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ANNIVERSARY OF ATTACK ON CAPITOL

# Biden accuses Trump and his supporters for holding a 'dagger at the throat of democracy'



President Joe Biden gives remarks in the Statuary Hall of the U.S. Capitol during a ceremony on the first anniversary of the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol by supporters of former President Donald Trump in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2022.

**WASHINGTON D.C. (TIP):** President Joe Biden forcefully blamed Donald Trump and his supporters for holding a "dagger at the throat of democracy" with election lies that sparked last year's deadly assault on the US Capitol, using the anniversary of the attack to warn that America's system of government remains under urgent threat.

The president Thursday, January 6, set the tone on a day of remembrance that brought fiery speeches, moments of silence and anguished accounts from lawmakers recalling the terrifying hours of Jan 6, 2021, when the Trump mob laid siege to the Capitol and rioters tried to stop the routine, ceremonial certification of election results.

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The INDIAN PANORAMA

Will bring out a profusely illustrated edition to mark the 72nd Republic Day of India.

Article and advertisements may please be emailed to salujaindra@gmail.com by January 18, 2022.

For any question, please call 646-247-9458.

## Veteran Indian American Diplomat Atul Keshap is the President of US-India Business Council



Atul Keshap, who most recently served in New Delhi as US Chargé d'Affaires to India is taking over as President of the US-India Business Council (USIBC) from another former Indian American diplomat Nisha Biswal.

**WASHINGTON D.C. (TIP):** Veteran Indian American diplomat Atul Keshap is set to lead the US-India Business Council (USIBC) as President from Wednesday, January 5 taking over from another former Indian American diplomat Nisha Biswal.

Keshap, who most recently served in New Delhi as US Chargé d'Affaires to India, leading the US Embassy team has joined the US Chamber of Commerce, the chamber announced Jan 4.

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## BAD WEATHER, FARMERS, RALLYISTS PLAY FOUL WITH PM MODI

### FEROZEPUR VISIT CANCELLED BECAUSE OF 'SECURITY LAPSE', SAYS HOME MINISTRY



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cavalcade stranded on a flyover 30 km away from Hussainiwala due to road jams by protesting farmers, in Punjab on January 5, 2022.

I.S. SALUJA

**NEW DELHI /NEW YORK (TIP):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's proposed event at Ferozepur in Punjab on Wednesday, January 5, had to be cancelled owing to a "security lapse", the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has said.

The Prime Minister was scheduled to lay the foundation stones for several projects.

According to a Ministry of Home statement, Prime Minister Modi landed at Bathinda in the morning from where he was to go to the National Martyrs Memorial at Hussainiwala by helicopter. "Due to rain and poor visibility, PM waited for about 20 minutes for the weather to clear out. When the weather didn't improve,

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**-: COMMENT :-**

**President's rule in Punjab is not a good idea**

BY INDRAJIT SALUJA



One has been hearing a demand by certain sections of politicians, both in Delhi and in Punjab for imposition of president's rule in the state of Punjab, following the lapse in the security of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his visit to the state.

Prime Minister was to announce developmental schemes and address a party rally in Ferozepur in Punjab. He was to travel from Bathinda to Hussainiwala by a helicopter where he was to pay tribute to the three martyrs - Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev. But a bad weather forced him to make changes to his travel plan.

It was decided that he would travel by road from Bathinda to Hussainiwala - a good two hours' drive. Somewhere on the road some 20 miles shy of Hussainiwala his convoy had to stop because there were, as alleged, protesting farmers who had blocked the road.

Prime Minister's convey was held up there for about 20 minutes. And then the PM returned to Bathinda where he told a Punjab government official to convey his thanks to Punjab chief minister that he had come back alive to Bathinda.

The Prime Minister's remark generated all kinds of conspiracy theories.

The central government blamed the Punjab government for the lapses and Punjab government defended its police officers, administration and itself by saying that the security of the Prime Minister is the responsibility of the SPG which cleared all plans of movement of the Prime Minister.

However, since Punjab is going to elections in the next couple of months, the state is politically surcharged.

The BJP which has lost ground in Punjab, after its break with SAD knows very well that it doesn't have the kind of strength to win elections and therefore, it decided to go with Capt Amarinder Singh only to realize soon that Capt did not have enough sway in the State and that an alliance with his party was not going to get them the number of assembly seats they wanted.

The Indian Panorama had pointed out a couple of months ago when the center had given BSF special powers and control over 50 kilometers of area of the state of Punjab along the Pakistan border that it was the beginning of an exercise to prevent elections in Punjab. Today, we hear a clamor for imposition of president's rule. Unconfirmed reports say that when Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Shah went to President

Kovind and requested him for imposing President's rule, President did not oblige them. BJP leaders demanding President's rule in Punjab say that because Punjab government is not able to secure law and order which is evident from the lapse in the security of the Prime Minister, the government has no right to remain in power.

The fact is that BJP government is looking for a pretext to not hold elections in Punjab knowing full well that it has no chance of winning enough seats to be able to in any way form a government. Therefore, it is better that elections are not held.

What the BJP wants is a number of Rajya Sabha members from any state because that is where they need people. They need people to be able to amend the Constitution to make India a theocratic state, a Hindu Rashtra. If opposition parties have their Raja Sabha members, that will weaken the strength of the BJP in the parliament.

We are concerned over this scenario.

It's not going to help democracy in the country. It is not going to serve the interests of the people of India. It is not going to serve the interests of the people of Punjab, and it certainly will be a bad precedent if the BJP government at the center made the issue of lapse in the security of the Prime Minister a reason for imposition of President's rule in Punjab

**-: GUEST COMMENT :-**

**An improved protocol for the PM's travel, and a repurposing of the SPG might be necessary**

The lapse in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's security arrangements, which left his convoy stranded on a flyover for around 20 minutes, near Ferozepur in Punjab on Wednesday is indeed a serious one as stated by the Union Home Ministry. But by quickly blaming the Punjab government and the State police, the Central functionaries triggered a blame game that has forestalled the possibility of a fair and credible inquiry into the incident. Two parallel inquiries have been announced, one by the Centre and another by the State, both of which are on hold until Monday when the Supreme Court of India will hear a plea on the issue. Discussions on national security are always surcharged in India but at least this one involving the personal security of the Prime Minister should have been more tempered. Union Ministers and Bharatiya Janata Party functionaries turned this into yet another loyalty test and resorted to

hyperbole. India takes the security of its Prime Minister very seriously. After all, a sitting Prime Minister, a former Prime Minister, and the leader revered as the father of the nation are among the list of the country's assassinated leaders. The Special Protection Group (SPG), with an outlay of around ₹600 crore in 2020 and around 3,000 personnel has just one job - protect one person, the Prime Minister.

The critical question that is to be probed is who made the decision that the Prime Minister could, and should, travel by road for more than 100 km, from Bathinda to Ferozepur and what inputs went into making that decision. Assuming that someone concluded that it was advisable for the Prime Minister to be on the road for nearly two hours, the process that preceded it must be probed. It was also decided that the Prime Minister should not be using a helicopter as was originally planned. The route was identified in advance as a

contingency plan, but the decision to use it was made at the last moment - a version that both the State and Central governments agree on. Various scenarios involving miscommunication, misinformation and misjudgment are possible. Protesters who blocked the route were reportedly unaware of the Prime Minister's travel. As the Union Home Minister said, accountability must be fixed, and loopholes must be plugged. Considering the mutual distrust the State and the Centre have now public, a Supreme Court-monitored probe could be a good way to get to the bottom of the matter in a credible manner. This episode must also lead to a more efficient protocol for the Prime Minister's travel, and a repurposing of the SPG, if required. Meanwhile, loose talk, diatribe and electioneering on the issue must be shunned at all cost.

(The Hindu)

# To-Go Drinks to Return to NY Bars and Restaurants: Hochul

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Drink up and go! Gov. Kathy Hochul announced Wednesday, January 5th the return of New York's to-go drink policy.

"[We're] going to do something bars and restaurants have been asking for, to once again allow the sale of to-go drinks," Hochul said. "Cheers, New York."

Gov. Kathy Hochul promised the return of the lapsed COVID-19 shutdown policy - which loosens restrictions on how bars and restaurants serve alcohol - during the State of the State address in Albany.

New Yorkers once again will be able to buy to-go drinks and enjoy them outside of bars and restaurants, the governor said.



Gov. Kathy Hochul addressed New Yorkers Wednesday, Jan. 5, for the annual State of the State address.

Hochul said she would support small businesses struggling to survive during a new surge of omicron cases.

To further this effort, Hochul promised bar and restaurants a tax credit to buy outdoor heaters and extra seating to fund socially distanced outdoor dining.

New Yorkers responded to the news with questions, demands and pointers to Hochul's public relations team.

The NYC Hospitality Alliance toasted Hochul's good news - "We look forward to toasting her administration and the state legislature once this important policy is reinstated," said executive director Andrew Rigie - but for some New Yorkers it felt like the return of a bad hangover.

(Source: Patch)

## Mayor Adams Announces Members Of His Senior Team

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Mayor Eric Adams, on January 6, announced members of his senior staff who will oversee operations at City Hall and advance his strategic policies and priorities.

"This team has the experience, knowledge, and skill to take our government - and our city - to new heights," said Mayor Eric Adams. "Our motto is Get Stuff Done - and we are already off to a flying start. Together, we will workday in and day out to make New York City safer, more equitable, and more prosperous for all."

"We are at a pivotal moment in our city's history, and we need strong leadership to bring New York back better than ever," said Chief of Staff Frank Carone. "Mayor Adams has already proved himself in the early days of his administration to be exactly that kind of leader. I am honored to join his team and serve the city that I love. As chief of staff, I will be focused on ensuring City Hall runs smoothly, keeping our City agencies aligned, and delivering on the mayor's vision for the city."



Mayor Eric Adams - File photo

The following appointments were announced.

- Frank Carone, Chief of Staff
- Dawn Miller, First Deputy Chief of Staff
- Madeline Labadie, Deputy Chief of Staff
- Ryan Lynch, Deputy Chief of Staff

- Menashe Shapiro, Deputy Chief of Staff
- Tiffany Raspberry, Senior Advisor for External Affairs
- Stefan Ringel, Senior Advisor to the Mayor
- Andrea Shapiro Davis, Senior Advisor for Talent and Appointments
- Eric Ulrich, Senior Advisor to the Mayor
- Edward Mermelstein, Commissioner, Mayor's Office of International Affairs
- Fred Kreizman, Commissioner, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit
- Roberto Perez, Director for Intergovernmental Affairs
- Dan Steinberg, Director, Mayor's Office of Operations
- Rachel Atcheson, Special Assistant to the Mayor

Brief biographies of appointees.

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

## CICA UNIVERSITY BESTOWS ON JOURNALIST KISHOR PANTHI AN HONORARY DOCTORATE DEGREE

**NEW YORK (TIP):** In recognition of the meritorious service of humanity through journalism, CICA University America has bestowed Kishor Panthi with an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters. Kishor Panthi is a New York based journalist, anchor, and television host.

Dr. Sharon J. Baquedo-Phinn, the president of the university, said the honor was bestowed on the party for its contribution to the good of humanity. She said that the ceremony for the graduation program has been fixed for 22nd January 2022. Every year, the university honors the great and selfless humanitarian contributions of individuals by awarding honorary doctorate degrees. While explaining the criterion for the award of an honorary doctorate degree, Sharon J. Finn explained that the minimum standard is more than a decade-long outstanding professional service to humanity.

Journalist Panthi is the editor-in-chief of Khasokhas, which is being published in New York for the last 11 years. During his two-decades-long journalism career,

Panthi has worked in the United States for almost twelve years now. In the United States, he has been the voice of the Nepali Diaspora. He is quite well known in the Nepali American community because he has always focused on the interests of the Nepali-American community. He also writes on pro-American immigration, politics, and social issues. Kishor Panthi said that the conferment of this prestigious award is not only a distinction for him but also for the whole American-Nepali community.

Many personalities, including Prophet Shepherd Bushiri from CICA University, have been awarded honorary doctorate degrees in the past. Some of the U.S. lawmakers have also received honorary Ph.D. from CICA University. The 42nd Commissioner of the Boston Police Department, William Gross, also received an honorary Ph.D. from CICA University. He received his honorary Ph.D. in 2015 as Boston Police Superintendent of Chief.



Kishor Panthi is a New York based journalist, anchor, and television host.

## First Indian American woman elected to municipal office in South Carolina

**COLUMBIA CITY, SC (TIP):** Dr Aditi Srivastava Bussells, a first-generation Indian American immigrant, made history Tuesday as she was sworn in as a Columbia City Council member in South Carolina.

Bussells, who won the 7-member council's at-large seat in November to become the first Indian American woman elected to municipal office in the state, will virtually function as number two.

Daniel Rickenmann became the new Mayor of Columbia after taking the oath of office with Bussells and two other council members, Tina Herbert and Joe Taylor.

The inauguration took place in the 1700 block of Main Street in Columbia. With their family at their side, the members took the oath of office from two justices from the South Carolina Supreme Court, according to News19.

First to take her oath, Bussells said Columbia is turning the page on a new chapter and encouraged young people to get involved in local issues.

"I was a political outsider. I kept going," she said. "Why? Our community is worth it. Columbia is worth it. South Carolina is worth it." Bussells also promised to make informed decisions based on root problems communities are facing.

Bussells is a public health researcher with Children's Trust who oversees several state-wide initiatives that support family and child health and well-being.

She received her PhD in public health at the University of South Carolina. Her spouse Louis Bussells is a frontline worker and army veteran.

She came out on top of a seven-person field in the November election to take the citywide at-large seat. She ultimately

defeated attorney Tyler Bailey in the Nov. 16 runoff.

"I feel overwhelmed, grateful, and excited. Over 10,000 of you voted for change, to break the status quo and have an independent advocate on city council," Bussells tweeted after her victory

"I am so honored to be your next councilwoman. Thank you for making history tonight! #scpol #columbiasc" she wrote.

During her campaign, Bussells said she believes that everyone, "regardless of their zip code, deserves to have equal opportunities to thrive."

"From knocking on doors to ensure residents complete their Census to providing expert guidance on public health in the city, my goal has always been to ensure our communities have the resources and knowledge they need, and their voices are heard," she said.



Dr Aditi Srivastava Bussells was sworn in as a Columbia City Council member in South Carolina.

## Indian American Jeremy Cooney to run for upstate New York senate again

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Indian American Jeremy Cooney, who made history in 2020 as the first Asian American elected to state senate from upstate New York, says he is going to run for a second term.

Democrat Cooney, 40, replaced Joe Robach in the 56th Senate District, which covers parts of Rochester and Brighton.

"Excited to announce my run for reelection to the New York State Senate! I'm proud of the wins we achieved for my hometown and look forward to continuing to deliver for Rochester's families," he tweeted Dec 30.

Adopted from an orphanage in Kolkata, India and raised by a single mother in the City of Rochester, Cooney now is the first chair of the Senate's new Upstate Cities Committee, focused on addressing gun violence across New York.

"For this campaign, it's not about one issue," Cooney told Spectrum News. "We owe it to New Yorkers to address the number of issues they are facing especially coming out of this pandemic."

"You can't have a conversation about violence or gun violence without talking about economic opportunity, without talking about access to mental health in our schools and on the streets," he said.

In his first year of office, Cooney said he has helped increase funding for suburban and city school districts, helped deliver \$475 million in construction for city schools and advocated to improve housing security.

Cooney's priorities for Rochester include poverty relief, job creation, downtown development, and increased funding for public schools.

He was included in City & State magazine's "40 Under 40" list and the



Jeremy Cooney, who made history in 2020 as the first Asian American elected to state senate from upstate New York, says he is going to run for a second term.

"Power of Diversity: Asian 100" powerful leaders list for 2021.

Cooney also introduced the legislation that would give the same rights to gay, lesbian, and bisexual people, according to Marijuana Moment.

"When New York State legalized adult-use recreational marijuana, we made a commitment to addressing the discrimination and injustice caused by the War on Drugs," Cooney told Marijuana Moment.

"I am proud to introduce legislation to include members of our lesbian, gay and bisexual community for priority licensure in the new adult-use recreational cannabis market," he said about his efforts on making equity provisions even more inclusive.

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

## Indian American Pavan Parikh to succeed Aftab Pureval in Hamilton County

**HAMILTON COUNTY, CINCINNATI (TIP):** With Aftab Pureval set to become Cincinnati's first Indian American mayor on Tuesday, January 4, Pavan Parikh, another attorney of Indian descent has been chosen to succeed him as Hamilton County Clerk of Courts.

Democrat Parikh, a former judicial candidate and a judge advocate in the Army Reserve, was unanimously chosen for the job by the Democratic Central Committee on Dec 29, Cincinnati Enquirer reported.

Fellow democrat Pureval, 38, the son of a Tibetan mother and an Indian father, who won the election in Nov 2021, will create history Jan 4 as Cincinnati's the first Asian-American Pacific Islander (AAPI) mayor.

Parikh was chosen because he "is well known in the courthouse, knows the legal system and can win re-election and keep the seat Democratic," Hamilton County Chairwoman Gwen McFarlin was quoted as saying.

"He is serious about this position," she said. "He is not using this position as a steppingstone for higher ground."

The Hamilton County Clerk of Court's duties include maintaining all the court records, overseeing courthouse security for municipal court and processing traffic tickets and passport applications.

Parikh's job is up for re-election in Nov 2022. Whoever wins in Nov 2022 will fill out the remainder of Pureval's term, which ends Jan 5, 2025.

Pureval won election as Cincinnati, Ohio, mayor, beating city councilman and former mayor David Mann with 66% of the vote.



