



We Wish Readers a Happy Republic Day of India

INDIA BETTER PLACED TO MEET CHALLENGES: RAM NATH KOVIND, PRESIDENT



Ram Nath Kovind, President of Republic of India addressing the Nation on January 25 - Screenshot

NEW DELHI (TIP): President Ram Nath Kovind on Tuesday, January 25, hailed the transformation of a Haryana village by its natives saying, "a new India, which is strong and sensitive, is emerging".

Urging all successful people to work for the development of their birthplaces, the President said rights and duties were two sides of the same coin and doing one's duty well was the foremost contribution to the nation.

In his address to the nation on the eve of the 73rd Republic Day, the President made a special mention of residents of Bhiwani's Sui village who collaborated to transform the area under "Swa Prerit Adarsh Gram Yojana". "I am sure other resourceful people will also contribute to the development of their villages and cities," said the President, crediting his own native village Paraunkh in UP for his ascent to the Rashtrapati Bhavan,

President Kovind said Indians had transformed the Covid vaccination drive into a mass movement. Noting that India is better placed to meet future challenges, he said, In the first year itself, we raised healthcare infrastructure and also reached out to help others. By the second year, we had developed indigenous vaccines and launched the world's biggest vaccination drive." He, however, cautioned against lowering the guard. "It has become a sacred duty to follow precautions suggested by experts," he said.

He said the economy was projected to grow at an impressive rate. He lauded the self-reliance in defense and also spoke of women breaking the glass ceiling in the armed forces.

An Impressive 73rd Republic Day Parade Showcasing India's Military Strength and Rich Cultural Heritage



Display of military strength

NEW DELHI (TIP): India displayed its military might and vibrant cultural heritage on Rajpath, with the ceremonial Republic Day parade this year being drastically scaled down in view of the Covid pandemic.

Special Force Commandoes march during the Republic Day Parade 2022 at Rajpath in New Delhi on January 26, 2022. Photos: Manas Ranjan Bhui

Showcased at the Republic Day parade were the Centurion tank, PT-76 tank, 75/24 Pack howitzer and OT-62 TOPAZ armored personnel carrier that played a major role in defeating Pakistan in the 1971 war.

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Consulate General of India, New York celebrates India's 73rd Republic Day



Consul General Randhir Jaiswal unfurls the national flag

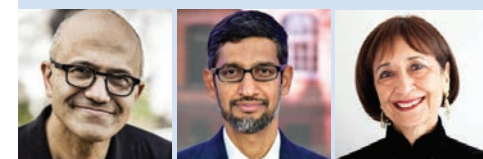
NEW YORK (TIP): The Consulate General of India here celebrated the 73rd Republic Day of India with a flag-hoisting ceremony on Tuesday, January 26th 2022.

Consul General Randhir Jaiswal unfurled the national flag after which the national anthem was sung. Consul General then read out the address of the President of India. A video congratulatory message received from Governor of New York Ms. Kathy Hochul was played at the event. A short cultural program was presented by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, which included singing of patriotic songs and poetry recitation. Due to the pandemic, the number of participants attending the event was restricted. However, the event was telecast LIVE through the Consulate's social media platforms, so that a larger audience could participate.

Local community and cultural organizations too are celebrating the Republic Day with much fanfare in virtual mode.

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PADMA AWARDS 2022 ANNOUNCED: SATYA NARAYANA NADELLA, SUNDARARAJAN PICHAI, MADHUR JAFFREY ARE AMONG THE RECIPIENTS



Satya Narayana Nadella, Sundararajan Pichai, Madhur Jaffrey are among the recipients of the Padma awards

NEW DELHI (TIP): Government of India announced Padma Awards 2022 on the eve of Republic Day on Tuesday, January 25.

Late Gen Bipin Rawat has been chosen for Padma Vibhushan. Indian Americans Satya Narayana Nadella, Sundararajan Pichai, Madhur Jaffrey are among the recipients of the Padma awards.

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PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER:

Prof. Indrajit S. Saluja

VICE PRESIDENT:

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CHIEF EDITOR:

Prof Indrajit S. Saluja

CONSULTING EDITOR :

Deepak Dwivedi, Chairman,
Bhaskar Group, Delhi

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

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SPL. REPORTER UNO:

H.S. Panaser

GRAPHICS DIRECTOR:

Om Parkash Malik

DIRECTOR

ADMINISTRATION:

Gauri Beri

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Baldev Singh / BJ Videos
Gunesh Desai / Masala Junction
Jay Mandal,
Mohammad Jaffer,
SnapsIndia
Mohammad Shahzad,
Zia Khan,
Nisha Rani
Vaaho Photographers,
Vijay Shah - Photo Journalist.

CORRESPONDENTS :

SACRAMENTO:

Parminder S. Aujla

NEW YORK :

Chitagam

FRESNO:

Tarlochan Singh

DALLAS:

Harjit Dhesi, Amarjit Dhillon

OVERSEAS CORRESPONDENTS

LONDON

Nirpal Singh Shergill

SPL CORRESPONDENT

DELHI BUREAU CHIEF:

Chandan Singh

CHANDIGARH:

Manjit Sidhu

LUDHIANA:

A.S. Arora,
R.P.Sharma

JAIPUR :

Dr. Yashpaul Goyal

DALLAS BUREAU CHIEF & VP

Lovlien Kaurr

972-330-3139

editor@theindianpanorama.news

The Indian Panorama

P.O. Box No. 190067, South

Richmond Hill, NY 11419,

Tel: 646-247-9458

Email:

editor@theindianpanorama.news

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COMMENT

Long Live Republic of India

BY INDRAJIT SALUJA



India has come a long way during the last seventy-three years as a Republic, but India has a long way to go. India is not there yet.

India always drew strength from its multi religious and multi-cultural mosaic.

India enriched itself with the wisdom coming from various faiths and the people following those faiths. A multiplicity of faiths and their followers - may they be Hindus, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs- they all contributed to the strengthening of the Indian nation.

If today India stands tall in the comity of nations, it is because India is recognized as a nation of diversity - diversity of which India has always been proud. Indians proudly told the world how there was unity in diversity in this great land where we were told to keep the doors and windows open to the freshness of new ideas and welcome new guests.

Indians gave to themselves a constitution which guaranteed Justice-social, economic, political; which guaranteed Liberty of thought, expression, belief faith, and worship; which guaranteed Equality of status and opportunity, and to promote them Fraternity among all, assuring the dignity of the individual and unity and integrity of the nation.

But, unfortunately, over the years, the guarantees enshrined in the constitution

of India are being eroded. India is slowly turning into a majoritarian state, through the backdoor. One can see today an undesirable exclusion of minorities from power and the blatant use of State power to suppress them. The Republic surely is in danger.

One gets reminded today of the midnight knocks during the times of the British and, even during free India in the times of emergency which was imposed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi when she was the Prime Minister.

The example of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi should open the eyes of the people of India that power hungry rulers can go to any extent to rob the people of their freedom. They use the power of the State to not only rob the people of their freedom and liberty but also to suppress them.

Today one sees similar situations evolving in India. Some call it an undeclared emergency. Because one sees the same old methods of suppression, the same old methods of creating fear in the minds of the people. But the rulers that create fear with the help of State power must remember that this fear not something permanent; it is only a fleeting feeling.

In the post emergency era when the elections were announced, one found Congress flags fluttering atop every house in the state of Uttar Pradesh. But when the elections were held, Congress was

routed in the State.

People were afraid and that's why they put up those Congress flags atop their houses. But deep down in their minds and hearts, they were very clear that they were not going to tolerate an oppressive regime. And when they got an opportunity, they voted that regime out of power.

The rulers who are now trying to suppress the liberties of minorities, people who are now trying to subvert the constitution should better take a lesson from history.

As for the people of India, let them all take a pledge on this sacred Republic Day that they will uphold the Constitution of India, that they will ensure that no political power in this country robs them of the rights guaranteed to the people in the Constitution.

It would be well to remember that it had been a terrible struggle to win for ourselves those wonderful rights and privileges which the Constitution of India guarantees us. Let's all pledge to protect them from being taken away through ballot or bullet.

Let us celebrate Republic Day of India as one nation, one people, one fraternity, irrespective of the faith we follow, irrespective of the language we speak, irrespective of the State we live in.

Long Live India!

Jai Hind!

GUEST COMMENT

Keeping faith: On people-to-people initiatives and India-Pakistan ties

PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE INITIATIVES CAN HELP BUILD GOODWILL BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

At a time when most other India-Pakistan exchanges are suspended, even a simple proposal by the Pakistan Hindu Council, forwarded by Pakistan to India, to allow pilgrims of both countries to travel by air to avoid cumbersome journeys seems a leap. Islamabad-Delhi ties now are possibly at their worst ever in peace times, with no political dialogue at a bilateral or multilateral level for over five years. After many terror attacks, India has stopped normal communications and cultural exchanges, and after the Government's moves on Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan stopped all trade ties. Both sides have downsized their diplomatic missions. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has ensured that the borders have been virtually sealed for two years, with few direct routes operating between them. Even the movement of pilgrims may have been

cancelled but for the conscious attempt by the two governments to make an exception for faith-based travel - as was done for the Kartarpur corridor that came up in 2019, the same year the two countries nearly went to war over the Pulwama attack. Religious exchanges, of mainly Muslim pilgrims from Pakistan, and Hindus and Sikhs from India, are governed by a protocol signed in 1974, and allowed to continue.

While the routes for Sikh pilgrims, from Indian Punjab to the Pakistani Punjab province, are relatively easy, hundreds of Indian and Pakistani pilgrims crossing over at the Wagah/Atari border to travel further to the Hinglaj Mata Mandir in Balochistan, the Paramhans Mandir in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Ajmer Sharif dargah in Rajasthan, the Nizamuddin Aulia in Delhi and other such shrines, face more circuitous routes. To avoid the extra time in travel, the Pakistan Hindu Council, which has now signed an MoU with Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) to facilitate faith-based tour groups, has

asked that PIA charters from Karachi and Lahore be allowed to fly direct to Indian cities this week, with a view to also allowing reciprocal air charters from India. This would be the first time such air travel has taken place in years, and the first time ever that pilgrimages would be accorded this facility. As pilgrim groups on both sides are vetted before being allowed to travel, the precedent is unlikely to pose any additional security threat. In an atmosphere fraught with tensions, such people-to-people initiatives can only help build some modicum of goodwill. No evident harm to national interests has come from other such recent moves embarked on by the two governments, such as the LoC ceasefire announcement in February, or the decision to reopen the Kartarpur corridor in November, or the Government's nod for cricket under the T20 World Cup as well as other sporting events. While the Government's reflex position may be to deny the request, it may prove wiser to give the proposal some deliberate consideration. (The Hindu)

THOMAS R. SUOZZI
3RD DISTRICT, NEW YORK
COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS



407 CASSIDY HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-3335-ansoc
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House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515



MESSAGE

Jai Hind to everyone celebrating the 73rd anniversary of Republic Day of India. Throughout my career in public service, I have worked to elevate the US-India partnership and believe it to be one of our most important relationships for the next 50 years.

Our relationship is driven, in part, by our vibrant Indian American community, one of the most industrious and successful diaspora populations in the world.

I wish all my friends in the Indian community happy, healthy, and safe celebrations. Jai Hind!

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

भारत का प्रधान कौंसल
न्यू यार्क



CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA
NEW YORK



January 21, 2022

MESSAGE

On the occasion of India's 73rd Republic Day, which we are going to celebrate across the world on January 26 2022, I convey my warmest wishes to one and all. Republic Day is special each year, but this year it is even more significant for it happens to be the 75th year of India's Independence. As we mark this National Day laced with the fervor of 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', let us commit ourselves to our Constitution and to the ideals enshrined in it. And let us commit ourselves to our democracy and to our people.

On 26th January 1950, India became a Republic with the enactment of the Constitution. The preamble of the Constitution begins with the words "We the people". As we talk of the opening words of our Constitution, it reminds us that the American Constitution also begins with the same words. This is a very special connect that we share with this great country. It has, indeed, been our effort to put 'people first' in all our national endeavors. We at the Consulate remain ever dedicated to this mantra of 'people first' in our engagement with the community.

I, once again, wish the readers of the 'Indian Panorama' the very best on the occasion of the 73rd Republic Day of India. And I compliment the weekly for bringing out a special publication on the occasion.

Jai Hind!

(Randhir Jaiswal)

3 East 64th Street, New York, NY 10065 (USA)
Tel : CG Office : (212) 774-0622/0621 • Fax : (212) 988-6423
E-mail : cg.newyork@mea.gov.in; cgoffice.newyork@mea.gov.in; Website: www.indiannewyork.gov.in



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NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016
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FAX: 212-545-0967

Professor Saluja January 26, 2022
The Indian Panorama

Re: Republic Day 2022: Democracy Is Free India's Happy Tryst with Destiny!

Dear Professor Saluja,

Ranju joins me in sending our warmest wishes to you and *The Indian Panorama*.

Dr. Ambedkar may have studied law in Columbia Law School right here in New York, but it was Pandit Nehru's singular gift to India: appointing him to be India's Thomas Jefferson, and to draft India's Constitution, albeit, a parliamentary system of governance, he was able to graft the updated-American Exceptionalism, enhanced by our Supreme Court precedents, into India. Dr. Ambedkar's Constitution is what every one of over a billion Indians takes as her/his birthright, and unyieldingly asks of their Government to honor Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Covenant: a Government *for* the people!

On September 25, 2021, Ranju and I extended, in-person, our warmest congratulations to P.M. Narendra Modi, soaked with bilateral pride - a feeling he warmly joined in and expressed with a Covid-modified elbow hug during the UNGA - as he, as India's P.M.: had secured a Bilateral Oval Office Meeting on the same day that our President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., was convening "The Quad," to help ensure a free Indo-Pacific and Freedom of Navigation, as United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea mandates.

I would be remiss, if we didn't celebrate the lightning fast construction of the Central Vista and the inauguration of the hologram statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at India Gate -- under the cupola where the statue of British monarch King George V once stood - by India's indomitable P.M. Narendra Modi, aided by an ambition-less loyal patriot, and who is so dear to us, Minister Hardeep Singh Puri



V.K. RAJU, MD, FRCS, FACS
Ophthalmologist, Regional Eye Associates
President and Founder, Eye Foundation of America
President and Founder, Goutami Eye Institute
Clinical Professor, West Virginia University
Director, International Ocular Surface Society
Adjunct Professor, GSL Medical School
Adjunct Professor, Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University
Phone: 304-288-2080



MESSAGE

Looking back over India's last 75 years, people who have watched India from the sidelines are impressed, perhaps more than the Indians themselves are at the scope of changes that have taken place, living standards, industrialization, education and technological advancements.

What is remarkable is the preservation, despite awesome strains, of national unity in the framework of a democratic polity. During the last elections of 2019, of the 912 million eligible voters (67% turned out: highest ever) stood in lines and voted without shooting each other.

Let us go to the other side of the coin. India is a highly developed country with a developing country's problems everywhere. In spite of the tremendous progress, we are still below sub-Saharan Africa, in children's nutrition status. India has the potential of economic superpower, yet numerous stumbling blocks are in the way after 75 years of independence. Insurgency disputes, lack of international representation (India is not a permanent member of UNSC), subsistence farming, infrastructure, inflation and overheating, energy dependence and costs, unemployment, health, literacy, and many social issues.

In spite of this above gloomy picture, India can overcome and become an economic juggernaut. What we need is a change of mindset. We have the greatest natural resource, 534 million+ young people, below the age of 34, no other country in the world has.

I often visit my motherland (3-5 times a year) in connection with vision care projects in children and beyond. (EyeFoundationofAmerica.org) This is the least I could do, when I consider that India has given me stellar medical education almost for free.

A Happy Republic Day of India!

V.K. Raju

डॉ. स्वाती वि. कुलकर्णी
Dr. Swati V. Kulkarni



भारत की प्रधान कौंसल
अटलांटा
Consul General of India
5549 Glenridge Drive NE
Sandy Springs
Atlanta 30342

January 24, 2022



Message for Indian Panorama 2022

It gives me great pleasure to extend warm greetings and best wishes to all readers of "The Indian Panorama" on the occasion of India's 73rd Republic Day.

Republic Day is a day of special significance for Indians and all people of Indian origin abroad. Since India adopted its constitution, it has strengthened and empowered its democracy. Its economy has shown impressive advances in all sectors - from agriculture to industry and from IT services to science and technology. We as a nation have successfully overcome many challenges and today, India is a strong, secular, vibrant, diverse, and dynamic democracy.

This year, India will cross a milestone when it completes 75 years of Independence on 15th August 2022. This occasion is being celebrated as 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. The series of events are receiving overwhelming participation from our people especially youngsters. We should celebrate great achievement of our leaders and people on this day.


I am confident that India will grow from strength to strength in years to come and will occupy her rightful place in the comity of nations. Once again, my felicitations to all on this momentous occasion.




(Dr. Swati V. Kulkarni)

Tel : 404-549-8358; Fax : 678-935-7054; E-mail : cg.atlanta@mea.gov.in

भारत का प्रधान कौंसल
शिकागो



CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA
CHICAGO




MESSAGE

I extend my warm greetings and felicitations to fellow Indians, members of the Indian diaspora and readers of the Indian panorama on the occasion of the 73rd Republic Day of India.

It was on this day in 1950 that we started our journey as a sovereign Republic. This year, we are also celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav to mark the 75th anniversary year of our independence. In this journey of over seven decades, we have notched up significant milestones as a nation with the contribution of countless Indians.

The government remains steadfast and has undertaken several structural and regulatory reforms in recent years in our pursuit of inclusive development for all. The United States of America is a key strategic and development partner for India. The vibrant Indian diaspora has enriched these ties. We look forward to continued engagement with them.

I thank the Indian panorama for their special edition on this important occasion. They have served as an important bridge connecting us with the Indian diaspora. I wish them much success in the coming months and years ahead.



(Amit Kumar)
24 January 2022




भारत का प्रधान कौंसल
ह्यूस्टन
CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA
HOUSTON

24 January 2022

Message

I extend my warm greetings to fellow Indians, the Indian American community and to the readers of The Indian Panorama on the occasion of the 73rd Republic Day of India. I am happy to know that 'The Indian Panorama' is bringing out a special edition on this occasion.

The Consulate is striving to strengthen the close multifaceted ties between India and United States. India is celebrating *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* to commemorate 75 years of progressive India and the glorious history of its people, culture, and achievements. As part of these celebrations, the Consulate has been organizing and planning various events and activities in partnership with multiple stakeholders. These include interactions to highlight the opportunities to promote trade and investment between both countries in areas like energy, healthcare, technology, innovation and manufacturing. India's National Education Policy 2020 offers immense potential to strengthen our partnership in the areas of education and knowledge. We are working with educational & research institutions in this part of United States for building institutional linkages, promoting exchanges, joint research and collaborating with institutions in India. We have also planned various seminars, conferences, and events to showcase the rich cultural heritage of India and other community initiatives.


We look forward to the continued support of 'The Indian Panorama' to strengthen our outreach and promote our various events and initiatives.

I once again extend my heartiest greetings and wish all good health, happiness and prosperity.




(Aseem R. Mahajan)

4300 Scotland Street, Houston, Texas 77007
Tel: (713) 626-2148 and (713) 626-2149 • Fax: (713) 626-2450
E-mail: cg.houston@mea.gov.in • Website: www.cgihouston.gov.in



CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA



MESSAGE


On the occasion of 73rd Republic Day of India, I extend my hearty felicitations and warmest greetings to all the readers of 'The Indian Panorama'. I congratulate the publishers for bringing out the special edition to mark the event.

This is a special year as we are celebrating '*Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*' - 75 years of India's Independence. Indian diaspora has been a proud partner of India's journey, as an independent nation, for the past 75 years. The community has been contributing in no small measure to the glorious milestones that India has achieved in the past decades.

I compliment Indian diaspora for showing their keen interest in participating in India's growth story. I hope this association would continue to deepen the partnership between India and United States for mutual benefit.

I appreciate the community for preserving their Indian heritage and promoting the country's tradition and culture over the years.

Once again, I appreciate the initiative by the Indian Panorama and wish all its readers a very Happy Republic Day!

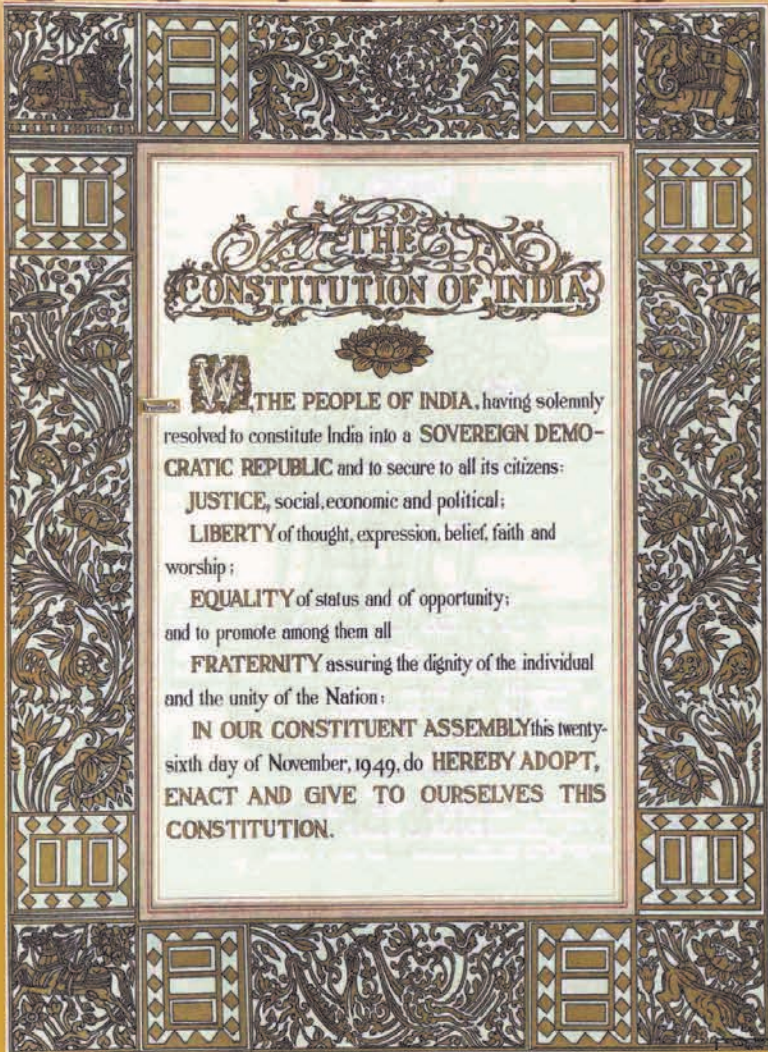


(Dr. T.V. Nagendra Prasad)

540 Arguello Boulevard, San Francisco, CA 94118, USA Tel: 001-415-668-0998 Fax: 001-415-668-2073 email: cg.sf@mea.gov.in

From Thomas Jefferson to Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

From USA to India With Love



US Constitution became effective March 4, 1789.
Indian Constitution came into effect on January 26, 1950, the date celebrated since as Republic Day.



Thomas Jefferson was one of America's Founding Fathers and was the principal author of the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution, and later served as the third US President 1801-1809.



Dr B.R. Ambedkar was independent India's first law and justice minister, the architect of the Constitution of India, and a founding father of the Republic of India. He also campaigned to end discrimination and make India a merit-based society.



The Law Firm of Ravi Batra, P.C., The Batra Building,
142 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10016
Ph: 212-545-1993

Ranju Batra
CHAIR



Indian-origin Gujrati family of four found frozen to death near US-Canada border

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): A family of four Indians from Gujarat - including a baby and a teenager - froze to death in -40F blizzard after walking for 11 hours through waist-high snow to illegally cross border into the US from Canada.

Canadian police found the bodies Wednesday, January 19, 33 feet from the border near Emerson, Manitoba, after the arrest of a Florida man Steve Shand, 47, on charges of human smuggling in the US, according to media reports.

Searching officers found three bodies - a man, a woman and a baby - together and a teen boy a short distance away. It is believed they all died from exposure to the cold.

Shand was arrested after a US Border Patrol in North Dakota stopped a 15-passenger van just south of the Canadian border and found him driving with two allegedly undocumented Indian nationals, the reports said.

Inside the vehicle, officers found cases of plastic cups, bottled water, bottled juice and snacks with one of the adults carrying items for a baby, but there was no infant with the group, reports said citing US court documents.

Later, the authorities came across another group of five Indian nationals who said they had walked across the border for an estimated 11 hours. A search was initiated immediately and Shand was charged with smuggling seven Indian nationals into the US.

One of those people allegedly spent a significant amount of money to come to Canada with a fraudulent student visa, the reports said.

Meanwhile, in New Delhi, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Friday, January 21, he was shocked to hear about the incident and had asked the Indian ambassadors in the US and Canada to



A family of four Indians from Gujarat - including a baby and a teenager - froze to death to illegally cross border into the US from Canada

urgently respond to the situation.

"Shocked by the report that 4 Indian nationals, including an infant, have lost their lives at the Canada-US border," he tweeted. "Have asked our Ambassadors in the US and Canada to urgently respond to the situation."

In Ottawa, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau calling it a "mind blowing tragedy," said on Friday Canada is doing all it can to stop people-smuggling across the US border.

"It was an absolutely mind-blowing story. It's so tragic to see a family die like that, victims of human traffickers ... and of people who took advantage of their desire to build a better life," Trudeau told a news conference, according to Winnipeg Sun.

"This is why we are doing all we can to discourage people from crossing the border in an irregular or illicit manner. We know there are great risks in doing so," he continued.

Canada, Trudeau said, was working very closely with the United States to stop smuggling and help people "taking unacceptable risks".

Meanwhile, a criminal complaint filed in the US District Court for the District of Minnesota charged Shand with human smuggling.

Shand, a "suspected smuggler of undocumented foreign nationals, was arrested near the US/Canadian border for transporting two Indian nationals, who were illegally present in the US," the complaint said. The two Indian nationals have been identified as 'SP' and 'YP' in the complaint.

The complaint said that five Indian nationals illegally present in the United States were also identified and arrested around the time of Shand's arrest.

All the foreign nationals spoke Gujarati, a language spoken in Gujarat in western India. Most had limited or no English language speaking ability, the complaint said. There are significant Gujarati populations outside of India, including in Canada and the US, it noted.

The family of four that was found dead was apparently separated from others while walking through blizzards and snow, according to one of the persons arrested on the US side of the border.

"It is an absolute and heartbreaking tragedy," Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Assistant Commissioner Jane MacLachy said in Winnipeg on Thursday.

"They were wearing winter clothing, she said, but it would not have been enough to save them with the freezing conditions" she said.

"The group was on its own in the middle of a blizzard and faced not only the cold weather, but endless fields, large snowdrifts and complete darkness," MacLachy added. "At this early stage of the investigation, it appears that they all died due to exposure to the cold weather," she said.

The RCMP said it was working with the US authorities on further investigation.

INDIAN ORIGIN MAN 'KILLED' IN PHILIPPINES OVER FINANCIAL DISPUTE

The family has urged the Indian government to bring back the body



Parminder Singh - File photo

NEW YORK (TIP): A 40-year-old man hailing from Galauti village in Moga district has allegedly been shot dead along with a local youth on the outskirts of Manila in the Philippines, the family said in Moga on Saturday, January 22, according to a Tribune report.

Parminder Singh went to the Philippines about 15 years back. After struggling for a couple of years, he started a finance company.

It is learnt that the Manila police had arrested one assailant by chasing him and recovered the weapon used in the crime.

Preliminary investigation revealed that there was a monetary dispute over lending money, which led to the murder.

Meanwhile, the family has urged the Indian government to bring back the body.

US man held for transporting 2 Indian-origin freed from jail without bond

NEW YORK (TIP): A Florida man, charged with human smuggling, has been released from prison conditionally and without paying a bond, days after he was found illegally transporting two Indians in America and four other Indian nationals were found frozen to death in Canada near the US border.

Steve Shand, 47, was arrested last week and charged with one count of having transported and moved or having attempted to transport aliens who entered or remained in the United States in violation of law.

Shand, who made his first appearance on January 20 before US District Court Magistrate Judge Hildy Bowbeer of Minnesota, was ordered to remain in custody pending a preliminary and detention hearing scheduled for January 24.

A report in the Grand Forks Herald newspaper in the US state of North Dakota, said that Shand, who participated in the hearing virtually, was granted a conditional release pending trial at the pretrial and detention hearing.

The report said that he will remain in detention until he is sent back to Florida. "Throughout the 30-minute hearing,



Steve Shand, 47 charged with human smuggling, has been released from prison conditionally and without paying a bond, days after he was found illegally transporting two Indians in America

Shand made no significant statements, only replying "yes ma'am" or "yes, your honor" as Bowbeer listed the conditions of his release," the report said.

"The fact that you are living in Florida is not an excuse" to not appear at any hearing, Bowbeer told Shand, who

replied "Yes ma'am."

The report said that Shand was released on the so-called appearance bond, "solemn written oath" to appear before the court whenever hearings are held or when his trial begins.

He will also need to report to prison if found guilty in the case, the report said.

"Under the conditions of release, Shand must surrender his passport or any similar travel document or visa. He must have no contact with anyone who may be considered a witness or victim in his human smuggling case.

"He will be supervised by a probation and pretrial supervisor in Florida, and he was ordered not to travel far from his home, though he is allowed to travel to Minnesota, should he be required to appear in person. Later hearings may take place either online or in person," it said.

The appearance bond also forbids Shand from violating other state or federal laws and Bowbeer warned that Shand would have to deal with the "snowballing set of consequences, all of them bad" if he did so, the report said.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American Director of White House military office quits citing personal reasons

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Maju Varghese, the Indian American director of the White House Military Office, has quit his post, citing personal reasons.

In a series of tweets on Saturday, January 22, Varghese said leading the White House Military Office (WHMO) was the honor of a lifetime.

"Overcome with lots of emotion today as a 2.5-year journey comes to a close. Grateful to have served @POTUS and for the friendships that were forged in the tough days of the early primaries when we were counted out but bounced back to win it all.

"Grateful to @BidenInaugural for giving the country a day to celebrate despite all the challenges we faced. Grateful to the men and women of the White House Military Office for taking me in and teaching me about service and sacrifice," he said.

An Obama administration alum, Varghese joined the Biden White House after leading the president's inauguration efforts and serving as a senior adviser and chief operating officer for Biden's 2020 presidential



Maju Varghese, the Indian American director of the White House Military Office, has quit his post, citing personal reasons.

campaign, the media reported on Friday.

Varghese "is departing his post Friday after several years working in President Joe Biden's orbit," it said.

The White House declined to say whether a replacement has been selected.

"One thing I learned during two tours

here is it's a demanding place to work and it's because the work is really important, and we throw all of ourselves into this...Right now, it's best for me and my family that I kind of just try to strike a little bit more of a balance," Varghese, who is in his early forties, was quoted as saying to media.

He, however, did not detail his next endeavors.

As head of the military office, Varghese used to coordinate with the military branches responsible for supporting presidential operations at the White House and on the road domestically and abroad, including Air Force One missions, secure communications via the White House Communications Agency, food services, the medical unit and Camp David, the presidential retreat frequented often by the Biden family, the report said.

A lawyer by training, Varghese was born in the US to parents who immigrated from Thiruvalla, Kerala. He has a bachelor's degree in political science and economics from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

INDIAN AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN NARENDER REDDY ANNOUNCES CAMPAIGN FOR NEWLY DRAWN GEORGIA HOUSE DISTRICT 50



Narender Reddy announced he is "running for the State House" of Georgia

ATLANTA, GA (TIP):

Republican businessman Narender Reddy announced his candidacy Tuesday, January 18, for the newly drawn House District 50 in North Fulton.

"I'm running for the State House because we need a leader who will stand up and fight those who would raise taxes, defund police and politicize our schools," said Reddy.

"I'm a lifelong businessman and entrepreneur who has real experience in banking, finance, and in real estate. I'll rely on that experience to effectively represent taxpayers," said Reddy. "Our community needs a Representative at the Capitol who will effectively lead to put North Fulton first, and who won't be afraid to ask hard questions."

Reddy earned his M.B.A. from the University of Evansville, Indiana. He is a 35-year resident of Georgia, having been appointed by both Governor Sonny Perdue and Governor Nathan Deal to serve as a Board member of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). As a GRTA board member, Reddy actively works to help Georgia communities with transportation.

He is the owner and President of Sterling Realty Services, Inc., a commercial real estate firm, and was a Founding Director of Quantum National Bank where he used his experience in real estate to ensure successful loan screening of applicants.

Reddy is the father of two grown children, both of whom graduated from Woodward Academy in North Fulton. Both of his children are medical doctors today.

INDIAN AMERICAN GOLFER BHATIA WINS THE BAHAMAS GREAT EXUMA CLASSIC



Akshay Bhatia has become the third-youngest golfer to win a Korn Ferry Tour event since the Tour's establishment in 1990

GREAT EXUMA, THE BAHAMAS

(TIP): Indian-American golfer Akshay Bhatia has become the third-youngest player to win a Korn Ferry Tour event since the Tour's establishment in 1990 when he secured a two-stroke victory at The Bahamas Great Exuma Classic at Sandals Emerald Bay, IANS reports.

Bhatia, who shot a stunning bogey-free 7-under 65 in the final round on Wednesday, won the title 12 days shy of his 20th birthday, joining Australia's former World No. 1 Jason Day and Korean star Sungjae Im as the only teenagers to win titles on the development circuit which is the pathway to the PGA TOUR.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin NYPD officer hailed as a hero for shooting gunman in New York

NEW YORK (TIP): A 27-year-old Indian-origin "super rookie" NYPD officer is being hailed as a hero after he shot a convicted felon who killed his colleague and seriously injured another while investigating a domestic-violence call in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City.

Sumit Sulan is still struggling to deal with Friday's deadly ambush and "his brain is stuck on the situation", his mother told the New York Post newspaper.

According to the police, 47-year-old crazed career criminal Lawshawn McNeil on Friday, January 21, ambushed the three policemen -- Sulan, Jason Rivera, 22 and Wilbert Mora, 27, who visited the Harlem address to investigate a domestic-violence call. McNeil opened fire and killed Rivera while critically injuring Mora.

Officer Sulan fired back at McNeil and wounded him during the deadly mayhem. Accused McNeil, a convicted felon, is currently hospitalized in a critical condition. Speaking to the Post, the Indian-origin NYPD officer's mother Dalvir Sulan, 60, said that her son is "shaken" and cannot get what happened out of his head. "I'm proud. Everyone says he did good," she said.



Sumit Sulan shot a convicted felon who killed his colleague and seriously injured another while investigating a domestic-violence call in the Harlem neighborhood of New York City.

"I feel bad for the other (officer). He died. We really feel bad. We're sorry. We're hurt. The other guy is critical and we're hurt," she said from her Queens home. A law-enforcement source described Sulan as a "super rookie," noting that he has been on the job since April and at Harlem's 32nd Precinct for only two months.

"He did a great job," Sulan's mother said of her son, who emigrated from India about 15 years ago. "We're proud of him, but we're sorry for both of (the other officers)," she added.

The media, citing a source, said that the call to the Harlem apartment appeared to be a routine run until things went sideways once the officers arrived. The expectation, he explained, was the situation could be resolved without an arrest after a chat with accused McNeil.

The accused's mother never told the arriving officers that her son was armed, the report said, citing the source. Flags across the five boroughs of New York City flew at half-staff on Saturday to honor Rivera, a son of Dominican immigrants who once wrote that he joined the NYPD to make a difference in "this chaotic city." Rivera, who was killed after just 14 months on the job, is survived by his wife.

India's Act West Policy

BY AMBASSADOR
ANIL TRIGUNAYAT



"IN THE RECENT YEARS, INDIA'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE REGION (WEST ASIA) HAS TRANSCENDED FROM MERELY TRANSACTIONAL AND BUYER SELLER RELATIONSHIP TO A TRULY STRATEGIC ONE WHICH IS MANIFESTED THROUGH THE ACCRUED DIVIDENDS IN REAL TIME. IT WOULD NOT BE A TRUISM TO SAY THAT WEST ASIA IS INDEED INDIA'S EXTENDED NEIGHBOURHOOD AND POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPORTANT ONES FOR OBVIOUS REASONS. ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS THERE HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON INDIA'S WELLBEING. AGAIN, GOING BY THE FREQUENCY OF HIGH-LEVEL ENGAGEMENTS AND QUALITY OF MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL OUTCOMES, IT WOULD BE SAFE TO SAY THAT INDIA'S ACT WEST POLICY IS POSSIBLY THE BIGGEST SUCCESS STORY OF PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S GOVERNMENT DESPITE MANY INTRINSIC CHALLENGES AND COMPETING GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS."



