership (with van der Dussen) was probably the decider."

The second match will be played on Friday.

Brief scores: South Africa 296/4 (van der Dussen 129*, Bavuma 110; Bumrah 2/48); India 265/8 (Dhawan 79, Kohli 51, Thakur 50*; Phehlukwayo 2/26, Shamsi 2/52, Ngidi 2/64).

Tough times made me stronger but needed calm and clarity: Dhawan

Scores 79 in the first ODI against South Africa

PAARL (TIP)

Shikhar Dhawan believes that every lean patch in his career has made him "stronger" but it is his clarity and calmness that has enabled him to ride over rough times.

The oldest player in the Indian ODI set-up, there were lots of talks about Dhawan's poor form in domestic cricket but as it has been with the 36-year-old, he was back with a bang in his favourite blue shirt with a top-score of 79 off 84 balls, albeit in a losing cause in the first ODI against South Africa.

"I don't listen to the media or don't read newspapers or watch news, that way I don't take all that information," Dhawan said when asked how he keeps himself away from negativity.

For him, neither the bad patch has affected him for the first time nor is it going to be the last time but one needs to have the self belief in one's abilities. "I have full confidence in myself that what my game is and I have clarity on that and I stay quite calm. And this is part of life, this happens in life, everyone's life has ups and downs, so it is nothing new and happening for the first time or for the last time in my career or my life, so it is all right, that only makes me stronger," said Dhawan.

Dhawan came into the series in the



Shikhar Dhawan in action in Paarl.

back of a poor run of Hazzare Trophy scores - 0, 12, 14, 18, 12 in five List A games.

But if one carefully looks at Dhawan's career, just when there has been calls to drop him, he has invariably responded with a big knock like he did in the first ODI, where he looked the best batter in his side.

"These talks (to drop him) always are there and I am used to it and I just know how to give my best and I always make sure that my preparation is quite good and process is good and

then I leave it to God.

"...and I know that with my experience and my self-confidence, I'll do good and I am happy that I did well today," the flamboyant opener said.

His endeavour is to remain fit and healthy for the last part of his career.

"With my experience I'll keep scoring lots of runs and yeah till the time I keep playing cricket I stay healthy and happy and I score lots of runs," he said knowing well that he is reaching the business end of his career.

Sania Mirza to retire after 2022 season, says body 'wearing down'

MELBOURNE (TIP)

India tennis star Sania Mirza on Wednesday announced that 2022 will be her last season since her body is "wearing down".

Mirza, 35, had returned to tennis after giving birth to her son in March 2019 but her progress was later thwarted by the coronavirus pandemic.

Mirza made the retirement announcement after losing the Australian Open women's doubles first round with partner Nadiia Kichenok.

"There's a bunch reasons for it. It's not as simple as 'okay I'm not going to play'. I do feel my recovery is taking longer; I do feel, considering my son is three years old, I'm putting him at risk by travelling so much with him, that's something I have to take into account," Mirza said at the post-match press conference.

"My body is wearing down. My knee was really hurting today and I'm not saying that's the reason we lost but I do think that it is taking time to recover as I'm getting older," she said.

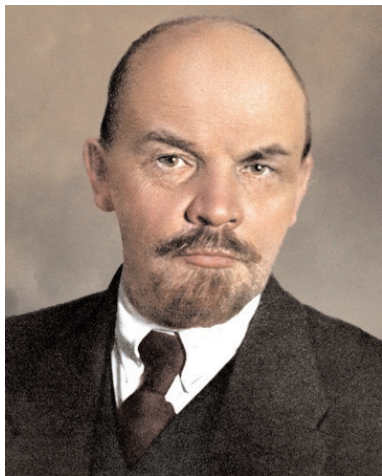


History This Week Jan 21 to Jan 27

"HISTORY, DESPITE ITS WRENCHING PAIN, CANNOT BE UNLIVED, BUT IF FACED WITH COURAGE, NEED NOT BE LIVED AGAIN." MAYA ANGELOU

January 21

January 21, 1793 - In the aftermath of the French Revolution, King Louis XVI of France was guillotined on the charge of conspiring with foreign countries for the invasion of France. During the Revolution, the King had attempted to flee to Austria for assistance. Ten months later, his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette, was also guillotined.



Vladimir Lenin

January 21, 1924 - Soviet Russian leader Vladimir Lenin died of a brain hemorrhage. He led the Bolsheviks to victory over the Czar in the October Revolution of 1917 and had then established the world's first Communist government. Lenin's body was placed in a tomb in Red Square in Moscow and was a much venerated national shrine until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

January 21, 1954 - The USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear powered submarine, was launched at Groton, Connecticut.

January 21, 1976 - The Concorde supersonic jet began passenger service with flights from London to Bahrain and Paris to Rio de Janeiro, cruising at twice the speed of sound (Mach 2) at an altitude up to 60,000 feet.

Birthdays - Ethan Allen (1738-1789) was born in Litchfield, Connecticut. He was a hero of the American Revolution who led the small force that captured Fort Ticonderoga in New York without bloodshed in 1775. The fort contained much needed supplies and ammunition.

Birthdays - Confederate Army General "Stonewall" Jackson (1824-1863) was born in Clarksburg, Virginia (as Thomas Jonathan Jackson). He was a West Point graduate who served in the Mexican War then

resigned to teach at the Virginia Military Institute. He sided with the South and became a Brigadier General, earning his nickname at the first battle of Bull Run as his troops held firm while others wavered. "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall," a fellow general commented. He was shot in 1863 by a Confederate lookout who had mistaken him in the dark. "I have lost my right arm," lamented General Lee upon his death.