Pavan Parikh, an attorney of Indian descent has been chosen to succeed Aftab Pureval who becomes Mayor of Cincinnati, as Hamilton County Clerk of Courts

When a vacancy occurs in a countywide office, the officeholder's political party can choose the person to fill the vacancy until an election can be held, the Enquirer said.

Parikh rallied the crowd after being sworn in. "I look forward to getting to work at the courthouse starting probably tomorrow, I'll be at the courthouse tomorrow, and I look forward to getting to go out in this election," Parikh was quoted as saying. "We need to keep this seat. We need to make sure all of our judges get elected."

Born and raised in Cincinnati, Parikh is a graduate of Princeton High School, Xavier University, and the Saint Louis University School of Law, according to his bio on pavanforjudge.com. He began his legal career in Cincinnati working at the courthouse under Judge Nadine Allen.

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

# Four more Indian Americans nominated to key posts

Indian Americans in Biden administration number around 50 now

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): President Joe Biden has nominated four more Indian Americans for key posts, pushing the number of people of Indian descent working in Biden-Harris administration close to a record 50.

Geeta Rao Gupta has been named Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues, while Jainey Kumar Bavishi would be Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

Arun Venkataraman has been nominated to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the US and Foreign Commercial Service, while Viqar Ahmad would serve as Assistant Secretary of Commerce and as Chief Financial Officer at Commerce Department.

The White House sent their nominations for confirmation to the Senate Tuesday.

Gupta, nominee for Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues at the State Department, is currently a Senior Fellow at the United Nations Foundation and Senior Advisor to Co-impact, a global collaborative philanthropy for systems change.

While at the UN Foundation, Dr. Gupta founded and served as Executive Director of the 3D Program for Girls and Women, according to her official bio.

She currently serves as co-chair of the WHO Independent Oversight and Advisory Committee for health emergencies, chairs the Global Advisory Board of WomenLift Health, a new initiative to promote women's leadership in global health, and serves as a member of the Board of UBS Optimus Foundation and of the Advisory Board of Merck for Mothers.

She also serves as a Commissioner for the Lancet-SIGHT Commission on Health, Gender Equality and Peace.



President Biden has nominated Geeta Rao, Jainey Kumar Bavishi, Arun Venkataraman, and Viqar Ahmad to key posts

Previously, Dr. Gupta was a Visiting Scholar at Stanford University and also served as co-Chair of the Gender-Based Violence Task Force of the World Bank.

Before that, Dr. Gupta served as Deputy Executive Director, Programs at UNICEF. Earlier, she was a senior fellow at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and served as president of the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW).

Dr. Gupta has served on several boards, including the Global Partnership for Education; Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health; and the MAC AIDS Fund.

She is the recipient of numerous awards, including InterAction's Julia Taft Award for Outstanding Leadership, Harvard University's Anne Roe Award and Washington Business Journal's "Women Who Mean Business" Award.

Dr. Gupta was awarded a PhD in Psychology from Bangalore University and a Master of Philosophy and Master of Arts from the University of Delhi in India.

Jainey Bavishi, nominee for Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere at Commerce Department currently serves as the Director of the New York City Mayor's Office of Climate Resiliency.

In this role, she leads a cross-disciplinary team that prepares the city

for the impacts of climate change through science-based analysis, policy, program, and project development, and capacity building.

During the Obama Administration, Bavishi served as the Associate Director for Climate Preparedness at the White House Council on Environmental Quality and Director of External Affairs and Senior Policy Advisor at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Bavishi also served as the Executive Director of R3ADY Asia-Pacific, focused on enhancing disaster risk reduction and resilience in the Asia-Pacific region, based in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Previously, she was the Founding Director of the Equity and Inclusion Campaign, a coalition of community-based leaders in the Gulf Coast region that focused on recovery from Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike, at the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation.

Bavishi has a Master's degree in city planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Bachelor's degree in public policy and cultural anthropology from Duke University.

Arun Venkataraman, nominee for Assistant Secretary of Commerce, has over 20 years of experience advising

companies, international organizations and the US government on international trade issues.

He is currently Counselor to the Secretary of Commerce, advising the Department on trade and other international economic matters.

Before joining the Biden-Harris Administration, Venkataraman was a Senior Director at Visa, leading global government engagement strategy on a range of international policy issues including digital economy, trade, tax and sanctions.

He previously served as Trade & Investment Policy Advisor at Steptoe & Johnson LLP, where he counseled multinational firms and other organizations on e-commerce, intellectual property rights, and US and foreign trade policies.

As the first ever Director of Policy at the Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration under President Barack Obama, Venkataraman helped shape the US government's responses to critical challenges faced by firms in the US and in markets around the world, including China and India.

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

## Indian-Origin Ashok Elluswamy on Tesla's Autopilot Team wins adulation of Elon Musk

HOUSTON (TIP): Tesla founder and CEO Elon Musk, who has been using social media to recruit people, has disclosed that Indian-origin Ashok Elluswamy was the first employee to be hired for his electric vehicle company's Autopilot team.



Before joining Tesla, Ashok Elluswamy was associated with Volkswagen Electronic Research Lab and WABCO Vehicle Control System. Photo credit / LinkedIn

often give me too much credit and give Andrej too much credit. The Tesla Autopilot AI team is extremely talented. Some of the smartest people in the world," he said. Before joining Tesla, Mr Elluswamy was associated with Volkswagen Electronic

Research Lab and WABCO Vehicle Control System. He holds a bachelor's degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering from the College of Engineering Guindy, Chennai and a Master's degree in Robotics System Development from Carnegie Mellon University.

"Ashok was the first person recruited from my tweet saying that Tesla is starting an Autopilot team!" Mr Musk said in a tweet in reply to a video on his interview. He said that Ashok is actually the head of Autopilot engineering. "Andrej is director of AI; People

## Indian origin Gupta brothers, Zuma misused public money, says report

JOHANNESBURG (TIP): The first report of the much-awaited South African Commission of Inquiry into State Capture has confirmed the influence that former President Jacob Zuma had in supporting the now-defunct newspaper The New Age (TNA) started by the Gupta brothers, who fled the country after looting billions from state enterprises.

TNA was started by the three Gupta brothers, Ajay, Atul and Rajesh, originally from Uttar Pradesh's Saharanpur, who are now believed to be in self-exile in Dubai as South African authorities seek their extradition to face criminal charges. The report, which was made public on Tuesday



The Gupta brothers - Ajay, Atul and Rajesh evening after President Cyril Ramaphosa received it from Commission chairperson, Acting Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, also said that Guptas wielded great influence over Zuma. <

(Source: PTI)



**BRAD LANDER**

COMPTROLLER, NEW YORK CITY

January 1, 2022

# Letter to New Yorkers

The NYC Comptroller is the city's budget watchdog, pension fiduciary, and chief accountability officer. The mission is to secure a thriving future for all New Yorkers. The office has the tools and the responsibility to ensure we are budgeting wisely, investing strategically, holding city agencies to their promises, and keeping a sharp eye on the challenges to come.

**And there are a lot of challenges.**

The city's glaring gender and racial inequities, highlighted and exacerbated by the pandemic, threaten the long-term prosperity of New York City's families, neighborhoods, and economy. The climate crisis looms as the biggest long-term risk, not just to NYC's infrastructure, but also to our investment portfolios and to the very lives of our people.

Some believe there is a conflict between effective government and progressive government. I believe they are mutually essential.

We need big, bold government that can care for people when they need it, educate our children to be leaders in diverse communities, and maintain the infrastructure that holds our lives in common together. But for that to be

possible, we must build confidence - confidence which has been badly eroded - in our government's ability to tell the truth, to plan ahead for emergencies, to deliver services effectively, to spend our public funds wisely, and account for where they've gone. To bring us together to solve shared problems and build a common future.

The Comptroller is NYC's accountant. We often think about accounting as values-free - do the numbers add up, do credits and debits balance?

**But the truth is: it's all about what we value.**

If we value our neighborhoods, then we must invest in good transit, truly affordable housing, and resilient infrastructure so that they can remain places where people can afford to live.

If we value a fair economy, then we must ensure that people whose work keeps our city and our economy going get the stability, pay, and dignity they need to care for themselves and their families.

If we value a sustainable future, then we must take action now - through our investments, our infrastructure, our buildings, our transportation - to transition to a green economy.

Our task together over the next four years is to ensure that we are accounting for our shared values. That we are delivering on the promises that NYC government has made to its people for a more just and equitable city.

The numbers must add up to a city where everyone has a chance to thrive.

That is the work ahead of us: to secure a fairer and more sustainable future for all our neighborhoods.

A future where every child can learn and succeed, regardless of their race or class. Where workers are treated with respect, earn fair pay, and can retire with dignity. Where economic opportunity and prosperity is accessible and shared, no matter what neighborhood you live in. Where our sewers, transit, and utilities are ready to withstand the storms to come. Where everyone who calls this city home has a home to live in.

Where our city's government is our common vehicle for that shared thriving.

I look forward to working hard, every day, side-by-side with you, to deliver on those promises.

*Sincerely,  
(Signed)  
Brad Lander*

## Nassau County Executive Blakeman Signs 3 Executive Orders on Masks in Schools, Businesses, County Offices

**MINEOLA(TIP):** Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman signed three executive orders on Thursday, January 6 reaffirming that Nassau will not follow New York State's mask mandate, instead leaving it up to local school boards, small businesses, and individuals to decide on mask wearing.

Gov. Kathy Hochul issued a statewide mandate requiring masks indoors at all schools, businesses, and offices in December in anticipation of a winter surge in Covid cases, which is now in full swing. The mandate lasts until Feb. 1, at which time it will be reevaluated.

"Let no one be fooled that we in Nassau County are not taking the challenges and risks of Covid-19 lightly. We are taking a very aggressive approach in fighting Covid-19," said Blakeman, a Republican who officially took office on Monday. "But this aggressive approach must be balanced by keeping in mind the psychological and economic risks of every decision we make as well as individuals' constitutional rights."

Blakeman's first executive order gives school boards the power to choose whether their district will require mask wearing. The second removes mask mandates for county employees, making it optional for them to wear masks. The third solidifies that Nassau will not cooperate with the state's mandate, which would "unfairly fine residents and small businesses thousands of dollars," Blakeman said.

"School boards are composed of elected officials who make decisions



**Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman**  
Photo / Courtesy Office of County Executive Bruce Blakeman

based upon the unique circumstances of each district. They are in the best position to make these decisions, not an autocracy in Albany," Blakeman added about mask wearing in schools.

His executive order related to schools drew the most criticism on Thursday. In a statement, New York State Education Department Commissioner Betty A. Rosa insisted that mask mandates are still in effect according to state public health laws that require counties to enforce them.

"Counties do not have the legal authority to require boards of education to vote on specific issues," Rosa said. "School officers take an oath to obey all legal requirements. The State Education Department expects school boards will follow all legal requirements, including the face-covering regulation."

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

## International passengers to undergo mandatory quarantine for one week

**NEW DELHI / NEW YORK (TIP):** India on Friday, January 7, made seven-day home quarantine mandatory for all international arrivals and an RT-PCR test on the eighth day, as it issued revised guidelines for international passengers.

The guidelines released on Friday come into force from January 11 and will remain effective till further government orders.

As per the existing rules, which have been retained in the revised guidelines, travelers coming from countries specified as "at risk" have to submit sample for Covid testing post-arrival and they required to wait for the results at the airport before leaving or taking a connecting flight.

If tested negative, they need to undergo home quarantine for seven days and then get their RT-PCR test done on the eighth.

They are also required to upload the results of the RT-PCR test conducted on the 8th day on the Air Suvidha portal (to be monitored by the respective States/UTs). If negative, they have to further self-monitor their health for next seven days. The updated list of nations from where travelers would need to follow additional measures on arrival, including post-arrival testing (countries at-risk) are countries in Europe including The United Kingdom, South Africa, Brazil, Botswana, China, Ghana, Mauritius, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Hong Kong, Israel, Congo, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Nigeria, Tunisia and Zambia.



**International passengers to undergo mandatory quarantine for one week**  
- Photo for representation

For "not at risk" countries, a subsection (2 per cent of the total flight passengers) shall undergo post-arrival testing at random at the airport.

These 2 per cent travelers in each flight will be identified by the airline concerned (preferably from different countries), according to the revised guidelines.

Laboratories shall prioritize testing of samples from such travelers.

Travelers from all categories of countries (including those 2 per cent who were selected for random testing on arrival and were found negative) will undergo home quarantine for seven days and undertake an RT-PCR test on the 8th day, officials said, sharing details about revised guidelines said.

International travelers arriving through seaports/land ports will also have to undergo the same protocols as above, except that facility for online registration is not available for such passengers currently.

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



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# Biden is right: Trump's wounded ego was the main reason for Jan. 6

BY MAX BOOT



**"BIDEN WAS ACCURATE IN WARNING THAT "THOSE WHO STORMED THIS CAPITOL AND THOSE WHO ... CALLED ON THEM TO DO SO HELD A DAGGER AT THE THROAT OF AMERICA AND AMERICAN DEMOCRACY." HE NEEDS TO KEEP REMINDING VOTERS OF THE REAL STAKES IN NOVEMBER 2022 - AND 2024. WE ARE FIGHTING, AS HE SAID, FOR "THE RIGHT TO VOTE, THE RIGHT TO GOVERN OURSELVES, THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE OUR OWN DESTINY." REPUBLICANS, SADLY, ARE WILLING TO JETTISON ALL THOSE HALLOWED PRINCIPLES SIMPLY TO FEED TRUMP'S INSATIABLE EGO."**

In what may be the most powerful speech of his presidency so far, President Biden delivered a searing (and overdue) indictment on Thursday, January 6 of his predecessor - never mentioned by name - for inciting a mob attack on the Capitol exactly a year ago. Biden identified the central truth of the insurrection: "The former president of the United States of America has created and spread a web of lies about the 2020 election ... because his bruised ego matters more to him than our democracy or our constitution. He can't accept he lost."

That's exactly right. There was no higher principle at operation on Jan. 6. This was not a battle over tax cuts, abortion, immigration, infrastructure, vaccine mandates or any other policy - none of which former president Donald Trump seems to care much about anyway, save to the extent that they are useful chum to excite his followers into a frenzy. Trump was willing to stage an assault on more than two centuries of democracy in America simply because his all-encompassing ego will not allow



Vice President Harris and President Biden at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2022.

him to admit that he was repudiated by more than 81.2 million voters.

And most Republicans, it is now clear, seem just fine with that. A party that once stood for certain principles - lower taxes, traditional values, a strong defense - has been reduced to a cult of personality for a narcissistic television personality. The GOP didn't even have a policy platform in 2020. What is normally a lengthy document listing positions on issues big and small was reduced to a one-page statement affirming "that the Republican Party has and will continue to enthusiastically support the President's America-first agenda." Trump-first agenda is more like it.

Remarkably enough, Republicans' desire to cater to the whims of the orange emperor has not lessened in the past year despite his loss of power (and his Twitter account). The Republican National Committee - whose chair, Ronna McDaniel, dropped the "Romney" from her name to appease Trump - even agreed last month to pay up to \$1.6 million of the former president's personal legal bills in investigations of his shady business practices. The probes of Trump by New York prosecutors have nothing to do with his actions in office. But the RNC has become his personal piggy bank. Indeed, the entire Republican Party has become a wholly owned subsidiary of the Trump Organization.

You can blame spineless Republican leaders for abasing themselves before

one of the worst presidents in U.S. history. But they are just giving their voters what they want. According to FiveThirtyEight, Trump's net favorability rating among Republicans declined only slightly over the past year, from 82 percent to 76 percent. But Vice President Mike Pence's fell off a cliff in January 2021, when he certified Biden's win - not that he had any other choice. So did then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's, after he condemned Trump's actions. Pence's net favorability among Republicans is down to just 28 percent, while McConnell's rating is 32 points underwater with voters of his party.

In another recent poll from the University of Massachusetts, only 21 percent of Republicans said that Trump's election defeat was legitimate - even though, as Biden noted Thursday, "93 United States senators, his own attorney general, his own vice president, governors and state officials in every battleground state have all said it: He lost." The handful of elected Republicans who actively call out the "big lie" - most prominently Reps. Liz Cheney (Wyo.) and Adam Kinzinger (Ill.) - have become pariahs in Republican ranks. Meanwhile, Rep. Matt Gaetz (Fla.), who said on Thursday that "we are proud of the work we did on Jan. 6 to make legitimate arguments about election integrity," remains a Republican in good standing.

I had hoped that Trump's role in inciting a mob attack on Congress might

have shaken his hold on the Republican Party - that it might have led Republicans to reconsider the perilous path they are on. But no. A year later, Trump's attack on democracy has emerged not as a dealbreaker for most Republicans but as a deal-clincher. Forced to choose between Trump and the Constitution, most Republicans choose Trump.

Shortly after the November election, a "senior Republican official" under cover of anonymity explained why Republicans were refusing to admit the obvious - Trump had lost. "What is the downside for humoring him for this little bit of time?" this Republican said. You would think that the downside would be readily apparent a year after lawmakers had to run for their lives from a #MAGA mob ransacking the Capitol. And yet the Republican Party continues to humor Trump even as he has turned increasingly authoritarian.

Biden was accurate in warning that "those who stormed this Capitol and those who ... called on them to do so held a dagger at the throat of America and American democracy." He needs to keep reminding voters of the real stakes in November 2022 - and 2024. We are fighting, as he said, for "the right to vote, the right to govern ourselves, the right to determine our own destiny." Republicans, sadly, are willing to jettison all those hallowed principles simply to feed Trump's insatiable ego.