India's External Affairs Minister late Sushma Swaraj in Abu Dhabi to attend the Foreign Ministers' meet of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) States

In recent years India's conscious outreach to the Islamic world has been exceptional. In this context West Asia, especially the Gulf countries, have acquired a strategic importance in India's foreign policy matrix as it has responded to evolving regional dynamic and developments. In the recent years, India's engagement with the region has transcended from merely transactional and buyer seller relationship to a truly strategic one which is manifested through the accrued dividends in real time. It would not be a truism to say that West Asia is indeed India's extended neighbourhood and possibly the most important ones for obvious reasons. Anything that happens there has a direct impact on India's wellbeing. Again, going by the frequency of high-level engagements and quality of mutually beneficial outcomes, it would be safe to say that India's Act West Policy is possibly the biggest success story of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government despite many intrinsic challenges and competing geopolitical interests.

West Asia is extremely important for India's energy security, food security, diaspora welfare and maritime linkages and security. It is also one of the most volatile landscapes with simmering hotspots and historic enmities and rivalries. Wading through which by keeping relationships intact and expand is not an easy task. But India has been able to do just that in past few years. India's nearly 9 mn diaspora in the region not only sends \$50 bn in remittances annually back home but have emerged as the most trusted, liked and preferred work force as partner in their development. Their security and welfare, of course, are of paramount importance for which New Delhi has worked out special bilateral institutional mechanisms with respective countries.

Energy bridge has been a major link for India with the region as it has

emerged as a major destination for their energy and hydrocarbons supplies. India imports over 70% of oil and nearly 90% of natural gas requirements from the Gulf countries. India's dependence on hydrocarbons is likely to last for another 30-40 years as it moves to reduce the fossil fuel use and diversify towards renewable and hydrogen energy which will become newer areas of collaboration with the gulf countries who themselves are diversifying their economies under Vision 2030 and beyond. Meanwhile, a qualitative change has occurred in their engagement with New Delhi as they have begun to not only invest in India's strategic petroleum reserves, refineries and infrastructure but also inviting Indian companies to participate in exploration and upstream activities. UAE allowed 10% equity stake to an Indian consortium of OVL, IOC and BPCL in the lower Zakum concession for a consideration of \$ 600mn that will accrue 2mn tonnes of crude per year for India.

Similarly, trade and investments have continued apace across sectors in India and the Middle East. Over 5000 Indian companies operate out of UAE special economic zones as UAE has emerged India's 3rd largest trading partner. Saudi Arabia is the 4th largest trade partner of India. Both Riyadh and Abu Dhabi have committed to investing \$ 100 bn and \$ 75 bn respectively in Indian opportunity. Likewise, several other countries are exploring opportunities as they are making it easier for Indian companies and investors to partake in the opportunities in their own countries. India's food security is also incumbent upon supplies of phosphates, fertilisers and urea from several countries like Jordan, Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia.

Security cooperation in all its ramifications including in the intelligence, counter terrorism, defence, cyber and maritime security have become centre stage in the bilateral

collaborative matrix. Earlier, it was virtually impossible to get any fugitive offenders economic or terror related back to India. But that has changed significantly as these countries have understood India's security concerns and have been at the forefront of complying with New Delhi's requests in the fastest manner. India is also expanding its engagement in Space and other hi-tech areas as the major Gulf economies move towards AI driven Industrial Revolution 4.0.

One of the biggest deficits in relationships with the region was absence of high-level visits from India. PM Modi changed that. His exceptional outreach to major Gulf countries including Iran led to several strategic initiatives. Not only that he became the first PM to visit many of the countries but he also became the most decorated foreign leader as many countries in the region conferred their highest State honours on him. This was also reflected in their public policy and attitudinal change as they began to understand India's security concerns and sensibilities.

During the Pulwama attacks by Pakistan based terror groups and India's surgical Balakot strikes as well as during the revocation of Art 370 they were supportive of Indian position.

For the first time, in 2019, the Indian Foreign Minister late Mrs Sushma Swaraj was invited to address the OIC Foreign Ministers by Abu Dhabi. Speaking about 185 million Indian Muslims, Sushma Swaraj said "They have diverse culinary tastes, myriad choices of traditional attire, and they maintain strong cultural and linguistic heritage of the regions they loved and have lived for generations. They practice their respective beliefs and live in harmony with each other and with their non-Muslim brethren. It is this appreciation of diversity and co-existence that has ensured that very few Muslims in India have fallen prey to the poisonous propaganda of radical and extremist ideologies."

Islamic countries, barring a few, do understand the threats from terrorism and extremism and its state sponsored sources as they are working to reform their own socio-economic landscape. But more needs to be done and India, representing the second largest Muslim community, and with its 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' philosophy could be the pivot.

(Article / courtesy Consulate General of India, New York)

(Anil Trigunayat is a former Indian Ambassador to Jordan, Libya and Malta. Twitter @aniltrigunayat)

Republic Day, January 26, 1950: An Epic Journey of India's greatest generation

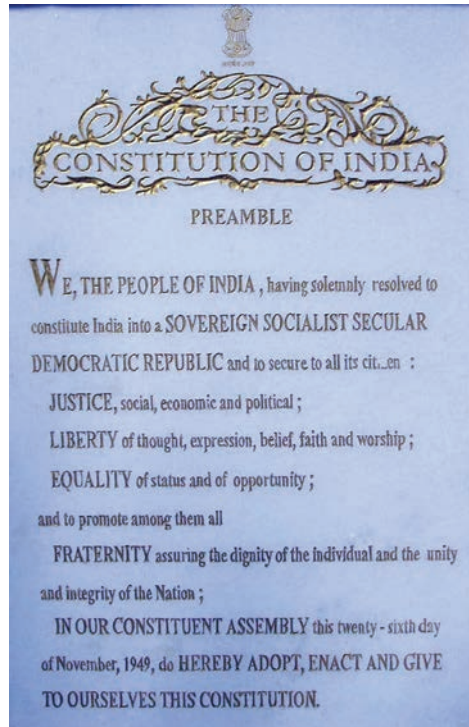
BY GEORGE
ABRAHAM



"THE INDIA WE WITNESS TODAY IS WHAT AMBEDKAR DREAMED, NEHRU BUILT, AND GANDHIJI PAID THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FOR. IT IS AN EPIC JOURNEY OF BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN WHO WENT ON TO CREATE AN INCREDIBLE CONSTITUTION OF SUCH BREATHLESS AMBITION WITH GREAT DETERMINATION. THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN THOSE VILLAGES DIVIDED BY CASTE, SUBCASTE, AND RELIGION RULED BY 600 OR SO PRIMARILY AUTOCRATIC RULERS WERE SUDDENLY GIVEN A LEASE TO BUILD THEIR OWN LIVES. AS WE CELEBRATE THIS REPUBLIC DAY, LET US BE MINDFUL AS WELL THAT THE SAME NOXIOUS FORCES WHO WERE IN CONTROL SEVENTY-TWO YEARS AGO ARE BACK IN THE SHEEP'S CLOTHING, READYING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO POUNCE AGAIN! NEVERTHELESS, IT WILL ALWAYS REMAIN A PHENOMENAL DAY IN HISTORY FOR REJUVENATION AND RENEWAL."

As India celebrates its 73rd Republic Day with pomp, pride, and parades, it is also time to rethink whether the country is living up to its constitution. India became a constitutional republic on January 26, 1950, replacing the colonial government act of India of 1935. It was a memorable day for all Indians who transformed their lives from subjects to citizens and from oppression to liberty. Indeed, this changeover instilled a sense of national pride in the heart of every Indian regardless of where he/she resides.

India's constitution lays down a broad framework structure, powers and



Preamble to the Constitution of India

procedures, and duties safeguarding its citizens' fundamental rights and duties. On January 26, 1929, the Indian National Congress made the famous declaration of "Poorna Swaraj," and the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru hoisted the tri-color flag on the banks of the Ravi river. Thus, when the constituent assembly approved the constitution draft by the committee chaired by B.R. Ambedkar, many felt it necessary to celebrate the document on that day associated with national honor, which was January 26.

The constitution is very clear in its declaration "We the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic and to secure to all its citizens: Justice, social, economic and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; Equality of status and opportunity; and to promote among them all Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation".

What leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, with significant input from B. R. Ambedkar, have done to the populace of India was to introduce a new experience in freedom and democracy. The people of India were reeling from the oppressive rule under the British Raj and experiencing horrible discriminations from the feudal/caste-driven policies of the powerful elites, who more often collaborated with the colonialists to control their own destiny.

Today, Kerala is considered to be a progressive state, thanks largely to the Nehruvian vision and the reform-minded local leadership in the past sixty years. However, before that period, as narrated in 'Kerala: an overview' by Titus George, laws were extremely cruel towards the lower castes in those provinces. Like the medieval Catholic



India's greatest generation- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru

Church clergy in Europe, the upper castes enjoyed all the benefits, including tax exemption. A system of slavery was practiced with impunity, at least in the form of bonded labor and there were designated places of the auction of slaves. The landowners had the power to put their slaves to death.

The Brahmins enjoyed immunity from death penalty, and after all, they have made the laws and applied them differently to different castes. Lower castes were subjected to death penalty for theft and cow slaughter offenses. Capital punishment took the forms of being trampled to death by an elephant, being blown from the mouth of a cannon, by hanging which lasted three days (Chitavadam), and by mutilation. Most tenants could not keep cows, wear fine clothes, live in a gilded house, use metal utensils, wear gold ornaments, or travel in trains or automobiles. Violators were often severely punished with fines.

There was a marriage tax for the lower castes, probably preventing them from increasing and multiplying. The use of public roadways was forbidden to the outcastes, and anyone daring to pass within the polluting distance of a Brahmin, or a Nair would be cut down at once. Ezhavas had to keep 32 feet from Brahmins. Low castes could not wear shoes and carry umbrellas in public, even in heavy rains. The proper salutation from a woman to persons of rank was to uncover the bosom. The practice of untouchability was so widespread, even to the point that lower castes did not have the right to walk along the approach roads leading to temples.

A hundred years ago, Swami Vivekananda was so appalled by Kerala's rigid and cruel caste system that he called it a 'lunatic asylum'. The British did not want to disturb the hierarchical caste system too fast and too radically, and the principle of 'divide and rule' always helped their cause. However, they gradually abolished blatant forms of slavery.

Western education provided in missionary-run schools created a new sense of equality and awareness about injustices and caste discrimination among the lower castes and among the members of the higher castes. In addition, great reformers such as Chattampi Swamikal, the saintly Sri Narayana Guru and Ayyankali, and the

freedom struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi provided additional impetus to fight and end caste discrimination and carve a path forward for societal reformation and progress.

The story of Dr. Padmanabhan Palpu, which is available in the public domain, indicates the struggle even for a person who had the means for better education and a career. He was born in the Ezhava community and learned English from a Eurasian tutor at 12. Like his older brother, he seems to have used his family's association with Christian missionaries to avoid the usual rule in the Kingdom that Ezhavas were forbidden from school attendance. He was subsequently refused admission to Travancore Medical College due to caste. However, he was able to attend a similar college in Tamil Nadu. Then he went on to further his medical training at London and Cambridge. However, back in India after obtaining a Licentiate in Medicine and surgery, he found that his caste status prevented him from securing employment in Travancore Health Service, which forced him to relocate to Mysore, where he became the Chief Medical officer.

I am sure that some may be wondering about my reason in retracing some of these historical facts. Short memories often have a way of obscuring recent paths and not revealing how humanity has traveled and survived rough terrains of life. What I have elicited above is a microcosm of what India had been before 1950. Although Kerala has come a long way, the remnants of these age-old despicable practices are still alive and well in many States. Lately, there has been a torrent of stories on the British legacy of exploitation and oppression, justifiably so, while obscuring or minimizing our own sins and shortcomings. Some authors may even succeed in convincing that if only the British hadn't come, we would have been in a different orbit!

The India we witness today is what Ambedkar dreamed, Nehru built, and Gandhiji paid the ultimate sacrifice for. It is an epic journey of brave men and women who went on to create an incredible constitution of such breathless ambition with great determination. The people who lived in those villages divided by caste, subcaste, and religion ruled by 600 or so primarily autocratic rulers were suddenly given a lease to build their own lives. As we celebrate this Republic Day, let us be mindful as well that the same noxious forces who were in control seventy-two years ago are back in the sheep's clothing, readying for an opportunity to pounce again! Nevertheless, it will always remain a phenomenal day in history for rejuvenation and renewal.

(Author is a former Chief Technology Officer and the Vice-Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, USA. He can be reached at gta777@gmail.com)

Punjab : 'Degeneration from Radiant to Colorless'

BY GURMIT PALAHI



"THE REALITY IS THAT PUNJAB STATE HAS ALWAYS STOOD UP AGAINST THE DISCRIMINATORY MISDOINGS OF THE CENTRE, WHETHER IT WAS DURING THE BLACK-ERA OF THE EMERGENCY IMPOSED BY PM INDIRA GANDHI, OR THE CURRENT IMPASSE CREATED BY PM NARENDRA MODI WHO WANTED TO CRUSH THE FARMERS BY OCCUPYING THEIR LANDS, IN ORDER TO FAVOR THE BILLIONAIRE-MAGNATES. IN THE PROCESS, THE PRESENT DELHI-ELITE ALSO ATTEMPTED TO THROTTLE THE CONSTITUTIONAL-RIGHTS OF THE STATES TO ENACT AND IMPLEMENT LAWS ON CERTAIN SUBJECTS. PUNJAB HAS, ALWAYS, PROVEN TO BE A LEADER IN SHOWING THE PATH TO THE NATION. HENCE, PUNJAB HAS BEEN CONSTANTLY IRKING THE CENTRE, WHO HAVE BEEN IGNORING THE HARD-FACTSHEET THAT DESPITE SUFFERING IN EVERY WAY, PUNJABI COMMUNITY HAVE MADE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SUPREME SACRIFICES OF LIFE DURING ALL THE WARS THRUST UPON INDIA, AND PUNJABIS CONTINUE TO MAN THE BORDERS, THWARTING THE EVIL-DESIGNS OF OTHER NATIONS."



Golden Temple, Amritsar

The State of Punjab has experienced the worst tortures, which have been inflicted on the body and soul, on the mind and spirit, consequently leaving it torn asunder and in a state of total shambles. It bore the maximum brunt of 1947 partition of India and was bruised by the genocidal pogrom of 1984, Punjab has borne 'heat-waves and freezing-shivers' of policies of the 'powers-that-be'. Punjab has suffered the menace of drug-addiction, unemployment and massive migration.

Since several decades, the appearance of Punjab has become devoid of color of enthusiasm and liveliness.

The 5 Rivers have vanished

Punjab, the land of 5 rivers, which once lived jubilantly in consonance with the Blessings of Guru Sahib, is currently 'breathing with difficulty', as the 5 rivers have 'disappeared', but a 6th river of drugs is flooding the State. The exuberant youth, both boys and girls are badly trapped in its grip, and they have forgotten their art, culture and heritage of 'Gidda - Bhangra'. Many youngsters have taken wings and migrated abroad. The villages are deserted. Whatever remained has been swallowed by selfish politicians.

What has Punjab gained ?

With the rest of India, Punjab has lived through independent era, for 74 years and as part of the Republic of India, for 71 years but what has it gained ? There is no big industry worth its name, no infrastructure to mention, absence of medical amenities akin to neighboring States, and no educational facilities. Environmental pollution has touched a record low as the rivers are contaminated and air has been poisoned. Haryana State, carved out of Punjab, boasts of prosperous massive industry and neighboring Himachal Pradesh has benefitted from an industrial package from the Center, while Punjab has been reeling under a step motherly discrimination from New Delhi. For instance, Haryana has 12 government medical institutions, Himachal has 7 whereas Punjab is forced to remain content with only 4 medical colleges.

Fearing Punjabis !



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on recent Punjab visit said to a Punjab official that he was lucky to be alive, after his cavalcade was stranded because of protests by the farmers

On the 5th of January 2022, the Prime Minister came to Ferozepur, to gift 2 medical colleges to Punjab but realizing the flop attendance at the rally, he returned to Delhi without reaching the rally point and instead of gifting something, went on to label Punjabis as sort of criminals, from whom "he was lucky to save his life, in a providential escape, narrowly missing death at the hands of natives of Punjab, who were out to assassinate him". What a derogatory and discriminatory attitude towards Punjab whose valiant sons defend the frontiers and whose brave farmers have, since time immemorial, been feeding the nation and saving Indians, especially after the advent of the Green Revolution. However, Punjab is, today, going downhill towards a barren desert. A fresh new survey aptly illustrates the plight of Punjab today. Environmental experts have published a report, as per which Punjab has, merely, adequate water resources for drinking and irrigation, so as to sustain itself, only for 9 or 10 years. The ominous danger lurks round the corner, as Punjab government remains conspicuous by its silence and the government of India is silent as a conspirator. So, ultimately, all that Punjab has gained is Memories of Warrior-Martyrs who offered the Supreme Sacrifice for India; and memories

of the Farmer-Martyrs who set a world-record, by forcing the duo of the affluent and the mighty ruling elite, to revoke the 3 black-laws which were meant to completely annihilate Punjab and Punjabis.

Rural Punjab in dire straits

Let us, now, analyze the plight of small-farmers and laborers in the villages. Here's an example of what Punjab gives to the nation and what it receives, in reciprocation, from the rulers.

There's a really small village named Bambeli in Phagwara District. This is smaller than the normally small. Working class is migrating to other States and those born to their second generation shall never return to Punjab. The population here is 1500, approximately and there are 200 ration cards, thereby implying 200 household-units with 1000 voters. There is land of about 200 acreage, cultivable area. Let's examine what the village offers to the country and what does the country give back to the village.

Although the statistics are approximate, yet they are nearer to the reality. One acre yields a harvest of Rs,50,000. On an average, lets presume the amount to be Rs,100,000 for 2 or 3 yields. The Mandi-Board levies a tax of Rs,5,000 on every Rs,100,000, per annum. So, 200 acres gifts the government an amount of Rupees Ten lakh, every year.

The village has some 15 government employees who pay an annual tax of 2 lakhs. At an average, each family has an expenditure of 1 lakh annually, on household requirements and uses another 1 lakh on other sundry expenses. Some 18% GST implying Rs.36000 per family, goes to the government. So, 200 families give a total tax of Rs.72 lakh to the government which receives a grand total of annual taxes of 84 lakhs (10+2+72). Additionally, the villagers spend a lot, at regular intervals, on the maintenance of buildings especially during community events and special festivities. Some 16 lakhs is this amount spent. So, 84+16 lakhs= One crore rupees per annum goes to the government from the smallest village of 1500 people. In 5 years, it comes to 5 crore rupees. (Statistics Courtesy : Survey Vijay, Bambeli).

What is received from the government ?

In return, all that the village is reimbursed is the expenditure made on white washing of Dharamshaala and other sundry maintenance works. For 20 years, this village has been undergoing a scarcity of schoolteachers. For over 15 years there has been no doctor and compounder in the veterinary hospital. In the government hospital, there is no doctor for 10 years and no dispenser for 5 years.

After paying all taxes and bills, they are mistreated as beggars and given only 2 kgs of grains and pulses as a gift and huge favor. This is an eyewash whereby the leaders and politicians snatch money from the squeezed people, by way of burdening them with taxes and inflation, only to tactfully return a fraction of it. The public is deprived of their rights to employment opportunities, free education and health facilities, adequate supply of water and electricity; seeds, manure, fertilizers, pesticides, oil, diesel etc.; clean environment and good roadway system. Everything is totally missing.

Polluted Political Scenario

This story of Bambeli village is the narrative applicable to the entire State of Punjab. The slum areas

CONTD ON PAGE 11

CONTD FROM PAGE 10

in cities are in the same condition as the huge garbage dumped in villages. Dilapidated government buildings, bad roads, shortage or total absence of requisite departmental offices, schoolteachers, workers, corrupt irresponsible administration structure along with the arrogant attitude of politicians and their supporters has made the overall atmosphere extremely suffocating. This time, the upcoming Punjab elections, after the Republic Day, have been turned into a quagmire, where the central clique and ruling elite are encouraging 'horse-trading' at an unprecedented scale, hitherto never observed in Punjab politics. The people are wondering how politicians are up for sale and have stooped so low as to become selfish beyond any imagination and comparison. People are also thinking loud about why they are just considered as mere voters whose loyalties can be purchased with some alcohol and a meager amount. The electoral drama would be witness to four or five-cornered wrestling-bouts, for time in the 71-year-old Republic. It is to be seen, now, whether people would grab money, succumbing due to sheer desperation and frustration or would they refrain from exercising their right to franchise!

Punjabis are no longer happy 'Living in their own Punjab'.

Actually, in 74 years after independence, the rulers, politicians and cronies have created such miserably devastating conditions, that Punjabis feel devoid of any real joy and bliss living in their Punjab. They are putting their passports and pockets or bags and running away to unknown destinations in far-away lands. Rarely they become successful but often, after several years of struggle, they find themselves as having lost their all, including family, home, house,



Punjabi Youth's flight to foreign lands

security, sleep, health, peace of mind and happiness et al.

During the last session of Lok Sabha, it was stated that 4.7 lakh Punjabis have migrated to foreign shores, in search of employment, from the year 2016 until 26 March 2021. Another report mentions that around 2 lakh young students have been going, every year, to Canada, USA and UK among others, equipped with a course in IELTS. In 2019, this number went up to 1.5 lakh youth flying, only to Canada having spent Rupees 15 to 22 lakh as fee for the first year of education. This means that a staggering amount of 27000 crore rupees changed hands from Punjab to Canada. This is total reversal of the times when NRIs used to make massive remittances to their relatives in Punjab and all of them used to invest in businesses, properties in Punjab and for construction, renovations etc. All this is the consequence of mismanagement and corruption and indifference of the government.

Undivided Punjab had lost massively during 1947 partition when both sides lost millions of people and millions more were displaced from one country to the other. Women were dishonored and children were orphaned. Punjab lost two and a half rivers out of five and life and economy were adversely impacted.

Historian Saugata Bose writes about this in his book 'The Nation as Mother and Other : Visions of Nationhood'. He says 10 lakh Sikh, Hindu and Muslims perished in the riots of 1947 and One Crore people were displaced crossing borders of the two newly carved

countries.

In 1947 people of various religions, castes and classes were inhabitants of Punjab where all lived peacefully and merrily. The 1941 census the population was 3 crore 40 lakh wherein Muslims constituted 53.2%, Hindus and Dalits 29.1%, Sikhs were 14.9% and Christians 1.9%. The partition etched a borderline which made minorities run helter-skelter, displaced them, when women and young girls were raped or abducted, thereby shaming human-birth and the species of humanity itself. These riots or carnage were not spontaneous but rather they were orchestrated and maneuvered by the politicians of various hues and shades. Muslim League, Akali party, RSS, Hindu Mahasabha, all of these acted in self-interest and used armed hooligans, criminals, retired army-men and local cronies to incite and ignite extreme violence, leading to unfathomable destruction and massive bloodshed. According to Ivan Jenkins, Governor at that time, Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims all fought, and 29 Districts of Punjab suffered. Perhaps this was one of the most shameful tragedies, globally.

Time went by. People started heaving a sigh of relief. In 1966, Punjab was, yet once again, bifurcated on the basis of language and Haryana came into existence. Sectarian-minded rulers segregated Punjab from Chandigarh (then capital of Punjab) and also from many Punjabi-speaking areas. Now, the City-beautiful was made the capital of both Punjab and Haryana. Punjab was divested its legal and natural right to the natural-water resources. The issue of sharing of the rivers was referred to the courts, to keep it in a long-term suspended animation.

Dreams shattered

More time went by. People started relishing some relief. The Green Revolution of 1965 gifted Punjabis a great new dream to envision. However, excessive usage of fertilizers and pesticides and the cultivation of rice rendered the water of Punjab and the health of Punjabis unsafe to the extent of hazardous levels. Farmers were plunged into debts. Punjabis fed the nation but were, themselves, destroyed. The devastatingly excruciating results of Green Revolution were cancer, birth of weakened children and weakened procreation-power in mothers. This was evident in reduced physical prowess in the children and a less than earlier happier youthful-age and lessened lifespan.

Punjab suffered an Economic Backwardness

Currently, Punjab is at a very low ebb, economically. It stands at the 16th place and its ranking in GDP is 19th. In 2020 the rate of unemployment slumped from 30.7% to 33.6%. In India, the figures of the unemployed stand at 4.8% whereas it is 7.3% in Punjab which is the highest in our nation. Next comes Haryana at 6.4%, followed by Chandigarh at 6.3% and Himachal at 3.7%. These figures were stated on 27 July 2021. The reasons attributed to this rate of unemployment in Punjab are unprofitable farming-business, lack of diversification in cultivation of crops and scarcity of non-agricultural job-avenues. The education-policies of the government, in the past two decades, are the cause of all these miserable circumstances. The erroneous policies include the lack of vocational training facilities for various skills and the total indifference displayed by politicians in Punjab, towards providing good-quality higher-learning institutions, which should have immensely benefitted Punjabis. Politicians are, quite apparently, totally bereft of the truly real spirit of doing something noble and worthy for the impoverished and downtrodden. And so, Punjab continues going downhill in various spheres. Lack of efficient and honest officers in the administrative cadre and a visible total-rule of several types of mafia ruling the roost in Punjab are some other key-factors which have ruined Punjab and Punjabis. It is being estimated that Punjab would be reeling under a Himalayan debt of 2.82 lakh crore rupees, in the aftermath of the Assembly polling. This is the result of the Power-Politics of the Ruling-Party in Punjab who are busy handing-out some really unnecessary concessions to woo the voters to their camp.

The industrial sector is in the doldrums and is perched on the edge of a precipice. The foundries in Batala are finished. Sports industry in Jalandhar has been usurped people of other States. Steel-rolling factories in Gobindgarh-Mandi are in very poor shape. Hosiery sector in Ludhiana has become a victim of the fear of Corona-pandemic. The by-cycle industry in Ludhiana has been eclipsed. At this time, although there are 194,000 small-scale units and 586 large and medium-sized industries in Punjab, yet all these produce only 25 GDP, according to a report published in 2018-2019. Then, there is the cotton-industry in Abohar, Malout, Phagwara, Amritsar and other areas, which have provided direct and indirect employment opportunities to some two million of the populace. In stark-contrast, there is the reality 22 sugar-mills in the State (15 in the cooperative sector and 7 in private-ownership) of which 6 cooperative mills have been shut down. The remaining mills owe the farmers, really massive amounts running into crores of rupees. Statistics show that these loss-recording units owe to the farmers, an amount of Rupees 16,883 crores, as on 31 January 2021. The dairy-industry in Punjab took upon itself the responsibility of providing, not only for the people of Punjab but also the entire nation. However, the farmers have not been able to derive benefit from this endeavor.

The Woes of Punjabis.

Their heartfelt pain now openly trickles down from their eyes. They cannot view any easily navigational route towards recuperation. Delhi-Darbar has been, since long, conspiring to play very deceptive, manipulative games to harm the State of Punjab. Why doesn't Delhi allow the Indian State of Punjab to trade with Punjab State in Pakistan? This measure has the massive potential to increase productivity and prosperity in our Punjab. There is special need to provide additional basic requisite amenities in this border-State. Why isn't the International Riparian Law implemented, in Letter & Spirit, to solve the water-dispute thereby giving justice to Punjab? Why doesn't Delhi order and prevail upon the State of Rajasthan to pay billions of Rupees to Punjab, for the unjust consumption of water utilized free by Rajasthan? Why isn't Delhi facilitating a stimulus-package to the agro-based big-industry, enabling a great fillip to Punjab-economy?

Step-motherly attitude

The reality is that Punjab State has always stood up against the discriminatory misdoings of the Centre, whether it was during the black-era of the Emergency imposed by PM Indira Gandhi, or the current impasse created by PM Narendra Modi who wanted to crush the farmers by occupying their lands, in order to favor the billionaire-magnates. In the process, the present Delhi-elite also attempted to throttle the constitutional-rights of the States to enact and implement laws on certain subjects. Punjab has, always, proven to be a leader in showing the path to the Nation. Hence, Punjab has been constantly irking the Centre, who have been ignoring the hard-factsheet that despite suffering in every way, Punjabi community have made the maximum number of supreme sacrifices of life during all the wars thrust upon India, and Punjabis continue to man the borders, thwarting the evil-designs of other nations.

Punjab sidelined and marginalized

Despite all of this, Punjab continues to be ignored thereby rendering it to become devoid of all colors, flavors, radiance and vibrancy, turning a once-flourishing State into a desert. This is the core-query pervading the minds of Punjabis. Would Punjabis be able to jubilantly sing, once again, the popular couplet "the most beautiful place among all places is Punjab, o' my friends; like rose is the flower amongst flowers, o' my friends".

(The author is a retired Principal and well-known columnist. He is President of Punjabi Columnists Patrakar Manch. He can be reached at Gurmitpalahi@yahoo.com

(Amarjit Singh Anand is a thinker and a writer. He can be reached at asa1ny@yahoo.com)

Town of Hempstead Celebrates 73rd Annual India Republic Day with Flag-Raising Celebration at Town Hall

SUPERVISOR AND TOWN BOARD RECOGNIZE HOLIDAY TO CELEBRATE FREEDOM IN THE WORLD'S MOST POPULOUS DEMOCRACY AND HONOR THE INDIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY'S LEGACY IN HEMPSTEAD TOWN



Hempstead Town Supervisor Don Clavin raised the Indian National Flag in the presence of a large number of Indian American community members and Town officials



Hempstead Town Supervisor Don Clavin addresses the gathering

HEMPSTEAD, NY (TIP): Hempstead Town Supervisor Don Clavin, along with members of the Hempstead Town Board and leaders of the Indian American Forum, joined together to celebrate the 73rd annual India Republic Day. The event was held on the front steps of Hempstead Town Hall Wednesday, January 26 to highlight the transition of the highest populated democracy in the world to a republic.

The National Flag of India was publicly

raised to commemorate Indian-American residents and culture.

"Indian-American culture and tradition are vastly important in the greater Hempstead Town community," Clavin said. "America's largest township is thankful to be home to thriving community of Indian-Americans contribute to shaping the dynamic identity of our home. It is vital and right that we communally recognize and celebrate the fundamental parts of our



Community members present at the celebration with Don Clavin



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neighbors' history."

The New York-Newark-Bridgeport Area (NY-NJ-CT-PA) contains the largest concentration of the Indian-American population in the United States, with over 700,000 Indian-American residents. Nassau County itself holds the third-largest Indian immigrant hub in the country.

Due to the persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was held completely outdoors. The flag-raising proceedings included a cultural music selection, the singing of the United States and Indian national anthems, blessings from a local pandit, and keynote speakers explaining the history and significance of the Indian-American community to the town

and country. Guests for the ceremony were served tea and coffee.

"The importance of India Republic day extends far beyond the Town of Hempstead," said Hempstead Town Clerk Kate Murray, who began the tradition during her tenure as Supervisor. "Indian culture has had a profound influence on American culture over the course of many years, and I'm always glad to honor and celebrate the Indian-American neighbors in our town."

"We encourage all residents to join us in celebrating our Indian-American community," Clavin said. "Happy India Republic Day!" (Based on a press release)

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Consulate General of India, New York celebrates India's 73rd Republic Day



Governor of New York Ms. Kathy Hochul delivered her congratulatory message in a video



Consul General Randhir Jaiswal read out the President of India's address to the Nation



A cultural program was presented by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

contd from page 1

Federation of Indian Associations (FIA), New England held a colorful virtual celebration supported by the Consulate General of India in New York on January 25th, 2022, at the iconic Worcester Union Station in Worcester, Massachusetts. Dignitaries including State Senator (Massachusetts) Mr. Michael Moore, former US Congressman Mr. Joe Kennedy III and former Rhode Island Assemblyman Mr. Robert Lancia participated in the event.

Federation of Indian Associations Ohio held a Flag Hoisting ceremony at the Ohio State House, Columbus on January 26th 2022. Ohio State Senator Mr. Niraj Antani and prominent members of the Indian community were present at the event. The program was live streamed.

Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) held a virtual event on January 26th 2022 in



The Consulate staff at the celebration

association with the Consulate General of India for celebration of the Republic Day. Several dignitaries including State Senators Mr. Kevin Thomas (New York),

Mr. Vin Gopal (New Jersey), Ms. Keshu Ram (Vermont), Mr. Neeraj Antani (Ohio); and members of State Assemblies Mr. Raj Mukherjee (New Jersey), Ms. Latha Mangipudi (New Hampshire), Mr. Harry Arora (Connecticut) and Ms. Jennifer Rajkumar (New York) participated in the event.

Other community and cultural organizations such as the International Center for Cultural Integration (ICCI), Long Island; the Tri City India Association, Albany; the Indian Association of Buffalo (IAB); the Indian Cultural Heritage & Arts Awareness Club, New York; the Indian Association of Greater Boston (IAGB); the Indian American Community in Northern America, New Jersey; The Council of Indian Organizations (CIO) in Pennsylvania; and the Hindu Temple of North America, Queens NY are scheduled to hold their respective events in the coming days.

(Based on a press release issued by the Consulate General of India, New York)

Arya Samaj of Long Island Celebrated Republic Day



Captain Surinder Kade unfurling the National Flag

HICKSVILLE, NY (TIP): Arya Samaj of Long Island celebrated 73rd Republic Day by unfurling the Indian National Flag at the Arya Samaj premises 319, Hicksville, NY on Sunday, on January 23, 2021 in the presence of the community leaders and Samaj members.

On this occasion, Dr. Yashpal Arya, Trustee Chairman addressed the congregation. He said, India got its independence on 15th August 1947 and did not have its own constitution until 26th January 1950. Republic Day is celebrated to remember the historic moment when our nation became an independent republic country.

Dr. Vijay Arya, President Arya Samaj, reminded not to forget our duties enjoined with the independence we got, so the Country's sovereignty is maintained. Captain (Retired) Surinder



Arya Samaj and community members at the celebration

Kade, Indu Jaiswal Chairperson, Indian American Forum, Dr. Urmilesh Arya, past President Association of Indians in America, Dr. Azad Anand, past President, India Study Center, Stony Brooke University and Veer Mukhi, Secretary addressed and reminded of the golden era of United India and its glory. Netaji Subash Chandra Bose was also remembered, and tributes were paid to Netaji's contributions in India's Independence.

ASLI was established in 2006 to extend Vedic Heritage and Vedic Teachings to the Hindu community at large. Its objectives and mission are to encourage adults and children to study the Vedas and other religious teachings. Samaj performs and conducts prayers and worship (Vedic Yajna & Pravachans) services to foster, advance and promote the practice of the religious belief of the Hindu faith.

NYS SEN. KEVIN THOMAS SPONSORS RESOLUTION TO PROCLAIM JANUARY 26, 2022, AS INDIA REPUBLIC DAY IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK



NY State Senator Kevin Thomas has sponsored an official resolution to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim January 26, 2022, as India Republic Day in the State of New York

GARDEN CITY, NY (TIP): In honor of India Republic Day, New York State Senator Kevin Thomas has sponsored an official resolution to memorialize Governor Kathy Hochul to proclaim January 26, 2022, as India Republic Day in the State of New York. Republic Day marks the adoption of the constitution of India and the transition of the country to a republic on January 26, 1950. Senator Thomas became the first Indian American to serve in the New York State Legislature when he was elected in 2018.

Speaker Pelosi announces run for reelection

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) announced Tuesday, January 25, that she is running for reelection, citing the "crucial" need to defend American democracy through legislation on voting rights and other issues, a Washington Post report says.

Pelosi, 81, has served in Congress since 1987

"While we have made progress, much more needs to be done to improve people's lives," Pelosi said in a video posted to her Twitter feed. "Our democracy is at risk because of assaults on the truth, the assault on the U.S. Capitol, and the state-by-state assault on voting rights. This election is crucial. Nothing less is at stake than our democracy."

She added: "But as we say, we don't agonize, we organize. And that is why I am running for reelection to Congress and respectfully seek your support. I would be greatly honored by it and grateful for it."

House Democrats begin preparing for the post-Pelosi era

Pelosi has led House Democrats for 19



Pelosi, 81, has served in Congress since 1987 - File photo

years through the presidencies of George W. Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump and now President Biden. She was instrumental in ensuring the passage of the Affordable Care Act during Obama's tenure. Democrats' focus on preserving the law helped the party reclaim the House majority in 2018.

In 2018, Pelosi said this term would be

her last as speaker, but she made no mention of her plans in the announcement Tuesday.