January 22



Queen Victoria

January 22, 1901 - Queen Victoria of England died after reigning for 64 years, the longest reign in British history, during which England had become the most powerful empire in the world.

January 22, 1905 - Five hundred protesting Russian workers were killed by the troops of Czar Nicholas II in St. Petersburg. The event became known as "Bloody Sunday" and marked the beginning of the violent revolutionary movement of 1905 which ultimately failed. A second revolutionary movement in 1917 succeeded and the Czar abdicated.

January 22, 1943 - During World War II in the Pacific, Japanese resistance ended in New Guinea, resulting in the first land victory of the war for Allied forces.

January 22, 1973 - Abortion became legal in the U.S. as the Supreme Court announced its decision in the case of Roe vs. Wade striking down local state laws restricting abortions in the first six months of pregnancy. In more recent rulings (1989 and 1992) the Court upheld the power of individual states to impose some restrictions.



Francis Bacon

Birthdays - British essayist, philosopher and statesman Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was born in London. Best known for his philosophical works concerning the acquisition of knowledge; *Novum Organum* and *The Advancement of Learning*.

January 23

January 23, 1849 - Elizabeth Blackwell was awarded her MD by the Medical Institute of Geneva, New York, thus becoming America's first woman doctor.

January 23, 1907 - Charles Curtis of Kansas became the first person of Native American ancestry to serve in the U.S. Senate. He later served as vice president under President Herbert Hoover from 1929-33.

January 23, 1937 - In Moscow, 17 leading Communists went on trial, accused of participating in a plot engineered by Leon Trotsky to overthrow Stalin's regime and assassinate its leaders. After a seven-day trial, 13 of them were sentenced to death. Trotsky fled to Mexico where he was assassinated in 1940.

January 23, 1943 - In North Africa, British forces under General Bernard Montgomery captured Tripoli in Libya.

January 23, 1968 - The American ship USS Pueblo was seized by North Koreans in the Sea of Japan amid claims the Navy ship was spying. The ship was confiscated and its crew held in captivity until December, with one fatality.

Birthdays - Russian film director Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948) was born in Riga, Latvia. He developed a new way of film making utilizing artistic montages (a series of arbitrary images) to deliver an emotional impact. Prior to him, most film makers showed scenes in strictly chronological sequences. His classic films include *Potemkin*, *Alexander*

Nevsky, and *Ivan the Terrible*.

January 24

January 24, 41 AD- Roman Emperor Caligula was assassinated at the Palatine Games by his own guard after a reign of just four years, noted for his madness and cruelty including arbitrary murder.

January 24, 1848 - The California gold rush began with the accidental discovery of the precious metal near Coloma during construction of a Sutter's sawmill. An announcement by President Polk later in the year caused a national sensation and resulted in a flood of "Forty-niners" seeking wealth.

January 24, 1895 - Hawaii's monarchy ended as Queen Liliuokalani was forced to abdicate. Hawaii was then annexed by the U.S. And remained a territory until statehood was granted in 1959.



Winston Churchill

January 24, 1965 - Winston Churchill (1874-1965) died. He had been Britain's wartime prime minister whose courageous leadership and defiant rhetoric had fortified the British during their long struggle against Hitler's Germany. "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat," he stated upon becoming prime minister at the beginning of the war. He called Hitler's Reich a "monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime." Following the war, he coined the term "Iron Curtain" to describe the barrier between areas in Eastern Europe under Soviet Russia's control and the free West.

January 24, 1972 - Japanese soldier Shoichi Yokoi was discovered on Guam after he had spent 28 years hiding out in the jungle not knowing World War II had long since ended.

January 25

January 25, 1533 - King Henry

VIII married his second wife, Anne Boleyn, in defiance of Pope Clement who had refused to annul his first marriage. The King later broke all ties with Rome and became Supreme Head of the Church of England.

January 25, 1579 - Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Gelderland, Friesland, Groningen and Overijssel formed the (Protestant) Dutch Republic with the signing of the Union of Utrecht to defend their rights against Catholic Spain.

January 25, 1947 - Gangster Al Capone, who once controlled organized crime in Chicago, died in Miami at age 48 from syphilis.

January 25, 1959 - An American Airlines Boeing 707 made the first scheduled transcontinental U.S. flight, traveling from California to New York.



John F. Kennedy

January 25, 1961 - President John F. Kennedy conducted the first live televised presidential news conference, five days after taking office.

January 25, 1971 - In Uganda, a military coup led by Idi Amin deposed President Milton Obote. Amin then ruled as president-dictator until 1979 when he was ousted by Tanzanian soldiers and Ugandan nationalists. During his reign, Amin expelled all Asians from Uganda, and ordered the execution of more than 300,000 tribal Ugandans.

January 26

January 26, 1788 - The British established a settlement at Sydney Harbor in Australia as 11 ships with 778 convicts arrived, setting up a penal colony to relieve overcrowded prisons in England.

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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"

"There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children". - Nelson Mandela



POST SURGERY



PRE SURGERY

Triplets Prasanth, Susanth and Nisanth, who were treated by Goutami Eye Institute three years ago and gifted vision for life, as ROP babies under GEMROP (Goutami Eye tele Medicine Retinopathy Of Prematurity).

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- Performing free cataract surgeries
- Screening infants and children
- Distributing glasses and visual aids
- Conducting Research
- Providing Education

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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.
<https://youtube/B23VvUaloN4> <https://youtube/KiCzqLQe2VE>

To know more about the work of Eye Foundation of America or to donate, visit www.eyefoundationofamerica.org

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनिः 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
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www.eyefoundationofamerica.org