(The author is a columnist with Washington Post)



# The hint of a 'one nation one NGO' regime

BY M. S.  
SRIRAM



THE CURRENT PURGE AGAINST CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS SEEMS TO BE INDISCRIMINATE AND ALARMING

**"WHY FOREIGN FUNDING? AS WE KNOW, "CAUSES" HAVE NO BOUNDARIES AND FUNDING FOR SUCH SOCIALLY DESIRABLE BELIEF SYSTEMS COULD COME FROM BEYOND BORDERS. SOME CAUSES CARRIED OUT BY ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS, OR REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS ARE BY DEFINITION INTERNATIONAL IN NATURE. SIMILAR IS THE CASE WITH THE JAIPUR FOOT PROVIDED BY THE BHAGWAN MAHAVEER VIKLANG SAHAYATA SAMITI. THE HUMANITARIAN WORK BY THE MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY IS BEYOND THE CAPABILITY OF A STATE. SUCH CAUSES DO NOT HAVE A RATIONAL BASIS TO BE EXPLAINED IN TERMS OF A FINANCIAL MODEL; HOW DO YOU PUT A PRICE TAG TO PRESS FREEDOM? THE NICHE FUNDING WILL HAPPEN FROM AGENCIES THAT MAY BE BEYOND THE BORDERS. THEY NEED TO BE ENCOURAGED."**

On December 31, 2021, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued another public notice extending the validity of registration certificates that were expiring from September 29, 2020, to March 31, 2022, till the latter date, provided that the request for renewal had not been rejected. What should have been a routine activity of the Ministry has turned out to be a fairly detailed exercise of scrutiny, resulting in a paralysis of granting permissions. The levels of due diligence and the information sought on the one hand and the annual declarations to be given by the board members of civil society organizations on the other have increased significantly. The mandatory opening of bank accounts for foreign contributions has been centralized in one branch of the State Bank of India. The linking of Permanent Account Number (PAN), Aadhaar number and mapping it with the bank account/s of the individual board members are



happening with gusto. All this has resulted in a chill settling over the people who are and have been associated with civil society organizations serving a social or cultural cause. The registrations under Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) have been long necessitated in order to undertake due diligence of the causes for which the organization is working for and also to have a handle on the traceability of funds.

## Data on cancellations

Recently, the Missionaries of Charity established by Nobel Laureate Mother Teresa, was in the news for the cancellation of its permission under the FCRA. A perusal of the statistics available on the website of the Ministry of Home Affairs (<https://bit.ly/32Kij6E>) reveals an interesting pattern. Of the 20,675 permissions under the FCRA that were cancelled from 2011 onwards, only 89 have been cancelled on request; the rest have been cancelled on violation. Of these 20,675 cancellations, 80% of the cancellations are after 2014, with a massive purge of around 10,003 permissions in the year 2015. The dashboard (<https://bit.ly/3sXfOsu>) shows a little under 17,000 active organizations - which have either got permission or will know their fate by March 2022, while around 33,000 organizations have either lost their permission or it has expired. These cancellation numbers do not include the rejection of around 600 applications that have been in the news in the recent past, as the website shows only three cancellations in the year 2021 and none in 2020.

There has been a pattern to the organized attack on civil society organizations and this looks like the final shot. In the past, the amendments in the FCRA that restricted the ability to sub-grant, killed many of the niche organizations working in very remote areas which had no direct access to international funding but were doing it through larger non-governmental organizations. The other amendment restricting the proportion of expenses on administration almost choked organizations that worked for the rights of the disposed. The increasing level of surveillance type of data sought has resulted in many organizations losing people on their governance structure

and resulting in problems in funding.

The level of the purge is alarming on two fronts. If this purge is because of violations that seem to threaten sovereignty because of evidence of money laundering, subversive activities and violation of the laws, then it is worrying that these organizations survived for all these years. This says a bit about the system of scrutiny that we have had in the past.

Alternately, if these are organizations that have been purged on xenophobic considerations - because they are activists usually questioning the Government and speaking for the marginalized - organizations working on issues such as human rights, and organizations serving the people whom the state is unable to reach, then it is even more alarming. That is because it is suppressing the concept of antyodaya - reaching the last person with rights, services and entitlements.

## Organizations that are needed

Why we need civil society organizations is a moot question. We need them because they usually work on what can be called an unreasonable agenda. This unreasonableness falls in three large verticals. The first is that they ask for greater efficiency, delivery and accountability from the state. Whether it is about rehabilitation and compensation in the case of land acquisition or setting up a great accountability framework as was done through the movement led by the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan for the Right to Information. The second vertical is in correcting the extractive nature of markets. The groups asking for environmental accountability are looking at inter-generational justice on a matter that is not very precisely measurable but is palpable. The third is basically picking up causes that are so niche that it is beyond the capability of the state to come up with such initiatives such as a school of drama set up by NINASAM (Nilakanteshwara Natyaseva Samgha) in a village called Heggodu, Karnataka, or an idea of distributing clothing for work as done by Goonj. These initiatives cannot be put into specific business plans, spreadsheets or government schemes. They, therefore, need a grant-based, cause-based revenue stream model.

## Issue of funding

Why foreign funding? As we know, "causes" have no boundaries and funding for such socially desirable belief systems could come from beyond borders. Some causes carried out by organizations such as Doctors Without Borders, or Reporters Without Borders are by definition international in nature. Similar is the case with the Jaipur foot provided by the Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti. The humanitarian work by the Missionaries of Charity is beyond the capability of a state. Such causes do not have a rational basis to be explained in terms of a financial model; how do you put a price tag to press freedom? The niche funding will happen from agencies that may be beyond the borders. They need to be encouraged.

In general, past regimes have been tolerant of all developmental and cultural causes; somewhat wary and tolerant of rights-based causes; and largely suspicious of civil society organizations working for human rights and environmental causes. Both human rights and environmental causes put these civil society organizations directly in confrontation with the job of policing/internal security and "development" or economic growth. That is a fight that the civil society organizations were used to.

## Deeper study needed

However, the current purge seems to be indiscriminate. The depth and the variety of the work of a civil society organization cannot be captured in the annual returns filed on the FCRA portal, where there is no scope for explaining something beyond the binary. There needs to be a study on how many civil society organizations lost their permissions on "expiry" only because the pre-populated dropdowns given by the FCRA portal were unable to capture the work of the organizations.

The duality of welcoming foreign investments (which takes away capital gains and dividends) while actively discouraging foreign aid to charities is staring us in the face. The definition of what is foreign in the case of electoral bonds and donations to political parties is dodgy at best. This duality is the signature of the current dispensation. Its appetite to collect data is matched only by its reluctance to share data. If the hope, therefore, for civil society organizations is corporate social responsibility funding and funding from Indian philanthropists, watch this space. As cartoonist P. Mahamud indicated in a cartoon, we are moving towards a 'One Nation One NGO' regime.

(Author is Faculty member, Centre for Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore. He is on the boards of non-governmental organizations, or NGOs that have applied for FCRA permission. None of those NGOs is mentioned in the article.)

# Modi's Christmas shocker hurts the poor and disadvantaged in India during the Covid

BY GEORGE ABRAHAM



**"THESE CALLS HAVE AN EERIE FAMILIARITY WITH WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE JEWS IN GERMANY DURING WORLD WAR II. EVEN HITLER HAS USED EUPHEMISM INSTEAD OF DIRECT APPEAL TO ANNIHILATE A COMMUNITY. HOWEVER, THE RELIGIOUS EXTREMISTS IN INDIA HAVE GONE EVEN A STEP FURTHER AND MADE THEIR OPEN CALL. UNDOUBTEDLY, INDIA IS AT AN INFLECTION POINT IN HISTORY, AND THE QUESTION IS WHETHER THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP ACQUIESCE TO THE SOUNDS AND FURY FROM THESE DIABOLICAL MINDSETS BY KEEPING THEIR DEAFENING SILENCE!"**

Like many other nations globally, India has been navigating through an economic crisis while battling an onslaught of Covid-19 and its variants. However, one may find it hard to pin down a leadership anywhere bent upon augmenting that misery for its own people through arbitrary and quirky actions. That is probably what the Modi administration has done by canceling about 6000 of FCRA's (Foreign Currency Remittance Act) of NGOs and various religious organizations that serve the poorest of the poor and disadvantaged in the educational, charitable, and healthcare arena. These leaders appear to be unimpressed with the vital work done by many of these civic organizations in blunting the fury of the pandemic by providing food and assistance when the government was found missing in action.

Missionaries of Charity, an organization founded by Mother Teresa, is one of the impacted organizations and might have garnered the most attention. However, so many of those organizations on that list might soon be depriving a dying patient of urgent medical care due



to their inability to pay or denying a meal to a hungry person from the ranks of the poor and disadvantaged. It is bizarre to learn that one of the reasons for cutting off funds for the Missionaries of Charities was that the inspectors had found copies of Bibles on the premises!

Missionaries of Charities have had a long record of distinguished humanitarian service that began in 1950 on the streets of Calcutta. The group is revered worldwide for its work under Mother Teresa, an Albanian Christian nun who made India her home. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her dedicated work over a lifetime, and her legacy inspires so many to carry on with similar missions.

The published list contains organizations belonging to various religious affiliations. Although one can fully understand the need for transparency and accountability in these organizations, this discretionary decision may have a far-reaching effect of closing their doors for good, resulting in a denial of services to the most vulnerable needy. Moreover, by releasing this list on the eve of Christmas, the Modi administration may also be sending a clear message to the Christians in India that you are no longer welcome as a partner in the social development arena. They may look at the Christian community as having undue influence in the society-at-large through their educational and charitable work and are determined to shut it down. While people worldwide are on edge dealing with variants of this virus, only a wicked mindset could think of this type of ordinance in a time such as these.

Thanks to the rising antagonism of the authorities towards minorities, we have also seen a spate of attacks on Christians during this holiday season. The right-wing extremists, who are emboldened by

the words and deeds of the current leadership, went on a rampage disrupting Carol services and destroying church properties in several parts of India. A group of men led by a politician barged into a Gurgaon private school and disrupted the Christmas carnival. They also chanted slogans of "Jai Shri Ram and Bharat Ki Jai," and the videos of the incident show a man addressing the gathering, stating that "Christianity is not acceptable here."

In another incident, a statue of Jesus Christ was vandalized at the Holy Redeemer Church entrance, a century-old building with great historical importance. In the Chandmari district of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, a group of right-wing men carrying saffron flags protested outside the Matridham Ashram before a Christmas event was to take place. The group of 20-30 people raised the "Jai Shri ram" slogan along with "Church murdabad" (death to the church) and "stop conversion." In Assam, the Bajrang Dal was also involved in impeding the Christmas midnight mass celebrations in Silchar. The men allegedly forced their way into the church and demanded that the celebration be shut down because it was also 'Tulsi Diwas.'

The action against Missionaries of Charity also happened in the backdrop of an anti-conversion bill passed in the Karnataka Assembly that has stoked anxieties among Christians in that southern state, the IT hub of India. The first anti-conversion law was passed in Odisha in 1967, leading to an attack on Christians, culminating in the Kandhamal violence in 2008. Six other states followed suit resulting in increased violence against Christians. Rev. Peter Machado, Archbishop of Bengaluru, summed up his heartfelt feelings this way: "This is frightening and a sad commentary on

secularism, signals are suggesting it is not a good time to be a Christian in Karnataka." One also wonders that if there is such a rampant conversion as alleged, why has the Christian population in Karnataka decreased from 1.91% as per the 2001 census instead of 1.87% as per the 2011 one?

Why are these attacks occurring at an increased frequency now? For those observers, it becomes apparent that it is part of the BJP efforts to promote their long-cherished goal of a majoritarian rule under the banner of a Hindu Rashtra. The recently held Dharam Sansad in Haridwar in the name of Sanatana Dharma indicated what extent they are willing to go to accomplish that goal. One of the main organizers of the Sansad, Prabodhhanand Giri, was heard praising the Myanmar people for killing and driving out Rohingya Muslims. The Swami wants the Hindus in India to imitate the Buddhists and drive out the Muslims from the country. A female speaker went even further, asking every Hindu to wield the sword and start killing Muslims. Christians may be considered collateral damage in their quest to fulfill that dream in the whole scheme of things.

These calls have an eerie familiarity with what has happened to the Jews in Germany during World War II. Even Hitler has used euphemism instead of direct appeal to annihilate a community. However, the religious extremists in India have gone even a step further and made their open call. Undoubtedly, India is at an inflection point in history, and the question is whether the current leadership acquiesce to the sounds and fury from these diabolical mindsets by keeping their deafening silence!

(Author is a former Chief Technology Officer of the United Nations and the Vice-Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, USA)

Foreign funding that enabled the sisters to shower their love on God's lesser children has been stopped.

Photo / PTI

# Pakistan's PM has been exposed as 'corrupt and dishonest con man': Nawaz Sharif on PTI's foreign funding fraud

**LAHORE (TIP):** Pakistan's deposed premier Nawaz Sharif has slammed Prime Minister Imran Khan for the "fraud" detected in the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf party's foreign funding, saying that he has been exposed as a "corrupt and dishonest political con man".

According to a damning report by the Election Commission recently, Prime Minister Khan's ruling Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party grossly under-reported funds received from foreign nationals, firms, and also concealed its bank accounts.

The ruling party has under-reported an amount of PKR 312 million over a four-year period, between FY 2009-10 and FY 2012-13. The year-wise details reveal that an amount in excess of PKR 145 million was under-reported in FY 2012-13 alone.

"Finally, 'Mr Clean' has been exposed

as a corrupt and dishonest political con-man. And the other dishonourable man (former chief justice of Pakistan Saqib Nisar) who declared him 'Sadiq & Amin (honest)' to engineer my ouster has already been heard admitting his crime. Divine justice is done, only the legal one remains to be seen & done," Sharif, who is also the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supreme leader, said in a tweet on Tuesday.

Sharif has been living in the UK in self-exile since November 2019. He had gone to London after the Lahore High Court granted him bail for four-weeks to get his treatment abroad. He was serving a seven-year term at Lahore's Kot Lakhpat jail in a corruption case.

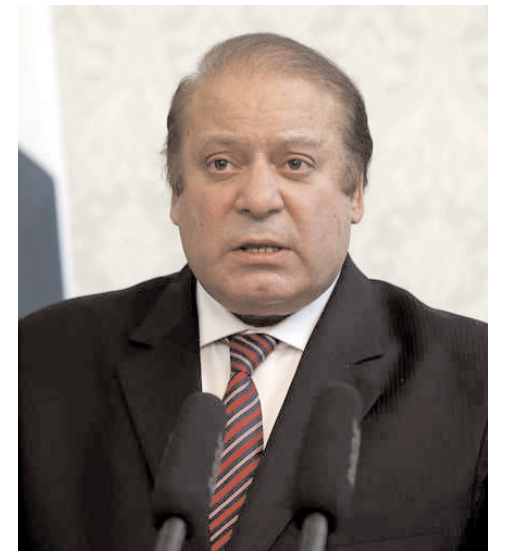
Sharif said the ECP's report not only has exposed Prime Minister Khan and PTI but what would happen when they would have to tell the names from whom they had taken money and where they

spent it.

"You (Imran) have not only committed financial fraud but also insulted the title of Sadiq aur Ameen," he said.

His younger brother and Opposition leader in National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif said, "It has been clear now as to why the PTI was running away from the foreign funding case for the last seven years. Truth has a strange way of exposing people. The Scrutiny Committee's report is a damning indictment of IK (Imran Khan). The facade of 'Sadiq aur Ameen (honesty)' has been shredded into pieces".

Sharif's daughter and PML-N vice president Maryam Nawaz said, "If you (Imran Khan) welcome the ECP's report, then why didn't you let this case proceed for the last seven years through force. Why did you keep running away (from the ECP's scrutiny of PTI foreign funding) for so many years and pleading



not to make the scrutiny committee's report public? Do you think the people are fools who believe whatever you say... be ready as the time of your accountability is near." —PTI

## Cabinet nod for MoU for bridge between India and Nepal at Dharchula



**KATHMANDU (TIP):** Union Cabinet on January 6 approved signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Nepal for construction of a bridge over Mahakali river at Dharchula in Uttarakhand.

Briefing the media on the Cabinet decisions, I&B Minister Anurag Thakur said the MoU between India and Nepal will be signed in the "near future" and the bridge will be completed within three years.

"The construction of the bridge will help people living in Dharchula in Uttarakhand and in the territory of Nepal," he said.

Thakur said as close neighbours, India and Nepal share unique ties of friendship and cooperation characterized by an open border and deep-rooted people-to-people contacts of kinship and culture.

The diplomatic relations between the two countries will further improve with the signing of the MoU, an official statement said.

It noted that India and Nepal have been working together on different regional forums such as SAARC and BIMSTEC as well as the global fora. PTI

## Sri Lanka vaccinates children as doctors warn of Covid surge



**COLOMBO (TIP):** Sri Lankan health authorities on January 7 began vaccinating children aged 12 to 15, as the island nation's top medical specialists warned of a wave of COVID-19 infections in the coming weeks driven by the omicron variant.

Under the new vaccination program, children will be given a single dose of the Pfizer vaccine, said the health ministry. Earlier, children above 15 could be vaccinated.

The latest effort begins as schools are set to fully reopen from Monday. Children were previously allowed to attend schools in two groups.

The move also comes as authorities take steps to make vaccination certificates compulsory to enter public places.

According to health officials, 47 omicron cases have been detected so far in Sri Lanka.