Pelosi, the first woman to be elected House speaker, has managed to unite the moderate and liberal factions in her party to pass legislation, while previous speakers - most notably John A. Boehner (R-Ohio) and Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.) - often

struggled with the fractious GOP.

In her video Tuesday, Pelosi spoke directly to the camera, with the San Francisco skyline behind her. She thanked her constituents for "giving me the privilege to represent our city and our San Francisco values in the Congress - human rights, reproductive justice, LGBTQ equality, respect for immigrants and care for each other."

"When people ask me what are the three most important issues facing the Congress, I always say the same thing: Our children, our children, our children," she added.

Her reelection announcement was expected, but it remains to be seen whether she will remain the Democratic leader after the current Congress.

"The Speaker is not on a shift, she's on a mission," Pelosi's spokesman, Drew Hammill, said in an email when asked whether Pelosi plans to run again for speaker or minority leader.

Pelosi's announcement came hours after longtime Rep. Jim Cooper (D-Tenn.) said he would not seek another term. Cooper is the 29th Democrat to decide against reelection or pursuit of another office.

The party faces strong head winds in holding its majority because of Biden's falling approval numbers, redistricting and the reality that the party holding the White House typically loses seats in a president's first midterm election.

(Source: Washington Post)

Omicron wave is wake-up call about need to vaccinate the world, say Hill Democrats, experts

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Senior administration officials, public health experts and Democrats say that the omicron wave has illustrated gaps in the U.S. global coronavirus strategy, warning that low-income nations are particularly vulnerable to the virus and that the risk of another variant will remain elevated as long as billions of people are unvaccinated, Washington Post reported.

"The assignment is incomplete," said Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-Ill.), who is leading a group of Democrats calling for \$17 billion in additional funding for global vaccination delivery and infrastructure to immunize people in the developing world. "We need to make this investment going forward, and we need to do it ASAP."

Some lawmakers and officials also say they remain unhappy with President Biden's decision to split authority over the global coronavirus strategy between White House covid-19 response coordinator Jeff Zients and national security adviser Jake Sullivan, arguing the structure complicates decisions and forces the two men to navigate between competing crises. Zients's team has recently focused on the surging U.S. outbreak, and Sullivan's national security team is addressing threats such as Russia's potential invasion of Ukraine.

"I think we need somebody whose mission 24/7 is to help get the rest of the world vaccinated," Krishnamoorthi said. "The consequences are enormous. We found out - painfully - how quickly a variant can come over here from abroad and totally overwhelm our system."

About 10 billion doses of coronavirus vaccine have been administered around the world, but they have been concentrated in wealthy nations, according to a World Health Organization review shared with The Washington Post. High-income countries have administered about 14 times the number of doses per inhabitant compared with low-income countries, the WHO found. About 84 percent of the population of the African Union has yet to receive a single shot, even as about 40 percent of Americans have received booster shots, according to The Post's vaccine tracker.

The Biden administration maintains that its leadership structure is working and that its global strategy - focused on donating vaccine doses abroad - remains unchanged, despite omicron's ability to evade some immune protection conferred by vaccines. The United States has now donated about 390 million doses to other countries, far more than any other nation, with Biden pressing global leaders to ramp up their donations.

"We know what works, and it's vaccines. And we're leaning into that hard," said a senior administration official who was not authorized to discuss the issue publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity. "The science is clear. Vaccines are protecting, particularly when boosters are deployed."

The United States is also helping fund efforts to increase vaccine manufacturing capacity around the world, White House Chief of Staff Ron Klain said in an interview on the New York Times' "Ezra Klein Show," adding that the administration recognizes the global shortfall. "We are not where we need to be," Klain said.

Officials touted a new campaign, led by the U.S. Agency for International Development and initially funded with roughly \$500 million, that is now supporting mobile vaccination sites, improving vaccine storage and addressing other logistical needs in low- and middle-income countries.

"This is a winnable fight," said Jeremy Konyndyk, executive director of USAID's covid-19 task force, saying that recent spikes in vaccination rates in African countries such as Zambia, Ghana and Ivory Coast show "proof of concept" for the U.S. strategy. For instance, 22 percent of people in Ghana have now received at



Indian American Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-Ill.) is leading a group of Democrats calling for \$17 billion in additional funding for global vaccination delivery and infrastructure to immunize people in the developing world.

least one dose of coronavirus vaccine, after vaccination rates were stalled below 8 percent for most of 2021, according to data tracked by Oxford University's Our World in Data project.

"They've all been able to deliver significant improvements in vaccine uptake when they have gotten infusions of resources," Konyndyk said.

White House officials confirmed they are targeting late March for an international summit, led by Biden, intended to hold global leaders accountable for pledges they made last year, including a vow to "fully vaccinate" 70 percent of the world by the fall of 2022.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian Embassy in Washington Celebrates the 73rd Republic Day of India



Saluting the National Flag of India. Ambassador of India, Taranjit Singh Sandhu, unfurled the tricolor



Ambassador Sandhu addresses the participants in the ceremony



Remotely participating in the celebration of the Republic Day

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The 73rd Republic Day of India was celebrated in Washington D.C. with a flag-hoisting ceremony on 26 January, 2022 at the India House. The ceremony was attended by a number of Indians, Diaspora members, and friends of India including through virtual mode in view of the pandemic.

Ambassador of India, Taranjit Singh Sandhu, unfurled the tricolor, which was followed by singing of the National Anthem. The Address by the President of India on the eve of Republic Day was played during the ceremony.

Highlighting the initiatives of the Indian Government such as Vaccine Maitri (Vaccine Friendship) and in clean energy as announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in COP26 Summit in Glasgow last year, Ambassador reiterated that India would continue to be the country that cherishes her

foundational values and ideals and works for global good. He recalled the remarks of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Bilateral Summit with President Joe Biden in September 2021 that we were witnessing a transformative period in the India - US strategic partnership driven by tradition, talent, technology, trade, and trusteeship.

Ambassador underlined that the Diaspora was an important pillar of the India- US relationship, through their achievements in diverse sectors and by contributing to India's development journey. He noted that three of the distinguished diaspora members, have been conferred the Padma Bhushan, one of the highest civilian awards by the Government of India - Madhu Jaffrey for popularizing Indian cuisine; Satya Nadella and Sundar Pichai for their leadership in the technology sector.

A short cultural program involving rendition of patriotic songs by students of Gandharva School of



Gandharva School of Music students presented a cultural program

Music, Richmond was presented during the ceremony.

(Based on a press release)

FIACONA Denounces Modi government for removing the Hymn "Abide With Me" from India's annual Republic Day Parade

SEES "YET ANOTHER CLEAR SIGN OF INDIA FAST BECOMING HINDU FUNDAMENTALIST STATE "

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): FIACONA, in a statement released to media on January 24 said " India to remain a liberal democratic state is vital for the US interests and the US-India relationship. If India slips into a religious fundamentalist state as Pakistan or Turkey has, it will have far-reaching implications for the US interests not only across the Indian Ocean Corridor but even at home. What is taking place in India this week is a clear indication yet of where that country is headed."

"Prime Minister Modi removed the Hymn "Abide With Me" from India's annual Republic Day Parade this week. This hymn was part of the official annual parade for the last 73 years. It was first included in 1949 by the Indian Army played by its band. It is considered to be Mahatma Gandhi's favorite hymn. Ever since, it has been a tradition for the army band to play it every year.

"It is not about whether or not a tune is removed or added in a lineup this year. It should be seen from a historical perspective. Mr. Modi's Hindu nationalist party has long been arguing that, for India to be truly independent, she should

shed the remnants of colonial past and all that are associated with it - including the Christian faith. Obviously, Mr. Modi sees the army band playing 'Abide With Me' in his presence is too close to the Christian faith to bear."

The President of FIACONA, Mr. Koshi George said, "The Modi government has sunk to a new low, just when you thought it could not possibly sink any further. The act of removing the hymn from India's Republic Day Parade to be held this Wednesday (Jan 26), shows the silliness and deep-rooted hatred of Mr. Modi and his party against anything that resembles the Christian faith".

Mr. John Mathew, a FIACONA Board Member said, "Out of ignorance, Hindu nationalists consider the Christian faith in India to be a remnant of British rule. Christian faith was introduced to the Indian subcontinent in 52 AD by Apostle Thomas, long before certain segments of what is collectively known as Hinduism today was formed."

Mr. George Abraham, also a Board Member said, "Yet, Modi and his party assume the Christian faith as a remnant of British rule. They ignore the fact that not only had many Christian

missionaries helped spread Gandhi's message, they had also joined him against the unjust policies of a Colonial power."

Moreover, he said, "Tens of thousands of Christians fought and sacrificed their lives in the Indian Army since India's independence from British rule." He reminded that the coinage of the word - "Hinduism" itself is of colonial origin.

Rev. Bryan Nerren, Pastor of House of Prayer and President of Asian Children's Education Fellowship in Tennessee stated that, "The removal of Democratic customs and traditions are the clear indicators that Prime Minister Modi is leading the largest democracy into a religious fundamentalist state".

Mr. John Prabhudoss, the Chairman of the Board said, FIACONA considers the act of removing the hymn from the Republic Day lineup this year as a new low even for this Modi government. It is a betrayal of the trust of hundreds of millions of people of the nation. A government calling itself Democratic must be impartial and respectful of all segments of its society.

Rev. Peter Cook, the Executive Director of the NY State Council of Churches, a



part of the National Council of Churches (NCC-USA) said: "The action of the Modi government is not only an insult to the sentiments of over 100 million people who follow the faith in India but also to millions of other people from all faith backgrounds. With this kind of open hostilities against people of faith in India, it's no wonder people like Dr. Gregory Stanton of Genocide Watch warn that India would be where the next genocide takes place".

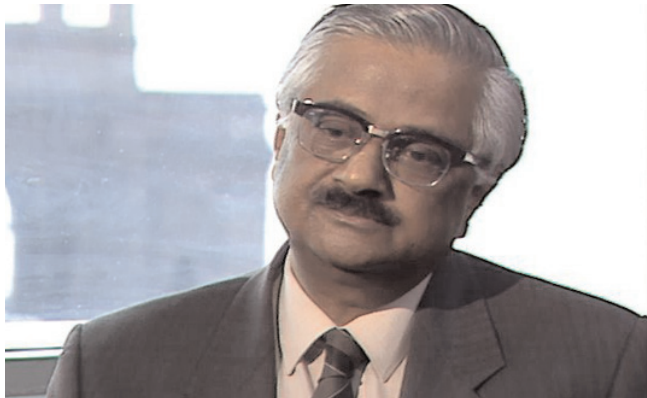
(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

India in history this Week

JANUARY 28, 2022, TO FEBRUARY 3, 2022

28 JANUARY

2009 Calcutta Medical College started in West Bengal.



1928 Raja Ramanna, the leading physicist of the country, was born.

1930 The classical singer Pandit Jasraj, who belonged to Mewati Gharana, was born.



1999 Lamb was born from a protected embryo for the first time in India.

2007 Famous musician OP Nayyar died.



1961 The first factory of HMT watches was started in 1961 in Bangalore.

1988 Death penalty given to 26 accused in the 'Rajiv Gandhi murder case'.

29 JANUARY

1597 Maharana Pratap was born.



1780 Publication of the country's first newspaper Hikki Gazette or Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser from Calcutta (now Kolkata) began.



1994 Government of India repealed the Air Corporation Act 1953.

30 JANUARY

1948 Mahatma Gandhi, who had contributed significantly to India's freedom struggle, was assassinated.



1530 Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar passed away.

31 JANUARY

1561 Bairam Khan, who played an important role in making the Mughal emperor deserving of a throne, was killed.

1963 The peacock was declared the national bird of India in 1963.



2007 Indian steel company Tata became the fifth largest company in the world in 2007 after the acquisition of Anglo Dutch steel company Corus.

1923 Birth of Somnath Sharma, the first Indian martyr to get 'Paramveer Chakra' in 1923.

01 FEBRUARY

1881 St. Stephen's College, the oldest college in Delhi, was established.

2003 Kalpana Chawla, the first Indian-American astronaut, died.



1930 The Times published the cross word puzzle for the first time.

1977 Indian Navy Coast Guard is formed.

02 FEBRUARY

1814 Calcutta (now Kolkata) Museum established.

1915 Khushwant Singh, a well-known writer, poet and columnist of the country, was born.



1952 India wins the first Test cricket in Madras.

03 FEBRUARY

1934 The process of sending Parcel by airplanes for the first time began. It was started by the company which is today known as Lufthansa.

1963 Former Reserve Bank Governor Raghuram Rajan was born.

1916 Banaras Hindu University started.

1988 The first nuclear submarine (INS Chakra) joined the Indian Army.



2008 There are indications that the stolen Nobel Prize of poet Guru Ravindra Nath Tagore was in Bangladesh.

Martyrs Day: Remembering Mahatma Gandhi on his 74th death anniversary

In India, five days are declared as Martyrs Day in honour of those who laid down their lives for the nation. Of these, the first falls on January 30, the day when Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by Nathuram Godse in 1948.

Mahatma Gandhi led the struggle for Independence that culminated in India getting freedom from British rule on August 15, 1947. Babu, as he was lovingly called, played one of the most prominent roles in India's freedom struggle through non-violence and peaceful methods.

Mahatma Gandhi was shot in Birla House compound in New Delhi at the age of 78. He was killed by Nathuram Godse, who had opposed Gandhi's views on the Partition of India.

Mahatma Gandhi was born on 2 October, 1869 at Porbandar, Gujarat. Every year on 2 October, Gandhi Jayanti is observed. This year the day marks the 152nd birth anniversary.

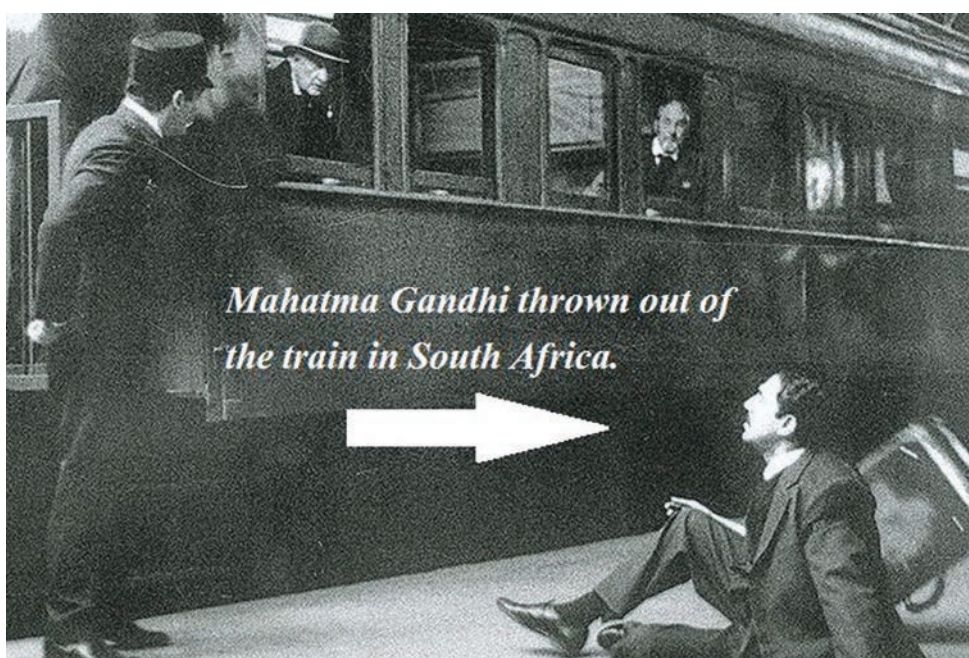
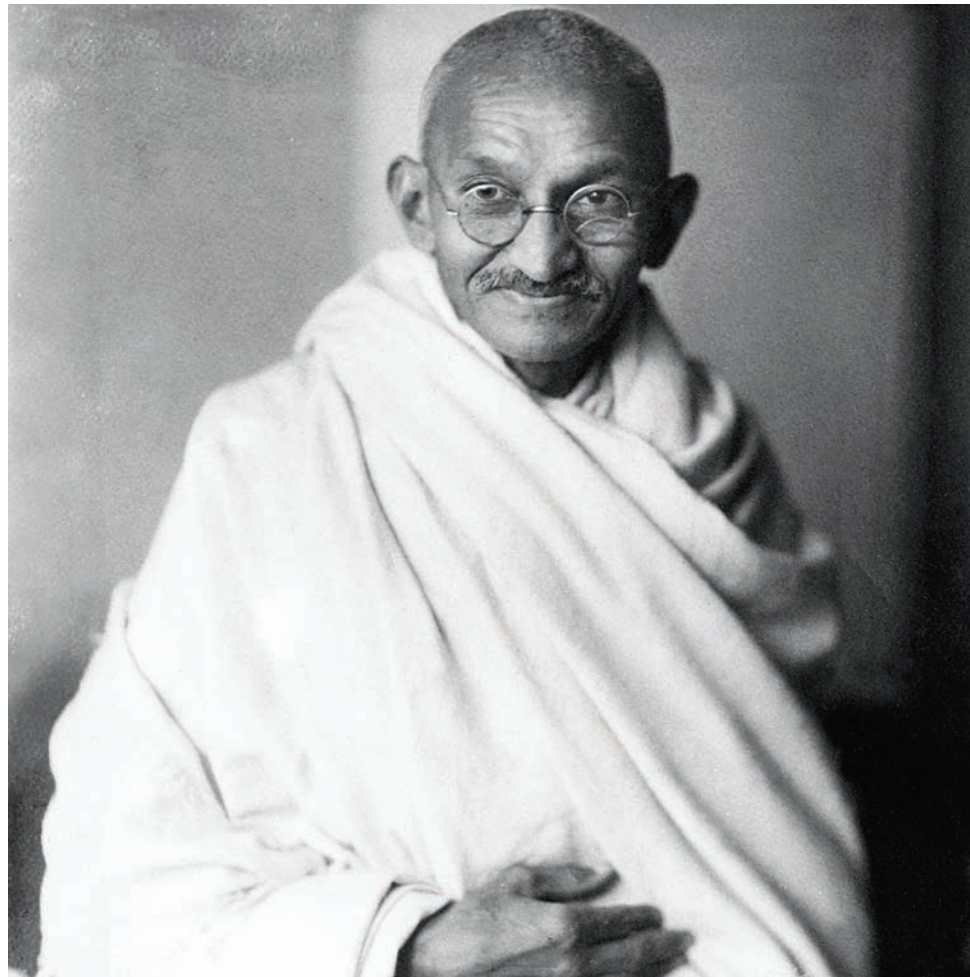
Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi or Mahatma Gandhi was a renowned freedom activist and an authoritative or powerful political leader who had played an important role in India's struggle for Independence against the British rule of India. He was also considered as the father of the country. No doubt, he had also improved the lives of India's poor people. His birthday is celebrated every year as Gandhi Jayanti. His ideology of truth and non-violence influenced many and was also adopted by Martin Luther and Nelson Mandela for their struggle movement.

In South Africa for about 20 years, Mahatma Gandhi protested against injustices and racial discrimination using the non-violent method of protests. His simplistic lifestyle won him, admirers, both in India and the outside world. He was popularly known as Babu (Father).

Early Life and Family Background

He was born on 2 October, 1869 in Porbandar, Gujarat. His father's name was Karamchand Gandhi and his mother's name was Putlibai. At the age of 13, Mahatma Gandhi was married to Kasturba which is an arranged marriage. They had four sons namely Harilal, Manilal, Ramdas and Devdas. She supported all the endeavors of her husband until her death in 1944.

His father was Dewan or Chief Minister of Porbandar, the capital of a small principality in Western British India (Now Gujarat State). Mahatma Gandhi was the son of his father's fourth wife Putlibai, who belonged to an affluent Vaishnava family. Let us tell you that in his earlier days, he was deeply influenced by the stories of Shrivana and Harishchandra as they



reflected the importance of truth.

Mahatma Gandhi: Education

When Gandhi was 9 years old he went to a local school at Rajkot and studied the basics of arithmetic, history, geography, and languages. At the age of 11, he went to a high school in Rajkot. Because of his wedding, at least about one year, his studies were disturbed and later he joined and completed his schooling. He joined

In the year 1888, Mahatma Gandhi left for London to study law. Thereafter 10 days of arrival, he joined the Inner Temple, one of the four London Law colleges, and studied and practiced law. In London, he also joined a Vegetarian Society and introduced to Bhagavad Gita by some of his vegetarian friends. Later, Bhagavad Gita set an impression and influenced his life.

In South Africa

In May, 1893 he went to South Africa to work as a lawyer. There he had the first-hand experience of racial discrimination when he was thrown out of the first-class apartment of the train despite holding the first-class ticket because it was reserved for white people only and no Indian or black was allowed to travel in the first class. This incident had a serious effect on him and he decided to protest against racial discrimination. He further observed that this type of incident was quite common against his fellow Indians who were derogatorily referred to as coolies.

On 22 May, 1894 Gandhi established the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) and worked hard to improve the rights of Indians in South Africa. In a short period, Gandhi became a leader of the Indian community in South Africa. Tirukkural ancient Indian literature, originally written in Tamil and later translated into various languages. Gandhiji was also influenced by this ancient book. He was influenced by the idea of Satyagraha that is a devotion of truth and in 1906 implemented non-violent protest. He returned to India in 1915, after spending 21 years of his life in South Africa, and no doubt, there he fought for civil rights and at this time he was transformed into a new person.

Role in Indian Independence Movement

In 1915, Gandhiji returned to India permanently and joined the Indian National Congress with Gopal Krishna Gokhale as his mentor.

Gandhi's first major achievement was in 1918 when he led the Champaran and Kheda agitations of Bihar and Gujarat. He also led Non-Cooperation Movement, Civil Disobedience Movement, Swaraj, and Quit-India movement against the British government.

Satyagraha

Gandhi identified his overall method of non-violent action as Satyagraha. Gandhiji's Satyagraha influenced eminent personalities such as Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther in their struggle for freedom, equality, and social justice. Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha was based on true principles and non-violence.

Off to London



Kerala Minister Ahamed Devarkovil

TRICOLOUR FOUND UPSIDE-DOWN AS KERALA MINISTER UNFURLS FLAG; PROBE ORDERED

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (TIP)

A probe has been ordered after the national flag was found upside-down when unfurled by Kerala Minister Ahamed Devarkovil on Republic Day in Kasaragod district Wednesday, January 26.

The minister, who holds the ports and archeology portfolios in the Left Democratic Front regime, was the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations in Kasaragod district headquarters on Wednesday. After unfurling the flag, the minister watched the parade held at the municipal stadium.

While he was delivering a speech at the event, media persons covering the ceremony pointed out the mistake. Subsequently, the Tricolour was brought down and unfurled again by the minister, who belongs to CPI(M) ally Indian National League.

Congress MP Rajmohan Unnithan, who represents Kasaragod Lok Sabha seat, three legislators from the district, additional district magistrate A K Ramendran and district police superintendent Vaibhav Saxena were also present at the event.

BUDGET SESSION: BOTH HOUSES TO CONVENE IN SHIFTS

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM (TIP)

Both the Houses will function in two different shifts in a day during the coming Budget Session of Parliament, it was decided on Monday, as the country continues to remain in grip of the third wave of Covid-19 infections. The budget session begins on January 31.

The protocols will be similar to the ones followed during the Monsoon Session of Parliament last year. Held in September 2020, the monsoon session was the first time parliamentary proceedings were held under strict Covid-19 protocol. The Rajya Sabha met in the first half of the day and the Lok Sabha during the second half. Members were seated in both the chambers to ensure social distancing. Similarly, this time around, the Upper House will convene in the morning and the Lok Sabha in the afternoon, a bulletin issued by the Lok Sabha Secretariat said on Monday.

Shaurya Chakra: 2 Army men killed fighting infiltrators in J&K, CRPF officer among 12 to receive honour

NEW DELHI (TIP)

TWO SOLDIERS who were killed fighting infiltrators along the Line of Control (LoC) in J&K and a Rifleman who chased two insurgents into the jungles and killed them during an operation in Assam are among six Army personnel who have been named for Shaurya Chakras this year.

Shaurya Chakra is the country's third highest peacetime gallantry award. President Ram Nath Kovind approved the list of awardees – six from Army and six from CRPF – on the eve of Republic Day.

While five of the six from the Army have been awarded posthumously, for the CRPF, the number of posthumous awards is four.

Two of the Army's posthumous awards have been given for the same operation. Naib Subedar Sreejith M and Sepoy Maruprolu Jaswanth Reddy, both from 17th Madras Regiment, were killed fighting infiltrators trying to cross the LoC in Sunderbani sector of J&K on July 8, 2021. They killed militants in face-to-face gunfights before they came under heavy fire and use of grenades.

Three others who were named for Shaurya Chakra are Havildar Anil Kumar Tomar and Havildar Kashiray Bammanalli, both from 44 Rashtra Rifles, and Havildar Pinku Kumar from 34 Rashtra Rifles. They were killed in operations in the Valley in which each of them killed at least one militant before they were killed.

The only surviving Army person to get



the Shaurya Chakra this year is Rifleman Rakesh Sharma, who during an operation on May 23 in an Assam village, chased two insurgents into the jungles and killed them despite coming under heavy fire.

Apart from them, six CoBRA commandos of the CRPF have been awarded the Shaurya Chakra.

Deputy Commandant Dilip Malik, posted in 205 CoBRA, who led his men in a fierce gunfight with Maoists after they came under head fire during a search operation in a Bihar forest has been named for the award. He killed at least three Maoists and "set the highest and exemplary standards of leadership"

during the operation.

Three personnel of CoBRA also received the Shaurya Chakra posthumously for a separate anti-Maoist operation in Irrapalli.

The President also awarded 'Mention-in-Despatches' to 44 personnel from the Armed Forces. The largest set of 15 are for counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in J&K. Fourteen personnel were awarded for the operations during the standoff in eastern Ladakh. Two of these are posthumous, awarded to Havildar Sudheesh Kumar S and Naik Ramarao Vanjarapu, both from Engineer Regiment.

Bhattacharjee is latest among those who've refused Padma honours

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Former West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee on Tuesday, Jan 25, declined to accept the Padma Bhushan award shortly after the Union ministry of home affairs released the list of the Padma awardees for 2022.

Bhattacharjee, 77, and veteran actor Victor Banerjee were among the 17 people named for the Padma Bhushan from West Bengal. To be sure, a third Padma Bhushan recipient, Ustad Rashid Khan, lives in Bengal but in the home ministry list, is classified under Uttar Pradesh where he was born.

"I do not know anything about the Padma Bhushan award. Nobody said anything to me about this. If I have been given the award, then I refuse it," Bhattacharjee said in a short statement circulated by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPI(M).

Bhattacharjee was the chief minister from 2000 to 2011. The former chief minister has been unwell for some time and never leaves home. He was treated for Covid-19 last year.

Here is a list of people who have earlier refused to accept such awards over various reasons:

- Author Gita Mehta refused to accept the Padma Shri conferred on her in 2019 for contributions to literature and education, citing the general election later that year. She said the timing of the award might be misconstrued, causing embarrassment both to the government and herself. Mehta, who is Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik's sister, said she believed the award was "a way to lure in Biju Janata Dal's support by the Bharatiya Janata Party."
- Journalist Virendra Kapoor, who was jailed during the Emergency in the 1970s, refused to accept the Padma award in 2016, saying he has not accepted anything from any government and did not believe in taking anything from it.
- Tamil writer and director Bahuleyan Jeyamohan also declined the Padma Shri in 2016 as he did not want to be labelled "a Hindutva sympathiser".
- Playback singer Sistla Janaki refused to accept the Padma Bhushan in 2013, saying the recognition was late and her family believed only a Bharat Ratna, the highest civilian award, would do justice to her reputation. *Source: HT*

Ashok Chakra awarded to J&K ASI Babu Ram posthumously

Assistant Sub-Inspector Babu Ram who lost his life in an encounter with terrorists at Pantha Chowk in Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar in 2020 has been awarded the Ashok Chakra posthumously by the President of India, Ram Nath Kovind. His family received the award during the Republic Day Parade 2022. Assistant Sub-Inspector Babu Ram's wife Reema Rani and his son Manik Sharma received the Ashok Chakra from President Kovind.

Ashok Chakra is the country's highest peacetime gallantry award. Babu Ram killed three terrorists during an operation in Srinagar on August 29, 2020.

The top gallantry award was approved by the President on the eve of the 75th Independence Day for Babu Ram.

INDIA RANKS 85 IN TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL'S CORRUPTION INDEX
NEW DELHI (TIP)

Underlining that some of the mechanisms that could help reign in corruption are weakening, Transparency International ranked India at 85 among 180 countries in its Corruption Perception Index report released on Tuesday, Jan 25.

"The case of India is particularly worrying. While the country's score has remained stagnant over the past decade, some of the mechanisms that could help reign in corruption are weakening. There are concerns over the country's democratic status, as fundamental freedoms and institutional checks and balances decay," the report said.

The index, which ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption according to experts and business people, uses a scale of 0 to 100 to rank Corruption Perception Index (CPI), where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean. Transparency International gave India a CPI score of 40. In 2021, India ranked 86th with the same CPI score of 40. The report highlighted concerns over the risk to journalists and activists who have been "victims of attacks by the police, political militants.

India sees 2.86 lakh new Covid cases, 665 more deaths

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India logged 2,85,914 new coronavirus infections, taking the total tally of Covid cases to 4,00,85,116, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Wednesday, January 25.

The death toll has climbed to 4,91,127 with 665 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The active cases have decreased to 22,23,018 and comprise 5.55 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid recovery rate has decreased to 93.23 per cent, the ministry said.

A reduction of 13,824 cases has been recorded in the active Covid caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 16.16 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was recorded at 17.33 per cent, according to the ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 3,73,70,971, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.23 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide Covid vaccination drive has exceeded 163.58 crore.

The 665 new fatalities include 154 from Kerala, and 86 from Maharashtra.



A total of 4,91,127 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 1,42,237 from Maharashtra, 52,141 from Kerala, 38,666 from Karnataka, 37,312 from Tamil Nadu, 25,681 from Delhi, 23,088 from Uttar Pradesh and 20,411 from West Bengal.

Omicron may have prolonged effect in India; Covid can't be eradicated: Expert

Harvard immunologist Dr Shiv Pillai has said that Covid-19 will never be completely eradicated but vaccines and drugs will hopefully change many things in a few years down the line. The ongoing Omicron wave may have a prolonged effect in India, the immunologist expressed concerns as not much is

known about the second version of Omicron (BA.2) that has started spreading in the country. "In India, there is a variant of Omicron BA.2 that's also spreading, it is different from Omicron. In fact, Omicron BA.1 is the original, but it's slightly different," Dr Pillai Professor of Medicine and Health Sciences and Technology, director, Harvard Immunology Graduate Programme at the Harvard Medical School, said to ANI.

BA.1, the first version of the Omicron, is slightly milder than the original virus and its variants like Alpha, Beta, Delta and did not affect the lungs badly. But with BA.2, it can't be confirmed as it is just being reported.

"Immunity from BA.1 first Omicron might give us some immunity against the second one BA.2. But will that second one be as mild? Not proven yet. We'll see the data will probably come from South Africa and India first. Because in India, BA.2 has taken over it is the most common version in India right now. It's rising the second version of Omicron," Dr Pillai said.

South Africa and the United States too have many BA.2 cases, Dr Pillai said, adding that it is not clear whether BA.2 will replace BA.1 and create another surge.

ITBP's 'Himveers' celebrate Republic Day at minus 35°C, hoist flag at 15,000 ft



NEW DELHI (TIP)

The soldiers of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) - called 'Himveers' - marked the occasion by unfurling the National Flag at 15,000 feet in minus 35 degree Celsius temperature at icy Ladakh borders.

The force also posted special videos and pictures to commemorate the Republic Day of India. The video shows the soldiers braving the freezing temperatures unfurling the national flag not only at Ladakh but also at different heights at peaks of the Himalayas where they are posted to secure the India-China border.

In one such video, taken at Auli in Uttarakhand, the ITBP soldiers are seen skiing on a snow-clad mountain in a formation, at 11,000 feet in minus 20 degrees Celsius.

The lead soldier leading the contingent is carrying the

Tricolour:

The 'Daredevil' bikers of the ITBP will also showcase 10 different types of formation at the Rajpath on the Republic Day Parade, which is scheduled to begin in some time. This is the first time that so many formations will be showcased.

According to ITBP, Lotus Formation, Border Man's Salute, Fly Riding, Pawan Chakki, Horizontal Bar Exercise, Six-Man Balance, Arrow Position, Jaguar Position, Sentinels of the Himalayas and the theme-based Pyramid on 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' on the 75th Anniversary of India's independence will be showcased as formations on the moving bikes by the force's 'Himveers'.

A total of 146 personnel and 33 Bullet Motorcycles of ITBP will participate in the Mission 'Daredevils'.

Kapil Sibal on Ghulam Nabi Azad's Padma: 'Ironic that Cong doesn't need him...'

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal on Wednesday, Jan 25, congratulated Ghulam Nabi Azad who has been conferred with Padma Bhushan on the eve of the Republic Day and said it is ironic that the Congress does not need his services when the nation recognises his contributions to public life. "Ghulam Nabi Azad conferred Padma Bhushan. Congratulations bhaijan. Ironic that the Congress doesn't need his services when the nation recognises his contributions to public life," the G-23 leader said.



The infighting in the Congress which surface from time to time became evident soon after Ghulam Nabi Azad was conferred with the Padma Bhushan. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh took a jibe at Ghulam Nabi Azad and referring to Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee's refusal to accept the Padma Bhushan, he said it is the right thing to do as the communist leader wants to be 'Azad not Ghulam', in a stinging attack to Ghulam Nabi Azad.

Jairam Ramesh's attack made the internal tension of the Congress palpable and soon after rumours spread that Ghulam Nabi Azad has dropped the Congress from his Twitter bio. Azad dismissed such rumours and said that some mischievous propaganda was being circulated by some people to create confusion. Without mentioning the Congress, he said that nothing has been added to or deleted from his Twitter profile.

Kapil Sibal who earlier slammed the Congress during the Punjab crisis and said that G-23 is not Ji Huzoor 23 extended support to Ghulam Nabi Azad.

The Republic of India

India observes Republic Day on January 26, every year. Republic Day marks an important event in India's history. It commemorates the enactment of the constitution of India which came into effect on January 26, 1950, and made the nation into a republic. The main attraction of the day is the Republic Day parade which begins at Rajpath, Delhi, and ends at India Gate. That year the country will be celebrating its 73rd Republic day.

On this day, the President hoists the flag at Rajpath, New Delhi. Ceremonious parades showcase India's defence, cultural abilities, cultural and social heritage.

The president of India, who is also the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Armed Forces, takes the salute.

Every year, the President distributes Padma Awards to the civilians of India, which is the second-highest civilian award in India after Bharat Ratna.

Republic Day 2022: History

Every year, since 1950, January 26 is celebrated as Republic Day in India. It was on this day, in 1950, that the Indian constitution came into existence.

The constitution was adopted by the Indian Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949, and came into effect 1 year later, on January 26, 1950, with a democratic government system.

Republic Day 2022: Significance

The constitution of India is a huge document that lays down procedures, powers, duties, fundamental rights and directive principles of the Government of India & Indian citizens.

This day marks the celebration of the empowerment of Indian citizens to select their own government. It is a national holiday that commemorates the process of the establishment of the Indian Constitution. Only 5,000-8,000 people to be allowed in parade amid COVID-19

The number of people that would be allowed to attend the Republic Day parade this year would be curtailed by 70-80 per cent to approximately 5,000-8,000 due to the ongoing wave of COVID-19, senior officials of the defence ministry said on Tuesday.

Approximately 25,000 people were allowed to attend the last year's parade. Moreover, the decision on whether chief guests will come or not for this year's parade is yet to be taken by the Ministry of External Affairs, the officials mentioned. There was no chief guest at the parade last year.

Officials said the aim is to keep the people away and maintain social distancing at all times so that the parade should not become a super spreader event. Therefore, the numbers have been significantly curtailed, they added. While the exact number is yet to be decided, it would be anywhere between 5,000-8,000 people this year, they mentioned.

People would be encouraged to watch the parade on TV and livestreaming, they stated.

The decision regarding chief guests is being handled by the Ministry of External Affairs and we will wait for their decision in this regard, the officials said.

There will be no foreign chief guest on Republic Day this year due to the



coronavirus crisis and the Omicron threat. The Government had reportedly sent invitations to the Heads of States of five Central Asian countries.