The Association of Medical Specialists, which comprises the country's top doctors, pointed to a surge in Covid-19 cases last April as a warning "that history is repeating itself." Almost 15,000 people died in that outbreak.

"Shops and bars, (New Year's Eve)

parties were jampacked," the association said in a statement. "It is therefore inevitable that the omicron variant will cause a massive wave of infection during the coming weeks." Last April's surge led to two separate lockdowns. The latest lockdown was lifted in October and authorities have since gradually relaxed many Covid related restrictions.

At the peak last July, Sri Lanka reported more than 3,000 daily infections and more than 200 deaths. Daily infections are now around 500, with fewer than 20 deaths.

The country has recorded 589,479 total confirmed cases and 15,065 deaths.

Life in Sri Lanka has begun returning to normal with the partial lifting of restrictions on restaurants, supermarkets, cinemas and weddings. But authorities have maintained strict restrictions on public transport and they discourage public gatherings.

Face masks and social distancing in public are still mandatory and police take legal action against anyone who fails to comply.

Nearly 64% of Sri Lanka's 22 million people have been fully vaccinated, and about 20% have received boosters. AP

## Won't allow fencing along Durand Line: Taliban

**ISLAMABAD (TIP):** Afghanistan's Taliban regime has said it will not allow fencing by Pakistan in any form along the Durand Line, issuing a stern warning to Islamabad amid escalating tensions between the neighbouring countries on the contentious issue of border fencing, a media report said. "We (Taliban) will not allow the fencing anytime, in any form. Whatever they (Pakistan) did before, they did, but we will not allow it anymore. There will be no fencing anymore," Mawllawi Sanaullah Sangin, Commander of the Taliban, said on January 5. Sangin's sharp reaction comes following Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi's comments earlier this week, when he said this issue would be resolved peacefully, through diplomatic channels. — PTI

## Pak PM Imran to visit China for bilateral talks

**ISLAMABAD (TIP):** Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan plans to visit China early next month to further strengthen the all-weather bilateral ties and seek more investments in various projects under the ambitious CPEC, according to a top official. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Khalid Mansoor said this on January 5 while addressing the launch of the annual Chinese enterprises report.

(PTI)

# Portrait of an Artist

**KRISH SENGUPTA IS ALL SET FOR HIS SOLO ART EXHIBITION IN NEW YORK CITY IN JANUARY 2022. THE ARTIST'S WORK CAN BE SEEN AT "ON THE FRINGE", AKA 72 WARREN AT TRIBECA FROM JANUARY 13TH TO JANUARY 16TH. ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 13, THE SHOW IS OPEN FROM 5 PM TO 11 PM. ON FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY, JANUARY 14, 15 AND 16, THE SHOW IS OPEN FROM NOON TO 9.00 PM.**

Krish at work  
Photograph / Jay Mandal-on assignment



**Krish's Retrospective Showcase of work done in the New York area over the years will have 30 paintings at the exhibition.**

**The time though is a little difficult on account of surging Covid cases, but Krish expects art lovers to brave the onslaught and turn up to see his work. Like any exhibition of paintings, Krish will be offering some paintings for outright sale. The occasion offers an opportunity to collectors of art pieces to add to their collection.**

**K**rish is an India born artist, now based in Jersey City, NJ. Since arriving in the USA in the summer of 2009, he has actively cultivated his art in Chicago, New York and New Jersey. Largely self-taught, he has honed his skills at eminent artist

workshops in these cities, namely those of Layne Jackson, Tom Robinson, Raul Sebasco and Joe Velez.

His focus is mostly on figurative work, exploring form and motion in his drawings and paintings. He had his first solo exhibition in the USA in Feb 2013, and has shown at the National Arts Club, New York City in 2015 & 2016, amongst many others. In Jan 2022, Krish will be hosted for his first solo exhibition in NYC - "New York Showcase" - by a prominent gallery in Tribeca, Manhattan.

It is always interesting to look into the mind of the artist. As The Indian Panorama requested Krish for an interview, he suggested that we republish an interview which was recently published at [artistcloseup.com](http://artistcloseup.com)

**In accordance with the artist's desire, we are publishing the referenced interview, as it was originally published. Placement of photographs of paintings is, of course, the original work of The Indian Panorama.**

**Q. What is your background and how did you start your journey in the art world?**

"My name is Krish, which is also the word with which I sign my paintings. Must add, I do use just 'K' as a signature in many works too. My art journey truly started in my childhood years, and quite clearly it is in midstream now. Mine has been a slow journey, especially as paint and draw on the side of my main work career, which is as an executive in financial services.

Over the years, I have even kept art aside for long periods of time to cater to education and career priorities. However, upon arriving in Chicago in the summer of 2009, I resumed painting and drawing, after a gap of 15 years, with a renewed passion and have never looked back since. As I reflect, I realize that the long hiatus was needed."

**Q. Which artists influence you most?**

"I entered the Chicago art scene through two institutions, namely - the studios of Layne Jackson and Tom Robinson, both eminent American artists with valued art careers in their names. Both them and the artists around me in those studio sessions were my biggest inspirations at that time, which spurred me to my point of no return.

That aside, I do draw inspiration heavily from the works of the Great Masters, from museums around the world and, of course, books. Impressionism as an art style is clearly my favorite and go-to style, and thus the impressionists among the Great Masters have remained my idols forever, and no one more than the great master, Pierre-Auguste Renoir."

**Q. Where else do you draw inspiration from?**





CONTD FROM PAGE 12

"Figurative art inspires me the most. In fact, with the internet, I feel almost 'over-inspired' by all the marvelous figurative work that we see every day. Life drawing has been a huge influence in shaping my continuing desire to depict form & figure at its artistic best. The best is yet to come but the journey is itself no less of a reward for me."

**Q.What themes do you pursue? Is there an underlying message in your work?**

"I mostly dwell on the theme of 'Form and Figure', emphasizing the aspects of pose, grace and motion in my work, to capture a stellar moment in time - visually and artistically - that the viewer would be drawn to. The key message in this theme, for me, is always to make that beautiful, graceful moment timeless, and for the viewer to cherish and take back an impression of it."

While most of it is conveyed through human form and figure, I do enjoy the

theme of horses and certain other animals that also have an abundance of beauty and grace. I have captured the poise and motion of horses in my series 'Spirit of the Horse' and am looking forward to creating a series on dolphins in the months ahead."

**Q.How would you describe your work?**

"My style of art is realistic with shades of impressionism. In my oil work, I like large, bold brush strokes, texture and a near realistic finish - although I always aspire to be more impressionistic. One day I will be! In my charcoal work, I like to be as smudgy and dirty as possible, and sometimes leave them with an unfinished look. However, as I always say, my art is constantly evolving and I am still trying to find my signature style, and until I get there, everything I create is an experiment."

Aside from the rendition style, I would also describe my art as singular pieces of beauty which are meant to adorn walls with images that would capture

attention. It would, in the least, demand a closer look or a second look before one can really walk away."

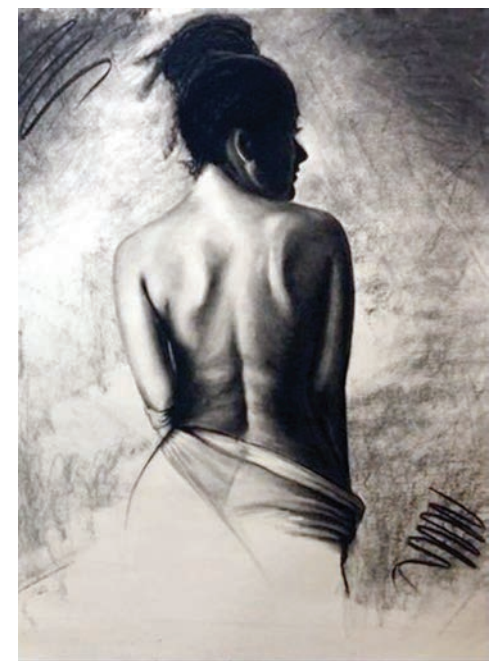
"I have this strong belief that all of us have an appreciation of art, maybe in different ways; thus, I am always really eager to capture attention to my work through visuals that most can relate to, before the viewer moves on to the next piece."

**Q.What is your creative process like?**

"Nowadays, as I am becoming more aware of proportion, I try to start with a charcoal stick or graphite to create my marks, around sizing; however, essentially I believe in the technique of alla prima for my painting - including portraits done from life or photographs. Sometimes I do my underpainting in acrylic and then finish with oil. I love blurry unclear depiction for my backgrounds and peripherals. I am more careful about values than color, and for that very reason, I love creating monochromes, which led me to create the series '#monochromesbykrish' & '#charcoalsbykrish', that is worth a search on Instagram. My pencil works and charcoal works give me the opportunity to continuously dwell on the concept of values, and perhaps they also keep me connected to my basic love for drawing."

**Q.What is an artist's role in society and how do you see that evolving?**

"A visual artist 'talks' with pictures, images and visual impressions that they create for viewers to dwell upon and form impressions in their minds, which is significantly quicker yet longer lasting than any other art form, be it performing arts or literature. This single component



of the power of a visual artwork to influence the viewer's mind, also casts an enormous responsibility on artists in society. Which, therefore, needs them to perform a role of positive influencers in society vs negative - always!"

**Q.Have you had any noteworthy exhibitions you'd like to share?**

- "Yes. They are quite a few.
- Drawing Attention II, Chicago June 2011
- Full Spectrum Art Show, Chicago June 2011
- Drawing Attention III, Chicago June 2012
- Naked July Art Show, Chicago July 2012
- Art & Friends, Solo Art Show, Chicago Feb 2013
- Drawing Attention IV, Chicago June 2013
- Renaissance Art Show, New York June 2014
- National Arts Club Annual Show, New York - 2014
- National Arts Club Annual Show, New York - 2015
- Artists Studio Walk Show, Hoboken 2016
- RAW Invitational Pop Up Art Show, Jersey City - Dec 2017
- Artist of the Month - July & August - Hudson Gallery Jersey City - 2019
- Solas Studio Summer Show, New York City - 2021"

Krish is currently based in Jersey City. Instagram: @8akrish



## Made-in-India test kit to detect Omicron gets ICMR nod

BENGALURU (TIP)

India's home-grown testing kit OmiSure, developed by the Tata Medical and Diagnostics (Tata MD) to identify the Omicron variant of Covid-19 in samples taken from the nose and throat, was approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Wednesday and will be available for commercial use from January 12.

Apart from identifying the B.1.1.529 (Omicron) variant, the kit can also detect any other circulating SARS-CoV-2 variant.

The company said the unique test design developed by scientists at Tata MD is a single tube, fully multiplexed test (provisional patent application filed). Therefore, it has two checks in place for Omicron detection without compromising the ability to detect other SARS-CoV-2 variants.

The kit evaluated in partnership with the ICMR reported 100 per cent sensitivity and 99.25 per cent specificity for detection of variants of SARS-CoV-2, including Omicron.

OmiSure is the first test to use a combination of two S-gene viral targets to identify Omicron. The first target is based on S-gene dropout or S-gene target failure (SGTF) and the second target is based on S-gene mutation amplification (SGMA). The company said that they have begun working to scale up the production capability, supply chain and raw material inventory to deliver two lakh OmiSure tests per day.

"It can help cut half the cost and complexity of first-line Covid-19 testing and Omicron screening," the company said.

## Hate app arrests: DU student Mayank Rawat held

DEHRADUN (TIP)

A Delhi University student pursuing graduation in science, he was in his hometown Kotdwar in Pauri Garhwal district when Mumbai Police arrested him in connection with the web-based hate app case.

Mayank Rawat, 21, was picked by the police which tracked his cellphone. It was this cellphone that he used to allegedly share links of extreme posts.

According to Additional SP (Kotdwar) Manisha Joshi, Rawat was arrested from Rajendra Nagar colony in Kotdwar. Son of an Army officer posted in Jammu, Rawat was considered a bright student. Investigators are checking his possible links with extreme elements that may have involved him in the case.

# Law ministry approves increase of poll expenditure by candidates

The increase comes at a time when five states are headed for assembly polls -- Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Union ministry of law and justice on Thursday, Jan 6, approved raising the election expenditure ceiling by a candidate to a maximum of Rs 95 lakh in Parliamentary elections and Rs 40 lakhs in assembly elections, increasing them from the earlier limits of Rs 77 lakh and Rs 30.8 lakh.

The increase comes at a time when five states are headed for assembly polls -- Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa -- even as a sharply rising third wave of Covid-19 cases has raised the clamour for political rallies to be conducted virtually to avoid the spread of the infection.

The increased budget is meant to facilitate this shift, officials familiar with the matter said on condition of anonymity.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by subsection (3) of Section 77 read with Section 169 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (43 of 1951), the central government, after consulting the Election Commission of India, hereby makes the following rules further to amend the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, namely, the government said in a gazette notification. These rules may be called the Conduct of Elections (Amendment) Rules, 2022. (2) They shall come into force on the date of their



publication in the Official Gazette," the gazette notification said.

In 2020, the government approved a 10% raise in the poll expenditure cap ahead of the Bihar elections to allow candidates to spend on virtual campaigning amid the pandemic. The ceiling for parliamentary constituencies was at the time raised to Rs 77 lakh, from the 2014 limit of Rs 70 lakh, and assembly polls to Rs 30.8 lakhs from Rs 28 lakh in larger states.

With the revision, candidates in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Punjab -- classified among large states -- will therefore be able to spend Rs 40 lakh in the upcoming polls, while those in Goa

and Manipur -- classified as small states -- will have to adhere to a limit of Rs 28 lakh.

The increase was cleared on the recommendation by the Election Commission, the official cited above said.

According to EC officials, there were three considerations which officials had while recommending raising limit. "Number of electors has gone up significantly, inflation index has also gone up," a second official said.

The Commission anticipates virtual campaigning to also increase costs. "They will need to out up big screens in various places so a budget for that had to be factored in," the official added, saying that this was part of the reforms that the poll panel has been pushing for.

The Commission had come under the scanner in April this year as polls continued amid the peak of the second wave of the pandemic. The Madras High Court went as far as to say that EC officials were culpable for murder for conducting polls.

Candidate expenditure includes the money spent by them on polling events, rallies, posters and other paraphernalia. The same, however, can also be borne by the political party the candidate is affiliated to. *Source HT*

## India's daily Covid-19 tally crosses 1-lakh mark, Omicron count at 3,000

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India saw a massive spike of over 1 lakh (1,17,100) Covid-19 cases, as per the date released by the Union health ministry on Friday, Jan 7. The last time India had reported more than 1 lakh daily Covid cases was on June 6 last year. The new Omicron variant is believed to be behind this exponential rise. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization (WHO) said that a record 9.5 million Covid-19 cases were tallied over the last week. However, the number of weekly recorded deaths declined.

The country's count of the highly transmissible Omicron crossed the 3,000-mark (3,007 to be exact) with 1,199 patients having been cured as well.

With 302 patients dying due to related complications, the toll touched 4,83,178. As many as 30,836 people recovered from the disease in the last 24 hours, taking the cumulative tally to 3,43,71,845.

### 125 passengers of Italy-Amritsar flight test Covid positive

The international airport at Amritsar witnessed chaos on Thursday as a chartered flight from Rome landed with 179 passengers, of whom 125 tested positive for Covid-19.

While 13 of the passengers were from Amritsar, the biggest group of 26 was from Hoshiarpur in the state, 10 from Haryana and one each from Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir.

The situation at the airport turned tense as a war of words ensued between the administration and the passengers, who said that all of them had produced negative Covid-19 reports before boarding the flight and that it was highly unlikely that so many of them had tested positive on arrival.

The chartered flight, owned by New Delhi-based SARC Aviation, landed at Amritsar airport at 4.20 am on Thursday.

Outside the airport, relatives of the passengers raised slogans against the Punjab government and the Centre, alleging a "conspiracy" behind the high number of Covid cases on board the flight.

Gurinder Kaur, who had come to pick up her husband, said, "They were negative for Covid when they boarded the flight. How could they have turned positive during the eight-hour-long flight? It was mandatory to procure Covid negative reports not older than 72 hours before boarding the flight in Italy. This is impossible."

Tempers flared further as ambulances arrived at the airport to take passengers to the Guru Nanak Dev Hospital in Amritsar.

"We have taken all the 13 passengers to the hospital. There have been instructions from the government to not allow home isolation for international passengers who test positive. They will be observed and treated at the hospital," said Amritsar Chief Medical Officer Charanjit Singh.

## India dismisses Pakistan's fresh offer to host SAARC summit this year

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India on Thursday, Jan 6, dismissed Pakistan's fresh offer to host the long-pending summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc), saying there is no consensus that will allow the holding of the meeting.

The last summit of the eight-nation grouping was held in Nepal in November 2014. India and other countries had pulled out of the 19th summit that was to be held in Islamabad in November 2016 following the Uri terror attack that was blamed on Pakistan-based terrorists.

On Monday, Pakistan foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi had reiterated his country's offer to host the summit in 2022, saying India could attend the meet virtually if it does not wish to participate in-person.

"We have seen media reports regarding the Pakistan foreign minister's remarks about the Saarc Summit. You are aware of the background as to why the Saarc Summit has not been held since 2014," external affairs ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi told a regular media briefing.

"There has been no material change in the situation since then. Therefore, there is still no consensus that would permit the holding of the summit," he added, without giving details.

Responding to a question on Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's comments calling on the world community to take action regarding the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, Bagchi said: "Let me make two points. First, the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir is an inalienable and integral part of India."

"Two, the remarks you have referred to were made by the prime minister of such a country that openly supports cross-border terrorism, which gave refuge to [al-Qaeda chief] Osama bin Laden, and whose shocking human rights record the world is familiar with."

India-Pakistan relations are currently at an all-time low following a string of terror attacks on Indian military facilities and troops in recent years that were all blamed on Pakistan-based terror groups, mainly the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). Following back channel talks between intelligence officials of both sides, the two countries agreed in February last year to strictly adhere to the 2003 ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir.

Source: HT

# Settle border row, stop renaming places, India tells China

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India on January 6 pulled up China for "renaming" places in Arunachal Pradesh and writing "inappropriate" letters to Indian MPs. "We hope that instead of engaging in such antics, China will work constructively with us to resolve the outstanding friction points in areas along the western sector of the LAC," said MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi.

Noting media reports of the Chinese side naming some places in Arunachal Pradesh last week, Bagchi said India had immediately conveyed its views on "such a ridiculous exercise to support untenable territorial claims".

Calling Tuting as "DouDeng" or Siyom river as "XiYueMu" or even Kibithu as "Daba" does not alter the fact that Arunachal Pradesh has always been and will always be an inalienable part of India, he added. Commenting on the reports about a bridge being built by the Chinese on Pangong lake, Bagchi said the activity was being closely watched. "The construction is being undertaken in



areas that have been under illegal occupation by China for around 60 years now. You are well aware India has never accepted such illegal occupation," he said.

Separately, the government has been taking all necessary steps to ensure that India's security interests are fully protected. As part of these efforts, the government has also, over the past seven

years, increased significantly the budget for development of border infrastructure and completed more roads and bridges than ever before. These have provided much needed connectivity to the local population as well as logistical support to armed forces. "The government remains committed to this objective," he said.

The MEA also took umbrage to political counsellor at the Chinese Embassy writing letters to Indian MPs saying substance, tone and tenor of the letters are inappropriate. "The Chinese side should note that India is a vibrant democracy and MPs, as representatives of the people, undertake activities as per their views and beliefs. We expect the Chinese side to refrain from hyping normal activities by MPs and further complicate the situation in our bilateral relations," he said.

Commenting on media reports about PLA unfurling a flag at Galwan Valley, he said that was not factually correct. Media houses in India had released pictures contradicting the claim, he said.

Source: TNS

## Air India sale: HC scraps Swamy's plea challenging divestment process

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Delhi high court on Thursday, Jan 6, dismissed Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Rajya Sabha member Subramanian Swamy's plea seeking to set aside the Air India disinvestment process, saying that the valuation of the national carrier saw keen competition and was not tailor made or rigged in favour of the Tatas.

The court said the plea is "wholly devoid of merit" as the policy decision to disinvest the national carrier was taken after "following transparent procedure through multi-layered decision making".

In October last year, the Centre accepted the highest bid made by a Tata Sons company for 100% equity shares of Air India and Air India Express, along with the government's 50% stake in ground-handling company AISATS.

Claiming that the process was "arbitrary, illegal and against public interest", Swamy had sought a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the Air India disinvestment process.

Swamy had alleged that the entire bidding process was rigged and one of the parties, Tatas, was given undue advantage, a claim vehemently refused both by the Centre and the corporate giant.

In his plea filed through advocate Satya Sabharwal, the senior BJP leader submitted that a consortium led by SpiceJet was the other bidder but insolvency proceedings are going on



against the airline in the Madras high court. Hence, SpiceJet was not entitled to bid and therefore, effectively there was only one bidder, he alleged.

On Thursday, rejecting the Swamy's argument, a bench of chief justice DN Patel and justice Jyoti Singh said that Spicejet Limited was neither a member of the consortium nor an "affiliate" on whose net worth, any of the members of the consortium had relied on, to meet the financial capability criteria of the bidding process.

"One of the bidders who submitted the financial bid was a consortium in which the lead member was Ajay Singh, but, in his individual capacity," the court noted.

The court also said that the process of bidding was not tilted towards the Tatas as seven expressions of interest (EOI) were received in December 2020 and two bidders submitted the financial bid in September, 2021.

Source: HT

## J&K ex-CMs lose elite cover, force downsized

SRINAGAR (TIP)

Former chief ministers of Jammu and Kashmir are no longer entitled to Special Security Group (SSG) cover as the government has decided to downsize the elite police force.

The J&K Home Department has issued an order asking the Additional Director General of Police, Security, to implement a recommendation by the Security Review and Coordination Committee to downsize the SSG to "bare minimum". The committee analyses the threat perception regarding important leaders in J&K.

The move will affect the security cover of Farooq Abdullah, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti. While the senior Abdullah and Azad would continue to get protection from the National Security Guards, Omar and Mufti would enjoy Z-Plus security, with the threat perception to them to be assessed by the Security Review and Coordination Committee. The personnel for their security would be drawn from the J&K Police's security wing now and no longer the SSG.

# Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated annually on 9 January to mark the contribution of the non-residential Indian community towards the development of the country.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs, 9 January was chosen for the observance, as on this day in the year 1915, Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa. He then went on to lead the country in its freedom struggle.

Being celebrated since 2003, the year 2015 saw a slight change with PBD being celebrated every two years from then on.

The convention allows NRIs to engage with the government and people of the land of their ancestors for mutually beneficial activities.

It is sad that the day has lost importance over the years under the Modi government.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Non-Resident Indians (NRI) across the globe are coming together to celebrate the 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention in a virtual format.

The Day holds great significance as it not only reconnects NRIs with their roots but celebrates their achievements as well. It also acknowledges the difficulties faced by Indian expatriate workers living abroad.

Established in 2000, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), the Confederation of Indian Industries and the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region.

A celebratory event is held on 7-9 January every other year in an Indian city: a forum for issues concerning the Indian Diaspora is organised and the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards are given.

In 2006, the concept of Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) was launched during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention at Hyderabad on 9 January.

In 2014, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held in New Delhi and was attended by 1,500 delegates from 51 countries. President Pranab Mukherjee gave the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards.

In 2013, 11th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held in Kochi from 7-9 January, where the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC) is organizing partner of the summit. The President of Mauritius, Rajkeswur Purryag, was the chief guest at the official inaugural session. Canadian Minister Jason Kenney became the first individual of non-Indian heritage to address the gathering.

The 12th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held during 7-9 January 2014 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The Theme for this year was Engaging Diaspora: Connecting Across Generations.

The 13th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held during 7-9 January 2015 at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The Theme for this year was "Apna Bharat, Apna Gaurav".

The 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, which was supposed to be held during 7-9 January 2016 at New Delhi, was cancelled under the MEA's decision to make the event biennial.

The 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held during 7-9 January 2017 at Bengaluru, Karnataka. The theme for this year was "Redefining engagement with the Indian diaspora".

The 16th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2018



Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2017 at Bengaluru.



Then Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Kamala Persad Bissessar (2L) watches as then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (C) lights an oil lamp during the opening ceremony of the tenth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2012 (Overseas Indian Conference) in Jaipur.

was held during 6-7 January 2018 at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore.

The 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019 was held during 21-23 January 2019 at Varanasi, India. Prime Minister of Mauritius, Pravind Jugnauth was the chief guest.

## History

The decision to celebrate Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was taken in accordance with recommendations of the High Level Committee (HLC) on the Indian Diaspora set up by government of India under the chairmanship of L. M. Singhvi. The then Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, received the report of the Committee at a public function at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on 8 January 2002, and announced the "Pravasi Bharatiya Divas" (PBD) on 9 January 2002. The day was chosen to mark the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India in 1915.

The occasion is marked by special programs to recognise the contributions of NRI/PIO individuals of exceptional merit, felicitate NRI/PIO individuals who have made exceptional contributions in their chosen field/profession (Pravasi Bharatiya Samman and provide a forum to discuss issues and concerns of people of the diaspora. The event has been organized every year since 2003, and is sponsored by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and the CII (Confederation of Indian Industry), initially sponsored by FICCI.

The 8th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas took place on 7-9 January 2010 and was webcast live at the official Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs website, also covered live on social media via live blogging and live tweeting at Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, an online platform powered by Kotak Mahindra Bank. An investment facilitation platform for overseas Indians, the Overseas Indians Facilitation Centre, was launched by India's Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, with a view of strengthening ties with the diaspora for partnering in India's growth story on the occasion.

The 2012 Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held from 7-9 January 2012. The venue was Jaipur, Rajasthan. Chief Guest of this event was the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, Ms Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

The 2013 Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held from 8-9 January 2013 in Kochi, Kerala. Chief Guest of this event was the President of Mauritius, Rajkeshwar Purryag. The 2015 Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held in Ahmedabad celebrating 100 years of Mahatma's return to India. Chief guest was Mr Donald Ramtar, President of Republic of Guyana. The theme for this was "Apna Bharat Apna Gaurav" "Connecting Generations".

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD), the annual event for the Indian diaspora, was canceled for 2016. The format of the event, which is held between 7 and 9 January, has been changed as announced by the minister of external affairs and overseas



Indian affairs Sushma Swaraj, in October 2015. As per the announcement, the event was being moved to different states every two years; a smaller event would be held in Delhi every alternate year.

In 2017, the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held from 7-9 January 2017 in Bengaluru. The theme of this edition was "Redefining Engagement with the Indian Diaspora". The Ministry of External Affairs, under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had used digital modes to reach out to Indians abroad. The campaign Digital India also played a major role in bringing the success to Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. The plenary session 'Leveraging Social Media for Diaspora Connect' held on 9 January 2017, at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas looked at social media as a medium in connecting the Indian Diaspora.

## About PBD Convention 2021

In a virtual format, the convention will be held and the theme of the 16th PBD Convention 2021 is "Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat". The Convention of PBD will have three segments and will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi. It will also be addressed by the Chief Guest, Chandrikapersad Santokhi, President of the Republic of Suriname. Winners of the online Bharat ko Janiye Quiz for the youth will be announced.

The inaugural session will also be followed by the two Plenary sessions. The first will be on the Role of Diaspora Aatmanirbhar Bharat and will be featured by the External Affairs Minister and Commerce and Industry Minister. And the second will be on Facing Post Covid Challenges - Scenario in Health, Economy, Social and International Relations that will be addressed by Minister of Health and Minister of State for External Affairs.

The Valedictory Session will be the finale where the President will deliver his Valedictory address to mark the occasion of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

Here to inform you that the Youth PBD was also observed virtually on the theme "Bringing together Young Achievers from India and Indian Diaspora" on 8 January 2021 and was anchored by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The Special Guest for the event is Priyanca Radhakrishnan, Minister for Community & Voluntary Sector of New Zealand.

In January 2019, it was celebrated at Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh to acknowledge the Indian Diaspora of Indian origin to share their experience, knowledge which can help in the development of the country.



# India in history this Week

JANUARY 7, 2022, TO JANUARY 13, 2022

**07 JANUARY**



1967 Irrfan Khan, who rejuvenated the characters of Hindi cinema world, stepped into the world.



1980 After less than three years of the overthrow of power due to emergency, the people of India once again handed over the reins of the country to Indira Gandhi.

**08 JANUARY**



1965 The first Indian cinema film to win internationally acclaimed filmmaker Bimal Roy. On this day, he said goodbye to the world.



1984 The first Indian woman pilot Sushma Mukhopadhyay died.

**09 JANUARY**



1982 The first Indian scientific expedition reaches Antarctica.



1915 Mahatma Gandhi arrives in Mumbai after returning from South Africa.



1934 Mahendra Kapoor, the famous playback singer of Hindi cinema, was born.

**10 JANUARY**



1916 British Ambassador Sir Thomas Roe meets Jahangir in Ajmer.

**11 JANUARY**

1922 The first insulin was given to patients with diabetes.



1954 Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi was born who raised a voice against child labor.

1966 Lal Bahadur Shastri, who won hearts with his simplicity, died in Tashkent.

**12 JANUARY**



1863 Swami Vivekananda, who brought India to Gyan Prakash, was born.

1948 Mahatma Gandhi gave his last speech and decided to go on a hunger strike against communal violence. He was deeply saddened by the partition of India in 1947.

**13 JANUARY**

1709 Mughal ruler Bahadur Shah I defeated his brother Kambakhsh in Hyderabad in a power struggle.

1849 The famous Battle of Chillianwala started during the Second Anglo Sikh War.

1910 Radio was broadcast for the first time. The broadcast could also be heard on a ship 20 km away in the sea.

1923 Famous film producer and director Shakti Samanta was born.

1938 Renowned santoor player Pandit Shivkumar was born.

1949 India's first astronaut Rakesh Sharma is born.



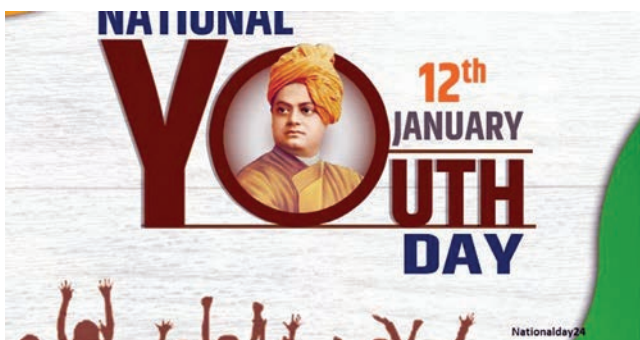
1976 Death of the famous tabla player of India Ahmed Jan Thirkwa.

# The multifaceted persona of Swami Vivekananda

BY AMARJIT  
SINGH ANAND



**"Vivekananda, original name Narendranath Datta, Datta also spelled Dutt, (born January 12, 1863, Calcutta [now Kolkata]-died July 4, 1902, near Calcutta), Hindu spiritual leader and reformer in India who attempted to combine Indian spirituality with Western material progress, maintaining that the two supplemented and complemented one another. His Absolute was a person's own higher self; to labor for the benefit of humanity was the noblest endeavor." Encyclopedia Britannica**



Vivekananda's birthday-January 14th- is celebrated in India as National Youth Day.



The Young Vivekananda

## Early Life and Education

Born Narendranath Dutta, into an affluent Bengali family in Calcutta, Vivekananda was one of the eight children of Vishwanath Dutta and Bhuvaneshwari Devi. He was born on January 12, 1863, on the occasion of Makar Sankranti. Father Vishwanath was a successful attorney with considerable influence in society. Narendranath's mother Bhuvaneshwari was a woman endowed with a strong, God-fearing mind who had a great impact on her son. As a young boy, Narendranath displayed sharp intellect. His mischievous nature belied his interest in music, both instrumental as well as vocal. He excelled in his studies as well, first at the Metropolitan institution, and later at the Presidency College in Calcutta. By the time he graduated from the college, he had acquired a vast knowledge of different subjects. He was active in sports, gymnastics, wrestling and body building. He was an avid reader and read up on almost everything under the sun. He perused the Hindu scriptures like the Bhagvad Gita and the Upanishads on one hand, while on the other hand he studied western philosophy, history and spirituality by David Hume, Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Herbert Spencer.

He did his schooling at Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's Metropolitan Institution (1871). Then he attended Presidency University (Kolkata) and General Assembly's Institution (Scottish Church College, Kolkata).

Swami Vivekananda died at an early age of 39 years on July 4, 1902, due to rupture in the blood vessel of his brain. His disciples say that he attained Mahasamadhi (the act of consciously and intentionally leaving one's body at the moment of death) while meditating.

Swamiji was never married, as He considered all women to be the manifestation of the Divine Mother of the Universe. All women were his Mother in that

sense. When Swami Vivekananda went to America, a woman expressed his desire to marry him. When Swami Vivekananda asked the woman about the reason for her intention. Then the woman said she was very fascinated with the wisdom of Swamiji and wished for such a wise child from him. On this, Swamiji told the woman that since she is fascinated only by his wisdom, there is no problem. Swami Vivekananda said "I understand your wish. It will take a long time to get married and bring a child into this world and then to know whether he is intelligent or not. There is no guarantee that this would happen. Instead, I can give you a suggestion to fulfill your wish immediately. You accept me as your child. In this way, you will become my mother and thus your desire to have a wise child like me will also be fulfilled".

## Spiritual Crisis and Relationship with Ramkrishna Paramhansa

Although Narendranath's mother was a devout woman and he had grown up in a religious atmosphere at home, he underwent a deep spiritual crisis at the start of his youth. His well-studied knowledge led him to question the existence of God and for some time he believed in Agnosticism. Yet he could not completely ignore the existence of a Supreme Being. He became associated with Brahmo Movement led by Keshab Chandra Sen, for some time. The Brahmo Samaj recognized one God unlike the idol-worshipping, superstition-ridden Hinduism. The host of philosophical questions regarding the existence of God roiling through his mind remained unanswered. During this spiritual crisis, Vivekananda first heard about Sri Ramkrishna from William Hastie, the Principal of the Scottish Church College.

Earlier, to satisfy his intellectual quest for God, Narendranath visited prominent spiritual leaders from all religions, asking them a single question, "Have you seen God?" Each time he came away without a satisfying answer. He put forward the same question to Sri Ramkrishna at his residence in Dakshinewar Kali Temple compounds. Without a moment's hesitation, Sri Ramkrishna replied: "Yes, I have. I see God as clearly as I see you, only in a much deeper sense." Vivekananda, initially unimpressed by the simplicity of Ramkrishna, was astonished with Ramkrishna's reply. Ramkrishna gradually won over this argumentative young man with his patience and love. The more Narendranath visited Dakshineshwar, the more his questions were answered.

## Spiritual Awakening

In 1884, Narendranath underwent a considerable financial distress due to the death of his father as he had to support his mother and younger siblings. He asked Ramkrishna to pray to the Goddess for the financial welfare of his family. On Ramkrishna's suggestion he himself went to the temple to pray. But once he faced the Goddess he could not ask for money and wealth, instead he asked for 'Vivek' (conscience) and 'Bairagya' (reclusion). That day marked the complete spiritual awakening of Narendranath and he found himself drawn to an ascetic way of life.