"There will be no foreign chief guest from Central Asian countries on Republic Day this year due to COVID-19. The government had sent invitations to the Heads of State of five Central Asian countries but the plans have now been cancelled," government sources told news agency ANI.

Republic Day signifies the right spirit of Independent and individual India. The important symbols of the festival include the exhibition of military equipment, the national flag and military equipment.

Mohandas Gandhi struggled through decades of passive resistance before Britain finally accepted Indian independence. Self-rule had been promised during World War II, but after the war triangular negotiations between Gandhi, the British and the Muslim League stalled over whether to partition India along religious lines. Eventually, Lord Mountbatten, the viceroy of India, forced through a compromise plan. On August 15, 1947, the former Mogul Empire was divided into the independent nations of India and Pakistan. Gandhi called the agreement the "noblest act of the British nation," but religious strife between Hindus and Muslims soon marred his exhilaration. Hundreds of thousands died, including Gandhi, who was assassinated by a Hindu fanatic in January 1948 during a prayer vigil in an area of Muslim-Hindu violence. Of Gandhi's death, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said, "The light has gone out of our lives, and there is darkness everywhere." However, Nehru, a leader of the Indian struggle for independence and Gandhi's protege,

persisted in his efforts to stabilize India, and by 1949 the religious violence began to subside. In late 1949, an Indian constitution was adopted, and on January 26, 1950, the Republic of India was born.

With universal adult franchise, Nehru hoped to overcome India's "caste-ridden" society and promote greater gender equality. Elections were to be held at least every five years, and India's government was modeled after the British parliamentary system. A president would hold the largely ceremonial post of head of state but would be given greater powers in times of emergency. The first president was Rajendra Prasad.

Nehru, who won his first of three subsequent elections in 1952, was faced with staggering challenges. A massively underdeveloped economy and overpopulation contributed to widespread poverty. Nehru also had to force the integration of the former princely states into the Indian union and suppress movements for greater autonomy in states like Punjab. In his years of struggle against Britain, he always advocated nonviolence but as prime minister sometimes had to stray from this policy. He sent troops into the Portuguese enclaves of Goa and Daman and fought with China over Kashmir and Nepal. He died in 1964 and was succeeded by Lal Bahadur Shastri. Later, Nehru's only child, Indira Gandhi, served four terms as a controversial prime minister of India. Republic Day is celebrated all over India with great gratification and joy. It's a day to honour the Constitution of independent India. National flag hoisting in schools and colleges are regular. Cultural events advocating India's struggle for freedom is held countrywide. In New Delhi, the national flag is hoisted by the President of

India at India Gate. The gloriest of parades takes place at Rajpath, New Delhi. The parade is conducted by the Indian President and is arranged by the Ministry of Defence. Other than displaying its military prowess, the event also promotes India's diverse culture. The event also colonizes to the martyrs who have sacrificed their lives for the country. The Prime Minister of India honours the martyrs by putting a ringlet at the Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate. It's followed by a 21-gun salute, national flag hoisting, and national anthem. Awards are presented to the brave soldiers in the form of Paramvir Chakra, Ashok Chakra, and Vir Chakra. Even children and general citizens who have displayed courage in times of adversity are honoured with awards.

The winners of gallantry awards salute the President in military jeeps. This is followed by India's display of its military power: March-past by the armed forces, police, and National Cadet Corps also takes place with the President of India receiving the salute from different regiments. The parade comes to an end when the Indian Air Force fighter jets flypast Janpath. The celebration takes place all over the country, however, Delhi being the capital of India, witnesses the largest of Republic Day celebrations. Live Webcast of the Republic Day Parade is made accessible every year to millions of people who wish to view the parade over the Internet. After the event is over, the exclusive footage is made obtainable as 'video on demand'. Celebrations, though on a relatively smaller scale, are also held in all state capitals, where the Governor of the state unfurls the flag. Some celebrations are also held at district headquarters, subdivisions, talukas, and panchayats.

Constitution of India

The Constitution of India lays down the distinctions in the political power structure in the country between the Centre and the states. On the 72nd anniversary of Republic Day, we look at some key facts about the Indian Constitution

January 26 marks the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect in 1950 and is celebrated as Republic Day. On this date, India became a sovereign nation free from the British Monarchy. On the 72nd anniversary of Republic Day, we look at some key facts about the Indian Constitution.

HISTORY

The Constitution of India became the supreme law of this nation, replacing the Government of India Act of 1935, adapted from the Parliament of the United Kingdom. After India's independence from British rule in 1947, The Constituent Assembly of India got elected to create the Constitution of India. It was passed and adopted on November 26, 1949, and came into force on January 26, the following year.

The Drafting Committee was headed by its chairman, Dr. BR Ambedkar, the jurist, economist and social reformer who worked to uplift the Dalits of India. K.M. Munshi, Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer, Muhammed Saadullah, N Madhava Rao and Gopala Swami Ayyangar were the other six members of the committee. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, was the president of the Drafting Committee.

FEATURES

The Indian Constitution is the longest one in the world and is the second-largest active Constitution. It has 470 articles in 25 parts and 12 schedules with five appendices. It had 395 articles in 22 parts and 8 schedules, originally. Additions took place through amendments or changes to the Constitution.

SEPARATION OF POWERS

The Constitution of India lays down the distinctions in the political power structure in the country between the Centre and the states. It provides for the checks and balances between the organs of the government, namely, the Judiciary, the Executive and the Legislature, to prevent the concentration of power in one particular branch.

DEMOCRACY

The preamble to the Constitution of India declares India to be a 'Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic republic,' having a parliamentary governance system. Six fundamental rights, namely, the right to equality, liberty, right against exploitation, freedom of religion, cultural and educational rights, and right to constitutional remedies, are recognised by the Indian Constitution.

Background

The major portion of the Indian subcontinent was under British rule from 1857 to 1947. When the Constitution of India came into force on 26 January 1950, it repealed the Indian Independence Act.



A photo of the drafting committee of the Constituent Assembly with its chairman BR Ambedkar in the centre. (Alamy Photo)

India ceased to be a dominion of the British Crown and became a sovereign democratic republic. The date of 26 January was chosen to commemorate the Purna Swaraj declaration of independence of 1930.

Articles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 60, 324, 366, 367, 379, 380, 388, 391, 392, 393 and 394 of the Constitution came into force on 26 Nov 1949 and the remaining articles on 26 Jan 1950.

Previous legislation used as sources

It is drawn from many sources. Keeping in mind the needs and conditions of India its framers borrowed different features freely from previous legislation viz. Government of India Act 1858, Indian Councils Act 1861, Indian Councils Act 1892, Indian Councils Act 1909, Government of India Act 1919, Government of India Act 1935 and the Indian Independence Act 1947. The last

legislation which led to the creation of the two independent nations of India and Pakistan provided for the division of the erstwhile Constituent Assembly into two, with each new assembly having sovereign powers transferred to it, to enable each to draft and enact a new constitution, for the separate states.

Constituent assembly

It was drafted by the Constituent Assembly, which was elected by elected members of the provincial assemblies. The 389 member Constituent Assembly took almost three years (two years, eleven months and eighteen days to be precise) to complete its historic task of drafting the Constitution for independent India, during which, it held eleven sessions over 165 days. Of these, 114 days were spent on the consideration of the draft Constitution. On 29 August 1947, the Constituent Assembly set up a Drafting Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to prepare a draft

Constitution for India. While deliberating upon the draft Constitution, the assembly moved, discussed and disposed of as many as 2,473 amendments out of a total of 7,635 tabled. Dr B.R. Ambedkar, Sanjay Phakey, Jawaharlal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Kanaiyalal Munshi, Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar, Sandipkumar Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Nalini Ranjan Ghosh, and Balwantraoi Mehta were some important figures in the assembly. There were more than 30 members of the scheduled classes. Frank Anthony represented the Anglo-Indian community, and the Parsis were represented by H. P. Modi. The Chairman of the Minorities Committee was Harendra Coomar Mookerjee, a distinguished Christian who represented all Christians other than Anglo-Indians. Ari Bahadur Gurung represented the Gorkha Community. Prominent jurists like Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer, Benegal Narsing Rau and K. M. Munshi, Ganesh Mavlankar were also members of the Assembly. Sarojini Naidu, Hansa Mehta, Durgabai Deshmukh, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Vijayalakshmi Pandit were important women members

The first temporary 2-day president of the Constituent Assembly was Dr Sachchidananda Sinha. Later, Rajendra Prasad was elected president of the Constituent Assembly. The members of the Constituent Assembly met for the first time on 9 December 1946.

Drafting

On the 14 August 1947 meeting of the Assembly, a proposal for forming various committees was presented. Such committees included a Committee on Fundamental Rights, the Union Powers Committee and Union Constitution Committee. On 29 August 1947, the Drafting Committee was appointed, with Dr B. R. Ambedkar as the Chairman along with six other members assisted by a constitutional advisor. These members were Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi (K M Munshi, Ex- Home Minister, Bombay), Alladi Krishnaswamy Iyer (Ex- Advocate General, Madras State), N Gopaldaswami Ayengar (Ex-Prime Minister, J&K and later member of Nehru Cabinet), B L Mitter (Ex-Advocate General, India), Md. Saadullah (Ex- Chief Minister of Assam, Muslim League member) and D P Khaitan (Scion of Khaitan Business family and a renowned lawyer). The constitutional advisor was Sir Benegal Narsing Rau (who became First Indian Judge in International Court of Justice, 1950-54). Later B L Mitter resigned and was replaced by Madhav Rao (Legal Advisor of Maharaja of Vadodara). On D P Khaitan's death, T T Krishnamachari was included in the drafting committee. A draft Constitution was prepared by the

From Page 21

committee and submitted to the Assembly on 4 November 1947, which was debated and over 2000 amendments were moved over a period of two years. Finally on 26 November 1949, the process was completed and the Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution. 284 members signed the document and the process of constitution making was complete. This day is celebrated as National Law Day or Constitution Day.

The assembly met in sessions open to the public, for 166 days, spread over a period of 2 years, 11 months and 18 days before adopting the Constitution, the 308 members of the assembly signed two copies of the document (one each in Hindi and English) on 24 January 1950. The original Constitution of India is handwritten with beautiful calligraphy, each page beautified and decorated by artists from Shantiniketan including Beohar Rammanohar Sinha and Nandalal Bose. The illustrations on the cover and pages represent styles from the different civilisations of the subcontinent, ranging from the prehistoric Mohenjodaro civilisation, in the Indus Valley, to the present. The calligraphy in the book was done by Prem Behari Narain Raizda. It was published in Dehra Dun, and photolithographed at the offices of Survey of India. The entire exercise to produce the original took nearly five years. Two days later, on 26 January 1950, the Constitution of India became the law of all the States and territories of India. Rs.1,00,00,000 was official estimate of expenditure on constituent assembly. It has undergone many amendments since its enactment.

The original 1950 Constitution of India is preserved in helium cases in the Parliament house, New Delhi. There are two original versions of this - one in Hindi and the other in English.

Preamble to the Constitution of India

India on Sunday, Jan 23, kicked off its Republic Day celebrations with 'Parakram Diwas,' a day dedicated to iconic freedom fighter Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. January 23 is also Netaji's birth anniversary.

January 26th is significant for the country's political history as it is the day when the country formally adopted its constitution in 1950. It replaced the Government of India Act (1935) as the governing document of India and thus, turning the nation into a newly formed republic.

What is Preamble to the Constitution of India?

The Preamble to the Constitution of India is an introductory statement that presents the key principles of the Constitution. It was adopted on 26 November 1949 by the Constituent Assembly and came into effect on 26 January 1950, celebrated as the Republic day in India.

Full text of Preamble to the Constitution

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a **SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC** and to secure to all its citizens: **JUSTICE**, social, economic and political; **LIBERTY** of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;



Hologram of the statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose unveiled by the PM, on the occasion of the Parakram Diwas celebrations, at India Gate, in New Delhi on January 23, 2022.

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all **FRATERNITY** assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Nation; **IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY** this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do **HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

Preamble embodies Constitution's vision

The Preamble manifests the vision of the draftspersons of the Constitution. In adopting it after the draft Constitution was approved, the Constituent Assembly ensured that the Preamble exhibited conformity with the provisions of the Constitution. Yet, the content of the Preamble traces its origins to even before the task of drafting the Constitution began. The foundations of the Preamble were laid down in the Objectives Resolution moved by Jawaharlal Nehru before the Constituent Assembly in December 1946.

The purpose of the resolution was to "proclaim India as an Independent Sovereign Republic and to draw up for her future governance a Constitution", which would secure "to all the people of India justice, social, economic and political; equality of status, of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith worship, vocation, association and action", among other goals. Seconding the resolution, one member remarked that equality was "its underlying theme". Another member supporting the resolution firmly believed that the Indian Republic would "be both democratic and socialist". The resolution was enthusiastically supported by most of the members and was adopted in January 1947.

Later, Nehru pointed out that Objective Resolution could be adopted with certain changes as the Preamble. The Drafting

Committee headed by BR Ambedkar felt that the Preamble should be restricted to defining the essential features of the new State and its basic socio-political objectives and that the other matters dealt with in the resolution could be more appropriately provided for in the substantive parts of the Constitution.

The Committee modified the content of the Objectives Resolution to formulate the Preamble, while clarifying that it followed the spirit and, as far as possible, the language of the resolution. The Committee adopted the expression "Sovereign Democratic Republic" instead of "Sovereign Independent Republic", as it considered independence to be implied in the word "Sovereign". The Committee introduced a clause on "Fraternity" to emphasize upon the need for fraternal concord and goodwill in India, which was specifically greater than ever, after the Partition.

The draft Preamble, as it is in current form, was tabled before the Constituent Assembly in October 1949. One member sought to include "In the name of God" in the beginning of the Preamble. The Assembly rejected the proposed amendment. Another member argued that inclusion of God would amount to compulsion of faith and violate the fundamental right to freedom of faith. Another member stated that invoking the name of God in the Preamble would resemble "a narrow, sectarian spirit, which is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution." The Assembly adopted the Preamble as presented by the Drafting Committee.

The Preamble recognizes and proclaims that the Constitution has its root, its authority, and its sovereignty, from the people. "Sovereign Democratic Republic" reflects the establishment of a democratic form of government, where ultimate power is vested with the public and exercised through universal adult franchise. Commenting upon this aspect of

the Preamble, Acharya Kriplani observed that "democracy is inconsistent with caste system", and that we must do away with castes and classes. "Justice, social, economic and political" symbolizes the commitment of the framers to put an end to status quo of inequalities and historical injustices and to replace fundamental wrongs with fundamental rights. As Kriplani remarked, "Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship" can only be guaranteed on the basis of non-violence and mutual respect for each other. "Equality of status and of opportunity", in Ambedkar's words, means absence of glaring inequalities and discrimination in the society. The expression "to promote among them all" is linked with "Fraternity". Ambedkar defined "Fraternity" as "a sense of common brotherhood of all Indians" and "an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellow men", which give "unity and solidarity to social life". The principles of liberty, equality and fraternity would ensure dignity of each individual, thus leading to unity of the nation. Ambedkar considered liberty, equality and fraternity to be forming "a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy".

The addition of the words "Socialist" and "Secular" into the Preamble by the 42nd constitutional amendment during the Emergency in 1976 did not alter its nature or identity. It merely provided a label to what was already in existence. There are three key points in support of this contention. First, in support of Nehru's Objectives Resolution, one member explained that the content of economic democracy and rejection of the existing social structure reflected through the phrases "justice, social, economic and political" and "equality of opportunity" represent the socialist aspect of the Resolution, without providing it with an open label. These phrases were later adopted into the Preamble. Second, by rejecting inclusion of any phrase on God in the Preamble, the Assembly adopted a secular document instead of a sectarian one. Third, the Preamble embodies the philosophy of the Constitution, which is reflected through its provisions and the basic structure. As Justice DY Chandrachud held in one of his judgments, the addition of the word "secular" solidified the basic structure of the Constitution, which enshrines secularism in the fundamental rights chapter.

The Court has often engaged with interpretation of the Constitution by relying upon the vision and values contained in the Preamble. While the flourishing of a constitutional order demands an active institutional role of courts, it also requires a responsive participation of the citizenry. The response of the citizens to their elected representatives has a powerful role in giving a meaning to the words of the Constitution. The content of the Preamble not only embodies events which predate the adoption of the Constitution, but also incorporates the citizens' experiences in the unfolding of the Constitution over the past seventy years. The hopes and aspirations of the people enshrined in the Preamble have sustained due to years of practice, effort, and experience to make society work with those values. The recent events of claiming the Preamble and the Constitution by the citizens as their very own resemble a path towards the professed collective destiny of India.

Dr BR Ambedkar: The Chief Architect of the Indian Constitution

Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, popularly known as Baba Saheb, was the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. A veritable emancipator of

Dalits, a great national leader and patriot, a great author, a great educationist, a great political philosopher, a great religious guide and above he was great himself without any parallel among his contemporaries.

Born in a Mahar family of Ambavade, a small village in Ratnagiri in Maharashtra on 14 April 1891, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was the fourteenth child of his parents. Since he was from an untouchable community devoid of dignity and pride, his childhood was full of humiliations and deprivations, whether in classroom or in playground or in any public gathering. Surprisingly, he rose to be a highly qualified man with his academic degrees of M.A., Ph.D., D.Sc. and Barrister at law.

Dr. Ambedkar was appointed as the first Law Minister of Free India. On 29th August, 1947 the Constituent Assembly appointed him as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee along with six other members to draft the Constitution of India.

Dr Ambedkar was appointed the Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee. The text prepared by Ambedkar provided constitutional guarantees and protections for a wide range of civil liberties for individual citizens, including freedom of religion, the abolition of untouchability and outlawing all forms of discrimination. Ambedkar argued for extensive economic and social rights for women, and also won the Constituent Assembly's support for introducing a system of reservations of jobs for members of the SC and ST. Ambedkar kept the clauses of the Constitution flexible so that amendments could be made as and when the situation demanded. He provided an inspiring Preamble to the Constitution ensuring justice, social, economic and political, liberty, equality and fraternity. The creation of an egalitarian social order, however, remains an unfulfilled wishful thinking to this day.

Dr Ambedkar was not only a learned scholar and an eminent jurist but also a revolutionary who fought against social evils like untouchability and caste restrictions. Throughout his life, he battled social discrimination while upholding the rights of the Dalits and other socially backward classes. He was not only a great national leader but also a distinguished scholar of international repute. He not only led various social movements for the upliftment of the depressed sections of the Indian society but also contributed to the understanding of the socio-economic and political problems of India through his scholarly works on caste, religion, culture, constitutional law and economic development. As a matter of fact he was an economist and his various scholarly works and speeches indicate his deep understanding of the problems faced by the Indian society. He was appointed as the nation's first Law Minister and was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1990.

On August 29, 1947 Dr. Ambedkar was appointed the Chairman of the Drafting Committee that was constituted by Constituent Assembly to draft a Constitution for independent India. The draft Constitution was the result of the collective efforts of a galaxy of great leaders and legal scholars in the Constituent Assembly such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, B.R. Ambedkar, Sardar Patel, B.N. Rao, Alladi Krishnaswamy Ayyar etc. The purpose of this paper is to examine the contribution of Dr Ambedkar only to the Indian Constitution.

Dr Ambedkar played a seminal role in the framing of the Indian Constitution. He used all his experience and knowledge in drafting the Constitution. In his capacity as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee, he hammered out a comprehensive workable Constitution into which he incorporated his valuable views. He gave free India its legal framework, and the



people, the basis of their freedom. To this end, his contribution was significant, substantial, and spectacular.² Dr Ambedkar's contribution to the evolution of free India lies in his striving for ensuring justice—social, economic and political—for one and all.

Fundamental Rights

Ambedkar was a champion of fundamental rights, and Part III of the Indian Constitution guarantees the fundamental rights to the citizens against the state. Some of the fundamental rights contained in Articles 15(2), 17, 23, and 24 are also enforceable against individuals as they are very significant rights relating to the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth etc.³ The text prepared by Ambedkar provided constitutional guarantees and protections for a wide range of civil liberties for individual citizens, including freedom of religion, the abolition of untouchability and outlawing all forms of discrimination. Ambedkar argued for extensive economic and social rights for women.

According to Ambedkar, the most significant feature of the fundamental rights is that these rights are made justiciable. The right to move to the Supreme Court for enforcement of fundamental rights under Article 32 is itself a fundamental right. Article 32 authorises the Supreme Court to issue directions, orders or writs in the nature of habeas corpus, mandamus, certioraris etc. or any other appropriate remedy, as the case may be, for the enforcement of fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

Parliamentary Democracy

Dr Ambedkar was a strong advocate of the parliamentary form of government right from the inception of the Government of India Act of 1935. He firmly believed that the parliamentary system of government alone can usher in an egalitarian society through the application of the principles of social democracy. Dr Ambedkar's social democracy comprised politicians, political parties with high standards of political morality, honesty and integrity and strong and highly responsible Opposition party or parties committed to the cause of the downtrodden and depressed classes. The Preamble of the Indian Constitution echoes the principles of parliamentary democracy. It reads:

We the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic and to secure to all its citizens—Justice, Social, Economic and Political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, Equality of status and of opportunity and to promote among them all—Fraternity, assuring the dignity of Individual and the Unity of the Nation, in our Constituent Assembly this 26th day of November, 1949

do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this Constitution.

Dr Ambedkar was a strong advocate of the federal structure of the Union and States based on the principles of a strong Centre and independent States. Dr Ambedkar also did great service to the nation by proposing the institution of a unified judicial system and common All India Services with a view to strengthen national unity and integrity.

Protective Discrimination/Reservation

The real contribution of Ambedkar is reflected in the protective discrimination scheme or the reservation policy of the government envisaged under some provisions of Part III and many of Part IV dealing with the constitutional mandate to ameliorate the condition of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the other backward classes. Provisions like Article 17 prohibiting untouchability, Article 30 dealing with the protection of minorities are some of the notable examples.

Articles 15(4) and 16(4) of Part III and Part XI, and Schedule V and VI dealing with the upliftment of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes speak clearly about the substantial and significant contribution of Ambedkar for the development of untouchables.⁵ Ambedkar made it his life's mission to uplift the untouchables and other downtrodden masses from the unequal position of inferiority to that of equal position of parity in socio-economic status with high-caste Hindus. For achieving this goal the reservation policy or the scheme of protective discrimination was advocated and implemented by him for ten years at least to ameliorate the conditions of the various depressed and down-trodden sections of Hindu society.

State Socialism

Dr Ambedkar advocated his economic doctrine of "state socialism" in the draft Constitution. He proposed state ownership of agriculture with a collectivised method of cultivation and a modified form of state socialism in the field of industry. But due to strong opposition in the Constitution Assembly, he could not incorporate his scheme of state socialism under the fundamental rights as a part of the Constitution.

In 1948, Dr Ambedkar presented the draft Constitution before the people of India; it was adopted on November 26, 1949 by the Constituent Assembly in the name of the people of India and came into force on January 26, 1950 marking the beginning of a new era in the history of India. Speaking after the completion of his work, Ambedkar said: "I feel the Constitution is workable; it is flexible and it is strong enough to hold the country together both in peace time and in war time."⁶ It has been in effect since January 26, 1950, which is celebrated as the Republic Day in India.

The first President of India, Dr Rajendra Prasad, praised the services rendered by Dr Ambedkar in the making of the Constitution and said:

I have carefully watched the day-to-day activities from the presidential seat. Therefore, I appreciate more than others with how much dedication and vitality this task has been carried out by the Drafting Committee and by its chairman Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar in particular. We never did a better thing than having Dr Ambedkar on the Drafting Committee and selecting him as its chairman.

The Columbia University at its Special convocation on June 5, 1952 conferred the LL.D. degree (Honoris Causa) on Dr Ambedkar in recognition of his drafting the Constitution of India. The citation read:

The degree is being conferred in recognition of the work done by him in connection with the drafting of India's Constitution.

The University hailed him as "one of India's leading citizens, a great social reformer and valiant upholder of human rights".

29 children conferred Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

As many as 29 Children have been conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar this year, selected from all regions of the country for their exceptional achievements in Innovation (7), Social Service (4), Scholastic (1), Sports (8), Art & Culture (6) and Bravery (3) categories. There are 15 Boys and 14 Girls among the awardees belonging to 21 States and UTs.

In view of the unprecedented circumstances emerging due to COVID-19 situation in the country, it was not possible to organize a physical ceremony at New Delhi. In order to felicitate and motivate the exceptional works of children, a function was held virtually on the occasion of National Girl Child Day today and also as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Awardees of PMRBP 2021 and 2022 along with their parents and concerned District Magistrate of their respective district joined the event from their district Head Quarters.

During the function, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave digital certificates to the 61 winners of PMRBP 2021 and 2022 using a Block Chain-driven technology developed by IIT Kanpur under the National Blockchain Project.

The cash prize of Rs.1,00,000/- was given to the awardees of PMRBP 2022 which was transferred online to the respective accounts of winners during the program by the PM.

The Prime Minister interacted virtually with the winners of PMRBP 2022. Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Zubin Irani and Munjpara Mahendrabhai, Minister of State were among those present on the occasion.

Interacting with Master Avi Sharma of Indore, Madhya Pradesh the Prime Minister enquired about the secret of his prolific output with regard to various aspects of Ramayana. Master Avi Sharma said that he got the inspiration by the decision of broadcasting the serial Ramayana during the lockdown. Avi also recited some couplets from his creation.

Interacting with Remona Evette Pereira from Karnataka, the Prime Minister discussed her passion for Indian Dance. He inquired about the difficulties she faced in pursuing her passion. The Prime Minister complimented her mother for ignoring her own adversities to realize her daughter's dreams. The Prime Minister said that Remona's achievements are much bigger than her age and told her that her art is a way of expressing the strength of the great country.

Interacting with Puhabi Chakraborti of Tripura, the Prime Minister enquired about her COVID related innovation. She also informed the Prime Minister about her fitness app for sportspersons. The Prime Minister asked about the support she receives from the school, friends and parents in her endeavor. He asked

about her balance in devoting her time to sports as well as developing innovative apps.

Interacting with Dhiraj Kumar from West Champaran, Bihar, the Prime Minister asked about the incident where he saved his younger brother from a crocodile attack. PM asked about his state of mind while saving his younger brother and how he feels after the fame he got now. The Prime Minister praised his courage and presence of mind. Dhiraj told the Prime Minister that he wants to serve the country as an Army soldier.

Interacting with Meedhansh Kumar Gupta from Punjab, the Prime Minister enquired about his achievement of creating an app for COVID issues. The Prime Minister said that in children like Meedhansh he feels that the government efforts to promote entrepreneurship are bearing fruit and a tendency to become job providers instead of being job seekers is becoming more pronounced.

Interacting with Tarushi Gaur from Chandigarh, the Prime Minister enquired about her opinion on the balance between sports and studies. The Prime Minister asked why Tarushi idolises Boxer Mary Kom. She informed the Prime Minister that she likes her because of her commitment to excellence and balance that she strikes as a sportsperson and as a mother.

The Prime Minister said that the government is committed to providing all the facilities to the sportspersons and creating a mindset of winning at every level.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister noted that these awards become all the more significant in the light of the fact that they have been

AWARDEES OF PRADHAN MANTRI RASHTRIYA BAL PURASKAR-2022		
NAME	CATEGORY	STATE
Gauri Maheshwari	Art & Culture	Rajasthan
Remona Evette Pereira	Art & Culture	Karnataka
Deviprasad	Art & Culture	Kerala
Syed Fateen Ahmed	Art & Culture	Karnataka
Daulas Lambamayum	Art & Culture	Manipur
Dhritishman Chakraborty	Art & Culture	Assam
Gurugu Himapriya	Bravery	Andhra Pradesh
Shivangi Kale	Bravery	Maharashtra
Dhiraj Kumar	Bravery	Bihar
Shivam Rawat	Innovation	Uttarakhand
Vishalini N C	Innovation	Tamil Nadu
Jui Abhijit Keskar	Innovation	Maharashtra
Puhabi Chakraborti	Innovation	Tripura
Aswatha Biju	Innovation	Tamil Nadu
Banita Dash	Innovation	Odisha
Tanish Sethi	Innovation	Haryana
Avi Sharma	Scholastic	Madhya Pradesh
Meedhansh Kumar Gupta	Social Service	Punjab
Abhinav Kumar Choudhary	Social Service	Uttar Pradesh
Pal Sakshi	Social Service	Bihar
Aakarsh Kaushal	Social Service	Haryana
Arushi Kotwal	Sports	Jammu & Kashmir
Shriya Lohia	Sports	Himachal Pradesh
Telukunta Virat Chandra	Sports	Telangana
Chandhary Singh Choudhary	Sports	Uttar Pradesh
Jiya Rai	Sports	Uttar Pradesh
Swayam Patil	Sports	Maharashtra
Tarushi Gaur	Sports	Chandigarh
Anvi Vijay Zanzarukia	Sports	Gujarat

conferred during the important period when the country is celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. He said this is the time to draw energy from the past and dedicate oneself to achieving great results in the coming 25 years of the Amrit kaal. He also greeted the daughters of the country on National Girl Child Day. The Prime Minister

remembered the glorious history of the Freedom Struggle and the contribution of Birbala Kanaklata Barua, Khudiram Bose and Rani Gaidinilu. "These fighters had made the country's freedom the mission of their lives at a very young age and had dedicated themselves for it" the Prime Minister noted.



PM interacts with the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) awardees, through video conferencing, in New Delhi on January 24, 2022.

A lookback into India's first Republic Day celebrations

January 26 marks one of the most important days in our country's history books. Republic Day is celebrated every year on this day. It was in 1950 when the constitution came into effect and India became a republic.

Every year, this day is celebrated with a grand parade that takes place in New Delhi. 72 years on, people still watch it with great interest, whether physically or on television.

The parade is also attended by a distinguished guest who happens to be a global political figure. However, due to COVID-19, no chief guest is invited for this year's Republic Day. Initially, UK prime minister Boris Johnson was to be present but because of the rampant spread of the new coronavirus strain in the country, he cancelled his trip to India.

On this day, what better way to remember the first-ever Republic Day parade and celebrations that took place in 1950.

The Indian constitution was adopted on November 26, 1949, but it was on January 26, 1950, when it officially came into effect. January 26 was chosen as it marked 20 years since it was decided that the sole aim will be to attain 'Purna Swaraj' or complete independence.

India got to witness the festivities of the first-ever Republic Day. The parade took place in Irwin Amphitheatre, that is now known as Major Dhyanchand Stadium. The parade consisted of various kinds of performances as well as an army marching band. Many esteemed personalities in the country attended the event. The chief guest was the Indonesian president, Sukarno, who came with his wife. Overlooking the Purana Qila, the parade started from Irwin Amphitheatre and went on till the Red Fort.

Rajpath has become synonymous with Republic Day celebrations 68 years since, that majestic boulevard that runs from the Rashtrapati Bhavan through Vijay Chowk to India Gate. But it was not the venue of the first celebrations in 1950. Beyond India Gate lay, Irwin Amphitheatre (now Major Dhyanchand National Stadium), named after a former Viceroy where 15,000 people had gathered for the big parade, still nascent compared to the gala it is today.

The new President took a slow,



ceremonial ride from Rashtrapati Bhavan with President Sukarno to the amphitheatre in a 35-year-old open state coach bearing the Ashoka Emblem. It was drawn by six Australian horses along the five-mile road to the Amphitheatre, escorted by the President's bodyguards.

The roads were lined with exuberant crowds with the tricolour in their hands, cheering and chanting "Jai" joined by those peering from neighbouring building roofs and treetops. Dr Prasad greeted them all with his hands folded and a modest but beaming smile.

His arrival at the amphitheatre was marked by a resounding 31-gun salute, solemnising the event as a milestone in India's "chequered history": Our first Republic Day celebrations as an independent nation.

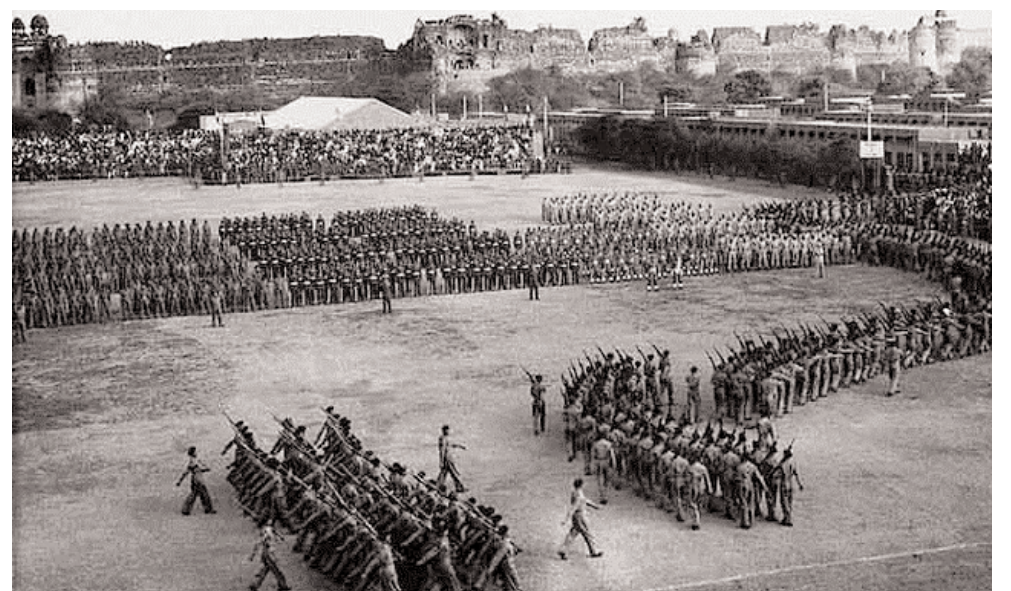
Dr Prasad proceeded to take a round of the amphitheatre, this time in a jeep, while saluting the 3,000 armed forces that had gathered there, after which he hoisted the tricolour, our national flag for the very first time. Another memorable speech by him was in the offing.



With a 31-gun salute at the Irwin Stadium in Delhi, India was declared as a Republic and Dr Rajendra Prasad as the President on January 26, 1950, at 10:30 am.



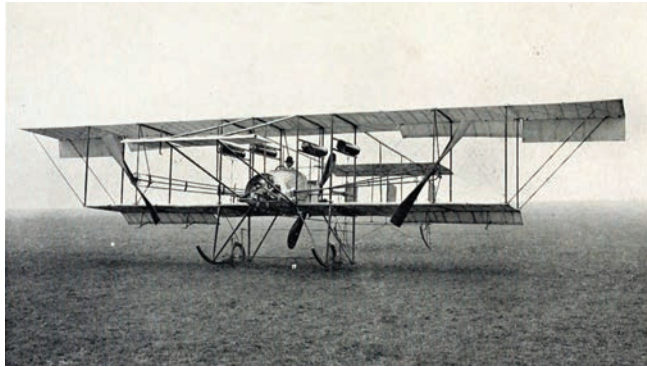
The chief guest at the first Republic Day parade was Indonesian President Dr Sukarno and his wife.



The first republic day parade at Irwin Amphitheatre, in the picture the walls of Purana Qila are visible.

Aviation Industry in the Republic of India

BY RISHIKANT SINGH



History

Erstwhile maharajas, nawabs, industrialists and businesspersons were keen sports enthusiasts. Many took to aviation very early with the first official airmail flight in the world flown from Naini to Allahabad, twin cities five miles apart on either side of the river Yamuna



Historic event of the day

On February 18, 1911, French pilot Henri Pequet carried the first official mail flown by airplane from Allahabad polo field, over the Yamuna River, to Naini.

Frenchman Henry Pequet flew a two-seater biplane in India on Feb 18th, 1911

This epic flight had taken 13 minutes by a two-seater biplane by Frenchman Henry Pequet on Feb 18th, 1911, within 8 years of the historic flight of Wright brothers on Dec 17th, 1903. Henry Piquet's flight was part of promotion of an industrial exhibition during the festivities of MahaKumbh held every 12 years. It had generated substantial interest among the Kumbh participants who historically form the largest human gathering at one place.



JRD Tata was the first to establish a full-fledged mail service starting on Oct 15th, 1932

Acting on the idea of Neville Vincent formerly of the Royal Air Force, JRD Tata was the first to establish a full-fledged mail service starting on Oct 15th, 1932 which carried 25kg of four anna airmail letters from Karachi to Bombay via Ahmedabad piloted by the young JRD and flew on to Bellary and Madras piloted by Capt. Neville Vincent. It was called Tata Air Services as

AT INDEPENDENCE, THE GOVERNMENT HAD TAKEN 49 PERCENT STAKE AND THEN FULL OWNERSHIP IN 1953 THROUGH NATIONALISATION. THE CLOCK HAS TURNED A FULL CIRCLE AND MUCH MORE PROMISES ARE IN THE AIR. THE INITIAL BABY STEPS SINCE SALE ANNOUNCEMENT HAVE NOW ACCELERATED TO DEEPER INVOLVEMENT OF TATAS. SOON WE EXPECT THE COMPLETE TRANSITION OF AIR INDIA, AIR INDIA EXPRESS AND AISATS GROUND HANDLING SUBSIDIARY SHARE OF AIR INDIA TO THE TATA GROUP HERALDING A NEW CHAPTER IN INDIAN AVIATION, OMICRON AND DELTACRON AND MILLION VARIANTS NOTWITHSTANDING.

a part of Tata Sons and in 1938 it was renamed as Tata Airlines.



Tata Airlines

The first transatlantic flight was on June 08th, 1948 to London via Cairo and Geneva carrying 35 passengers at the princely fare of Rs.1720. A documentary highlighting this maiden flight of "Malabar Princess" carrying royalty and dignitaries are part of national archives.

Nationalisation

The Republic of India came into being on 26th January 1950 with India getting its Constitution under which general elections up to block and village level continues to be held since 1952. Soon after in 1953 by 'The Air Corporations Act' enactment a wholly domestic Indian Airlines was created by merger and nationalisation of eight loss-making private carriers which required a bailout. The domestic routes of Tata Airlines were added to Indian Airlines with exclusive domain to operate within India. For international routes, under the same statute Air India International was formed by nationalisation of Tata Airlines with JRD continued as Chairman till 1978.

(Photo A 5 here)

The 50s and 60s were the golden period for Indian



Air India's First Flight

Air India's first flight

aviation with Air India International being consistently ranked in the top 3 airline brands in the world. By 1962 it had replaced all its aircraft with Boeing 707 making it the world's first all-jet aircraft fleet. It was the first cargo operator within Asia carrying everything including circus and zoo animals that would fit in its belly. The passenger cabin interiors with very pleasing and artistic Indian mythological figurines on the wallpaper set it apart from the rest in the industry. The domestic had similarly flourished and connected remote parts of India providing much needed impetus to economic development within the country, while Air India facilitated overseas cultural, social, employment, trade, and economic development. Ask any NRI or OCI of yesteryear and they will fondly recall the excitement of their first overseas flight to foreign land on India's flag carrier. No yesteryear movie was complete without scene of the airport and arrival and departure as the lure of foreign lands and the glamour of flying was too compelling to be missed in tinsel town. The well-groomed inflight personnel received training from the very best, including hair do tips from none other than Vidal Sassoon and food preparation from the best international chefs.



JRD Tata shaped the future of Air India

The contribution in India's development of both the national carriers' can be gauged by simple economic valuation model that estimates it to trillions towards the Indian economy given that aviation is interwoven with 130-150 different industries as part of its business cycle.

Open skies

The US deregulated its air industry in 1978 bringing about tumultuous changes. Airlines like Braniff International Airways and Pan Am went out of business, and transformation of many others like TWA and numerous smaller ones. Compelling stories like Laker Airways which revolutionised airfares also bowed out eventually. Of all the airlines that were ever started under 5 percent continue to fly today.

Both the airlines served the nation acting as second line of defence, besides furthering social and economic development policies of the government. In India

CONTD FROM PAGE 26

relaxation of air transport policies in nineties allowed many private players like Modiluft, NEPC, East West, Jet Airways, Air Deccan, Sahara, Damania and Kingfisher bring vibrancy and competition to the staid skies. These eventually ran aground due to unsustainable financials with Jet Airways outlasting them all till recent years. An attempt to disinvest Air India in the early nineties was stillborn due to political and bureaucratic reluctance and national pride.

International carriers had increased flights and the Gulf giants started dominating Indian skies with their capacity, frequency, and model of doing business operating through their own country capitals serving as aviation hubs and engines of growth to their own economies. Dubai which was a small desert town with an airport that opened for few hours and shut by lunch grew to an international hub given the immense foresight of the ruler who diversified his economy from oil to the vibrant economy it is today. Gulf Air formed as a collaboration of Gulf and Middle East nations was gradually eclipsed by individual state airlines following the model of Dubai. Later entrants like Qatar went on to fine tune their operations and marketing and continue to win international recognition and fame.

Low-cost carriers

Smart low-cost carriers made their entrance on the world scenario operating from lower cost regional airports, using modern small to medium jets, preferably operating a uniform fleet and configuration, used direct marketing and online sales, hosted their flights on much cheaper alternative platforms than the elaborate but expensive market leaders, and doing away with traditional ticketing altogether. While the lack of tickets and limited system functionalities reduced flexibility for interline travel capability and partnerships, with travel largely between two points on their own carrier, yet the low fares caught the attention of travellers looking to save money. Ridiculously low prices were announced on midnight sales even from established full-service carriers to compete and stay in business against the aggressive gain made by low-cost carriers. The British and European markets were the first to witness many new initiatives including unbundling of travel services like baggage and meals which had to be paid separately. Airlines with a complete bouquet of services in a single price providing full service were inching downhill with advent of low-cost options.

Inorganic growth was the way forward across all industries by acquiring businesses through mergers and acquisitions. Airline industry was no exception. These trends came to India with Deccan and then Sahara getting acquired by Kingfisher and Jet Airways respectively which then launched their low-cost divisions, while Air India set up a new Air India Express of their own. The overlap of operations with parent full-service may have caused some



Air India- a growth story

cannibalising and the prices of low-cost carriers in monopoly or markets with lesser competition did not exactly bring revolutionary low fares. Smaller regional carriers touched distant corners of the heartland and the national, state, and economic capital cities saving substantial time where surface travel would take long through the difficult terrain as seen in the hilly regions, and were a boon for the residents and businesses.

focussing on reliable schedules. They chose to saturate a city-pair with multiple frequencies growing steadily and increased market share in India. SpiceJet underwent bankruptcy proceedings and was revived with change of ownership and management leadership. Both airlines together dominated the Indian market despite presence of Go Air and Vistara and many smaller players. Indigo became the dominant player with over half the entire market till the pandemic wrecked



The return of the Native- the iconic Maharaja comes back home

Amalgamation

The government keen for economic reforms had adopted a complete open sky by 2011 a full 10 years after legislating it in 2001 giving time to carriers to adjust to new realities. As arms of the government with social objectives, the national carriers had been overcome by domestic and international competition with mounting losses despite loan subsidies and equity grants. By 2006 it was decided to merge Air India with Indian Airlines to reap many advantages to build a large company as measured by fleet size, network and turnover and return to profitability. Both airlines were individually getting marginalised and could very well be obliterated or face closure due financial unsustainability. It took a decade for internal synergies to develop and take advantage of the merger by reworking its systems, processes, and network for enhanced efficiency.

Indigo and Spice Jet grew rapidly on the low-cost low-price proposition

global economies and the travel industry. Regional players like Star Air based in Bengaluru play a significant role in local connectivity while government owned Alliance Air a large regional airline whose operations are invaluable through most of India.

The new government which had taken charge in 2014 was keen to revive all public sector units and institutions. Its priorities soon changed for the national carriers burdened with sagging interest payments on aircraft purchase loans, working capital requirements, and the staggering losses since merger, despite repeated change of top management to affect a turnaround. The government in need to stem the financial drain and keen to invest funds for social projects, concentrate on economic growth and required to prop up banks which too were showing signs of loan repayment stress chose to disinvest Air India instead, retaining only Alliance Air and a few subsidiaries at present.

Pandemic

Covid 19 knocked the sails off all airlines and the global economy. Air India got a lease of life as repeated attempts to divest minority and then majority stake had not fructified and closure was bandied about openly in the corridors of power and in the media. The decision in early stages of the pandemic was to operate national relief and rescue missions given that Air India had carried out numerous creditably over three quarters of a century with the record breaking 111,170 airlifted from Jordan fleeing from the Iraq Kuwait conflict of 1990-91 subject of a Bollywood movie. Evacuation of Indians from pandemic hit nations started with Wuhan, followed by Italy and a host of nations continued, while the privatisation cauldron was kept bubbling. These ongoing rescue flights were labelled VandeBharat flights setting new records for repatriation of Indian nationals from severely affected areas and those stranded due discontinued air services.

The pandemic has sunk all carriers even profitable ones like Indigo into record losses in 2021. The government finally succeeded in getting a suitor to win the Air India disinvestment tender after several twists and turns. It was celebrated by citizens touting it to be poetic that the airline was to return to the Tata fold from where it had originated. It was unclear if it was an emotional moment for the Chairman Emeritus Ratan Tata and executive leadership of N. Chandrasekaran in regaining the international flagship of India's original multinational or was it an astute business decision, possibly both.

At independence, the government had taken 49 percent stake and then full ownership in 1953 through nationalisation. The clock has turned a full circle and much more promises are in the air. The initial baby steps since sale announcement have now accelerated to deeper involvement of Tatas. Soon we expect the complete transition of Air India, Air India Express and AISATS ground handling subsidiary share of Air India to the Tata group heralding a new chapter in Indian aviation, Omicron and Deltacron and million variants notwithstanding.

About the author

Rishikant Singh, The Sage is author of 'Lark's Nest' and currently penning the "Original Indian Multinational." He is an airline industry veteran of 33 years in India who held key commercial positions in US, Middle East, and India, after completing his MBA from a New York institution in 1987. Indian American community will recognize Rishi as Air India Regional Manager at Chicago and New York. He currently resides in Delhi and serves as a consultant for sales and marketing for an airline IT company based in Europe. He can be reached at rishikant.s@gmail.com)

India celebrates 73rd Republic Day --- In pictures



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being greeted by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh as they arrive to witness the Republic Day Parade 2022, at Rajpath in New Delhi.



Indian Air Force tableau displays the theme 'Indian Air Force Transforming for the future'.



Meghalaya's tableau shows a woman weaving a bamboo basket and the many bamboo & cane products of the state.



The tableaux of Arunachal Pradesh at Rajpath during the Republic Day Parade



Ministry of Civil Aviation's tableau participates in the Republic Day Parade for the first time.



The first woman fighter pilot on the Rafale combat aircraft, Flight Lieutenant Shivangi Singh at the Indian Air Force (IAF) tableau.



Seema Bhawani motorcycle team of the Border Security Force (BSF) at the Republic Day parade.



75/24 Pack Howitzer MK-I indigenously developed gun system in front of the saluting dais during Republic Day parade at Rajpath.



Tableau of UP showcases achievement through skill development & employment via 'One District One Product', based on new micro, small & medium enterprise policy & industrial development policy of the state govt. Development in Kashi Vishwanath corridor also exhibited.



Depicting 'Punjab's contribution in freedom struggle', the tableau of the state depicts Bhagat Singh, Rajguru & Sukhdev. It also depicts protest against the Simon Commission led by Lala Lajpat Rai and Udham Singh shooting Michael O'Dwyer.



With the theme 'number one in sports', the tableau of Haryana participates in the Republic Day Parade.



Goa tableau participating in the Republic Day Parade, is based on the theme 'symbols of Goan Heritage'.



Detachments of Centurion Tank, PT-76, MBT Arjun MK-I, and APC Topaz participate in the Republic Day parade at the Rajpath in Delhi.

Do sportsmen make better politicians?

BY PRABHJOT SINGH



Barring a few exceptions, most of sports stars were all introduced on the political horizon as "bold and big game changers". Finding their wings clipped and sans all powers, they attempted to walk free to end up "loners" and "failures". What they did on playfields, they could not repeat even one per cent of that in politics.

Politics in sports and sportspersons in politics are two diverse, interesting and highly debatable issues. Come elections and itch for getting into public life as a representative of one party or the other becomes uncontrollable for some of the former sports stalwarts. Latest on the list is the captain of the 1975 World Cup champion Indian hockey team and Olympian Ajitpal Singh Kular.

He comes from Sansarpur, the famous nursery of hockey.

Ajitpal Singh, after a distinguished career in sports, left the Border Security Force (in Jalandhar), and moved to the union capital for a new innings by owning a gas station at a posh location. He is now looking for yet another innings and this time it is politics. He has chosen a constituency that is contiguous to his native village. Intriguingly, Sansarpur falls in the Jalandhar Cantonment area from where fellow Olympian and also a former Indian captain, Pargat Singh, will be contesting his third consecutive election to the State Assembly. Pargat represents the ruling Congress though his first election was as an Akali.

Interestingly, Ajitpal has joined a party that has a hockey stick and a ball as its election symbol. What could be more ideal icon for a political party for its public campaign with Ajitpal Singh wielding a hockey stick. His joining politics is perhaps a part of the trend that has been luring eminent sports stars, artists, singers, Bollywood and Pollywood stars into politics.

Incidentally, the Chief Ministerial face of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is a comedian and small screen star Bhagwant Mann.

Though sports stars joining politics has been there for decades, it got a big boost when a former Test cricketer rose to be the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Emergence of Imran Khan on the global political scenario in general and South Asian politics in particular had activated an animated discussion on whether sportspersons make better politicians or not. Never before in the history of the world had a Test cricketer been chosen to lead a country tormented by internal strife, economic turn down, corruption and armed conflicts.

For a sports person looking to build a career in politics on his or her athletic legacy may not be easy unless he or she had a high popularity profile as the shift from peak of a sports celebrity to a political bigwig may not be possible without a deluge of publicity and unconditional support from rank and file of the political outfit he or she intends to head or lead.

Even before Imran Khan emerged on



Some Indian sportspersons in politics: Ajitpal Singh, Navjot Singh, Rajyavardhan Rathore, Pargat Singh, Kirti Azad, Mohammad Azharuddin

the political horizon of Pakistan, there have been lots of Olympians and cricketing heroes who wandered into politics and made a name for themselves. Sportspersons turned politicians have held limelight not only in India but also in developed nations like the United States, England, Australia, Canada and Japan besides developing nations like Pakistan. Not only men, even women athletes have had successful second innings in politics.

Sprinters Ralph Metcalfe and Jim Ryun, cagers Bill Bradley and Tom McMillen, decathlete Bob Mathias and judoka Nighthorse are some of the names who have had successful innings in US politics after their successful youth years in sports.

Dr Richard Charlesworth of Australia belongs to a rare category, who excelled not only in more than one sport but also hawked limelight and honor as a trainer, as a coach and also as a politician. A Test cricketer, Olympic hockey gold medalist and MP all made one Richard Charlesworth. Then there is Australian aboriginal Nova Perry, an Olympic gold medalist in hockey and Commonwealth Games gold medalist in athletics, she became the first indigenous woman to be elected to Australian Parliament and later to Senate.

Ryoko Tami of Japan, a renowned judoka, who won silver in the Barcelona Olympic Games and gold medals in Sydney and Athens and a bronze in Beijing turned to politics at the end of her career in sports. She won a seat in the House of Councilors of Japan. In Canada also, former hockey Olympian Ravi Kahlon is a member of the British Columbia Provincial Parliament.

Before Imran Khan made it to Pakistan's National Assembly, his contemporaries in sports - Sarfraz Nawaz (cricket) and Akhtar Rasool (hockey) - also sat in Punjab provincial assembly and held Ministerial posts.

India has a much longer history of sportspersons in politics. This diminishes the role of conventional politicians and their families. In a way it may slow down a long debated issue of dynastic politics.

There have been numerous instances when eminent sports persons joined politics, both at State and national level.

Olympian Jaipal Singh (hockey), Raja Karni Singh, Chetan Chauhan, Kirti Azad, Navjot Singh Sidhu, Sachin Tendulkar, Aslam Sher Khan, Mohammed Azharuddin, Pargat Singh, Dilip Tirkey and Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore have been among some of the sports stalwarts, who after or during their innings in sports, dabbled in politics. But their entry was either through established political parties or as independents.

Kirti Azad represented BJP in Lok Sabha, His long innings in cricket and then in politics almost brought him to the brink for alleging wrong doings in the DDCA. Ultimately, he had to quit BJP. Another cricketer to make it to Parliament in the last general elections was former Test opener Gautam Gambhir.

Why are sports stars damp squibs in politics? Or are they content with membership of Parliament or State Assemblies and do not look beyond?

Athens Olympic medalist Rajyavardhan Singh and Test cricketer Navjot Singh Sidhu may be exceptions. Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore remained a part of Narendra Modi ministry. And his portfolio was sports. And Navjot Singh Sidhu remained a cabinet minister in Punjab. But his portfolio did not include sports.

It is more than a question of political rehabilitation for those leaving sports and opting for a new career.

If politicians are not a welcome to National Sports Federations how could sports stars expect warm welcome or assimilation in political administration, it may be the corollary to have the answer for the vexed question of sports into politics.

The last election to the 15th Punjab Vidhan Sabha, was, however, different as not only a large number of sportspersons, bureaucrats, technocrats, small and big screen artistes, singers, academicians, realtors and others evinced extra interest in politics.

Besides Navjot Singh Sidhu (cricket) and Olympian Pargat Singh (hockey), who were successful in the last Punjab Assembly elections, Asian Games gold medalist Kartar Singh (wrestling), Sajjan Singh Cheema (Olympian, basketball) and Gulzar Singh (kabaddi)

were in the fray while several others including Olympians Surinder Singh Sodhi and Hardeep Singh Grewal and internationals Jagdeep Singh Gill and Asian Games gold medalist Rajbir Kaur Rai (all hockey) did not get a chance to enter the electoral politics.

Sajjan Singh Cheema, now back again in AAP as its candidate from Sultanpur Lodhi, hopes to script success in his second attempt.

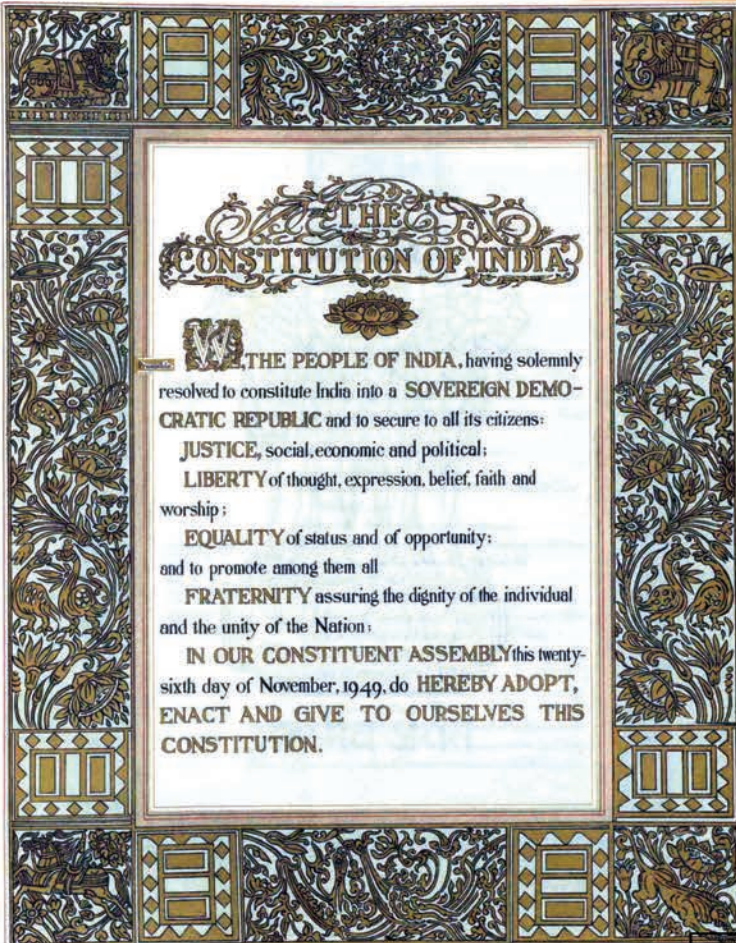
In all previous instances, sportspersons may have stirred hornets' nests here and there but in the longer run their actions remained far too small to impact national or provincial politics. Both Navjot Singh Sidhu and Pargat Singh played a pivotal role in getting the Punjab Congress Legislature Party's leadership changed. If Capt Amarinder Singh had to quit Chief Ministership in September last year, it was primarily because of the flag of revolt raised by Navjot Singh Sidhu closely followed by Pargat Singh. Navjot Singh Sidhu has risen to head the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee.

Barring a few exceptions, most of sports stars were all introduced on the political horizon as "bold and big game changers". Finding their wings clipped and sans all powers, they attempted to walk free to end up "loners" and "failures". What they did on playfields, they could not repeat even one per cent of that in politics. It is all the more intriguing that Indian sports is mired much deeper in politics than the politics of running world's biggest liberal democracy, but our sports personalities have failed on that front too.

One may not be able to name a sport that is free from politics. Political affiliations apart, sports administrators defy rules, regulations and guidelines to monopolize State and National Sports associations. Governments come and go but our sports politicians, who have perfected the art of staying in office irrespective of the political party in power, remain indispensable.

It is but natural to come to one's mind that if our sports are so deep into politics, why sports personalities have been generally non-performers in the political scenario.

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*Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar,
Chairman of the Indian
Constitution Drafting Committee*

A Happy Republic Day of India



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President and Founder, Eye Foundation of America
President and Founder, Goutami Eye Institute
Clinical Professor, West Virginia University
Director, International Ocular Surface Society
Adjunct Professor, GSL Medical School
Adjunct Professor, Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins University
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Padma honors for Gen Bipin Rawat, ex-CM Buddhadeb, Google CEO Sundar Pichai

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's first chief of defence staff General Bipin Rawat, former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Kalyan Singh, Gita Press chairman Radheyshyam Khemka, and renowned vocalist Prabha Atre were on Tuesday, January 25, awarded the Padma Vibhushan, the country's second-highest civilian honour.

The government announced 128 Padma awards on the eve of Republic Day, including 17 Padma Bhushans and 107 Padma Shri honours. Thirty-four of the

awardees were women.

Some of India's top vaccine manufacturers featured in the list, including Serum Institute of India chairman Cyrus Poonawalla and Bharat Biotech founders Krishna Ella and Suchitra Ella. They were awarded the Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian honour.

Alphabet Inc chief Sundar Pichai, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and Tata Sons chairman Natarajan



FULL LIST OF 128 RECIPIENTS NAMED FOR CIVILIAN HONOURS

PADMA VIBHUSHAN (4)

SN	Name	Field	State / Country
1	Ms. Prabha Atre	Art	Maharashtra
2	Shri Radheyshyam Khemka	(Posthumous) Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
3	General Bipin Rawat	(Posthumous) Civil Service	Uttarakhand
4	Shri Kalyan Singh	(Posthumous) Public Affairs	Uttar Pradesh

PADMA BHUSHAN (17)

5	Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad	Public Affairs	Jammu and Kashmir
6	Shri Victor Banerjee	Art	West Bengal
7	Ms. Gurmeet Bawa	(Posthumous) Art	Punjab
8	Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee	Public Affairs	West Bengal
9	Shri Natarajan Chandrasekaran	Trade and Industry	Maharashtra
10	Shri Krishna Ella and Smt. Suchitra Ella* (Duo)	Trade and Industry	Telangana
11	Ms. Madhur Jaffery	Others-Culinary	USA
12	Shri Devendra Jhajharia	Sports	Rajasthan
13	Shri Rashid Khan	Art	Uttar Pradesh
14	Shri Rajiv Mehrishi	Civil Service	Rajasthan
15	Shri Satya Narayana Nadella	Trade and Industry	USA
16	Shri Sundararajan Pichai	Trade and Industry	USA
17	Shri Cyrus Poonawalla	Trade and Industry	Maharashtra
18	Shri Sanjaya Rajaram	(Posthumous) Science & Engineering	Mexico
19	Ms. Pratibha Ray	Literature and Education	Odisha
20	Swami Sachidanand	Literature and Education	Gujarat
21	Shri Vashishth Tripathi	Literature and Education	Uttar Pradesh

PADMA SHRI (107)

22	Shri Prahlad Rai Agarwala	Trade and Industry	West Bengal
23	Prof. Najma Akhtar	Literature and Education	Delhi
24	Shri Sumit Antil	Sports	Haryana
25	Shri T Senka Ao	Literature and Education	Nagaland
26	Ms. Kamalini Asthana & Ms.Nalini Asthana* (Duo)	Art	Uttar Pradesh
27	Shri Subbanna Ayyappan	Science and Engineering	Karnataka
28	Shri J K Bajaj	Literature and Education	Delhi
29	Shri Sirpi Balasubramaniam	Literature and Education	Tamil Nadu
30	Srimad Baba Balia	Social Work	Odisha
31	Ms. Sanghamitra Bandyopadhyay	Science and Engineering	West Bengal
32	Ms. Madhuri Barthwal	Art	Uttarakhand
33	Shri Akhone Asgar Ali Basharat	Literature and Education	Ladakh
34	Dr. Himmatrao Bawaskar	Medicine	Maharashtra
35	Shri Harmohinder Singh Bedi	Literature and Education	Punjab
36	Shri Pramod Bhagat	Sports	Odisha
37	Shri S Balleash Bhajantri	Art	Tamil Nadu
38	Shri Khandu Wangchuk Bhutia	Art	Sikkim
39	Shri Maria Christopher Byrski	Literature and Education	Poland
40	Acharya Chandanaji	Social Work	Bihar
41	Ms. Sulochana Chavan	Art	Maharashtra
42	Shri Neeraj Chopra	Sports	Haryana
43	Ms. Shakuntala Choudhary	Social	Work Assam
44	Shri Sankaranarayana Menon	Sports	Kerala
45	Shri S Damodaran	Social Work	Tamil Nadu
46	Shri Faisal Ali Dar	Sports	Jammu Kashmir
47	Shri Jagjit Singh Dardi	Trade and Industry	Chandigarh
48	Dr. Prokar Dasgupta	Medicine	United Kingdom
49	Shri Aditya Prasad Dash	Science and Engineering	Odisha
50	Dr. Lata Desai	Medicine	Gujarat
51	Shri Malji bhai Desai	Public Affairs	Gujarat
52	Ms. Basanti Devi	Social Work	Uttarakhand
53	Ms. Lourembam Bino Devi	Art	Manipur
54	Ms. Muktamani Devi	Trade and Industry	Manipur
55	Ms. Shyamamani Devi	Art	Odisha
56	Shri Khalil Dhantejvi (Posthumous)	Literature and Education	Gujarat
57	Shri Savaji Bhai Dholakia	Social Work	Gujarat
58	Shri Arjun Singh Dhurve	Art	Madhya Pradesh
59	Dr. Vijaykumar Vinayak Dongre	Medicine	Maharashtra
60	Shri Chandraprakash Dwivedi	Art	Rajasthan
61	Shri Dhneswar Engti	Literature and Education	Assam
62	Shri Om Prakash Gandhi	Social Work	Haryana
63	Shri Narasimha Rao Garikapati	Literature and Education	Andhra Pradesh

64	Shri Girdhari Ram Ghonju (Posthumous)	Literature and Education	Jharkhand
65	Shri Shaibal Gupta (Posthumous)	Literature and Education	Bihar
66	Shri Narasingha Prasad Guru	Literature and Education	Odisha
67	Shri Gosaveedu Shaik Hassan (Posthumous)	Art	Andhra Pradesh
68	Shri Ryuko Hira	Trade and Industry	Japan
69	Ms. Sosamma Iype Others	Animal Husbandry	Kerala
70	Shri Avadh Kishore Jadia	Literature and Education	Madhya Pradesh
71	Ms. Sowcar Janaki	Art	Tamil Nadu
72	Ms. Tara Jauhar	Literature and Education	Delhi
73	Ms. Vandana Kataria	Sports	Uttarakhand
74	Shri H R Keshavmurthy	Art	Karnataka
75	Shri Rutger Kortenhorst	Literature and Education	Ireland
76	Shri P Narayana Kurup	Literature and Education	Kerala
77	Ms. Avani Lekhara	Sports	Rajasthan
78	Shri Moti Lal Madan	Science and Engineering	Haryana
79	Shri Shivnath Mishra	Art	Uttar Pradesh
80	Dr. Narendra Prasad Misra (Posthumous)	Medicine	Madhya Pradesh
81	Shri Darshanam Mogilaiah	Art	Telangana
82	Shri Guruprasad Mohapatra (Posthumous)	Civil Service	Delhi
83	Shri Thavil Kongampattu A V	Murugaian Art	Puducherry
84	Ms. R Muthukannammal	Art	Tamil Nadu
85	Shri Abdul Khader Nadakattin	Others - Grassroots Innovation	Karnataka
86	Shri Amal Mahalinga Naik Others	Agriculture	Karnataka
87	Shri Tsering Namgyal	Art	Ladakh
88	Shri A K C Natarajan	Art	Tamil Nadu
89	Shri V L Nghaka	Literature and Education	Mizoram
90	Shri Sonu Nigam	Art	Maharashtra
91	Shri Ram Sahay Panday	Art	Madhya Pradesh
92	Shri Chirapat Prapandavidya	Literature and Education	Thailand
93	Ms. K V Rabiya	Social Work	Kerala
94	Shri Anil Kumar Rajvanshi	Science and Engineering	Maharashtra
95	Shri Sheesh Ram	Art	Uttar Pradesh
96	Shri Ramachandraiah	Art	Telangana
97	Dr. Sunkara Venkata Adinarayana	Medicine	Andhra Pradesh
98	Ms. Gamit Ramilaben Raysingbhai	Social	Work Gujarat
99	Ms. Padmaja Reddy	Art	Telangana
100	Guru Tulku Rinpoche Others	Spiritualism	Arunachal Pradesh
101	Shri Brahmanand Sankhwalkar	Sports	Goa
102	Shri Vidyandand Sarek	Literature and Education	Himachal Pradesh
103	Shri Kali Pada Saren	Literature and Education	West Bengal
104	Dr. Veeraswamy Seshiah	Medicine	Tamil Nadu
105	Ms. Prabhaben Shah	Social Work	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu
106	Shri Dilip Shahani	Literature and Education	Delhi
107	Shri Ram Dayal Sharma	Art	Rajasthan
108	Shri Vishwamurti Shastri	Literature and Education	Jammu Kashmir
109	Ms. Tatiana Lvovna Shaumyan	Literature and Education	Russia
110	Shri Siddhalingaiah	(Posthumous) Literature and Education	Karnataka
111	Shri Kaajee Singh	Art	West Bengal
112	Shri Konsam Ibomcha Singh	Art	Manipur
113	Shri Prem Singh	Social Work	Punjab
114	Shri Seth Pal Singh Others	Agriculture	Uttar Pradesh
115	Ms. Vidya Vindu Singh	Literature and Education	Uttar Pradesh
116	Baba Iqbal Singh Ji	Social Work	Punjab
117	Dr. Bhimsen Singhal	Medicine	Maharashtra
118	Shri Sivananda Others	Yoga	Uttar Pradesh
119	Shri Ajay Kumar Sonkar	Science and Engineering	Uttar Pradesh
120	Ms. Ajita Srivastava	Art	Uttar Pradesh
121	Sadguru Brahmeshanand Acharya Swami	Others - Spiritualism	Goa
122	Dr. Balaji Tambe (Posthumous)	Medicine	Maharashtra
123	Shri Raghuvendra Tanwar	Literature and Education	Haryana
124	Dr. Kamlakar Tripathi	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh
125	Ms. Lalita Vakil	Art	Himachal Pradesh
126	Ms. Durga Bai Vyam	Art	Madhya Pradesh
127	Shri Jyantkumar Maganlal Vyas	Science and Engineering	Gujarat
128	Ms. Badaplin War	Literature and Education	Meghalaya

Note: * In Duo case, the Award is counted as one.

PADMA VIBHUSHAN



Ms. Prabha Atre



Shri Radheyshyam Khemka



General Bipin Rawat



Shri Kalyan Singh

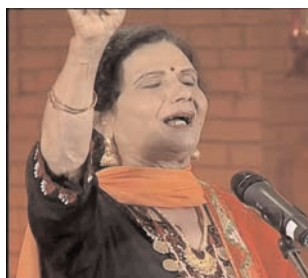
PADMA BHUSHAN



Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad



Shri Victor Banerjee



Ms. Gurmeet Bawa



Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee



Natarajan Chandrasekaran



Krishna Ella



Suchitra Ella



Madhur Jaffery



Devendra Jhajharia



Rashid Khan



Rajiv Mehrishi



Satya Narayana Nadella



Sundararajan Pichai



Cyrus Poonawalla



Sanjaya Rajaram



Pratibha Ray



Swami Sachidanand



Vashishth Tripathi

Chandrasekharan were conferred with the Padma Bhushan.

“No nation can excel without the contribution of selfless individuals working tirelessly to serve society. Congratulations to all those who have been conferred with the Padma Awards. PM (Narendra) Modi ji is committed to honouring our real heroes,” Union home minister Amit Shah said.

“It makes you very happy when the audience notices your thought process behind the songs and compositions. I am thankful for receiving such support and acceptance,” Atre said.

“It is a great privilege for me to be amongst a prestigious list of illustrious people who have contributed to the growth of our country,” said Poonawalla.

Actor Victor Banerjee, artist Rashid Khan, Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad and former West Bengal chief minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee were also named for the honour, though the Left leader later said he declined the award.

“I do not know anything about the Padma Bhushan award. Nobody said anything to me about this. If I have been given the award then I refuse it,”

Bhattacharjee said in a short statement.

Rawat was India’s longest serving four-star general who was killed in helicopter crash last month. He was headed to the Defence Services Staff College in Wellington when his chopper crashed in Tamil Nadu on December 8.

His wife Madhulika Rawat and 12 other personnel also died in the crash.

Former union home secretary Rajiv Mehrishi, who later became the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), was among 17 Padma Bhushan awardees.

Others in the list were Punjabi folk singer Gurmeet Bawa, chef and food journalist Madhur Jaffrey, two-time Paralympics gold-medalist Devendra Jhajharia, India-born Mexican scientist Sanjaya Rajaram and Swami Sachidanand, known for his work in disaster relief.

Tokyo Olympics gold medallist Neeraj Chopra led the Padma Shri honours, which also included paralympic gold medallists Sumit Antil, Pramod Bhagat and Avani Lekhara.

Singer Sonu Nigam, author Najma Akhtar, Kathak duo Kamalini Asthana

and Nalini Asthana; Garhwali folk singer Madhuri Barthwal, author Harmohinder Singh Bedi and Gandhian social worker Shakuntala Choudhary were among other awardees.

Others in the list included Chandraprakash Dwivedi, a national award winning director and actor best known for playing Chanakya, distinguished economist Shaibal Gupta, hockey player Vandana Kataria, senior bureaucrat Guruprasad Mohapatra, who carried out his assigned charge of ensuring oxygen availability during Covid even from his hospital bed before finally succumbing to the virus,

Narendra Prasad Mishra, a senior doctor known for treating victims of the 1984 Bhopal Gas tragedy, Sheesh Ram, a 1971 war veteran, former Indian football team captain Brahmanand Sankhwalkar, Russian scholar Tatiana Lvovna Shaumyan and Punjab spiritual leader Baba Iqbal Singh were among the other names.

The Union home ministry said these awards were given in various disciplines or fields of activities such as art, social work, public affairs, science and

engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, and civil service.

Padma Vibhushan was awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; Padma Bhushan for distinguished service of high order and Padma Shri for distinguished service in any field.

The awards also stirred controversy late on Tuesday evening after Bhattacharjee declined the honour.

A senior home ministry official said a call was made to the residence of Bhattacharjee on Tuesday morning, which was picked by his wife, and she was informed about his Padma award. There is no provision of taking consent for giving Padma awards to anyone; the awardees are only informed after the decision has been made.

Bhattacharjee, who was the chief minister of Bengal from 2000 to 2011, is not well and largely confined to his home in Kolkata. His predecessor, Jyoti Basu, had also refused the Bharat Ratna in 2008.

“Right thing to do. He wants to be Azad not Ghulam,” said Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, in an apparent reference to Ghulam Nabi Azad. *Source: HT*



Sara gets minor scare as light bulb explodes during her makeup session

Sara Ali Khan had a rather eventful start to her day on Sunday as the actor received a minor scare with a light bulb exploding in her vanity while she was getting her make-up done. Sara shared the video on her Instagram Stories on Sunday morning.

In the video, she can be seen getting her make-up done in preparation for a shoot. "Just ask Jeetu for nariyal-paani," she is heard telling someone off camera. As her make-up artiste finishes the touch ups and moves away, a loud pop is heard and a flash of light is seen in the video. The video immediately crashes with a beep. Sara shared this video with the caption "Mornings like these," followed by three ghost emojis to signify that it was a scary experience. She also shared a lightbulb and explosion emoji to denote what happened. The actor tagged make-up artiste Aditya Sharma and producer Pooja Vijan in the story as well.