## Life of a Monk



Vivekananda, the monk

During the middle of 1885, Ramkrishna, who had been suffering from throat cancer, fell seriously ill. In September 1885, Sri Ramkrishna was moved to Shyampukur in Calcutta, and a few months later Narendranath took a rented villa at Cossipore. Here, he formed a group of young people who were ardent followers of Sri Ramkrishna and together they nursed their Guru with devoted care. On 16 August 1886, Sri Ramkrishna gave up his mortal body. After the demise of Sri Ramkrishna, around

fifteen of his disciples including Narendranath began to live together in a dilapidated building at Baranagar in North Calcutta, which was named Ramkrishna Math, the monastic order of Ramkrishna. Here, in 1887, they formally renounced all ties to the world and took vows of monkhood. The brotherhood rechristened themselves and Narendranath emerged as Vivekananda meaning "the bliss of discerning wisdom". The brotherhood lived on alms donated voluntarily by patrons during holy begging or 'madhukari', performed yoga and meditation. Vivekananda left the Math in 1886 and went on a tour of India on foot as a 'Parivrajak'. He travelled the breadth of the country, absorbing much of the social, cultural and religious aspects of the people he came in contact with. He witnessed the adversities of life that the common people faced, their ailments, and vowed to dedicate his life to bring relief to these suffering.

Vivekananda says "knowing God is a deep human necessity. Those who deny this fact have been proven wrong. Therefore, so long as there is fear of death in the world, there shall be faith in God. The concept of God is a fundamental element in the human constitution. In the Vedanta, Sat-chit-ananda (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss) is the highest concept of God".

Swami Vivekananda was a Hindu monk, a spiritual leader and reformer in India who attempted to combine Indian spirituality with Western material progress, maintaining that the two supplemented and complemented one another. To him, The Absolute was a person's own higher self; and to labor for the benefit of humanity was the noblest endeavor. Born on January 12, 1863 in Calcutta, he died July 4, 1902 near Calcutta). His original name was Narendranath Datta.

Swami Vivekananda on The Philosophy of Life.

He was a youth icon who was well respected even by much older wiser people. He says everyone has a philosophy to apply in their life. Due to lack of proper education and consequent ignorance about whether such chosen philosophy is good or not, many people go

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astray. Many are not inquisitive and so remain content with their situations, howsoever crude or selfish. Then, some philosophies may not be adaptable in modern times and some may be too far-fetched, thereby unattainable. The majority set sensual pleasures as their goal. Some would do anything to gain position, power, name, fame, and so on because they think these are the greatest objectives to attain. Each group has a set of arguments to justify their views. However, we are shown by sages and saints that the path to express our infinite possibilities and reach a state that is universally valued and respected. Swamiji says "The lives of Buddha, Mahavira, Christ, Sri Ramakrishna, and many other great persons have demonstrated this truth".

While conducting a 'Bhakti-Yoga' class in New York, on 20th of January 1896, Swamiji narrated the incidents pertaining to Guru Nanak Sahebji whereby Gurujee emphasized upon the paramount significance of mindful honest prayer, when the Guru visited the Arabic world and exposed the hypocrisy during the prayer service led by preachers.

### Swami Vivekananda and his 1893 Lecture

<https://www.artic.edu/swami-vivekananda-and-his-1893-speech>



Swami Vivekananda in Chicago in 1893 with the handwritten words "one infinite pure and holy-beyond thought beyond qualities I bow down to thee"

Swami Vivekananda burst upon the global stage because of his famed speech on September 11, 1893, at the first World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. In his groundbreaking speech to the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions, he introduced Hinduism to America and called for religious tolerance and an end to fanaticism. He was the chief disciple of the 19th-century mystic Ramakrishna and the founder of Ramakrishna Mission. Swami Vivekananda is also considered a key figure in the introduction of Vedanta and Yoga to the West and is credited with raising the profile of Hinduism to that of a world religion.

### Speech delivered by Swami Vivekananda

"Sisters and Brothers of America, it fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us. I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world, I thank you in the name of the mother of religions, and I thank you in the name of millions and



Swami Vivekananda at the first World Parliament of Religions in Chicago on September 11, 1893,

millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects.

"My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who, referring to the delegates from the Orient, have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honor of bearing to different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation. I will quote to you, brethren, a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings: "As the different streams having their sources in different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee."

"The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: "Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to me." Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilization and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But their time is come; and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honor of this convention may be the death-knell of all fanaticism, of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal."

### New Path to Perfection

Great saints and prophets have taught that becoming divine or perfect is the highest goal of human life. All have declared that humankind is heir to immortal life, infinite knowledge, love, and bliss. Though this is very much true according to the Indian ethos, it is also echoed by other great personalities, as Christ says: "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect".

This goal of perfection is attained gradually after realizing the futility of lower goals such as sense enjoyment and socioeconomic power. We see that people once addicted to sensual pleasures become, by middle age, disillusioned and disappointed with those so-called pleasures. Similar is the case with those who run after wealth and power. Therefore, the wise ones counsel us against the pursuit of temporal goals: "Be spiritual; realize that you are divine and you will attain the highest perfection by knowing that you are spiritually immortal, possessing infinite knowledge and bliss."

They also declare that this goal is achievable and open to everyone. They boldly proclaim that there is no other way to blessedness than consciously choosing and struggling to actualize our real nature. And this spiritual struggle is described in the Upanishads: 'As difficult as impassable as a razor's edge,' and 'this soul is not attained by the weak'. This struggle is more adventurous, thrilling, and inspiring than the conquest of external nature.

Guided by his Master Sri Ramakrishna, he traversed this difficult path of discipline and prolonged struggles, and showed us its validity. Swamiji expressed this through a unique philosophy of life that promised us peace and happiness in temporal life, as well as lasting spiritual peace and joy.



Swami Vivekananda in Kashmir

Swamiji wanted his monastic brothers to educate the masses of India in secular and spiritual matters. He writes in a famous letter of 1894 from the US to his brother disciples at the Alambazar monastery: 'I am giving you a new idea. If you can work it out, then I shall know you are men and will be of service. ... get together a number of poor, indigent folk ... teach them astronomy, geography, etc., and preach Sri Ramakrishna to them.' 4 Centuries of suppression and exploitation had rendered people helpless. Now, instead of depending on petty rulers and kings or the British to do something, Swamiji wanted the regeneration of India for the people and by the people. He first wanted to eradicate poverty through technical and other secular education, which had to go along with the instilling of spiritual culture, the backbone of India since ancient times.

Swami Vivekananda speaks about teaching history, geography, astronomy, and modern social sciences in order to awaken the Indian masses. He knew that individual happiness rests on the happiness of others, and awakening people was the first step towards an all-round national development. His 'new idea' was far ahead of even the much later communist movements in some parts of the world, which failed because they could not understand the spiritual dimension of the human being. His novel idea was initially not well received by his own brother disciples! But Swami Vivekananda, a born leader, was charting a new path for humanity while spiritually extending the old ideal of 'bahujana hitaya bahujana sukhaya; for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many'. In a poignant letter written to the Maharaja of Mysore he says: 'My noble Prince, this life is short, the vanities of the world are transient, but they alone live who live for others, the rest are more dead than alive'. Spiritual life, in the hands of Swamiji, was made proactive and practical through service of the Atmaa in all.

Swamiji wanted a healthy exchange of ideas between the East and the West. Western technology must be used to uplift the poor masses, and values cherished by the orient for thousands of years taught to the West in exchange. He spoke of mass education going from door to door using the magic lantern, maps, charts, and so on. Today primary education in India, after all these years, is a right and a reality. Unfortunately, the gap between the rich and the poor has not been bridged, but a big start has been made for the poor to rise and stop being exploited.

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# Indian Origin Harpreet Chandi reaches South Pole after trekking 700 miles

NIRPAL SINGH SHERGILL

**SHE IS "THE FIRST WOMAN OF COLOR" TO HAVE DONE SO**

**LONDON / NEW YORK (TIP):** Indian origin woman Harpreet Chandi, a 32-year-old captain with the British army, reached the South Pole on Monday after trekking 700 miles solo and unaided across the Antarctic wilderness.

She reported journey's end in her blog: "Hello everyone, checking in from day 40. I made it to the South Pole where it's snowing. Feeling so many emotions right now. I knew nothing about the polar world three years ago and it feels so surreal to finally be here. It was tough getting here and I want to thank everybody for their support."



Harpreet Chandi

"This expedition was always about so much more than me. I want to encourage people to push their boundaries and to believe in themselves, and I want you to be able to do it without being labelled a rebel. I have been told no on many occasions and told to 'just do the normal thing', but we create our own normal. You are capable of anything you want. No-matter where you are from or where your start line is, everybody starts somewhere. I don't want to just break the glass ceiling; I want to smash it into a million pieces."

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

# Oscar winner and groundbreaking star Sidney Poitier dies

**BEFORE POITIER, FEW BLACK ACTORS WERE PERMITTED A BREAK FROM THE STEREOTYPES OF BUG-EYED SERVANTS AND GRINNING ENTERTAINERS**

**NEW YORK (TIP):** Sidney Poitier, the groundbreaking actor and enduring inspiration who transformed how Black people were portrayed on screen, became the first Black actor to win an Academy Award for best lead performance and the first to be a top box-office draw, has died. He was 94.

Poitier, winner of the best actor Oscar in 1964 for "Lilies of the Field," died Thursday, January 6th in the Bahamas, according



to Eugene Torchon-Newry, acting director general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Bahamas.

Few movie stars, Black or white, had such an influence both on and off the screen. Before Poitier, the son of Bahamian tomato farmers, no Black actor had a sustained career as a lead performer or could get a film produced based on his own star power.

Before Poitier, few Black actors were permitted a break from the stereotypes of bug-eyed servants and grinning entertainers. Before Poitier, Hollywood filmmakers rarely even attempted to tell a Black person's story.

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

# Santos Sworn in as New Census Bureau Director

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** Robert Santos was sworn in today as the U.S. Census Bureau's 26th director, becoming the first Latino person to serve in the role. This appointment follows the U.S. Senate confirmation Nov. 4, 2021, with Santos' term set to last for five years.

"Mr. Santos is a tremendous leader and I have full confidence that he will lead the Census Bureau with integrity in the years ahead," said Secretary of Commerce Gina M. Raimondo. "The Census Bureau is an invaluable asset to our government and the American people, providing essential data for businesses, government leaders and policymakers to make informed decisions. I look forward to working with Mr. Santos and congratulate him on his appointment."

**Santos' career spans more than 40 years in survey research, statistical design and analysis, and executive-level management. He specializes in quantitative and qualitative research design, including program evaluation, needs assessments, survey methodology and survey operations. He also has expertise in demographic and administrative data, decennial censuses, social policy research and equity issues in research.**



U.S. Census Bureau Director Robert Santos is sworn in Jan 5, 2022

"I'm deeply honored and humbled to lead the federal government's largest statistical agency," Santos said. "I've spent the majority of my career with organizations dedicated to delivering credible and informative statistical analysis for the public good. Census Bureau data have been essential to that work. It is such an immense privilege to join the Census Bureau and its very talented team."

Santos previously served for 15

years as vice president and chief methodologist at the Urban Institute and directed its Statistical Methods Group. He was executive vice president and partner of NuStats, a social science research firm in Austin, Texas.

Santos has held leadership positions in the nation's top survey research organizations, including the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago, where he

served as vice president of statistics and methodology and director of survey operations; the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, as director of survey operations; and Temple University's Institute for Survey Research, as senior study director and sampling statistician.

Additionally, Santos served as the 2021 president of the American Statistical Association (ASA) and is an ASA Fellow and recipient of the ASA Founder's Award in 2006. He was the 2014 president of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and received the 2021 AAPOR Award for Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement. Santos is also an elected member to the International Statistical Institute, and he served from 2017 to 2020 as a member of the Board of Scientific Counselors for the National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. He was a longtime member of the editorial board of Public Opinion Quarterly.

Santos was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas. He earned a B.A. in mathematics from Trinity University in San Antonio and an M.A. in statistics from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

(United States Census Press Release)

# 'If above 60, see your ophthalmologist at least once a year': Dr. VK Raju

**HYDERABAD/ NEW YORK (TIP):** Eminent ophthalmologist and President of Eye Foundation of America spoke on cataract surgery at the AAPI Global Health Summit held in Hyderabad from January 5 to 7, 2022.

"Cataract surgery was first described in Sanskrit literature 3000 years ago by Susruta of ancient India. We have come a long way since then. With modern technology, and skillful surgeon it has become an outpatient surgery. Not long ago, patients were hospitalized for 5-7 days", said Dr. Raju.

He described the modern cataract surgery and its benefits.

Cataracts are one of the leading causes of blurry vision in patients over 50. Other symptoms of cataracts like glare, halos, double vision, loss of contrast sensitivity, dimness of vision, or difficulty with depth perception can lead to trouble reading or difficulty with



Dr. VK Raju, eminent ophthalmologist and President of Eye Foundation of America speaking at the AAPI Global Health Summit in Hyderabad held from January 5 -7, 2022

driving during the day or night."

Multiple studies have shown that decreased vision in the elderly has been associated with a decrease in their mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing. In fact, the visual disturbances from cataracts have been shown to increase the risk of falling and hip fractures."

Cataract surgery is the only way to treat cataracts and is a low risk, quick, and efficient procedure. Having cataract surgery has been shown in multiple studies to decrease the rate of falls and fractures and improve the emotional, mental and physical wellbeing of patients, Dr. Raju explained.

His advice: if you are close to 60 years you should see your ophthalmologist once a year atleast. Today many eye problems can be prevented or treated if the ophthalmologist catches them early, he said.

## Tarrant county Fort Worth has Coronavirus Positivity Rate over 35%

**FORT WORTH, TX (TIP):** In case you missed it, here are four COVID updates from the first Tarrant County Commissioners' meeting of 2022, which was held Tuesday, January 4.

The County's positivity rate is at a record high

Data shows the positivity rate in Tarrant County is just over 35%, a number Public Health Director Vinny Taneja said is "a record high for the pandemic."

"(Of the) people that are getting tested, one in three are coming back positive," Taneja said. "That's a huge number in our community."

**No surprise: Demand for COVID testing has skyrocketed**

Before Christmas, testing sites were seeing 10 to 15 people a day on average, according to Taneja. Now, the public health director said some sites are seeing close to 1,000 people a day.

"I did hear quite a few complaints about people waiting four, five, six days for test results," Tarrant County Commissioner Devan Allen told the court Tuesday.

Taneja said plans are in the works to open more testing sites, including possibly one in White Settlement next week.

**The Tarrant County Sheriff's Office is getting some help**

The Tarrant County Sheriff's Office accepted a donation of 10,000 rapid COVID tests from the Texas Army National Guard for the second year in a



Tarrant County Public Health Director Vinny Taneja said the positivity rate is just over 35%, a number which is "a record high for the pandemic."

row. This week, TCSO announced 173 inmates have tested positive in the Tarrant County jail.

The county is encouraging residents to use its website -- not Google -- to find testing locations

Taneja said he's aware of the long wait times people have experienced at various testing sites recently -- a problem that's not unique to Tarrant County.

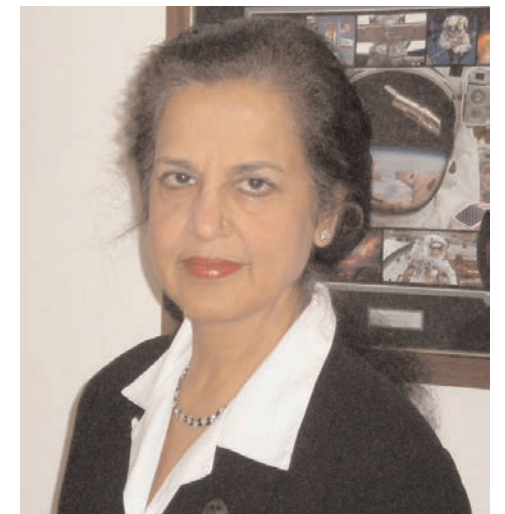
He said the county keeps its website updated, which can be a more effective tool than Google when trying to find an available and convenient testing location.

Once on the website, scroll down and click on "Additional Testing Sites" to view more links and a Google map showing more locations.

## Lucknow Woman Scientist Plays a Key Role in Launching of Ten Billion Dollar NASA's Webb Space Telescope

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):** "What are the odds of a girl child born in the newly formed Republic of India to become a Program Scientist at NASA," said Dr. Hashima Hasan reminiscing about her early school days during a recent NASA podcast interview. The words of her Class VI teacher in Loreto Convent, Lucknow, that they could do anything if worked hard made a big impact on her. Loreto Convent-an educational institution established in 1872 for girls-had recently allowed girls to take science subjects for their studies. She took the challenge and got interested in science. She was inspired by the scientific career of her great-uncle, Dr. Husain Zaheer, who was the Director-General of India's Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and later her aunt Dr. Najma Zaheer, a renowned biological scientist. Hashima recalled that her mother had unwavering faith in her capabilities and she encouraged her to pursue her ambitions. The inspiration to pursue space science was born when, in 1957, her grandmother gathered the entire family in the backyard of her home in the early dawn to watch Sputnik pass by. It was very fascinating to see the Sputnik in the clear sky.