Kangana gives reasons 'why South superstars are such a rage'

Actor Kangana Ranaut gave a host of reasons as to why the content and superstars of South film industry 'are such a rage'. Taking to Instagram Stories, Kangana also shared some advice.

Kangana shared a news article on Instagram while making her point and also added Samantha Ruth Prabhu's song Oo Antava from the film Pushpa: The Rise to the post. The article spoke about the sequels--KGF: Chapter 2 and Pushpa: The Rule.

The actor wrote, "Some of the reasons why South content and superstars are such a rage...1) They are deeply rooted in Indian culture, 2) They love their families and relationships are conventional not westernised, 3) their professionalism and passion is unparalleled." She also added, "They should not allow Bollywood to corrupt them."

What Kangana Ranaut shared on her Instagram story.

Pushpa: The Rise, which released last month, grossed a total of Rs 173 crore worldwide in three days since its release. The film, set against the backdrop of red sandalwood smuggling, features Allu Arjun, Fahadh Faasil, Rashmika Mandanna and Sunil among other actors. Pushpa was originally shot in Telugu and later dubbed and released in Hindi, Malayalam, Kannada and Tamil.

KGF: Chapter 2 is the next instalment in Prashanth Neel's KGF series - the first film released to great success in 2018. Yash will reprise his role as the protagonist in the second part, which also features Sanjay Dutt and Raveena Tandon.



Last year, Kangana herself featured in *Thalaivii*, in which she portrayed the role of late Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalithaa. The multilingual biographical film also featured Aravind Swamy and Nassar.

Kangana will be seen next in her upcoming movie *Tejas*. Apart from this, she also has *Dhaakad*, *Manikarnika Returns: The Legend Of Didda*, *Emergency*, and *The Incarnation: Sita*. She is also producing *Tiku Weds Sheru* under her production house, Manikarnika Films. *Source: HT*

Lara says she took a break from films as she was tired of 'playing hero's wife'

Actor Lara Dutta says she decided to momentarily step away from acting because she felt 'jaded' being slotted in roles which required her to be either the 'girlfriend or wife' of the leading men.

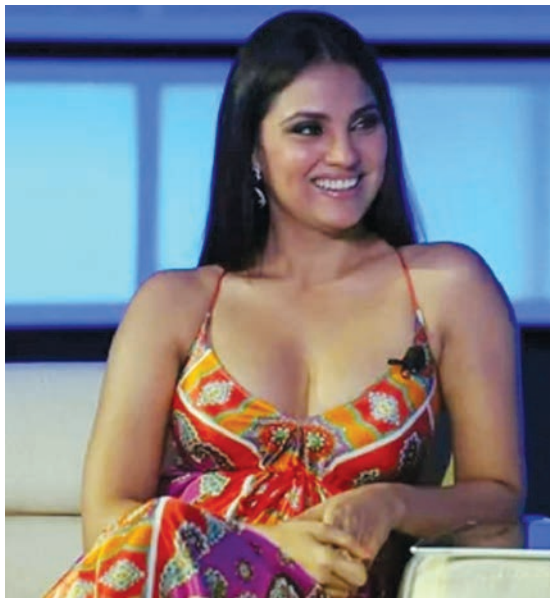
After a career of almost a decade following her 2003 debut *Andaaz*, Lara slowed down her film work post 2015.

The actor said the decision to take a break from screen was fuelled by her desire to give time to her daughter Saira, whom she shares with husband Mahesh Bhupathi, and also because the industry rarely challenged her with interesting parts.

"By the time I reached my early 30s, I honestly may have gotten a bid jaded. The industry was in a different space back then. You were cast because a glamorous actress had to be cast in a film. You were invariably playing the hero's girlfriend or wife. I got tired of it," Lara told PTI.

The 43-year-old actor said she decided to overcome the situation by consciously choosing comedy films, which she found offered her more scope to perform.

Dutta has featured in several blockbuster comedies like *No Entry*, *Bhagam Bhag*, *Partner* and the *Housefull* franchise.



Shilpa Shetty's rapping skills shock Badshah

Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty shocked rapper Badshah after she rapped a few lines for him on the ninth season of the show 'India's Got Talent'.

Shilpa shared the clip on Instagram and said that she would like to try rapping while Badshah made a face.

Soon, the actress started singing lines from the song 'Kar gayi chull'. She forgot a few verses so the rapper helped her out.

Shilpa is then heard telling Badshah: "Dekha mera hidden talent (did you see my hidden talent)?" To which, a not-so-impressed Badshah said: "Hidden he rehna chahiye (should have remained hidden)."

Talking about Badshah, Kirron Kher said: "He's got a mad look on his face." Shilpa captioned the clip: "Na dikhe woh talent kaisa, Toh ek jhalak pesh hai mere rap ka zara sa! Gaaya maine gaana aisa, Ke Badshah bhi proud feel kare waisa, But reaction aaya unexpected sa, Maano rapper hamaara ho raha ho thoda jealous sa What say, @badboyshah?" 'India's Got Talent' airs on Sony Entertainment Television. *Source: IANS*





Schwarzenegger involved in 'bad' car accident, escapes unhurt

Hollywood star and former California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was involved in a multi-car crash on Friday, leaving one person injured.

"There was a four-vehicle traffic accident on Sunset and Allenford at 4:35 p.m. One vehicle on top of another...one female was transported to a local hospital with an abrasion," Los Angeles Police Department Officer Drake Madison told Fox News Digital.

Apparently, the former governor of California was inside of a Yukon that hit a red Toyota Prius, causing the SUV's airbags to deploy. Several pictures from the scene went viral on the internet. The images show a number of cars with severe damage.

TMZ posted pictures from the crash site showing Arnold's black SUV partially on top of the red car, with which it collided. The actor was also pictured at the scene, appearing to be unharmed.

Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas welcome their first baby via surrogacy

Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas have welcomed a baby via surrogate. She made the announcement on Instagram on Saturday, Jan 22, 12 am.

"We are overjoyed to confirm that we have welcomed a baby via surrogate. We respectfully ask for privacy during this special time as we focus on our family. Thank you so much," she wrote. Nick also posted the same message on his Instagram page.

The couple received congratulations from their friend and family. Nick's brother Joe Jonas dropped heart emojis on both Priyanka and Nick's post. Lara Dutta wrote, "Congratulations." Their fans were also overjoyed at the news. "Oh my goodness Nick I can't even begin of how happy I am for you guys congratulations can't wait to see the baby grow up," read a comment on Nick's post.

In a recent interview to Vanity Fair magazine, Priyanka had spoken about starting a family with Nick. Priyanka was asked whether her mother, Dr Madhu Chopra hopes to become a grandma someday. "They're a big part of our desire for the future. By God's grace, when it happens, it happens," Priyanka said. But when the interviewer pointed that both her and Nick lead very busy lives, she had cheekily replied, "No, we're not too busy to practice."

In 2019, Priyanka said that having a baby was on her to-do list. "Buying a home and having a baby are on my to-do



list. For me, home is wherever I'm happy, as long as I have the people I love around me," she told Vogue India.

In an interview to E!, Nick had said that having children is something that they 'hope happens'. "She (Priyanka) is the most important piece of the puzzle, and it's obviously something we hope happens, and god willing, it comes

together. You know, whatever is right. We're blessed to have each other and have a full heart for the future, I say, and things are out of your control. And the foundation of a couple is strong, and you're excited about the possibility of that."

Priyanka and Nick got married in India in December 2018.

Penelope Cruz: I love India and I feel a strong connection to it

She was 21 when Spanish actor Penelope Cruz visited India for the first time. She says that her love for the country has only grown over the years, which has also resulted in her multiple visits here.

"I love India and feel a strong connection to the place," she admits, adding, "When I visited the country for the first time, I worked with Mother Teresa, and that trip changed my life."

Cruz says she now wishes to visit India with her family, husband, actor Javier Bardem, and kids — Luna (8) and Leo (11). "I have been to the country three times and hope to go again someday with my family. It's such an inspiring and special place," she adds.

A few years ago, Cruz wanted to work on a project in India, called Passion India, which was about a young flamenco dancer, who sparked a scandal in the early 20th century by marrying a maharaja.

Sharing an update on the project, she tells us, "That was quite some time ago. Some people involved in their family didn't want the film to be made, and we wanted to be respectful of that. Hence, the movie never got made." Source: HT



Jessica Chastain: Our industry has done a terrible job at showcasing women as they are

As someone who by her own admission has consciously always taken up well-written female characters in her acting journey so far, Jessica Chastain still believes that such roles are still far and between.

The star of films like Zero Dark Thirty (2012), Sloane (2016), Molly's Game (2017), Ava (2020), says that even though things have been changing for the better in recent times, it is still not enough when it comes to good female roles.

"There has been so much conversation about strong women, and how radical a thought it is about our industry... but in reality our industry has done a terrible job at showcasing women as they are. And through Zero Dark Thirty I got to know some women who do the work in the shadows, espionage work and put their lives at risk and are really unsung in their deeds," Chastain tells us.

The actor further adds, "I feel like the industry has determined in the past that a woman's greatest asset is her sexual desirability and I don't see that in the world. I want people to see the true reflection of how strong women are on screen."



FIRE, CLASH AT NIGHTCLUB KILL 19 PEOPLE IN INDONESIA

JAKARTA (TIP): A nightclub in Indonesia's West Papua province burned after two groups clashed inside the building and 19 people were killed, officials said January 25.

One of the dead was a member of the groups that clashed Monday night at the club in Sorong city and 18 bodies were found after the fire, Adam Erwindi, spokesperson of West Papua Police, said on Metro TV. Police are still investigating what caused the clash and whether the fire was set or was accidental.

Erwindi added that along with the investigation, police officers were meeting the main figures of the two groups to make for more conducive conditions. Police and Indonesian military officers were in control in the area. AP

SEVERAL WOUNDED IN SHOOTING IN GERMAN CITY; GUNMAN DEAD

BERLIN (TIP): A lone gunman wounded several people at a lecture theatre in the southwestern German city of Heidelberg on January 21, police said.

Police said in a brief statement that the perpetrator was dead, but didn't give details of how that happened. They had earlier asked people on Twitter to avoid the Neuenheimer Feld area of Heidelberg, where the city's university campus is located.

Police didn't specify how many people were wounded, or how seriously. The university's press office declined to give any details on the shooting and referred all inquiries to police.

Police said the weapon used in the shooting was a long-barreled firearm.

Heidelberg is located south of Frankfurt and has about 160,000 inhabitants. Its university is one of Germany's best-known. AP

CHINA SENDS 39 WARPLANES TOWARD TAIWAN, LARGEST IN NEW YEAR

TAIPEI (TIP): China flew 39 warplanes toward Taiwan in its largest such sortie of the new year, continuing a pattern that the island has answered by scrambling its own jets in response. The formation January 20 night included 24 J-16 fighter jets and 10 J-10 jets, among other support aircraft and electronic warfare aircraft, according to Taiwan's defense ministry. Taiwan's air force scrambled its own jets and tracked the People's Liberation Army planes on its air defense radar systems, the defense ministry said. Chinese pilots have been flying towards Taiwan on a near-daily basis in the past year and a half, since Taiwan's government started publishing the data regularly. (AP)

Moscow adds Navalny to terrorist list

MOSCOW (TIP): Russian authorities have added imprisoned opposition leader Alexei Navalny and some of his top allies to the registry of terrorists and extremists, the latest move in a multi-pronged crackdown on opposition supporters, independent media and human rights activists.

Navalny, Vladimir Putin's fiercest critic, and eight of his allies — including top aides Lyubov Sobol and Georgy Alburow — were on January 25 added to the registry by Russia's Federal Financial Monitoring Service.

The law requires that the bank accounts of those on the list be frozen. The move comes just a over a year after Navalny's arrest, which triggered a wave of the biggest mass protests across the country in years. The politician was detained upon his return from Germany, where he spent five months recovering from a nerve agent poisoning he blamed on the Kremlin.

Navalny was ordered to serve 2 1/2 years in prison for



violating the terms of a suspended sentence stemming from a fraud conviction. — Agencies

UK police to investigate alleged lockdown breaches at PM's residence

LONDON (TIP): British police will investigate alleged lockdown breaches at Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Downing Street residence after receiving evidence from an internal government probe into a series of gatherings.

Johnson is fighting for his political survival after new allegations that he broke the Covid-19 lockdown rules he imposed by attending a surprise birthday party in Downing Street when social gatherings indoors were banned.

That added to a long list of alleged lockdown breaches in Downing Street, including one 'bring your own booze' party, which Johnson has said he attended thinking it was a work event.

Police will now investigate, London's Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick said on January 25.

"I can confirm that the Met (Metropolitan Police) is now investigating a number of events that took place at Downing Street and Whitehall in the last two years in relation to potential breaches of Covid-19 regulations," she said.



The police investigation could force a delay to the internal inquiry commissioned by Johnson and carried out by senior official Sue Gray, who is

expected to report her findings later this week in what was seen as a key moment for Johnson's future as prime minister. Reuters

Power blackout hits Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan

ALMATY (TIP): The central Asian nations of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan suffered electrical power outages in major cities on January 25, according to authorities and residents, after a major power line in Kazakhstan was disconnected.

The grids of the three ex-Soviet republics are interconnected, and via Kazakhstan are linked to the Russian power grid which they can use to cover unexpected shortages.

But Kazakhstan's North-South power line, which links densely populated southern Kazakhstan and its two

neighbours to major power stations in northern Kazakhstan and the Russian network, was disconnected on Tuesday morning due to "emergency imbalances" in the Central Asian part of the grid, grid operator KEGOC said.

Outages were reported in Kazakhstan's largest city Almaty and several major southern cities close to the Uzbek and Kyrgyz borders.

Authorities in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan said they were restarting power plants after emergency shutdowns and would initially remain disconnected from the Central Asian grid. - Reuters

3,500 families flee homes in Syria's Hasakah amid US airstrikes

DAMASCUS (TIP): As many as 3,500 families have so far fled their homes in Syria's northeastern province of Hasakah amid US airstrikes and clashes between the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and the Islamic State (IS) terror group.

The airstrikes and the clashes have been escalating following the jailbreak of IS inmates from a Kurdish-controlled prison in the Gweiran neighbourhood in Hasakah on January 20, Xinhua news agency. Following the prison break, the SDF engaged in fierce battles with IS militants inside and outside the prison while the US-led warplanes kept on targeting residential areas where the fugitives could have reached.

Earlier on January 24, the warplanes struck a university campus in Hasakah and destroyed the university's parking lot, as part of their manhunt for the escaped inmates. Such a situation has pushed thousands of families to flee their homes close to the clashes sites in Kurdish-controlled areas.

Local media reports have said the displaced families reached the government-controlled areas in Hasakah and settled in temporary



displacement shelters, as the Syrian army opened safe corridors to secure the fleeing families. Director of Social Affairs Ibrahim Khalaf said in a statement that due to the increase in the number of displaced families, two new temporary shelters were opened, bringing the number of centres to five in the city.

Khalaf pointed out that the work is underway to equip the sixth centre in light of the continued influx of people

from the southern neighbourhoods. Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry on Monday held an urgent meeting of representatives from the international organisations operating in Syria to address the crisis in Hasakah.

Hasakah province is largely controlled by the US-backed SDF, while some certain areas, particularly in the city of Qamishli, are still under the control of the Syrian government. IANS

JOHNSON ORDERS PROBE INTO MUSLIM MP'S CLAIM

LONDON (TIP): British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on January 24 ordered an internal Cabinet Office inquiry into allegations by a Pakistani-origin MP that she was sacked from her ministerial post due to her Muslim faith.

Conservative Party MP Nusrat Ghani had said in a 'Sunday Times' interview that at a post-reshuffle meeting in February 2020 with the party whips, or MPs in charge of party discipline, she was told that her "Muslimness" was raised as an 'issue', that my 'Muslim woman minister' status was making colleagues uncomfortable."

Chief Tory Whip Mark Spencer said over the weekend that he was the whip in question and described Ghani's allegations as "completely false".

On Monday, Downing Street confirmed that Johnson has asked the Cabinet Office to carry out an inquiry into the allegations. Ghani welcomed the investigation in a statement on Twitter. She said: "As I said to the PM last night all I want is for this to be taken seriously and for him to investigate. I welcome his decision to do that now. The terms of reference of the inquiry must include all that was said in Downing Street and by the whip. I look forward to seeing the terms of reference."

Julian Assange wins right to appeal extradition in UK Supreme Court



LONDON (TIP): WikiLeaks Founder Julian Assange was on January 24 granted permission from the Supreme Court to appeal against his extradition order to the US.

The 50-year-old is wanted in America over the leak of thousands of classified documents related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. His lawyers argued that he should not be taken to the US because of a real and "oppressive" risk of suicide.

Last month, the US authorities won an appeal against a previous court ruling that he could not be extradited due to concerns over his mental health.

US authorities later provided

assurances that the WikiLeaks founder would not face the severely restrictive conditions that his lawyers said would put his physical and mental health at risk.

The High Court overturned the lower court's decision in December, noting American "solemn undertakings" were enough to guarantee Assange would be treated humanely.

Now, Assange has secured the right to seek appeal against that ruling in the Supreme Court based on a point of law that is of "general public importance", which could potentially have a far-reaching impact of setting fresh precedent in extradition cases. (PTI)

Inside La Palma's volcano, gas emissions mark colourful terrain

LA PALMA (TIP): Two bare pine tree trunks remain standing inside the jagged and colourful main crater of the volcano on the Spanish island of La Palma, while gas emissions and high temperatures continue though they are easing a month after the eruption ended.

A Reuters crew was on January 23 granted rare access to the edge of the volcano's craters with a team from the Canary Islands Volcanology Institute (Involcan), who went inside one of the six craters to measure gas emissions and temperatures and check that their monitoring stations were functioning well.

Powerful gas emissions during the 85-day volcanic eruption have tainted parts of the crater yellow, orange and white.

The surrounding terrain is pitch black, with violent tongues of lava scattered along slopes completely covered with a thick blanket of volcanic ash. Scores of burnt pine trees are now beige.

"Despite having been inside (the crater) many times, it always strikes me how big it is. Once you are inside you realise it's huge, gigantic," said Pedro Hernandez, the Involcan volcanologist

leading the team.

"There are many craters and gas emissions continue to be very impressive from a visual perspective." The volcanic eruption in La Palma in the Canary Islands, which officially ended on Christmas Day, was the most devastating in Europe in 80 years, he said.

Rivers of lava destroyed around 3,000 buildings and scores of fields covering 1,219 hectares, although no direct deaths were reported.

Temperatures inside the craters were around 840 degrees Celsius, lower than the 1,100 degrees registered around two weeks before. But extremely high temperatures could continue for several years, said Hernandez, 53. This is the eighth volcanic eruption he has studied on the ground.

His team also checked in person that gas emissions from the craters' edges had slightly decreased but the volcano continued to emit sulphur and carbon dioxide, which could be smelled in the surrounding area. Fifteen minutes from the crater by foot, where the Involcan expedition left its vehicles, the ground remained warm. (Reuters)

FREE 56 INDIAN FISHERMEN: LANKA COURT

COLOMBO (TIP): A Sri Lankan court ordered the release of 56 Indian fishermen who were detained for allegedly fishing in the island nation's territorial waters on January 25, a verdict that sets free all the remaining Indian fisherfolk languishing in the country's jails.

The court in the northern Jaffna peninsula ordered the release of the fishermen who were detained by the Sri Lankan Navy in mid-December in the seas south of Mannar. Happy to learn about it, Indian High Commission in Colombo tweeted.

"Commend the work of High Commissioner Gopal Baglay and his team in securing the release," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said in a tweet. Both Sri Lankan officials and the Indian diplomatic sources confirmed the release and noted that with Tuesday's release there are no more Indian fishermen in the island nation's custody.

The court order for the release of fishermen came as the Indian authorities urged Sri Lanka to release them on humanitarian grounds in the backdrop of economic assistance talks that were going on at the time. — PTI

I WOULD BE MORE DANGEROUS IF FORCED TO STEP DOWN, PAK PM IMRAN KHAN WARNS OPPOSITION

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Sunday warned the Opposition parties that he would be more dangerous if they forced him to step down as he ruled out granting any concession to them.

Responding to a question about the planned long march by the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) on March 23 during live calls by the public, Khan said that the move would fail.

"If I take to the streets, then you (opposition parties) won't find any place to hide," Khan said, adding that he would be more dangerous if forced to step down.

The PDM – an alliance of nearly a dozen opposition parties – was formed against the Pakistan Army's interference in politics and installing "puppet" Prime Minister Khan through a "manipulated" election.

PDM President and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl head Maulana Fazlur Rahman has announced that the opposition parties would launch a long march towards Islamabad on March 23 to rid the nation of the "incapable and illegitimate" government of Imran Khan.

Khan also slammed the Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif and refused to have any interaction with him. (PTI)

Pakistan slips on Corruption Perceptions Index, ranks 140 out of 180 countries

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan has dropped 16 spots on the global Corruption Perceptions Index for 2021 and is ranked 140th out of 180 countries, Transparency International said in a report on January 25, in a major blow to Prime Minister Imran Khan's government which came to power on the promise of introducing a clean governance system.

The report released by the Berlin-based non-profit organisation formed to combat global corruption said that corruption levels remain at a standstill worldwide, with 86 per cent of countries making little to no progress in the last 10 years.

In its 2021 edition, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) ranks 180 countries and territories by their perceived levels of public sector corruption on a scale of zero (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean), drawing on 13 expert assessments and surveys of business executives.

In 2020, Pakistan's CPI was 31 and it was ranked 124 out of 180 countries. According to Transparency International, the country's corruption score has now deteriorated to 28 while it is ranked 140 out of the total 180 countries on the index.

Comparatively, India's score stands at 40 and is ranked 85, while Bangladesh's CPI is 26 and stands at 147th position. Explaining the causes of low score of Pakistan, the report said the absence of the "rule of law" and "state capture" were the main reasons.

The report comes at a time when



Prime Minister Khan is under pressure to improve the performance of his government which came to power in 2018 on the promise of introducing a clean governance system.

His adviser on accountability, Shehzad Akbar, stepped down on Monday amidst reports of his poor performance to bring the corrupt elements under the law.

To add to Khan's woes, Justice Nasira Iqbal (ret'd), Vice-Chair of Transparency International Pakistan, said the ranking of Pakistan under the PTI government has gradually come down.

In 2019, it was 120th out of 180 countries, in 2020, it was 124th and in 2021 it worsened further to 140, she said.

In contrast, in 2018, during the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) period, Pakistan's ranking was 117

out of 180 countries.

Former prime minister and PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi while addressing the media said that the report showed that the Khan's government is corrupt and incompetent.

"This government is the most corrupt government in the entire history of Pakistan," he said, and demanded Khan step down immediately.

The CPI global average remains unchanged at 43 for the tenth year in a row, and two-thirds of countries score below 50, the report said.

According to the report, the top-performing countries are Denmark, Finland and New Zealand — all having a corruption perceptions score of 88 — followed by Norway, Singapore and Sweden, all of them scoring 85. (PTI)

42 people dead due to heavy snowfall in Afghanistan

KABUL (TIP): Since the last 20 days, at least 42 people have died and 118 other injured as heavy snowfall has lashed 15 provinces of Afghanistan, officials said.

Meanwhile, over 2,000 houses have also been destroyed, the officials from the Ministry of Disaster Management said, adding that emergency aid to the affected people are being delivered, reports Khaama Press.

Deputy of the Ministry Enayatullah Shuja said that hundreds of people who were stranded on several highways due to heavy snowfall have been rescued and that the further operations were still underway.

Shuja further said that they are working with different aid agencies to deliver emergency assistance to those affected.

Freezing winter and heavy snowfall



have contributed to the ongoing humanitarian crisis of Afghanistan.

Based on the statistics of the UN, over

half of the Afghan population which is more than 24 million people need life-saving assistance. IANS



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Remove blackheads on your nose at home with these easy DIY masks and scrubs

There is something about those tiny, pesky blackheads that are so stubborn that they often have you pull your hair out in attempts to get rid of them, don't you agree?

But have you ever wondered, what exactly are those or how can you put an end to them?

Today, through this article, we are going to decode everything about blackheads - from the causes to solutions in the form of home remedies and understand the best ways to keep blackheads at bay.

What Are Blackheads?

Blackheads are basically a form of acne that rise to the surface of the skin. They hold an oxidized version of melanin which is the dark pigment made by cells in the skin.

In simple terms, when a pore gets clogged and closes up, it is known as a whitehead. While, on the other hand, when the top remains open, a blackhead forms.

It is usually believed that blackheads are dark because the dirt in the specific pore is that colour. Contrary to popular notion, blackheads are black or dark gray because the oil and dead skin that clogs the pore oxidize when exposed to air.

Causes Of Blackheads

If you're dealing with blackheads, you may be wondering, why do these pop-up? Some of these factors can increase the chance of developing blackheads. So, take note!

- Age and hormonal changes
- Inheritance
- Blocking or covering pores by cosmetics and clothing
- Excessive sweating
- Overproduction of skin cells by the body
- Performing activities that open the hair follicles
- High humidity and grease in the environment
- Use of some steroid-based drugs, such as corticosteroids

Why Do You Commonly Find Blackheads On The Nose?

We all can relate that the tip of the nose is home to blackheads. It generally happens because pores on your nose are usually bigger than the pores on the rest of your facial skin.

These pores are also connected to the sebaceous glands that produce sebum and natural oil in your skin. Also, skin in this area is the centre of more oil glands as compared to the rest of your face, thereby, cropping up more blackheads.

DIY Masks And Scrubs

Now that you know all about blackheads, we know what you must be wondering. You certainly can't get rid of the skin pores and you definitely can't stop the oil secretion in your skin, so what can you do, right?

Take a look at these effective homemade blackhead removal masks and scrubs and get flawless, blackhead-free skin.

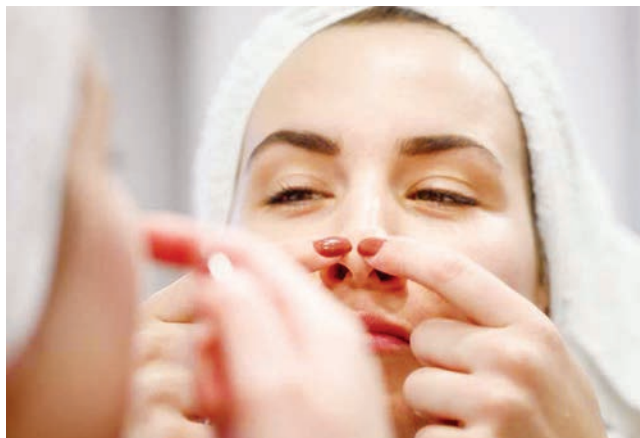
Bentonite Clay Mask

A gentle ingredient that effectively works on blackheads is bentonite clay. It helps the skin in getting rid of excess oil and may help to loosen or even remove dirt from clogged pores.

Not only to your nose, but you can also extend this mask to your whole t-zone as blackheads tend to appear more in this area.

Method

- Take 3 tablespoons of bentonite clay.
- Add water to get a paste-like consistency.
- You can also add lavender oil to the mix.
- Apply the paste evenly on your face and leave it on for about 20 minutes.



- Remove the mask with a soft cotton cloth dipped in water and gently wipe it off.

Cinnamon And Honey Mask

Is there anything the humble honey cannot pull off? Honey mixed with cinnamon powder is one of the most effective masks for blackhead removal. Both of these ingredients have antibacterial and cleansing properties.

Cinnamon is an astringent ingredient that is known for improving blood circulation, tightening the skin's pores, and doesn't let oil and dirt settle in. While honey hydrates the skin and makes it nourished and glowing.

Method

- Take 3 tablespoons of organic honey.
- Take 1 tablespoon of cinnamon powder.
- Mix them together and make a thick paste.
- Apply it on your damp face with the help of a brush.
- Also note, stick to only the nose area as cinnamon can be irritating for sensitive skin.
- Leave the mask on for 10 minutes.
- Remove the mask with lukewarm water.

Sugar Scrub

One of the most proven home remedies to get rid of blackheads is to make yourself an effective sugar scrub. You just need two ingredients for this - sugar and jojoba oil. These ingredients will help in cutting down dead skin cells.

Method

- Take a cup of white sugar.
- Take three tablespoons of jojoba oil.
- Stir the mixture well until you get an evenly thick paste.
- You can also use almond oil or olive oil, as per your convenience.
- Apply it to your nose area and massage it for a minute or two.
- Let it sit for 4-5 minutes
- Rinse it off with lukewarm water.
- You can scrub at least twice a week to get the desired results.

Oatmeal And Yoghurt Scrub

Method

- Take 2 tablespoons of oatmeal.
- Take 3 tablespoons of plain yogurt
- You can also take half a lemon juice.
- Mix the ingredients well until you get a fine paste.
- Apply this to your nose area and massage it for a minute.
- Leave the scrub for 10-15 minutes.
- Rinse it off with lukewarm water.

You can scrub with this mixture once a week to get the desired results.

Source: Her Zindigi

FOOD CORNER



Chicken with sweet potatoes and cauliflower

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup nonfat plain yogurt
- 1 teaspoon Madras-style curry powder
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced-
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, (about 1 1/2 pounds), trimmed
- 1 sweet potato, (about 1 pound), peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 3 cups cauliflower florets, (1 small head) or broccoli florets
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup chopped unsalted dry-roasted peanuts, or cashews
- 1/4 cup loosely packed cilantro leaves

Method

- Combine yogurt, curry powder, coriander, ginger, garlic, 1/2 teaspoon salt and cayenne in a shallow glass dish; mix to blend. Reserve 1/4 cup of this mixture; cover and refrigerate. Add chicken to the remaining yogurt mixture and turn to coat. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours or overnight.
- Preheat oven to 230°C. Lightly coat a large rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
- Remove the chicken from the marinade and place on the prepared baking sheet. Toss sweet potato with the reserved yogurt mixture in a medium bowl and place on the baking sheet.
- Toss cauliflower with oil in a medium bowl and add to the baking sheet. Season vegetables with the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper. Roast chicken and vegetables, uncovered, for 15 minutes.
- Carefully turn the chicken over and stir the vegetables. Roast until the vegetables are tender and chicken is cooked through, 10 to 15 minutes more.
- Arrange chicken and vegetables on a platter or individual plates and garnish with peanuts (or cashews) and cilantro.

Mocha Mousse

Ingredients

- Instant Chocolate - 50 gms Cold Milk - 1/2 cup Strong Coffee - 2 tblsp, chilled Sugar - 1 to 2 tblsp, powdered Vanilla Extract - 1/4 tsp Whipping Cream - 1/2 cup, heavy Choco Chips - 1 tblsp, for garnish

Method

- Mix the instant chocolate, milk and coffee until thick.
- Beat the cream, sugar and vanilla until soft peaks form. Reserve some for topping.
- Mix the cream mixture into the chocolate mixture and spoon into a dessert glass.
- Keep it in the fridge for 35 to 40 minutes.
- Just before serving, add a little bit of the reserved cream mixture and garnish with the choco chips.
- Serve chill.

Researchers discover biomarkers linked to autism risk

A recent clinical study led by a team of international researchers has identified molecular signatures of gestational inflammation linked to the risk of developing autism spectrum disorder (ASD). These findings, which provide insights into abnormal brain development, could eventually lead to a test to screen for ASD at birth. The study was published in the journal 'Molecular Psychiatry'.

The large study was conducted by researchers at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and the Norwegian National Institute of Public Health.

The new research aligns with growing evidence that the risk of ASD is increased by fetal exposure to inflammation. In earlier studies, the researchers linked ASD risk to prenatal exposure to maternal fever, and to influenza infection and herpesvirus type 2 infection – two of many potential triggers for maternal inflammation and ASD.

In the new study, researchers analyzed the presence of 60 molecular markers of immune response, including cytokines and growth factors. Blood samples were collected during pregnancy (maternal mid-



gestational blood sample) and at birth (cord blood) from 957 children, roughly half of whom were later diagnosed with ASD. The study linked ASD risk to groupings of inflammation-related molecules, with different groupings seen in boys versus girls. Among the most predictive molecules were interleukins like IL1RA and IL4. Four molecules thought to be involved in fetal brain development were also linked to ASD risk in both sexes: TNF α , Serpin E1, VCAM1, and IL1b. Biomarkers collected at birth were only slightly less predictive than those collected during pregnancy. "Our research suggests a period of vulnerability during gestation when inflammation can interfere with central nervous system development,"

said first author Xiaoyu (Jason) Che, PhD, assistant professor of biostatistics in the Center for Infection and Immunity at Columbia Mailman School. "We found immune signatures in mid-pregnancy blood samples from mothers and in umbilical cord blood from children later diagnosed with autism that correlate with responses to infection, and molecules important for the development of the brain and its blood supply," said study co-first author, Mady Hornig, MD, associate professor of epidemiology at Columbia Mailman School.

"This work illustrates the unique power of prospective cohorts for elucidating the roots of disease," said corresponding author, Ezra Susser, professor of epidemiology and psychiatry. "This paper is the culmination of more than 20 years of data and sample collection and analysis in collaboration with our colleagues in the Norwegian Institute of Public Health. Our future research will focus on finding the triggers for inflammation and links between those triggers and genetic susceptibility," said W. Ian Lipkin, John Snow Professor of Epidemiology and professor of neurology and pathology.

Source: ANI



Omicron sub-lineage BA.2 variant under investigation in UK

The UK health authorities on Friday said they will be conducting further analysis into a sub-lineage of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 after designating it a variant under investigation (VUI).

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), which monitors data related to the pandemic, said the sub-lineage known as BA.2 shows a low number of cases in the country, with the original Omicron lineage BA.1 still dominant.

A VUI designation is the initial step of investigation before being designated a variant of concern (VOC), which the original Omicron BA.1 currently is.

"The Omicron variant sub-lineage known as BA.2 has been designated as a variant under investigation," UKHSA said.

"The number of BA.2 cases is currently low, with the original Omicron lineage, BA.1, still dominant in the UK and further analyses will now be undertaken. UKHSA are continuing to monitor data on the BA.2 sub-lineage closely," it said.

The sub-lineage was designated in early December last year and as of January 10 this year, 53 sequences of BA.2 had been identified in the UK.

"It is in the nature of viruses to evolve and mutate, so it's to be expected that we will continue to see new variants emerge as the pandemic goes on," said Dr Meera Chand, UKHSA Incident Director.

"Our continued genomic surveillance allows us to detect them and assess whether they are significant. Case rates remain high throughout the UK and we must remain vigilant and take up vaccinations," she said.

The UKHSA update comes as the UK recorded another 107,364 Covid-19 infections on Thursday, after having dropped below the 100,000 mark in recent days. The health agency said there is now "high confidence" that the Omicron variant causes low severity of disease in adults.

However, confidence levels for severity indicators for children are low because further analysis is required to compare the risk of hospitalisation between Omicron and Delta, and to assess the clinical nature of illness in children.

Source: PTI

Kids whose grandparents are overweight are almost twice as likely to struggle with obesity

School holidays can be a special time for extended families to gather. Children may see their grandparents at seasonal gatherings or as part of childcare arrangements to help working parents. New research suggests the biology, environment and the food they share contributes to children's future health.

According to the World Health Organisation, 39 million children under five years are overweight. Some 25% of Australian children and adolescents are overweight or obese.

How parents contribute to their offspring's obesity risk is well established but the link between grandparents and grandchildren has been less clear. Our systematic review of studies involving more than 200,000 people around the world confirms obesity is transmitted across multiple generations of families. We still need to figure out why and how to break this cycle.

Obesity among children and adolescents is associated with developing health problems. These include high blood pressure, cholesterol imbalance, insulin resistance, diabetes mellitus, accelerated growth and maturity, orthopaedic difficulties, psychosocial problems, increased risk of heart disease and premature mortality.

We examined the current global evidence on the association between grandparents who are overweight or obese and the healthy weight status of their grandchildren. We looked at 25 studies that involved 238,771 people from 17 countries. The combined data confirms obesity is transmitted multigenerationally – not just from parent to child but also from grandparent to grandchild.

We found children whose grandparents are obese or overweight are almost twice as likely to be obese or overweight compared to those whose grandparents are "normal" weight.



Further research is needed into how children's obesity status is influenced by their grandparents but there are likely two pathways at work. The influence could be indirect via parents' genes or occur directly through the roles played by grandparents in children's upbringing.

Let's start with biological factors. Both egg and sperm cells contain molecules that respond to the nutritional intake of parents. This means traits that are susceptible to high weight gain can be passed on from grandparents to parents and then to their grandchildren. And evidence shows genetics, environmental factors, lifestyle and eating habits all play key roles in predisposing individuals to obesity.

What we eat and feed our family members can lead to the expression of certain genetic traits (a term referred to as epigenetics) which can then be transferred to successive generations. Due to shared familial, genetic, and environmental factors, obesity tends to aggregate within immediate families and studies have consistently reported an intergenerational transmission of obesity from parents to children.

Source: PTI

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DR. SATISH AND GITANJLI ANAND



DR. SATISH ANAND
Former Chairman, Board of Trustees, AAPI National
E-Mail: sanandmd@gmail.com

GITANJLI ANAND
Former President, India Association of Long Island (IALI)
E-mail: gitanjlianand@gmail.com



WhatsApp to allow transfer of chats from Android to iPhone

Meta-owned WhatsApp is reportedly testing the possibility of allowing users to migrate chats from their Android device to an iPhone.

According to WABetaInfo, WhatsApp is working on an "import chat history" feature that will let Android users move their chats to an iPhone device.

The feature was spotted in development in the latest WhatsApp beta for iOS v22.2.74. Currently, it is not available to everyone at the moment. It appears that WhatsApp will rely on an app called Move to iOS in order to make the migration possible.

At present, chat transfer feature has been available from iOS to Samsung devices and Google pixel since last October. Users can also migrate chats from iOS to devices based on Android 12 out-of-the-box.

WhatsApp is also reportedly rolling out a new global voice note player on iOS beta that will let users listen to a voice message even when they switch to a different chat.

The voice note that users are listening to will not be dismissed when they swipe back or open a different chat.

This feature has been released to some iOS beta testers, including WhatsApp Business beta.

How trillion-dollar 'space economy' is threatened by debris

The space economy is on track to be valued at a trillion dollars by the end of 2030, but assets such as navigation, weather and communication satellites that serve our society daily are threatened by space debris, an Indian-American professor has stressed.

According to NASA, it is estimated that millions of pieces of space debris orbit around Earth. A major portion of these objects as well as active satellites reside in the low-Earth orbit region, at altitudes between 200 km and 1,000 km.

In November last year, Russia destroyed one of its own satellites with a ground-based missile, creating thousands of pieces of debris that passed through the International Space Station (ISS).

The astronauts and cosmonauts had to take shelter in their Soyuz and Dragon vehicles docked at the space station, as the orbital lab continued to pass through a debris field every 90 minutes.

The US identified more than 1,500 trackable pieces of debris from the event, and many thousands of smaller ones couldn't be traced.

According to Piyush Mehta, Assistant Professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering at West Virginia University, the US, in low-Earth orbit, our ability to safeguard these space assets depends on modelling of the aerodynamic forces acting on the satellites, specifically satellite drag.

"The drag force acting on a satellite is affected by various physical parameters, however, the most crucial and uncertain are the drag coefficient and mass density," said Mehta, who leads a collaborative effort on satellite drag coefficient modelling under the International Space Weather Action Teams (ISWAT) initiative.



Mehta explained that because of the interconnectedness of the two parameters, one of them is held constant, typically the drag coefficient, while the other is investigated.

However, he added that this causes inconsistencies or inaccuracies in our understanding of the mass density variability in the upper atmosphere or thermosphere.

Jason Gross, Interim Chair of mechanical and aerospace engineering at the Statler College, West Virginia University, said: "With the continued rapid increase of manmade satellites in low-Earth orbit, his (Mehta's) work towards improved orbital decay prediction becomes more important for the future of space environment sustainability with each passing day. His lab is at the forefront of this important field."

Source: IANS

Google launches beta of Android games on Windows PCs

Tech giant Google is reportedly launching a limited beta of its app to bring Android games to Windows PCs.

According to The Verge, Google Play Games will be available in beta in Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan, allowing Windows PC owners to play popular Android games like Mobile Legends, Summoners War, State of Survival and Three Kingdoms Tactics.

Players in these countries will be able to sign up to access the beta and access Google's standalone app on Windows PCs.

The tech giant is promising "seamless gameplay sessions between a phone, tablet, Chromebook and Windows PC", suggesting that you'll be able to easily resume games between multiple devices.

"Players can easily browse, download, and play their favourite mobile games on their PCs while taking advantage of larger screens with mouse and keyboard inputs," Arjun Dayal, group product manager for Google Play Games was quoted as saying.

"No more losing your progress or achievements when switching between devices; it just works with your Google Play Games profile," he added.

Google Play Games will also include Play Points that can be earned while playing Android games on PCs. The company only announced its plans to bring Android games to PCs a month ago, but it's still not clear what technology the company is using to get Android games running on Windows PCs.

The Google Play Games app will be a native Windows app that will not involve game streaming, though and Google is opening up a developer site today that should start to provide more information for game developers.

Source: IANS



Google Search adds new Easter Egg for Wordle players

Wordle has been taking over the internet. After Twitter users flooding their timelines with yellow, green and grey boxes, the game now is now acknowledged by Google as a trend. The search giant now has a dedicated easter egg that comes into play when your search for 'Wordle'.

Google will show a new animation on the top left of the search result screen and the animation will cycle through a number of six-letter words (instead of Wordle's default five-letter words) to show certain green and yellow boxes.

The same can be spotted on the top of the screen in the middle when you search for 'Wordle' on phone. As you keep watching words like GOALIE and COLUMN get animated, the final word with all green characters is revealed to be GOOGLE.

The animation is currently seen on both desktops and smartphones. While Google does pay homage to the trend, note that this isn't a Google Doodle (when Google changes its logo on the main Google Search page) and rather an easter egg that will appear only when you search for 'Wordle'. However, because it is a search-specific easter egg, the Wordle animation may stick around for much longer than a Google Doodle, which is usually there only for one day.

If you too want to hop on the Wordle train you can check out our guides on what the game is about, how to play it and even how to get better at it.

Wordle continues to grow more popular each day as more players are introduced to the simple puzzle game that drops a five-letter word each day that must be strategically guessed within six chances. The only help players get is a three-way colour code that lets them know what letter is present in and where it is positioned in the word of the day.





INDIA'S ECONOMY HAS SOME BRIGHT SPOTS, A NUMBER OF VERY DARK STAINS, SAYS RAGHURAM RAJAN

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Indian economy has "some bright spots and a number of very dark stains" and the government should target its spending "carefully" so that there are no huge deficits, noted economist and former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan said on Sunday.

Known for his frank views, Rajan said the government needed to do more to prevent a K-shaped recovery of the economy hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

Generally, a K-shaped recovery will reflect a situation where technology and large capital firms recover at a far faster rate than small businesses and industries that have been significantly impacted by the pandemic.

"My greater worry about the economy is the scarring to the middle class, the small and medium sector, and our children's minds, all of which will come into play after an initial rebound due to pent-up demand. One symptom of all this is weak consumption growth, especially for mass consumption goods," Rajan told PTI in an e-mail interview.

Rajan, currently a Professor at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, noted that as always, the economy has some bright spots and a number of very dark stains.

"The bright spots are the health of large firms, the roaring business the IT and IT-enabled sectors are doing, including the emergence of unicorns in a number of areas, and the strength of some parts of the financial sector," he said.

On the other hand, "dark stains" are the extent of unemployment and low buying power, especially amongst the lower middle-class, the financial stress small and medium-sized firms are experiencing, "including the very tepid credit growth, and the tragic state of our schooling".

Rajan opined that omicron is a setback, both medically and in terms of economic activity but cautioned the government on the possibility of a K-shaped economic recovery.

"We need to do more to prevent a K-shaped recovery, as well as a possible lowering of our medium-term growth potential," he said.

Source: PTI

Microsoft profits up 21%, giving cushion for gaming push

WASHINGTON (TIP)

Demand for Microsoft's cloud-computing services and work software helped boost its quarterly profits by 21% as the pandemic continued to keep many office workers at least partly at home.

The Redmond, Washington company on Tuesday, January 25, reported fiscal second-quarter profit of \$18.8 billion. It posted revenue of \$51.7 billion for the October-December period, up 20% from a year earlier.

In a call with investors, CEO Satya Nadella said the company is transitioning from a period of pandemic-fueled demand to one in which digital technology can help overcome economic constraints to "drive productivity while keeping costs down."

"The other area we are seeing strength is gaming," Nadella said. "That's where we have doubled down in terms of our consumer category."

Microsoft last week announced its plans to buy high-profile game publisher Activision Blizzard for \$68.7 billion, an all-cash deal that could be the priciest tech acquisition in history if it withstands scrutiny by antitrust regulators. It could also catapult the Xbox-maker ahead of Nintendo to join Sony and Tencent as one of the three biggest video game companies.

But the financial results revealed Tuesday show that business-focused offerings such as Microsoft's Azure cloud computing platform and its suite of software products are still driving the company's growth.

Net income of \$2.48 per share beat Wall Street expectations. Analysts surveyed by FactSet were expecting Microsoft to earn \$2.32 per share on revenue of \$50.71 billion for the fiscal quarter. It's the first time the company hit over \$50 billion in sales in a three-month period.

Beating analysts' forecasts wasn't enough to stop Microsoft shares from first dropping, then rising about 2% in after-hours trading on a jittery day for investors. As markets have been swinging between steep losses and gains, expensive stocks in high-flying tech companies have led losses as investors worry about rising interest rates.

Sales from Microsoft's cloud computing business segment — where its biggest competitor is Amazon — grew 26% to \$18.3



billion in the quarter ending in December.

Microsoft's productivity segment, which includes its Office suite of workplace products such as email, grew by 19% from the same period a year earlier, to \$15.9 billion.

The productivity segment also includes revenue from Microsoft's LinkedIn jobs networking service, which increased 37% from the same time a year earlier. Nadella said it's getting more engagement because of the "great reshuffle across the labor market."

he company late last year halted its localized version of LinkedIn in mainland China, citing tightening government restrictions affecting the only major Western social networking platform that had still operated in the country.

Microsoft's personal computing business, which includes Windows software licenses, Xbox and the Surface line of devices, grew by 15% to \$17.5 billion.

Holiday gadget sales typically make the October-December quarter an important one for Surface devices and Xbox games and consoles. The company said Xbox content and services revenue grew 10% over the same time a year earlier. Xbox hardware revenue grew more modestly at 4% — in part because numbers in late 2020 had been boosted by the release of Microsoft's Xbox Series X system, the company's first new console since 2013.

Source: AP

IMF slashes India's economic growth forecast to 9% in FY22

WASHINGTON (TIP)

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cut India's economic growth forecast to 9% for the current fiscal year ending March 31, joining a host of agencies which have downgraded their projections on concerns over the impact of a spread of new variant of coronavirus on business activity and mobility.

In its latest update of World Economic Outlook on Tuesday, the Washington-based international financial institution, which had in October last year projected a 9.5% GDP growth for India, put the forecast for the next fiscal FY23 (April 2022 to March 2023) at 7.1%. The Indian economy had contracted by 7.3% in the 2020-21 fiscal.

The IMF's forecast for the current fiscal is less than 9.2% that the government's Central Statistics Office has predicted and 9.5% that the RBI has estimated. Its forecast is lower than the 9.5% projection by S&P and 9.3% by Moody's but more than the 8.3% projection by the World Bank and 8.4% by Fitch.

According to the IMF, India's prospects for 2023 are marked up on expected improvements to credit growth and, subsequently, investment and consumption, building on better-than-anticipated performance of the financial sector.

The IMF said global growth is expected to moderate from 5.9% in 2021 to 4.4% in 2022, half a percentage point lower for 2022 than in the October WEO, largely reflecting forecast markdowns in the two largest economies — the US and China.

A revised assumption removing the Build Back Better fiscal policy package from the baseline, earlier withdrawal of monetary accommodation, and continued supply shortages produced a downward 1.2 percentage-point revision for the US, it said.

Source: PTI

Sensex snaps 5-day rout, rebounds 367 points

MUMBAI (TIP)

Snapping its five-session losing streak, equity benchmark Sensex rebounded 367 points on Tuesday, January 25, boosted by strong gains in Maruti, Axis Bank and SBI amid a supportive trend in European equities.

The BSE gauge ended 366.64 points or 0.64 per cent higher at 57,858.15. Similarly, the NSE Nifty rose 128.85 points or 0.75 per cent to close at 17,277.95.

Maruti was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, rising around 7 per cent, followed by Axis Bank, SBI, IndusInd Bank, Bharti Airtel and NTPC.

On the other hand, Wipro, Bajaj Finserv, HDFC twins and RIL were among the laggards.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokyo and Seoul ended sharply lower.

Stock exchanges in Europe were trading with significant gains in mid-session deals.

International oil benchmark Brent crude advanced 0.89 per cent to USD 87.04 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital market as they sold shares worth Rs 3,751.58 crore on Monday, according to stock exchange data.



Shree Ganeshaya Namah



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

Nastur Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at info@bejandaruwalla.com and on phone +91-9638770377 www.bejandaruwalla.com

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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JAN 31 TO FEB 06, 2022



Aries

Ganesha says, watch out for new developments. You will be looking at true growth, comprising your own assets and your larger role in the community. You will look inwards at your own limitations and will also spend time with welfare activities and charities. You move positively from the worldly affairs that occupied you till recently to more self - analysing and introspection. Your main criterion is personal growth and you will do all that you can to progress in the right direction. Ganesha gives you blessings.



Taurus

Ganesha makes this phase truly challenging and you have a strong and tough week. You probably feel that you have been pursuing the wrong goals. The focus will be on loans and funds and, strangely, on passion and sex. There may also be some neuroses, anxiety, minor alignments and an unsettled feeling to contend with. You may turn to prayer and meditation. This is a testing time, and you will tap into the spiritual nooks and crannies of your being, and your soul for answers.



Gemini

Your good spirits will be restored. There will be success with people you want to have fun and enjoy the limelight. You seek out good company, good friends, good food and all the good things of life. Which I mentioned earlier. Being sociable, amiable and outgoing, you will be partying and socialising. Ganesha has given you charisma and charm, even good looks and a deceptively seductive manner. You use it in all your interactions with disarming effect. You are caught up at several levels of social life - both meeting and even renewing old acquaintances and friendships.



Cancer

Money and the people in your life will both be in sharp focus this quarter. You will look at new avenues of business, sources of income. Ganesha warns against both, a) too much socialising, once again, and not to b) mixing business with pleasure. This may lead to situations you don't want to get into and are better off without. You are friendly and sociable and also keen to get on with overhauling of your both career and income. Leasing, rentals and business deals, taxes, funding, will be part of the theme this week.



Leo

Your life is moving at a certain pace and in the right directions and you will be filled with a sense of satisfaction. Ganesha sends you your due rewards in several ways. This is a joyous phase filled with good tidings. There is a welcome twist too with travel, journeys for fun or for work, partnerships and ties, whether new or old, romantic ties and attachments, even greater joy in matrimony and other bonds. There is a change in the momentum with new interests, new pursuits and a new slant on life.



Virgo

This is the time for the expansion and extension of your mental horizons. New inclinations and predilections, a new focus, are even more likely to emerge than they were last week. You move towards spirituality and the higher issues of life and are concerned with justice, law and order and the higher consciousness. More than just acquiring knowledge, it will be a widening of the vistas of your mind that interests you. Travel, publicity, visits, interviews, meets, conferences, collaborations and networking (including even in - laws, kin, and distant relatives) within and outside the family.



Libra

At one level, you are at the crossroads. You need to make strong decisions. You don't want your success / popularity, good interactions to slip and falter. It is also a great time to help the community at large, to share resources, give charity and monetary help. You work with purpose and want to get act together professionally in the larger social context as well as within your immediate social circle. Money will also be an important consideration and better planning and effort will be required. There is a need also to streamline relationships.



Scorpio

You will look at changing your lifestyle and priorities. You need to get your act together and need to do some hard rethinking. Ganesha tells you to look deep within yourself; you have had too much of a social life, been a party animal, and your expenses are also mounting. You need to guard against arousing animosity in others as well. People get jealous of you. You think and act big and are breaking new ground in a number of spheres, but don't forget that even ordinary ties are important.



Sagittarius

This sun in your own signs brings many unusual aspects into the light of day (or rather, week!) The year is slowly coming to a close and it is a good time for reflection. You started off with ambition and grand plans on the work front and then saw a platter ranging from strange esoteric pursuits to flights of fancy, the supernatural and even the supranatural but back to the drawing board now and it is time for investments, finances (loans, funds, buying, selling) and capital - raising.



Capricorn

You have put in a lot in terms of ideas, efforts and commitment and this is the time for reaping the harvest. You like the sweet sound of good money in the bank and the social standing and perquisites that come in the form of pleasing symbols of success. You enjoy it all without a second thought, and why not? They bring joy to you and your family. You look back on the year and even seek to expand on the good fortune coming to you from time well spent. The health of an elder in the family can cause grave concern.



Aquarius

You are in introspection mode. You even look at parapsychology medicare, healing mind and bodies, charities will take your time and energy and quite happily too. You have many desires to be fulfilled and are filled with a new mindset of inquiry. The moon phase brings a sense of completion and direction to the growth of the past several weeks.



Pisces

You are pressured by commitments to work and family. Both will need hard work and effort. There will also be the investments and outlays, both financial and with time. You will have a lot of coping to do as they are all linked. It can be a heavy burden and so guard against overdoing it. But, whatever you do now, the results that follow will be pleasant. I must also tell you now that this is a special time and is filled with favours coming your way. It will be almost ideal for getting things done.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JAN 31 TO FEB 06, 2022

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January 31

Ganesha says don't pursue a career because of fame or money. Doing what you love will help you attain success. You may be in a positive frame of mind, which is likely to help you identify appropriate growth opportunities that come your way. You may remain committed to working on multiple tasks at the same time, which is likely to improve your productivity in all aspects of life. The day may bring important developments for you.

February 1

Ganesha says today your day will be excellent. Your boss will be cooperative today. You are likely to get promoted for your constant hard work. You may plan for a family trip. Today your enthusiasm will be at its peak and you will try to do new things at work. You will have good communication with your colleague, which will make you learn new things. Today you will find lots of transformation, which will give you more time to relax and channel your positive energies in the right direction. It is the perfect time to start planning for the future.

February 2

Ganesha says this day will be extremely auspicious for you. You will be in a good space as far as professionals and personal success is concerned. Peace and harmony will make good progress in all areas of your life. Today your level of happiness will make solid progress in areas of concern. You will enter into a new phase of life today. This phase will push you to do hard work and make you competitive. You will witness lots of success today. Your hard work will impress your boss. Today you are likely to show interest in spiritual activities.

February 3

Ganesha says today your day will be very promising. Your communication skill will be able to impress everyone around you. Today you will be in a sociable mood, ready to network with those who can help professionally and personally. Today you will lead the project at work. You may begin new tasks and show lots of spontaneity in executing them. Today you plan a trip with your friends.

February 4

Ganesha says today your day will be great. This day may bring lots of opportunities at work which may lead you to a good plan. Today your

energy level may be at an all-time high, which is likely to help you get going. Today will bring lots of happiness and joy to your life. Your day will start with lots of positivity. You may dedicate the day to yourself and your interest. A changed perspective towards work is likely to keep you ahead of your competitors.

February 5

Ganesha says today your day will be great. You will be able to solve an issue at work, which will make your boss happy. You may plan for a business trip with your colleague. Today will be a good day, as you will meet some new people at the office. You may learn something new from them and share different stories related to work. You may take a trip to a destination in a completely different climate zone.

February 6

Ganesha says today you will have good mental strength. You may enjoy working at the office. You are likely to implement new ideas in the family business. Today your hard work will help you to implement the plan successfully. You will choose to work hard today, the financial profit you will make today will last you a long time. Your love life will be as great as your professional life today.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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History This Week Jan 28 to Feb 3

"THINGS HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE LIKE THE WAY THEY ARE TODAY IN HISTORY." -DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

January 28



King Henry VIII of England

January 28, 1547 - King Henry VIII of England died and was succeeded by his son, Edward VI. Henry had ruled since 1509 and had broken all ties with the Roman Catholic Church over the issue of divorce. He married a total of six times. Edward VI was the son of his third wife, Jane Seymour. Edward became king at age 10 but died of tuberculosis at age 16. He was followed by his half-sister, Mary.

January 28, 1871 - The Franco-Prussian War ended as Paris surrendered to the Germans after a four-month siege. Peace terms imposed on the French included yielding the greater part of Alsace and Lorraine to the Germans and a \$1 billion fine. German troops also outraged the French by marching triumphantly through the streets of Paris causing enmity between the two nations which lasted for decades.

January 28, 1915 - The U.S. Coast Guard was created by an Act of Congress, combining the Life Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service.

January 28, 1935 - Iceland became the first country to legalize abortion.

January 28, 1963 - African American student Harvey Gantt entered Clemson College in South Carolina, the last state to hold out against integration.

January 28, 1986 - The U.S. Space Shuttle Challenger exploded 74 seconds into its flight, killing seven persons, including Christa McAuliffe, a teacher who was to be the first ordinary citizen in space.

Birthdays - Explorer Henry Stanley (1841-1904) was born in Wales. As a newspaper correspondent for the New York Herald, he was given the challenging assignment of finding missionary-explorer David Livingston in Africa. Upon locating Livingston near Lake Tanganyika in 1871 after an exhausting search, Stanley simply asked, "Dr. Livingston, I presume?"

January 29

January 29, 1891 - Hawaii proclaimed Liliuokalani as its queen. Renowned for her song Aloha Oe, she had a reign of only four years until she was forced to abdicate in 1895 under pressure from powerful businessmen.

January 29, 1916 - During World War I, the first aerial bombings of Paris by German zeppelins took place.

January 29, 1919 - The 18th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (Prohibition Amendment) was ratified. For nearly 14 years, until December 5, 1933, the manufacture, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages were illegal in the United States. The Amendment had the unexpected result of causing enormous growth of organized crime which provided bootleg liquor to thirsty Americans.

Birthdays - Common Sense author Thomas Paine (1737-1809) was born in Thetford, England. His pamphlet, published in 1776, provided inspiration to undecided Americans that a new nation, independent from Britain, might eventually become "...an asylum for mankind!" He served in the Continental Army and observed the hardships of American troops fighting the world's most powerful army. He then published The Crisis series pamphlets which began by stating, "These are the times that try men's souls." He refused to accept the profits from his writings and wound up destitute after the Revolution.

Birthdays - William McKinley (1843-1901) the 25th U.S. President was born in Niles, Ohio. He was elected in 1896 and re-elected in 1900. Early in his second term, on September 6, 1901, he was shot and mortally wounded by an anarchist at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, and died eight days later.



Anton Chekhov

Birthdays - Russian playwright

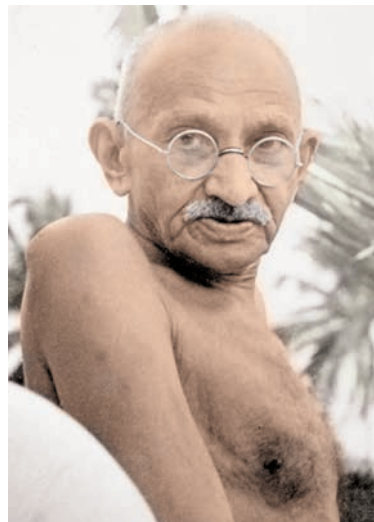
Anton Chekhov (1860-1904) was born in Taganrog, Russia. His works included Uncle Vanya, Three Sisters and The Cherry Orchard.

January 30

January 30, 1649 - King Charles I of England was beheaded for treason by order of Parliament under the direction of Oliver Cromwell, leader of the Puritan Revolution.

January 30, 1835 - President Andrew Jackson survived the first assassination attempt on a U.S. President. While leaving the House of Representatives Chamber, an insane would-be assassin fired two pistol shots at him, however both pistols misfired and the president was unharmed.

January 30, 1933 - Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany by President Paul von Hindenburg. Hitler went on to become the sole leader of Nazi Germany. He then waged a war of expansion in Europe, precipitating the deaths of an estimated 50 million persons through military conflict and through the Holocaust in which the Nazis attempted to exterminate the entire Jewish population of Europe.



Mahatma Gandhi

January 30, 1948 - Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in New Delhi, India, by a religious fanatic named Nathuram Godse. Gandhi had ended British rule in India through nonviolent resistance. "Non-violence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our very being," he had stated in 1926.

January 30, 1972 - In Londonderry, Northern Ireland, 13 Roman Catholics were killed by British troops during a banned civil rights march. The event became known as Bloody Sunday.

January 30, 1973 - During the Watergate scandal, Gordon Liddy and James McCord were convicted of burglary, wire-tapping and attempted bugging of the Democratic headquarters inside the Watergate building in Washington, D.C.

January 30, 1992 - Argentina allowed access to numerous files of Nazis who had fled to South America from Germany after World War II, thus aiding the hunt for Nazi war criminals.

Birthdays - Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) the 32nd U.S. President was born in Hyde Park, New York. Despite crippling polio, he led America out of the Great Depression and through World War II and is widely considered to be one of America's three greatest presidents (along with Washington and Lincoln). "When peace has been broken anywhere, the peace of all countries is in danger," he stated in 1939.

January 31

January 31, 1943 - German troops surrendered at Stalingrad, marking the first big defeat of Hitler's armies in World War II. During the Battle of Stalingrad, 160,000 Germans were killed and 90,000 taken prisoner, including the commander, Friedrich von Paulus, the first German field marshal ever to surrender. The captured Germans were forced to march to Siberia, with few ever returning to Germany.

January 31, 1945 - Eddie Slovik, a 24-year-old U.S. Army private, was executed by a firing squad after being sentenced to death for desertion, the first such occurrence in the U.S. Army since the Civil War.



Jackie Robinson

Birthdays - Jackie Robinson (1919-1972) was born in Cairo, Georgia. He was the first African American to play professional baseball. He played

for the Brooklyn Dodgers from 1947 to 1956, was chosen as the National League's most valuable player in 1949 and elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.

February 1

February 1, 2003 - Sixteen minutes before it was scheduled to land, the Space Shuttle Columbia broke apart in flight over west Texas, killing all seven crew members. The accident may have resulted from damage caused during liftoff when a piece of insulating foam from the external fuel tank broke off, piercing a hole in the shuttle's left wing that allowed hot gases to penetrate the wing upon re-entry into the Earth's atmosphere. This was the second space shuttle lost in flight. In January 1986, Challenger exploded during liftoff.

Birthdays - Hattie Caraway (1878-1950) the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate, was born in Bakersville, Tennessee. Her husband became the U.S. Senator from Arkansas. Following his death in 1931, she filled the remainder of his term, then was elected herself, serving a total of 14 years.



John Ford

Birthdays - Hollywood director John Ford (1895-1973) was born in Cape Elizabeth, Maine. Known for The Grapes of Wrath and The Searchers, he also served in World War II as chief of the Photographic Unit of OSS, and earned two Academy Awards for documentaries made during the war.

February 2

February 2, 1848 - The war between the U.S. and Mexico ended with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In exchange for \$15 million, the U.S. acquired the areas encompassing parts or all of present-day California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, and Texas. The treaty was ratified on March 10, 1848.

(Read more on www.theindianpanorama.news)

Mauni Amavasya

Mauni Amavasya, the word Mauni means silence, on this day any person remains silent all day and this is a kind of fast. Which is done on the day of Mauni Amavasya. Mauni Amavasya is considered the most important and auspicious day in the Hindu calendar. It is believed that on this day the water of the holy Ganges River turns into nectar and taking a bath in the Ganges on the day of Mauni Amavasya is considered holy. It is said that the creator of the universe, Manu, was also born on this new moon day. Amavasya is the most important festival of Magh month.

According to Hindu religion, Mauni Amavasya falls in the middle of the month of Magha and is also called Maghi Amavasya. In Hinduism, the month of Magha is considered auspicious because Dwapara Yuga started on this day. By the way, bathing the Ganges in the whole months of Magha is considered auspicious, but bathing on the day of Mauni Amavasya is considered special and holy.

Mauni Amavasya 2022

Tuesday, 1 February 2022

Amavasya Tithi Begins - 02:18 PM on Jan 31, 2022

Amavasya Tithi Ends - 11:15 AM on Feb 01, 2022

In the scriptures, the importance of doing charity on this day is said to be very fruitful. According to a belief, this day is also believed to be the birth of Manu Rishi, due to which this day is celebrated as Mauni Amavasya.

If the day of Mauni Amavasya falls during the biggest Kumbh Mela of Hinduism, then this day is called the most important bathing day, this day is also called the day of Amrit Yoga.

Mauni Amavasya Significance

The Mauni Amavasya is an auspicious day for Hindus all over the world. On this day, hundreds of devotees reside near the bank of the Triveni Sangam, where the holy rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati meet in Prayagraj. According to the Hindu Gurus, taking a bath in the Triveni Sangam on this day and truly worshipping Lord Vishnu wholeheartedly on this day shall lead to a prolonged, happy and healthy life. The Maha Kumbh Mela also welcomes lakhs of pilgrims on the day of the Mauni Amavasya or Maghi Amavasya.

Rituals

There are a few simple rituals one needs to follow in order to successfully complete the fast of the Mauni Amavasya. Let us know what these rituals are and how they should be performed:

- Wake up during the Brahma Muhurat i.e. between 3 am to 6 am.
- Take a bath in the River Ganga, and if you are not able to do that bathe in clean water or add some "Gangajal" in a bucket of water and then bathe with that water.



- Chant the mantra written below while bathing with the holy water.
'Gange cha yamune chaiva godavari saraswati. Narmade Sindhu Kaveri Jal?sminsannidhi kuru.'
- Gange cha yamune chaiva godavari saraswati. Narmade Sindhu Kaveri Jal sminsannidhi kuru.' After bathing, meditate in the name of Lord Vishnu and take an oath of silence or "Maun Vrat" for the day.
- Now circumambulate the Tulsi 108 times.
- Donate money, food and clothes to the poor after worshipping.
- Ensure that you remain silent right after taking the bath and chant the mantra mentioned above in your mind throughout the day.

The Story behind the Mauni Amavasya

The most popular story about Mauni Amavasya is the one with Brahmin Devaswami. Once lived a Brahmin named Devaswami, with his wife Dhanvati, his sons and a virtuous daughter in Kanchipuram. All his sons were married and he was left with an unmarried daughter eligible for marriage. He began to search for an eligible groom for his daughter and sent his eldest son with his daughter's kundali to the city to search for a suitable groom. His son showed his sister's horoscope to an expert astrologer who told him that the girl would become a widow after marriage.

When Devaswami heard about his daughter's fate he got worried and asked the astrologer for a remedy. The

astrologer suggested requesting a washerwoman Soma in Sinhaladweep to conduct a special "pooja" and that if the lady agreed to perform the "pooja" at his house, then his daughter's horoscope dosha shall be removed. Devaswami headed to Soma's house but he had to cross the ocean to reach there. When he got tired, hungry and thirsty, he thought of having some rest under a banyan tree.

On the same tree lived a vulture's family. The vulture asked Devaswami about his problem and he told them his whole story. Then the vulture assured him that he would help him reach Soma's house and guided him throughout the journey. Devaswami brought Soma to his house and asked her to perform the pooja (worship) with all the rituals.

After the pooja, his daughter Gunvati got married to a suitable groom. Even after all this, her husband died. Then Soma, being a kind-hearted woman donated her good deeds to Gunavati. Her husband got his life back and Soma returned to Sinhaladweep. As she had donated all her virtuous deeds to Gunavati, her husband, her son and her son-in-law died. Soma went through a deeply saddened phase and began to worship Lord Vishnu sitting under a peepal tree at the bank of the river and circumambulated the Peepal tree 108 times. Pleased with her true worship, Lord Vishnu gave back life to her husband, her son and her son-in-law. And ever since the fast of Mauni Amavasya is practised.



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"If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard it?"
"Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one."

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Vibrant Gujarat

Located in the westernmost part of India, Gujarat is home to several architectural marvels and is famous for its vibrant culture and rich heritage, apart from the scenic landscapes and mouth-watering cuisine. Offering a broad range of the most spectacular attractions, Gujarat, also known as 'The Land of Legends', presents a perfect blend of art, history, music and culture.

Being the sole home of the pure Asiatic Lions, Gujarat also offers splendid views of the scenic beauty ranging from the Great Rann of Kutch to the hills of Satpura. Apart from the picturesque landscapes and the more than 1600 kilometres long coastline, Gujarat also offers its tourists with some magnificent ancient cave paintings, historic murals, holy temples, historic capitals, wildlife sanctuaries, beaches, hill resorts and fascinating handicrafts. Gujarat is a dry state but the cultural exuberance of the Gujaratis will give rejuvenate you.

Places to Visit

Ahmedabad

A rapidly growing metropolis, an industrial hub, an educational hotspot, and a city with a magnificent past – Ahmedabad is one of the most important cities in Gujarat. Located on the banks of the Sabarmati River, Ahmedabad is the former capital of Gujarat, and its delicious food, colourful culture is making it a fast-growing tourist destination. The historic city of Ahmedabad or the old part of the city was declared as the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Home to a plethora of remarkable temples like Swaminarayan Temple, intriguing museums and classy markets, with a little bit of colonial history attached to it, Ahmedabad is an excellent example of how a city can still retain every bit of its old-world charm while still rapidly progressing on the path of globalisation.

Ahmedabad is famous for its textiles and its tie-dye bandhani handloom technique, which makes it a great place to shop. From bandhani sarees, dupattas to traditionally embroidered dress materials, and other local handicrafts.

Sabarmati Ashram, situated directly beside the Sabarmati river, is a quaint and peaceful ashram built by Mahatma Gandhi after he returned from South Africa. To this date, Gandhiji's living quarters are preserved here and is now used as a museum where visitors can learn all about his life and his teachings. The infamous Dandi Salt March, which was a crucial point in India's independence struggle, originated from this ashram.

Kutch

Virtually an island that resembles the shape of a tortoise, Kutch is an erstwhile princely state of India holding onto its grandeur nature from the past. Kutch is probably one of the most beautiful, yet surreal places in India with the vast expanses of the white salt desert. The place comes to life during the winters when the Rann Festival is held during December-February everywhere in which there are huge camp settlements with cultural programs, functions and adventure activities like hot-air ballooning.

Kutch is also among the largest district of India with a terribly low population density. Also, Kutch lies on the India-



Pakistan border and you can see parts of Pakistan from Kutch. Kutch is also famous for crafts and embroidery works, Flamingo Sanctuary and Wild Ass Sanctuary. Bhuj is an ideal starting point to visit the Rann of Kutch. Beautiful beaches of Mandvi near Bhuj are also totally worth visiting during your trip to Kutch. Don't miss to see the ancient town of Dholavira.

Gir National Park

Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary is the only remaining home for the Asiatic Lions. Located in Talala Gir in Gujarat, the Sanctuary is a part of Kathiawar- Gir dry deciduous forests ecoregion. Gir National Park is closed from 16 June to 15 October every year and the best time for wildlife spotting is April and May.

Gir provides you with the unique experience of visiting a place which

almost singularly plays a crucial and defining role in the preservation and sustaining of a certain species. The preservation of these lions was initiated by the Nawab of Junagadh when these were just about to enter the phase of extinction due to hunting.

The official count said that there were 411 lions in 2010. Also, there are roughly different 2375 species of fauna here with 38 species of mammals, over 300 species of birds, 37 species of reptiles and over 2000 species of insects. Other important wildlife forms found here are leopard, chausingha, spotted deer, hyena, sambar deer and chinkara.

Somnath

Somnath, literally meaning 'lord of the moon' is a pilgrim center and is home to one of the 12 Jyotirlingas. It is a town which derives much of its identity from the mythology, religion, and legends that surround it.

Primarily a temple town, Somnath is a place where a strong scent of religion and legends lingers around tourism and even daily life. Its spiritual environment is ornamented by the huge number of temples in the area, however, Somnath also offers beaches, museums and other attractions. While the Somnath temple and Somnath beach are the primary places to visit here, Gita Mandir, Balukha Tirtha, Kamnath Mahadev Temple, Somnath Museum are some of the other places that one can visit.

Vadodara

Vadodara or Baroda is a cosmopolitan city located in Gujarat. Home to some of the most exemplary displays of architecture, Vadodara is a fitting memorial to Maratha leader Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III who had envisioned a dream to make this Big City an educational, industrial and commercial centre.

Known for one of the most lavish palaces in India- the Lakshmi Vilas Palace and plenty more legendary monuments, Vadodara is the cultural capital of Gujarat. With a prominent part of it being occupied by the Gujaratis, this place is the most sought after during the nine days of the Navratri festival. No city in India celebrates the festival of Navratri with as much zeal and exuberance as Vadodara does. It houses one of the premier universities of India- the Maharaja Sayajirao University.