Hashima completed a B.Sc. degree at Lucknow University, securing the fifth position, and went on to Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and obtained an M.Sc. (Physics) degree securing first place and a gold medal. She started a Ph. D. program under the tutelage of the legendary Dr. Zillur Rahman Khan. After completing the pre-requisite



Dr. Hashima Hasan, Deputy Program Scientist for the JWST at NASA

degree of M. Phil., she took the bold step of applying to the University of Oxford. With encouragement from Dr. Rais Ahmad, Head, Department of Physics, she applied and received a Commonwealth Scholarship and joined the University of Oxford, U.K. Three years later, with a D.Phil. (Theoretical Nuclear Physics) in hand, she returned to India as a post-doctoral scholar at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Bombay. With scholars like Dr. J. V. Narlikar, and Dr. Obaid Siddiqi, TIFR was a haven of intellectual thought. After two intense years at TIFR, she secured a faculty position at the Physics Department, University of Poona, Pune. She was the only non-Marathi-speaking faculty member.

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

## 12 cops killed, Russia sends troops to quell Kazakh unrest

**MOSCOW (TIP):** Dozens of protesters and 12 policemen died during extraordinarily violent demonstrations in Kazakhstan that saw government buildings stormed and set ablaze, authorities said on January 6. One police officer was found beheaded in escalating unrest that poses a growing challenge to authoritarian rule in the Central Asian nation.

Russia sent paratroopers into Kazakhstan to help put down the countrywide uprising.

Tens of thousands of people, some reportedly carrying clubs and shields, have taken to the streets in recent days in the worst protests the country has seen since gaining independence from the Soviet Union three decades ago. Although the demonstrations began over a near-doubling of prices for a type of vehicle fuel, their size and rapid spread suggest they reflect wider discontent in the country that has been under the rule of the same party since independence.

After breaking into the presidential residence and the mayor's office in the country's largest city on Wednesday, demonstrators continued to try to storm more buildings overnight.

"Dozens of attackers were liquidated," police spokeswoman Saltanat Azirbek said. Twelve police officers were killed in the unrest and 353 injured, according to city officials cited by a news channel.

While the President initially seemed to try to mollify the protesters, he later promised harsh measures to quell the unrest, which he blamed on "terrorist bands", and called on a Russia-led military alliance for help. — AP

## North Korea test-fires hypersonic missile

**SEOUL (TIP):** North Korea on January 6 announced that it has successfully conducted a test-firing of a hypersonic missile a day earlier, three months after it first showcased the new weapons system. On Wednesday, South Korea's military said the North fired what appeared to be a ballistic missile towards the East Sea from the northern province of Jagang, reports Yonhap News Agency. The missile made a "120 km lateral movement" from the initial launch azimuth and "precisely hit a set target 700 km away", Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said on Thursday but did not disclose the speed of the projectile. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un did not attend the firing. "The test launch clearly demonstrated the control and stability of the hypersonic gliding warhead which combined the multi-stage gliding jump flight and the strong lateral movement," the KCNA said. (IANS)

# Germany mulls new Covid restrictions as Omicron advances

**BERLIN (TIP):** Germany's leaders are set to consider possible new restrictions and changes to quarantine rules on January 7 as the new Omicron variant advances quickly.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz and the country's 16 state governors are likely to build on restrictions introduced just after Christmas that limited private gatherings to 10 people, among other things.

One measure under consideration is toughening a measure that requires people to provide proof of full vaccination or recovery to enter restaurants or bars. They could now be required to provide proof of either a booster shot or a fresh negative test.

Scholz and the governors also are expected to consider shortening required quarantine or self-isolation periods that are currently as long as 14 days, something that many other countries already have done.

The Covid-19 situation in Germany has been foggy for the past two weeks because of very patchy testing and slow reporting over the holiday period. Official figures, which authorities have acknowledged don't yet show the full picture, have shown a steady increase in



the infection rate over the past week.

On Friday, the national disease control centre, the Robert Koch Institute, reported an official rate of 303.4 new cases per 1,00,000 residents over the past seven days. Over the past 24 hours, 56,335 new cases were reported.

In its weekly report on Thursday, the institute said Omicron accounted for 44.3

per cent of cases tested for variants in Germany last week, up from 15.8 per cent the previous week.

Germany's vaccination campaign is regaining speed after the holidays. As of Thursday, 71.5 per cent of the population had received a full first vaccine course and 40.9 per cent had had a booster shot. —AP

# Kazakh leader ordered use of lethal force on 'terrorists'

**MOSCOW (TIP):** The President of Kazakhstan said on January 7 he authorised law enforcement to open fire on "terrorists" and shoot to kill, a move that comes after days of extremely violent protests in the former Soviet nation.

In a televised address to the nation, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev blamed the unrest on "terrorists" and "militants" and said that he had authorised the use of lethal force against them.

"Those who don't surrender will be eliminated," Tokayev said.

He also blasted calls for talks with the protesters made by some other countries as "nonsense". "What negotiations can be held with criminals, murderers?" Tokayev said.

Kazakhstan's Interior Ministry reported on Friday that 26 protesters had been killed during the unrest, 18 were wounded and more than 3,000 people have been detained.

A total of 18 law enforcement officers were reported killed as well, and over 700 sustained injuries.

Kazakhstan is experiencing the worst street protests since the country gained independence three decades ago. The demonstrations began over a near-doubling of prices for a type of vehicle fuel and quickly spread across the country, reflecting wider discontent over



the rule of the same party since independence. Protests have turned extremely violent, with government buildings set ablaze and scores of protesters and more than a dozen law enforcement officers killed. Internet across the country has been shut down, and two airports closed, including one in Almaty, the country's largest city.

In a concession, the government on Thursday announced a 180-day price cap on vehicle fuel and a moratorium on utility rate increases.

Tokayev has vacillated between trying to mollify the protesters, including accepting the resignation of his

government, and promising harsh measures to quell the unrest, which he blamed on "terrorist bands".

In what was seen as one such measure, the president has called on a Russia-led military alliance for help.

The alliance, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, includes the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Belarus, Armenia, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan and has started deploying troops to Kazakhstan for a peacekeeping mission.

Kazakh officials have insisted that the troops will not be fighting the demonstrators, and instead will take on

# Weak testing, data outage leave Brazil 'in the dark' as Omicron advances

**RIO DE JANEIRO (TIP):** Insufficient testing for Covid-19 and a data blackout caused by hackers have left Brazil in the dark as it grapples with a wave of infections from the Omicron coronavirus variant, health experts warn.

Brazilians with Covid-19 symptoms are facing long lines to get tested due to the lack of kits in a country without a comprehensive testing strategy since the start of the pandemic.

Substantial testing and genomic sequencing of confirmed infections are crucial to tracking and fighting the pandemic, especially with the onset of the highly contagious Omicron.

To make matters worse, some Health Ministry databases have been offline since an apparent ransomware attack seriously hampered the government's ability to gather data from state health authorities.

"In general, the registration system was bad from the start, and it got worse with the hacker attack, so we're really under water," said Gonzalo Vecina, former head of Brazilian health regulator Anvisa and professor at the University of Sao Paulo.

"We're in the dark," he said.

Despite having the world's third-deadliest outbreak after the United States and Russia, according to Reuters calculations, Brazil tests for Covid-19 far less than South American peers.

Over the last seven days, Brazil performed an average 0.23 tests per 1,000 inhabitants, according to statistics compiled by the Our World in Data website. By contrast, Argentina applied 2.15 tests per 1,000 people in the same period and Uruguay performed 3.88 tests per 1,000 inhabitants.



Demand for tests in Brazil surged during year-end holidays and many pharmacies and clinics ran out of kits. Inventory had dwindled as vaccination advanced in the country and cases fell.

## 'AN EXPRESSIVE INCREASE'

Despite limited data sources, Covid-19 cases are clearly rising in Brazil.

In Rio de Janeiro, the rolling seven-day average of confirmed cases jumped more than 2,000% since mid-December to 398 on Monday.

"We are seeing an expressive increase in the number of cases, dealing with patients and people in everyday life. And this increase is happening in the places where Omicron has been detected," said Esper Kallas, a doctor specialized in infectious diseases and professor at the University of Sao Paulo.

The Health Ministry did not respond to

a request for comment on how the cyberattack affected monitoring of the pandemic.

Health Minister Marcelo Queiroga has said that data is being collected but not made public.

The ministry's website was back online this week, but with numbers only through early December, before it was hacked.

Brazil has so far verified just 265 Omicron cases since late November, according to the ministry. Extensive sequencing in other countries showed Omicron quickly became the dominant variant, causing cases to surge in a matter of days.

The hope, experts say, is that Omicron does not seem as lethal as previous variants and its death toll may be limited in Brazil, where a vaccination campaign. Reuters

## Japan tycoon Maezawa returns from space with business dreams

**TOKYO (TIP):** "Space now," was what Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa wanted to tweet for years. He finally really did it, from the International Space Station.

"The space market holds so much potential," he said Friday at the Foreign Correspondents' Club in Tokyo, his first news conference in Japan after returning to earth before Christmas.

Maezawa, who heads a company called Start Today, is preparing to invest in various businesses which may develop from the ongoing research by NASA, the Japanese equivalent called JAXA and others. But he wants first to recover from his recent celestial adventure: returning to life with gravity has proved heavier than he'd expected, he said.

Maezawa, 46, blasted off in a Russian Soyuz spacecraft along with a Russian cosmonaut December 8, becoming the first self-paying tourist to visit the station since 2009.

He returned to earth after spending 12 days at the orbiting outpost, where he took videos of himself clowning around in weightlessness, shaping water droplets into bubbles and punting a golf ball drifting toward a flag in the spacecraft. The clips, taken by astronaut Yozo Hirano, who accompanied Maezawa, have been posted on YouTube, drawing millions of views. He tweeted "uchyu nau," or "space now," in the style Japanese often use on the popular social media to relay what they're up to, such as "partying now," or "dinner now." "Here is what I really wanted say. My first tweet from space," said the post following one with a photo of him wearing a T-shirt and shorts, floating cross-legged in a meditation pose.

He said he would like to tweet "moon now" next. He has booked an orbit around the moon aboard Tesla CEO Elon Musk's Starship, scheduled in the next few years, possibly as early as next year.

"I don't know when exactly I should tweet that," he said, as he wouldn't be landing on the moon. "Maybe when we get to the back side of the moon." Maezawa has more than 11 million Twitter followers and has emerged as a flamboyant celebrity known for a free-wheeling managerial style that's rare in Japan's conformist, staid business world. He ran an import CD business and played in a rock band before starting an online fashion business in 1998. Famous for dating movie stars, Maezawa has been both admired and ridiculed for his lavish purchases, including a Stradivarius violin and artworks by Jean-Michel Basquiat and Andy Warhol.

In 2019, Maezawa resigned as CEO of e-commerce company Zozo Inc. to devote his time to space travel, selling his business to Yahoo Japan. (AP)

## Small protest outside Djokovic Melbourne detention hotel

**MELBOURNE (TIP):** A small group of protesters supporting Novak Djokovic waved flags and banners outside an Australian immigration detention hotel where he remained on January 7.

Locked in a dispute over his COVID-19 vaccination status, the number 1 men's tennis player in the world is awaiting a court ruling on whether he can compete in the Australian Open later this month.

Djokovic, a vocal skeptic of vaccines, had travelled to Australia after Victoria state authorities granted him a medical exemption to the country's strict vaccination requirements.

But when he arrived late Wednesday, the Australian Border Force rejected his exemption as invalid and barred him



from entering the country.

A court hearing on his bid to stave off deportation was set for Monday, a week before the season's first major tennis tournament is set to begin.

The defending Australian Open champion is waiting it out in Melbourne

at a secure hotel used by immigration officials to house asylum seekers and refugees.

Djokovic is hoping to overtake rivals Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer and win his 21st Grand Slam singles title, the most by any player in men's tennis.

Djokovic's securing of an exemption so that he could play triggered an uproar and allegations of special treatment in Australia, where people spent months in lockdown and endured harsh travel restrictions at the height of the pandemic.

After his long-haul flight, the tennis star spent the night at the airport trying to convince authorities he had the necessary documentation, to no avail. (AP)

# Lohri: The harvest festival

Lohri is a popular winter folk festival celebrated in the northern region of the country, particularly in Punjab. Every year, it falls on January 13. This is the time the Sun starts moving towards the northern hemisphere marking the auspicious period of Uttarayan. Lohri is observed a night before Makar Sankranti, a festival that marks the end of the winter solstice and the beginning of longer days and shorter nights.

## Significance of Lohri

For the people of Punjab, the festival of Lohri holds great significance as it marks the beginning of the harvest season of Rabi crops in the state and the end of winter. It is celebrated by making a huge bonfire that symbolises the Sun bringing in warmth. The significance of the festival is both as a winter crop season celebration and a remembrance of the Sun deity.

Other legends explain the celebration as a folk reverence for fire or the goddess of Lohri.

## Lohri puja

On the day of Lohri, place the picture of Mahadev on a piece of black cloth. An earthen lamp must be lit in front of the deity and people make several offerings and puja to the deity. People usually turn to the West during this puja. After doing puja to Sri Mahadev, people go around the bonfire made of wood and cow dung cakes — singing, dancing and throwing in food items like sugarcane, jaggery and other eatables they have got as part of the puja offering.

## Lohri history and beliefs

As per the Punjabi folk tradition, Lohri's original can be traced back to the time when a legendary Punjabi hero, Dulla Bhatti rescued innocent girls from the clutches of lecherous men. It is enshrined in folk poetry that is sung during the winter festival of Lohri. The chieftain is believed to have rescued two Brahmin girls, Sundri and Mundri, from Akbar, who wanted them in his harem. Dulla Bhatti became their godfather and is believed to have married them off on Lohri with much pomp and festivity, directly challenging the authority of the emperor.

The tale of Sundri and Mundri was turned into a song that is sung during Lohri celebrations every year.

## Lohri celebrations

Just like many other Indian festivals, Lohri is celebrated in its own unique way. The festival is celebrated by lighting up a bonfire. People dance and sing around it. They eat and also throw popcorn, gur, rewaries, sugar-candies and sesame seeds into the fire. In traditional Punjabi families, dinner is served with gajak, sarson da saag and makki di roti on the day of Lohri festival.

Lohri holds special significance for the newly-married couple or the newborn child in the family and is celebrated with great enthusiasm on these occasions as it symbolises fertility.

Punjabi farmers observe the day after



Lohri (Maghi) as the beginning of the financial New Year.

## What is Happy Lohri?

Happy Lohri is the conventional greeting on Lohri. Rather than go to each other's homes to exchange sweets or mithai, like during Diwali, Lohri calls for everyone to meet at a common place. The community comes together and wishes each other a 'Happy Lohri' signifying the beginning of a new season. The word Lohri is derived from two words til (sesame) and rorhi (jaggery), which are traditionally eaten during the festival. The terms til and rorhi together used to sound like 'tilohri' earlier in history, gradually morphing into the term 'Lohri'. One the fire dies out, dinner includes crowd favorites like makki di roti te sarson da saag (cornflour pancakes and mustard spinach) and lassi (buttermilk).

Lohri celebrations mark the beginning of the harvest season. It is celebrated to offer thanks for making a bounteous harvest possible. Lohri night traditionally falls on the longest night of the year known as the winter solstice. Lohri festival indicates that the biting cold of the winter is ending and happy sunny days are arriving.

## What do we do on Lohri?

Bonfire is the top highlight of Lohri. Traditionally, families used to gather around bonfires and sing folk songs like Sundariye Mundariye Ho. Nowadays, most people plug in a speaker to play songs off of YouTube or other music apps. Dishes made of rewri, gajak, peanuts and other seasonal products are snacks — as well as bonfire fodder.

## What do you put on a Lohri



## fire?

People sing and dance around the Lohri fire and throw foods like gajak, popcorn, puffed rice and others into the fire as 'tributes' to the gods in exchange for blessings. Lohri is also considered especially auspicious for newlywed couples and parents with newborn babies.

## Why do we burn fire on Lohri?

Folklore of Punjab believes that the

flames of the bonfire lit on the day of Lohri carry the messages and prayers of the people to the sun god to bring warmth to the planet to help crops grow. In exchange, the sun god blesses the land and ends the days of gloom and cold. The next day is celebrated as Makar Sankranti. For some, the bonfire symbolically indicates that the bright days are ahead of the people's lives and acts as the carrier of people's prayers to the sun god — it's just a really good excuse to party.



**M**akar Sankranti is the first major festival to be celebrated in India and usually takes place in January, this year the festival will be celebrated on January 14. Makar Sankranti is a major harvest festival celebrated by Hindus across India, however different states celebrated the festival under different names, traditions and festivities. Makar Sankranti marks the end of winter as well as the beginning of longer days on account of the sun's northward journey, this period is also known as Uttarayan on this account and is considered to be very auspicious.

The harvest festival is both a religious as well as seasonal observance, and is dedicated to Lord Surya, the Sun God and marks the sun's transit into Makara (Capricorn) raashi (zodiac sign). The festival is majorly celebrated in the Indian Subcontinent and also by Indians and Hindus around the world.

The festivities related to Makar Sankranti have many names depending on the region it is being celebrated in. For example, by north Indian Hindus and Sikhs, it is called Maghi and is preceded by Lohri. It is called Makara Sankranti and also Poush songkranti in Maharashtra, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Karnataka and Telangana, Sukarat in central India, Magh Bihu by Assamese, and Thai Pongal or Pongal by Tamils.