Dwarka

Located on the western tip of the Saurashtra peninsula in Gujarat, Dwarka is believed to be the capital city of Lord Krishna's kingdom. Known as Devbhoomi Dwarka, Dwarka boasts of being the only city that is a part of both Char Dham (four principal holy places) and also Sapta Puris (seven sacred cities) mentioned in the Hindu religion. Dwarka was a part of the ancient kingdom of Krishna and Nageshwar Jyotirlinga Temple, one of the 12 Jyotirlingas, is also located in Dwarka. The beachside and the seashores are an added tourist attraction. Legend has it that the city was once engulfed by the sea and recent excavations reveal that a city did exist here. The name Dwarka translates to 'dwar' meaning 'door' and 'ka' meaning 'moksha' meaning the 'door to salvation'.

contd from page 1

An Impressive 73rd Republic Day Parade Showcasing India's Military Strength and Rich Cultural Heritage

India in 2021 celebrated the Swarnim Vijay Varsh (Golden victory year) to commemorate the country's win over Pakistan in the 1971 war that led to the creation of Bangladesh. The mechanized columns of the Army showed one PT-76 tank, one Centurion tank, two MBT Arjun MK-I tanks, one OT-62 TOPAZ armored personnel carrier, one BMP-I infantry fighting vehicle and two BMP-II infantry fighting vehicles.

The ceremony began with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the nation in paying homage to the martyrs by laying a wreath at the National War Memorial, a monument to the soldiers who have made supreme sacrifice for the country.

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh and the three service chiefs were present at the solemn ceremony.

There was no chief guest at the parade this year. However, Swachhagrah, frontline workers, auto-rickshaw drivers, construction workers and laborers who prepared the majestic tableaux were among special guests invited this year to the Republic Day parade.

The parade started at 10.30 am this year, half-an-hour later than usual for better visibility.

Commanded by Lt Gen Vijay Kumar Mishra, with Maj Gen Alok Kacker as the second-in-command, the parade began with President Ram Nath Kovind taking the salute. The national flag was unfurled followed by the national anthem, synchronized with a 21-gun salute.

Horse-mounted soldiers of the Indian Army's 61 Cavalry Regiment, the only active horsed cavalry unit in the world currently, was the first marching contingent at the parade. This regiment's contingent was led by Major Mrityunjay Singh Chouhan.

The parade saw the launch of



The Punjab Tableau- Martyrdom of Shaheed Bhagat Singh , Sukhdev and Rajguru celebrated

'Shaheedon Ko Shat Shat Naman' program by the National Cadet Corps and a display of 10 scrolls each of 75 meters prepared during the 'Kala Kumbh' event besides installation of 10 large LED screens for a better viewing experience of spectators.

The contingents of security forces were followed by tableaux from states that showcased India's cultural diversity, with themes ranging from the freedom struggle to biodiversity.

Several government ministries and departments also took out tableaux, highlighting flagship initiatives such as the Jal Jeevan Mission. The Central Public Works Development tableau paid tribute to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on his 125th birth anniversary.

The Lok Adalat tableau made its debut on Rajpath this year. The theme of the float by National Legal Services Authority was 'Ek Mutthi Aasman (Inclusive Legal System): Lok Adalat'. The front part of the tableau showcased 'Nyay Sabke Liye', a hand gesture of fearlessness, guarantee and protection.

Martyrs and independence movement was the theme of poll-bound Punjab's tableau while the Department of Post's tableau displayed the robust outreach and the modern face of India Post as well as all-women post offices to showcase the steps taken towards gender equality.



The defenders of India- a contingent of Sikh soldiers

Dancers from the Kunbi community, the original inhabitants of Goa, and glimpses from the liberation struggle were the highlight of the tableau of the coastal state while Karnataka's skillfully made pots, carefully sculpted sandalwood miniatures and rich tradition of handicraft were on display in the state's tableau.

Known otherwise to witness huge bustling crowds across many age groups, the annual ceremonial event at Rajpath was scaled down this time in view of the coronavirus pandemic, with spectators' size drastically cut to 5,000 from the 25,000 last year.

In the pre-pandemic times, over one lakh spectators used to witness the parade.

From members of contingents to spectators, everyone wore masks. The audience maintained the mandated distance while sitting, and standing spectators were not allowed.

Only double vaccinated adults and children above the age of 15 who have taken at least one dose of a Covid vaccine were allowed to enter the venue. Children below 15 were not permitted to attend.

There was tight security with personnel maintaining strict vigil. Chairs were placed at a distance to ensure social distancing. Participants

also received a white cap with 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' printed on it.

Delhi was brought under a heavy security cover as the city police had intensified patrolling and sealed the borders of the national capital in coordination with its counterparts from the neighboring states to thwart any untoward incident amid a terror alert by intelligence agencies.

Over 27,000 police personnel were deployed on Republic Day security duties in Delhi and anti-terror measures intensified. (With inputs from PTI)

Padma Awards 2022 announced: Satya Narayana Nadella, Sundararajan Pichai, Madhur Jaffrey are among the recipients

This year the President has approved conferment of 128 Padma Awards including 2 duo case (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one).

The list comprises 4 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan and 107 Padma Shri Awards. 34 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 10 persons from the category of Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI and 13 Posthumous awardees.

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AUSTRALIAN CRICKETERS NERVOUS ABOUT PAKISTAN TOUR: REPORT MELBOURNE (TIP)

Australian cricketers are on edge barely a month before their first tour of Pakistan in 24 years, amid an uptick in terror attacks in the Asian nation, the Sydney Morning Herald reported on Wednesday. "We're all toey about it," a source close to the team told the newspaper, using an informal Australian term for being anxious or worried.

Australia are scheduled to play three tests, three one-day internationals and one Twenty20 match in Pakistan starting March 3. Australia has not toured Pakistan since 1998 due to security concerns, instead playing its away matches in the United Arab Emirates.

Though some international touring sides have returned to Pakistan in recent years, New Zealand abruptly halted a tour there in September citing security issues and England shortly afterwards cancelled a planned tour. An increase in attacks since the Taliban regained control of neighbouring Afghanistan in August hasn't helped to bolster confidence either.

Pakistan's interior Minister Sheikh Rashid said terrorist incidents had increased by more than a third since the United States withdrew from Afghanistan, local media reported. A bomb blast ripped through a crowded market in eastern Pakistan on Thursday, killing three people and wounding over 20, police said.

SEVILLA CONFIRM ANTHONY MARTIAL LOAN FROM MANCHESTER UNITED

Sevilla have confirmed the loan signing of Manchester United forward Anthony Martial for the remainder of the season after the France international sealed his desired move away from Old Trafford on Tuesday. "Sevilla FC and Manchester United FC have reached an agreement which will see Anthony Martial join the club on loan until the end of the current season," the LaLiga side said in a statement.

The 26-year-old has started only two premier league games this campaign with his final appearance coming off the bench in the 1-0 win over West Ham United on Saturday, which now looks like a potential farewell for good. Martial joined United in the 2015/16 season and scored 79 goals in 269 appearances, but had grown into an increasingly peripheral figure this season. *Source: Reuters*

Rohit fit to lead India vs WI; Bhuvi, Ashwin under scanner; Hardik back in radar

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India's white-ball captain Rohit Sharma is "fit" and ready to lead the side against the West Indies in a six-match white-ball series starting February 6 with the three ODIs in Ahmedabad.

However, the team selection meeting, which is set to happen this week, will be an interesting one as some senior players like Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Ravichandran Ashwin, after their indifferent performance against South Africa in their 0-3 ODI series defeat, will come under the scanner.

But Rohit is ready to lead the side after a left hamstring injury ruled him out of the South Africa tour. The T20 matches against the Caribbean team are set to be held from February 16 to 20 in Kolkata.

"Rohit is fit and available for the series against the West Indies," a senior BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"By the time, the West Indies series starts, it will be more than seven and half weeks of rehabilitation and recuperation for Rohit.

"He is already training in Mumbai and is expected to be in Bangalore for the fitness test and get a formal okay from the National Cricket Academy," the source informed.

Rohit set to be named Test captain too

It is almost certain that for the time being, Rohit will be named the Test captain although BCCI will be looking at other options considering his workload and the responsibility that comes with leading India in two back-to-back World Cups in 2022 and 2023.

It is understood that KL Rahul's first stint as captain hasn't gone as per expectations and for now, he will have to remain an apprentice under Rohit till he is seen to be ready to lead the national team in near future.

Under Rahul, India lost all four international games in South Africa and for men who matter in Indian cricket, he hasn't exactly come across as a proactive captain.

It is understood that Rahul's performance as Lucknow Super Giants captain will be keenly monitored during this edition of the IPL.

Hardik Pandya's comeback

Hardik Pandya has been bowling in the nets and even though



it is not clear whether he can bowl full tilt but Venkatesh Iyer's relative inexperience at No.6 and Rahul Dravid's admission that the colourful Baroda man was missed, can pave the way for his comeback against the West Indies.

"You have to remember after the T20 World Cup, Hardik was dropped and not rested because of his fitness. The selectors wanted to send him a message after his underwhelming show at World T20 but he is too good a player to be kept out for long.

"If not against West Indies, then he will surely be back against Sri Lanka," the source added.

Ravindra Jadeja also seems to be close to attaining full fitness and will play either against West Indies or in the next assignment against Sri Lanka.

Bumrah might be rested

Jasprit Bumrah's workload management is paramount for this current Indian team and there is a possibility that he might be rested for the six matches.

This is after Bumrah played all six games in South Africa which, which included three Tests and three 50-over games, and sent down the highest number of overs (104.5 overs in Tests and 30 in ODIs). However, Bhuvneshwar, whose form has tapered off, might be dropped while Ashwin might get one more series as the South Africa white-ball leg was his comeback in ODIs. *Source: PTI*

Nadal survives Denis Shapovalov scare in 5-set thriller to enter Australian Open semi-finals

MELBOURNE (TIP)

Rafael Nadal drew within two wins of a record 21st Grand Slam title on January 25, after claiming a five-set thriller against Denis Shapovalov to grind into the Australian Open semifinals for a seventh time.

On a steamy afternoon at Rod Laver Arena, Nadal suffered a huge scare as Shapovalov roared back from two sets down but the warrior Spaniard found another gear in the decider to prevail 6-3 6-4 4-6 3-6 6-3.

"I was completely destroyed after that," Nadal said on-court after the match, which lasted four hours and eight minutes. "It's amazing, honestly, to be in the semifinals...for me it's everything to be able to play one more time here in the Rod Laver Arena."

Nadal narrowly avoided a repeat of



last year's quarterfinals exit in Melbourne when he was sent packing by Stefanos Tsitsipas after taking a two-set lead.

Two months ago, the sixth seed wondered whether his career was finished as he struggled to come back from a foot injury, but he will now

prepare for his 36th Grand Slam semifinal against Matteo Berrettini, who found a higher gear in the face of a heroic fightback from Gael Monfils to script a 6-4 6-4 3-6 3-6 6-2 win and become the first Italian man to reach the Australian Open semifinals.

Comeback kid on the block

Having wallowed in a "deep, dark pit of despair" last season, Madison Keys booked her first Grand Slam semifinals spot in four years with a 6-3 6-2 upset of Barbora Krejckova.

Keys' renaissance after a dismal 2021 season has lit up Melbourne Park this year, and at a baking hot Rod Laver Arena.

fourth seed Krejckova became another casualty of the American's new-found confidence and traditional firepower. *Source: AP*



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India: Gangster Capitalism Financing Criminals in Politics & Sham Democracy

BY DAVE
MAKKAR



Mr. Makkar has made serious allegations against the Modi government, politicians and the big businesses which need a careful and honest probing. We call upon our readers to initiate the task of investigating in their own way whether or not they find the allegations worth believing. The Indian Panorama invites an open debate to unravel the truth. Please send in your comments to editor@theindianpanorama.com - EDITOR

Since my student days every year on India's Independence Day & Republic Day, I used to look back and compare the gradual deterioration in the functioning of democracy, the Master's (Ruling Class & their Financiers) Ruling the Slaves (The Indian Public) Governance system getting more cruel with erosion in moral and social fiber of the society, year after years. This Masters & Slaves Governance system in India, implemented by East India Company & more strictly & violently enforced by British Crown; was later adopted by the Congress after independence in 1947. That is the reason India still has British time Sedition & UAPA laws.

1990 was a turning point in my life when Chandra Shekhar with 61 MP's (out of 525-member Lok Sabha/lower house) from the breakaway group of Janta Dal was installed Proxy PM with the outside support of 195 Congress MPs under Rajiv Gandhi & 25 MPs of splinter groups by toppling the V P Singh government. The entire operation was financed by Dhirubhai Ambani with bribes to every MP across the party line because V P Singh government was pursuing money laundering, tax evasion, political & bureaucratic bribes and other wrong doings against Ambani group.

That forced me to say publicly that from now onward the likes of Ambani's whenever they feel like can install any one as Proxy PM in India.

After Chandra Shekhar, Indians have seen administration after administrations marred in corruption, criminals getting elected to public offices and MLAs & MPs for sale to the highest bidder; all under the facade of democracy.

Since 2014 this deterioration has been so fast that India can no longer be called a democracy and the most pathetic, it is inhabited by the world famous rich, highly educated and intelligent people that do not care about social and moral corruption that has infected every institution of their government while majority of their fellow Indians live subhuman lives in the ocean of poverty and hunger with no basic human rights.

The most disturbing is the large number of criminals in the BJP and in Modi's Cabinet of Ministers. Out of 303 BJP MPs, 116 have criminal record including a bomb maker & a terrorism accused and 22 are in Cabinet and out of those 16 ministers have serious criminal cases registered against them. Most pathetic is, Home Minister Amit Shah was accused of having orchestrated the extrajudicial killings under CM Modi of Gujarat. Serious criminal cases include terrorism, treason, arson, murder, rape, robbery, burglary, communal disharmony/hate speeches, electoral violations, and kidnapping, among others. If that is the plight of India's Parliament and government run by criminals; one can for sure say the states must be doing worse than this!

The criminalization of politics is directly related to "Gangster Capitalism" that is being practiced in India since its independence in 1947. In India, politicians are selected & financed by the "New India Company" - NIC; voters play a part in the charade of voting for them! It was Congress that gave their blessings to the formation of "New India Company" in 1947 to replace "The East India Company" with prominent shareholders of that time like Birlas, Sighanias etc. The current prominent Shareholders of "New India Company" are Ambani, Adani, Tata, Aggarwals, Jindals, Ruia's & Fraud Religious Gurus Ram Dev, Ravi Shankar, Jaggi Vasudev



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

THE CRIMINALIZATION OF POLITICS IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO "GANGSTER CAPITALISM" THAT IS BEING PRACTICED IN INDIA SINCE ITS INDEPENDENCE IN 1947. IN INDIA, POLITICIANS ARE SELECTED & FINANCED BY THE "NEW INDIA COMPANY" - NIC; VOTERS PLAY A PART IN THE CHARADE OF VOTING FOR THEM!

with many other major names. NIC along with the Politicians they select are the termites that have eaten up the public wealth along with the social and moral fiber of India.

The NIC & politicians are directly responsible for acute poverty, illiteracy, un-employment, communalism, catechism, lack of basic civic & health care services and massive corruption at all levels of governance including judiciary & media in India. With the majority of the mainstream media owned by Ambani & Adani; the corruption, communalization bigotry against minorities & suppression of news uncomfortable for Modi govt in Media has reached to new level after 2014. Media owned by them decide what information is to be released for public consumption and anyone questioning the rulers or establishment of Hindu Rashtra is conveniently dubbed as "Anti-National".

THESE ELITES ARE ALSO PROMOTING AND FINANCING "HINDU RASHTRA" A COMMUNAL AGENDA, CALL IT A "MAJORITARIAN RULE" WHERE UPPER CASTE HINDUS ARE MORE EQUAL EVEN THAN THE LOWER CASTE HINDUS. NO ONE CAN IGNORE HOW THE MINORITIES ESPECIALLY MUSLIMS & CHRISTIANS ARE BEING TREATED UNDER MODI RULE SINCE 2014. UNFORTUNATELY, HISTORY TELLS US THAT SUCH COUNTRIES RARELY PROGRESS MUCH. RETD. ADMIRAL ARUN PRAKASH IN AN INTERVIEW HAS OBSERVED THAT UNDER THE CURRENT RULERS, "INDIA IS PRONE TO A CIVIL WAR IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE".

The most dangerous part is that NIC shareholders have no relevant experience or expertise or have never invented any product or an idea. None of them have any vision for a country of over 1.39 billion people with the majority of them being poor. Their expertise is in how to swindle and scam to get bank funding for their highly cost inflated projects. They buy/lease perpetually, public owned natural wealth like land, oil wells, spectrum, mining rights, airports, railway stations, National Monuments and more at highly undervalued cost & terms which is a fraud on the owners that is public. The other expertise they do have is in financing criminal, communal & corrupt politicians with no vision for the country; so that these shareholders can govern India through them. The example is coronation of Modi first as CM of Gujarat and later as PM of India. Adani and Ambani have prospered the most under Modi; Adani from \$70 Million net worth in 1998 is now worth \$92.2 Billion and Ambani who was Congress Party owner turned BJP owner in 2013, his net worth zoomed from \$23.6 Billion to \$95.3 Billion despite India's GDP falling from 10% growth to -8% in 2021, amid 45 years high unemployment, poverty and hunger that may lead to a humanitarian crisis.

Recent report on inequality from Oxfam points out - one of the biggest increases in wealth was that of Gautam Adani, whose wealth multiplied eight-fold during the pandemic, and Oxfam notes that he made use of state connections to become the country's largest operator of ports and its largest thermal coal power producer, wielding market control over power transmission, gas distribution, and now privatized airports - all once considered public goods.

World Inequality Report finds that India stands out as a poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite. World Inequality Report estimates that the ratio of private wealth to national income increased from 290% in 1980 to 555% in 2020, one of the fastest such increases in the world, throughout history.

India had 102 billionaires last year, and now the number is 142. On the other hand, there are estimates that 150 to 160 million people slid into poverty during the same period. The income of poorest Fifth plunged 53% in last 5 years of Modi rule. All his Grand Schemes with Millions of Dollars for Advertising have proved a big disaster for India. The United Nations says that half of the new poor globally are coming from India. So, what we're looking at is inequality reaching obscene proportions.

Modi government is notorious for suppressing inconvenient information and manipulate data, refusing to release the results of the 2017-18 national consumer expenditure survey. World Inequality Report finds that India stands out as a poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite. These elites are also promoting and financing "Hindu Rashtra" a communal agenda, call it a "Majoritarian Rule" where Upper caste Hindus are more equal even than the lower caste Hindus. No one can ignore how the minorities especially Muslims & Christians are being treated under Modi Rule since 2014. Unfortunately, history tells us that such countries rarely progress much. Retd. Admiral Arun Prakash in an interview has observed that under the current rulers, "India is prone to a Civil War in the very near future".

(The author is a social activist. He can be reached at davemakkar@yahoo.com)

Readers Comment on Republic Day

INDIA HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS, BUT IT NEEDS TO ACHIEVE MUCH MORE

Anu Jain
Realtor and Community Helper



Indians across the globe celebrate the Republic Day with patriotic fervor, unfurling the tricolor and holding cultural events to mark the occasion.

I am obliged and honored to write for Republic Day on January 26th. Republic Day has a special significance in the history of India. We all know that India gained its independence on August 15th, 1947. However, the nation didn't have any constitution of its own. After numerous discussions and considerations, a committee submitted a draft of the Indian constitution, which was adopted on November 26th, 1949, and became official on January 26th, 1950.

But beyond it all, the constitution declares that India is a sovereign, socialist, secular, and democratic republic. The privilege of electing a leader for this country assures its peoples justice, equality, and liberty. Additionally, this gives us our rights and duties as people of India. No matter who we are, rich or poor, politician or citizen, or a person of Indian origin, we continue to respect these basic principles and values given to us by our amazing constitution, so that when we move forward and continue to build this nation, we do not leave behind the foundation on which our country was built. Although there has been a lot of improvement with our country, there are still multiple challenges remaining such as corruption, discrimination, pollution, and poverty. However, we hope that our leaders have enough skills to resolve these challenges. I now end my column by paying my respects and tributes to those great revolutionaries. Jai Hind.

PERSPECTIVE ON STATE OF THE INDIAN REPUBLIC 2022

Ashook Ramsaran
"Freedom is not given; it is taken" - Subhash Chandra Bose



Indians sacrificed for many years with struggles and lives lost in attaining their hard fought and wrenching freedom from Britain on 15th August 1947. The Indian people used various independence movements, in particular nonviolent resistance led by Mahatma Gandhi, to become free and independent. The partition with Pakistan resulted in violent riots, mass casualties and dislocation of millions of people. Republic Day marks the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect on 26th January 1950, replacing the Government of India Act, turning the nation into a newly formed republic.

Despite many initial difficulties, India has made enormous strides and progress, from dependency to becoming a major geo-economic and strategic entity in the global arena. As India continues its transformation and adaptation as it has done for centuries, the future bodes well for continued progress that is beneficial to all Indians and the world. India's enduring vitality is always strong and vibrant. While India produced huge amounts of Covid-19 vaccines for its own people and many countries as well, the impact of Covid-19 has resulted in many setbacks, including the curtailment of most migration of Indians to work and live in other countries. Indians take much pride in their country's stalwart position as the bulwark against aggression. Post Covid-19 trends show a resurgence of economic growth, and social, health and educational programs beneficial to all its people. India takes pride in its sons and daughters achieving most prominent positions globally in science and technology, politics, businesses, medical and legal professions, health and academia.

(Ashook Ramsaran, born in Guyana of Indian parents and residing in the USA, is President of the Indian Diaspora Council International)

NEVER FORGET THE HEROES WHO SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES TO BRING UP THIS GLORIOUS DAY TO INDIA

Indu Jaiswal RDN



As we are all geared up to celebrate India's 73rd Republic Day this year, it is an important event in India's History. It commemorates the enactment of the constitution of India which came into effect on January 26, 1950 and made the nation into a republic. My vision is to see India a proud and clean country. We are also celebrating 125th Birth Anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. As a new India @75 emerges, we are hoping towards ending of the Pandemic. We Salute all Frontline workers who continue to serve unconditionally and fulfill their duties. We see that vaccinations are given to all as part of global efforts in controlling COVID 19 Pandemic. On behalf of Board of trustees and executive members of Indian American Forum we wish everyone Happy Republic Day on 26 January. We applaud Professor Saluja and his team for continuing to publish The Indian Panorama with excellence in Journalism.

As shaheed Bhagat Singh said the sanctity of law can be maintained only so as it is the expression of the will of people. Never forget the Heroes who sacrificed their lives to bring up this glorious day to India. Let us remember the Golden Heritage of our Country and feel proud to be part of an ever-shining INDIA Vande Mataram!

(Indu Jaiswal is Chair, Indian American Forum)

A WISH FOR A HAPPY, HEALTHY, PROSPEROUS INDIA ON CELEBRATING REPUBLIC DAY 2022

Tirloak Malik



India celebrates the Republic Day every year on the 26th of January from 1950 when the Constitution of India came into force.

Republic day in India is of great importance in history as it tells us all about each and every struggle of Indian freedom.

Thanks to the editorial team of this publication for asking my views as a NRI on the state of Indian republic.

I have a mixed bag of emotions, ideas and views. I love India, it's a part of My DNA, no matter where I live.

I may be wrong, but I am confused, hurt, disappointed in some ways why India is not realizing its full potential in many aspects.

There is a blame game among leaders, caretakers of The Country and even the public in general.

I do not feel fully qualified to make a statement on this because I do not live there. I only visit once in a while. But I have a hope and wish for great India.

A happy, healthy and prosperous India. Truly celebrating in all essence of Republic Day.

(Tirloak Malik is an Emmy Nominated Filmmaker, Ayurveda Restaurateur and Happy Lifestyle Speaker)

INDIA HAS THE POTENTIAL, BUT IT HAS REMAINED UNTAPPED

Ven Parameswaran



On the 75th year of independence and 72nd year of Republic of India, I wish Happy Republic Day to all Indians and Indian origin. I am highly proud of India because Indians are the smartest people in the world. Indian diaspora number 37 million. Indians are the leaders in all walks of life in many countries including the USA, UK, Ireland, Portugal, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia, South Africa, Guyana, Fiji. Indians head trillion-dollar corporations of Microsoft and Google. 25 Indians are CEOs of important corporations in the USA.

However, I am disappointed that India has not made much progress. It has failed to capitalize on the strength of smartest Indians in India and abroad. How can India call it a democracy when it is the largest poor country in the world with 300 million poor? THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.

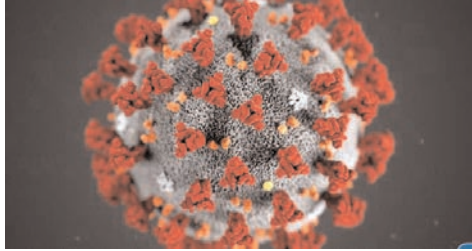
India is a net exporter of food. But it is wasting minimum \$25 billion dollars' worth of food production due to lack of modern silos, warehouses, transportation, and marketing system. What India is wasting may be adequate to feed the 300 million poor! THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE.

After 75 years of independence, India still has no clean water for all its population. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE. China economy was far behind India till 1979. But China is modern and second superpower of the world. India thru its alignment first with the Soviet Union and after with Russia has failed. Indian leadership has refused to capitalize on the offers made by the USA. President Trump offered India 100% transfer of technology, but India has failed to capitalize. Why? It refuses to give up its military relationship with Russia.

India has the potential to become the largest exporter of consumer and industrial goods to the world. This alone will create huge employment.

(Ven Parameswaran of Scarsdale, NY came to the USA in 1954. He associated with the Permanent Mission of India to the U.N. as a diplomat for 10 years as Adviser, Economic & Social Affairs. Later he was President & CEO, First Asian Securities, NY; Adjunct Professor of Economics and Finance, Pace University, NY Institute of Technology, and Concordia College.)

Coronavirus: The Basics



Coronavirus, since it first struck on December 31, 2019, has claimed 5.62 M lives worldwide, with a total of 359 M cases.

Since January 2020, life in the US has revolved around the "coronavirus" AKA COVID-19. While our lives have been greatly altered after the emergence of this virus, there still seems to be a lack of basic knowledge surrounding COVID-19 and just what exactly it is. Thus, I'm hoping after reading this article, you'll leave with a bit of an understanding about the basics of COVID-19.

Before we can understand more about COVID-19, we need to first learn a little about viruses. Viruses are tiny infectious agents (even smaller than bacteria), which need to be inside of living cells to replicate. Viruses contain 2 major parts which make them whole: their capsid and their genetic material. The viral capsid is the outside shell of the virus. The main purpose of this shell is to protect the genetic material within it. The shell is usually coated with various proteins on its surface which are used to interact with and invade their

target cells. Once inside their target cells, the virus uses its genetic material to divide and grow. But the virus cannot do this alone, it actually takes over the machinery and systems of the target cell and uses them to help it replicate and grow. Once mature viruses are made, they leave the cell to infect other cells. Infected cells basically become little virus factories manufacturing large quantities of viruses. This is basically how the "coronavirus" infects each one of us as well.

Now that we have a little background on viruses in general, let's circle back to COVID-19. To start off, the name "coronavirus" is the name of a group of viruses which cause a wide range of diseases. Coronaviruses are quite common, some cause very minor infections like the common cold. But the virus we think of when hearing the term "coronavirus" is actually named SARS-CoV 2, which stands for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome-Coronavirus 2. This virus is a close relative of the infectious SARS virus, thus the name SARS-CoV 2. The term COVID-19 is the name for the disease caused by SARS-CoV 2. The term COVID-19 specifically stands for "coronavirus disease 2019". So, to sum this up, SARS-CoV 2 is the virus which causes the disease COVID-19 and is part of a group of viruses called coronaviruses. To make things easier to understand, I will refer to the virus as COVID-19 for the rest of the article.

Now let's talk about the COVID-19 and vaccines. You may be hearing a lot on the news about the spike protein of COVID-19. The spike protein is extremely important to the virus, as it is what the virus uses to stick onto our cells. Once it sticks onto the surface of our cells and gets in, it hijacks it and takes it over like other viruses do. Thus, scientists developed a vaccine which helps our body target this important spike protein of COVID-19. Normally, when you hear the word "vaccine" you probably think you are being injected with a weaker or dead version of the virus. While this is one form of vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccine is NOT this. I cannot stress this enough, when you are vaccinated against COVID-19, there is absolutely no virus being injected in you. The COVID-19 vaccine is something called a synthetic mRNA vaccine. These new types of vaccines are very interesting because rather than injecting a patient with a weaker version of the virus, the patient is injected with a synthetic mRNA.

Before we go any further, let's get a better understanding of mRNAs. To understand mRNAs, you first need to understand how proteins are made inside your cells. In your cells you have DNA, which are the blueprints to all the proteins in your cells. When your cell wants to make new proteins, it reads your DNA and then sends the blueprints of the specific protein it wants to make to your cellular protein factories (these

BY CODY
KEMPEN



are called ribosomes). Your cells use mRNA to send these blueprints from your DNA to the ribosomes. Fittingly enough the m in mRNA stands for messenger. Thus, mRNAs are basically little postmen which take specific blueprints on how to make specific proteins from your DNA and delivers them to your ribosomes (protein factories).

Now that we understand what mRNAs are, let's get back to the COVID-19 vaccine. These vaccines are synthetic mRNAs made by scientists in the lab. These mRNAs are the blueprints of the COVID-19 spike protein. When we are injected with a COVID-19 vaccination, all we are doing is giving our cells the blueprints to the COVID-19 spike protein. They can then take these blueprints and learn how to build antibodies against this spike protein. These antibodies can then target the spike protein of COVID-19 and stop the virus from attaching to our cells.

I hope after reading this, you have a better understanding of COVID-19 and the vaccines developed to help fight it. Stay safe everyone!

(Cody Kempen received his Bachelor's and Master's in Pharmaceutical Sciences from Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. He is currently a PhD Candidate in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics with a focus in mucosal immunology at Stony Brook University. He can be reached at cody.kempen32@gmail.com)

All third Economic Impact Payments issued; IRS

Parents of children born in 2021, guardians and other eligible people who did not receive all of their third-round EIPs can claim up to \$1,400 per person through the 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): - The Internal Revenue Service announced on January 26, that all third-round Economic Impact Payments have been issued and reminds people how to claim any remaining stimulus payment they're entitled to on their 2021 income tax return as part of the 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit.

Parents of a child born in 2021 - or parents and guardians who added a new child to their family in 2021 - did not receive a third-round Economic Impact Payment for that child and may be eligible to receive up to \$1,400 for the child by claiming the Recovery Rebate Credit.

While some third-round Economic Impact Payments may still be in the mail, the IRS is no longer issuing first-, second-, or third-round Economic Impact Payments. Through December 31, the IRS issued more than 175 million third-round payments totaling over \$400 billion to individuals and families across the country while simultaneously managing an extended filing season in 2021.

Third-round Economic Impact Payments were advance payments of the 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit. In late January, the IRS began issuing Letter 6475, Your Third Economic Impact Payment, to recipients of the third-round Economic Impact Payment. This letter will help Economic Impact Payment recipients determine if they are entitled to and should claim the Recovery Rebate Credit on their 2021 tax returns when they file in 2022.

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, signed into law on March 11, 2021, authorized a third round of Economic Impact Payments and required them to be issued by Dec. 31, 2021. The IRS began issuing these payments on March 12, 2021 and continued through the end of the year.

Eligible parents of children born in 2021 and families that added dependents in 2021 should claim the 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit; most other eligible people already received the full amount and won't need to claim a credit on their tax return.

The third-round Economic Impact Payment was an advance payment of the tax year 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit. The amount of the third-round Economic Impact Payment was based on the income and number of dependents listed on an individual's 2019- or 2020-income tax return. The

amount of the 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit is based on the income and number of dependents listed on an individual's 2021 income tax return.

Families and individuals in the following circumstances, among others, may not have received the full amount of their third-round Economic Impact Payment because their circumstances in 2021 were different than they were in 2020. These families and individuals may be eligible to receive more money by claiming the 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit on their 2021 income tax return:

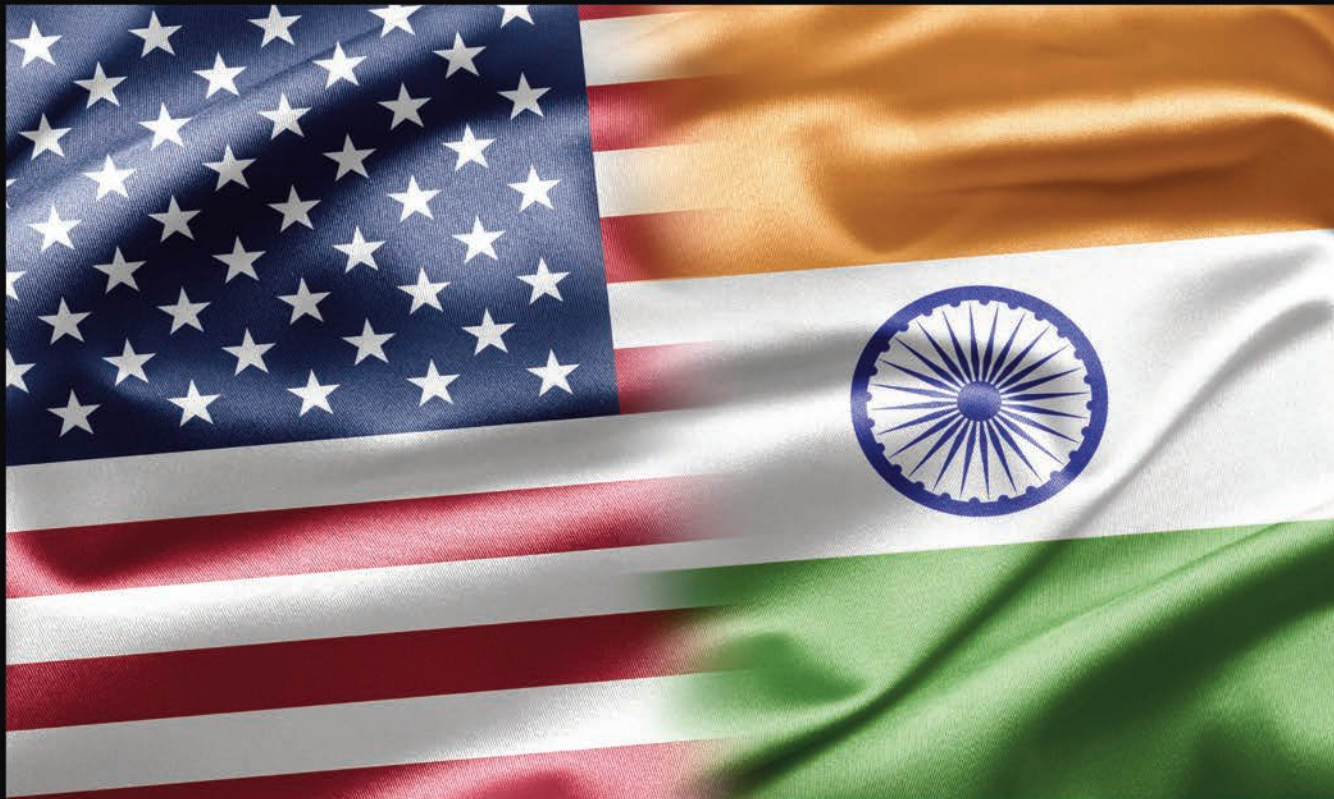
- o Parents of a child born in 2021 who claim the child as a dependent on their 2021 income tax return may be eligible to receive a 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit of up to \$1,400 for this child.
- o All eligible parents of qualifying children born in 2021 are also encouraged to claim the child tax credit-worth up to \$3,600 per child born in 2021-on their 2021 income tax return.
- o Families who added a dependent - such as a parent, a nephew or niece, or a grandchild - on their 2021 income tax return who was not listed as a dependent on their 2020 income tax return may be eligible to receive a 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit of up to \$1,400 for this dependent.



Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

- o Single filers who had incomes above \$80,000 in 2020 but less than this amount in 2021; married couples who filed a joint return and had incomes above \$160,000 in 2020 but less than this amount in 2021; and head of household filers who had incomes above \$120,000 in 2020 but less than this amount in 2021 may be eligible for a 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit of up to \$1,400 per person.
- o Single filers who had incomes between \$75,000 and \$80,000 in 2020 but had lower incomes in 2021; married couples who filed a joint return and had incomes between \$150,000 and \$160,000 in 2020 but had lower incomes in 2021; and head of household filers who had incomes between \$112,500 and \$120,000 in 2020 but had lower incomes in 2021 may be eligible for a 2021 Recovery Rebate Credit.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



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