While festivities may not be at par as previous years on account of the coronavirus pandemic, usually on this day devotees take a dip in rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Krishna and Cauvery that are considered to be holy. For believers, taking a dip washes away their sins, it is also considered a time of peace and prosperity and many spiritual practices are conducted on this day. Sesame and jaggery ladoos or chikkis are distributed on this day. Popularly referred to as til-gud. The sweet signifies that people must stay together in peace and harmony despite their differences. In Gujarat, kite flying is organised as part of Makar Sankranti festivities. It is also believed that those who die on Makar Sankranti are not According to Hindu belief, if one dies on Makar Sankranti they are not reborn, but go straight to paradise.

The auspicious day of Makar Sankranti will fall on Friday, 14 January 2022.

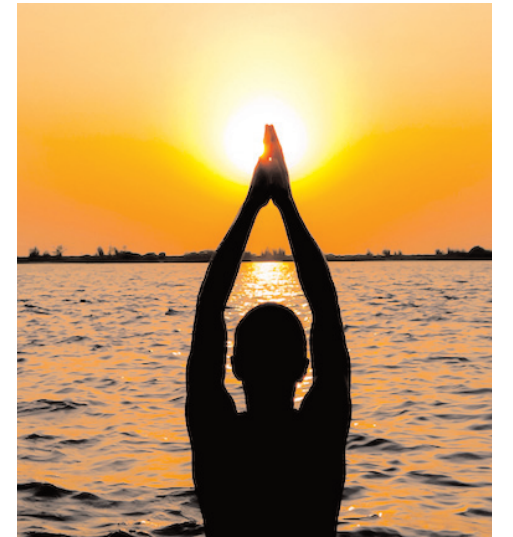
Believe goes that Makar Sankranti is the most auspicious day of the year and has a very sacred mythological story associated. It marks the end of an inauspicious phase that begins around mid-December. Further, it is also believed that any sacred Makar Sankranti ritual can be performed from this day onwards. The auspicious day of Makar Sankranti also marks the beginning of warmer and longer days as compared to nights. Now let's know what mythology says about this lucky day.

Mata Mahishasurmardini – a powerful form of Goddess Durga, had descended with the purpose of destroying Mahishasur. The Goddess had first set foot on earth, in the Kataraj ashram of Rishi Kardam and Devahuti.

It is also believed that on this day Lord Sun visits God Shani who is the owner of the constellation Makar. Since Shani is the foster child of Sun, they do not share a good relation. However, it is Shani's responsibility to take care of his father. Hence, this day signifies the priority of responsibilities.

Even in the epic of Mahabharata, an

# Makar Sankranti



on this day is regarded as most auspicious. A big one-month long 'Magha-Mela' fair begins at Prayag in Allahabad on this occasion. Apart from Triveni, ritual bathing also takes place at many places like Haridwar and Garh Mukteshwar in Uttar Pradesh, and Patna in Bihar.

## Bengal

The famous Ganga Sagar river witnesses a huge Mela every year during Makar Sankranti. This is the place where river Ganga is believed to have divided into the nether region and vivified the ashes of the sixty thousand ancestors of King Bhagirath. This meal is attended by a large number of pilgrims from all over the country.

## Tamil Nadu

Pongal is the festival which is very similar to Makar Sankranti and is one of the major festivities of South India. Rice and pulses cooked together in ghee and milk are offered to the family deity after the ritual worship. In this, they worship the Sun God.

## Andhra Pradesh

The people of Andhra celebrate it for three long days and call it 'Pedda Panduga' meaning big festival. The whole event lasts for four days, the first day Bhogi, the second day Sankranti, the third day Kanuma and the fourth day, Mukkanuma.

## Gujarat

For the Gujarati's, the festival is more about socializing and show your love for your relatives. They exchange gifts, arrange dinners and perform Puja together. The Gujarati Pundits on this auspicious day grant scholarships to students for higher studies in astrology and philosophy. This festival thus helps the maintenance of social relationships within the family, caste, and community.

## Punjab

Punjab celebrated this occasion as Lohri. This period being the coldest of the year they lit huge bonfires and participate in entertaining activities. Sweets, sugarcane, and rice are thrown in the bonfires, around which friends and relatives gather together. The following day, which is Sankranti, is celebrated as MAGHI. The Punjabi dance their famous Bhangra dance and eat sumptuous dinner together.

episode mentions how people in that era also considered the day as auspicious. Bhishma Pitamah even after being wounded in the Mahabharata war lingered on till Uttarayan set in so that he can attain heavenly abode inauspicious times. It is said that death on this day brings Moksha or salvation to the deceased.

## History of Makar Sankranti

The great savior of his ancestors, Maharaj Bhagirath, did great Tapasya to bring Gangaji down on the earth for the redemption of 60,000 sons of Maharaj Sagar, who were burnt to ashes at the Kapil Muni Ashram, near the present-day Ganga Sagar. It was on this day that Bhagirath finally did tarpan with the Ganges water for his unfortunate ancestors and thereby liberated them from the curse. Thus Makar Sankranti marks the start of good luck and fortune for all endeavors.

Another legend says that any boy or girl who takes a bath at any of the holy places will be blessed with a charming and beautiful partner. Another belief associated with the holy dip is that Lord Vishnu himself comes down to take a dip in the Triveni Sangam and therefore anyone who bathes there is blessed with his grace.

## Culture and Festivity of Makar

## Sankranti in different states

Makar Sankranti is celebrated differently at different places and has a variety of rituals associated.

### Maharashtra

Maharashtra takes the limelight when it comes to the celebration of Makar Sankranti. People here come together to exchange sweets especially laddus made of Til (Sesame seeds) and Jaggery. Women who are married get together to exchange utensils and put Haldi Kumkum on their forehead. Hindus wear ornaments made of 'Halwa' on this day.

### Orissa

In Orissa, families get together to prepare some authentic delicacies on the eve of Makar Sankranti. They prepare a special dish called 'Ghantaa' which is a curry made of different cereals and vegetables. They also prepare some sweet dishes. Many of Orissa celebrate the day of Sankranti by lighting bonfires, dancing and eating their particular dishes sitting together. The Bhaya tribals of Orissa have their Magh yatra in which small home-made articles are put for sale.

### Uttar Pradesh

In Uttar Pradesh, Sankranti is called 'Khichiri'. Taking a dip in the holy rivers



## Anushka-starrer 'Chakda Xpress' on Jhulan Goswami to release on Netflix

Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma is all set to make her comeback after three years with the film 'Chakda Xpress' based on the life of female Indian cricketer Jhulan Goswami. The movie will have an OTT release on Netflix.

Anushka calls 'Chakda Xpress' a really special film because it "is essentially a story of tremendous sacrifice." "Chakda Xpress is inspired by the life and times of former Indian captain Jhulan Goswami and it will be an eye-opener into the world of women's cricket. At a time when Jhulan decided to become a cricketer and make her country proud on the global stage, it was very tough for women to even think of playing the sport," she said.

Anushka shared that the film is a dramatic retelling of several instances that shaped her life and also women's cricket. "From support systems, to facilities, to having a stable income from playing the game, to even having a future in cricket - very little propelled women of India to take up cricket as a profession. Jhulan had a fighting and extremely uncertain cricketing career and she stayed motivated to make her country proud."

## Not married yet! Tanishaa Mukerji quashes secret wedding rumours

For some actors, relationships or movie offers make buzz, but for actor Tanishaa Mukerji, her toe ring did the job. On Tuesday, Mukerji, who is in Goa currently, posted a picture of her feet with toe rings, which left the internet users wondering if the actor had tied the knot secretly. Many comments mentioned that toe rings are an essential ornament that married woman adorn. An "amused" Mukerji was not "aware" of all the conjectures spinning on the net, courtesy of being in a no network area.

"I like wearing toe rings and I thought it looked good. That's why, I took a picture and posted it. There's nothing more to it. Do I need to justify my fashion sense to people? (laughs)" questions Mukerji.

Talking about marriage, the former Bigg Boss contestant admits it is indeed on her mind. "Of course, everybody thinks about it. My dream wedding keeps changing till I find the dream man to get married," she quips, and adds, "I'm not breaking all the hearts yet. If and when I tie the knot, I will let the world know it. I'm not a quiet person. It'll (the wedding) be a fanfare."

So does that mean she has not found her dream man yet? She reverts, "The whole world knows that I'm single. There's no need to keep it ambiguous. And I'm happy being single."

Source: HT



## Red-faced Kartik Aaryan says he isn't a ladies' magnet

Actor Kartik Aaryan spoke about his reputation as a ladies' man, and chalked it down to his 'fun-loving' nature and approachability. The actor has been linked with several past co-stars, and was responding to high praise given to him by his new co-actor, Aalaya F.

The two will be seen together in the upcoming film Freddy. He will also reunite with his Lukka Chuppi co-star Kriti Sanon in the film Shehzada. In an interview to Bollywood Hungama, a red-faced Kartik was asked about being a 'magnet' for the ladies. He said, "This isn't something that I've decoded. Nor do I think I'm any sort of magnet. I'm single, after all."

He continued, "Maybe I'm fun to hang with. I'm a fun-loving guy, I like to enjoy myself, crack jokes. I'm honest with my work also. It's not just about girls, it's about girls and guys. I love hanging out with people who I work with. So, that's how it is, to sum it up. The 'magnetism' applies to all sorts of people, not just one gender."

Kartik broke out after the back-to-back box office success of Pyaar Ka PUNCHAMA 2 and Sonu Ki Titu Ki Sweetie, both directed by Luv Ranjan. He has since appeared in the commercially successful films Luka Chuppi and Pati Patni Aur Woh. His last release was the Netflix thriller Dhamaka, directed by Ram Madhvani. It was a change of pace for the actor, who was best known for his romantic comedies.

Besides Shehzada and Freddy, he has Captain India, Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 and Satyanarayan Ki Katha in the pipeline. Source: Indian Express



## Sanya Malhotra recalls putting extra pressure on herself for Dangal

In a span of five years, Sanya Malhotra has delivered acclaimed performances featuring in a record-breaking blockbuster, a National Award-winning dramedy and a series of well-received films- all while battling crippling self-doubt as a performer, which she says didn't let her celebrate her success.

Malhotra burst onto the scene as wrestler Babita Kumari in her 2016 debut Dangal. The global success of the Aamir Khan-headlined sports drama was followed by Vishal Bhardwaj's boisterous Pataakha, where she played one half of the quarrelling sister duo.

The actor then balanced the quirk of Delhi-set Badhaai Ho with the silence of Ritesh Batra's quaint Photograph.

In an interview with PTI, the 29-year-old actor said all her best-reviewed performances were a result of a maddening pressure to not make a single misstep.

"Earlier, I was too harsh on myself as an actor. I would get mad at myself for making mistakes, which was definitely not helping me with anything. I was harsh on myself because maybe I was still trying to learn about so many things, about the industry, the job. Even a small mistake used to tick me off. I was trying to be perfect in everything," Malhotra said.

Malhotra recalled how she would never like her work despite the critical acclaim that came her way. The dislike was so intense, she would cry herself to sleep, she said.

"Whenever a film used to come out, I would not listen to anyone and first give myself a report- 'I didn't do this well', so that if next time I got an opportunity like that, I should work harder. After every release, I would go back home and cry myself to sleep. My family has seen it so much."

Source: PTI





## Chris Evans in talks to star as Gene Kelly in new film

Captain America star Chris Evans is in discussions to star as legendary actor Gene Kelly in a film produced by John Logan. The untitled film is based on Evans' original idea in which a 12-year-old boy who works on the MGM Lot in the 1950s finds an imaginary friend in Kelly while working on his newest film, reported Variety quoting sources.

Evans is set to produce the film alongside Logan, who is also writing the script.

His 'Knives Out' director Rian Johnson and Ram Bergman will produce through their company T-Street Productions, as will Mark Kassen after they last worked together on the thriller in 2019. Johnson is also working on a sequel to "Knives Out".

Logan is best known for writing Ridley Scott's 'Gladiator' Martin Scorsese's 'The Aviator' and James Bond movie 'Skyfall'.

Evans is also working with Russo Brothers' 'The Gray Man', which also features Ryan Gosling.

# Money Heist's Stockholm aka Esther reveals Lord Ganesha's painting at her house

A picture of Spanish actor Esther Acebo's house with Lord Ganesha's painting in the background is doing rounds on the internet. Esther is known for playing the character of Stockholm in the hit show Money Heist.

On Wednesday, Jan 5, many Internet users posted screenshots from a video that Esther posted on social media. One person shared the picture on Twitter and wrote, "Proud moment for India Spanish actress @EstherAcebo to international fame for her role as Mónica Gaztambide aka #Stockholm in the hit @netflix series #MoneyHeist. who is proudly displaying vedic pictures of lord #Ganesha at her home in one of her video."

Another one tweeted, "Money Heist fame @estheracebo unveils painting of lord Ganesha in her home and pictures is going viral Spanish actress Esther Acebo rose to international fame for her role as Monica Gaztambide aka Stockholm in the hit Netflix series La Casa de Papel aka money heist #Ganesha." While one said, "So proud of it."

Esther is known for playing the role of Mónica Gaztambide (Stockholm) in Money Heist. She has also starred in Ángel o Demonio, Antes de perder and in the film Los Encantados. Last year, the Hindi remake of Money Heist, titled Three Monkeys was announced. Actor Arjun Rampal will be playing the role of the professor, which is essayed by Álvaro Morte in the original series.

Arjun posted a picture of himself from the sets in November and captioned it, "Lights camera action. On set again. A new journey begins. #ThreeMonkeys #abbasmustanhusain #Mumbai #filmset #Avpictureproductions"



## Squid Game star Lee Jung Jae to boycott Golden Globes 2022

Squid Game star Lee Jung Jae will not attend the Golden Globes 2022, despite being nominated for the awards. The actor, who starred in the dystopian drama, has been nominated for Best Performance By An Actor in a television series. Squid Game was also nominated for Best Television Series - Drama and O Yeong Su was nominated for Best Supporting Actor - Television.

On January 5, Lee Jung Jae's management company, Artist Company, released a statement that read, "He is immensely grateful to have been nominated in the Best Actor category at the Golden Globes, but he has decided not to attend the ceremony. He recognizes that Netflix is not participating in the Golden Globes, as has been widely reported around the world. He also made the decision considering other factors like the COVID-19 situation and the quarantine requirements."

While the Golden Globes is precursor to the Academy Awards, it came under fire for allegations of corruption and lack of diversity among the members of the HFPA (Hollywood Foreign Press Association). As a result, Hollywood called for a boycott of the award ceremony, and studios like Netflix, Warner Media and Amazon declared that they will not participate in the ceremony, till HFPA has new reforms in place.



## Keanu Reeves reportedly donated 70% of his Matrix fees for cancer research

Actor Keanu Reeves is being hailed as one of the most charitable stars in Hollywood. The actor had reportedly donated 70 percent of his salary from the original The Matrix film for cancer research.

As per New York Post, Keanu fees was a sum \$10 million for the 1999 movie The Matrix, before in addition to further earnings of \$35 million as the movie turned out to be a huge success. Lad Bible reports, Keanu donated 70 per cent of his earnings for leukaemia research. The reported donation was made at a time when Keanu's younger sister Kim was already battling the cancer for years.

As soon as the news came to light, Keanu's fans started reacting to it. One person took to Twitter, "Love Keanu. What a role model." Another one wrote, "Keanu is like nobody else. What a great man" One more added, "As a family that has been in the battle against breast cancer for 5 years now... thank you, Keanu Reeves! You are one of my favourite actors ever."

Keanu's sister Kim was detected with blood cancer in 1991. Keanu even created a charity foundation to help those battling cancer., about which he opened up sometime in 2009. Last year, he auctioned off a Zoom date with himself and donated the money to a summer program for children battling cancer in Idaho.



# Hair care mistakes and ways to avoid them



Make it sacrosanct that you never use silicone, mineral oil, or dye with harmful ingredients as part of your hair care routine, said Clelia Cecilia Angelon, founder and CEO, Surya Brasil.

"Different people face different kinds of hair and scalp issues, induced majorly by their hormonal behaviour, texture, skin conditions and the hair care regimen they follow. We also contribute to the woes with some very common mistakes, which might not appear as damaging as they actually turn out to be in the long run," she added.

The problems that these mistakes can cause include frizz, double ends, breakage and excessive greasiness, among others. Luckily, it is easy to nurture our hair and scalp while avoiding all the damaging mistakes, said the founder and CEO of Surya Brasil.

## Trapping and/or sleeping with wet hair

Dermatologists and hair experts suggest that holding damp strands can make the hair more prone to breakage. As such, those fond of sporting a ponytail shortly after a hair wash or bath might want to reconsider their habit. When damp hair strands are tightened and pulled for a hairdo, it can cause traction alopecia or hair fall. Hairline failures are also a possibility that cannot be ruled out in such instances.

"In addition to the aforementioned mistake, one also needs to avoid going to sleep with damp or wet hair. Doing so, not only causes stress to the hair threads, it ends up allowing the proliferation of fungus in the scalp," she shared.

## Applying mask/creams directly to the root

People who have curly hair often battle acute dryness,

and what they need are products that have the potential to 'quiet their baby hair'. But it must be noted that such products, especially hair masks or creams, must be applied on the roots and not the scalp. If the root is oily, just apply the product two fingers below it. The best way, though, is to apply on the strands away from the root so that the product does not block the pores. This would help avoid hair and scalp related problems like itching or dandruff.

Also, always read the ingredients and go for Ayurvedic herbs, plant extracts, and natural minerals.

## Foam or no foam?

It is a common perception about shampoos that ones that lather more are best when it comes to cleaning and cleansing the hair and scalp area. Whereas, the fact is that foam is actually triggered by sulphate, a substance that is quite harmful for our hair health. Understandably, this is one of the most common mistakes that people commit while caring for their hair. Next time you need to spend on a shampoo, make sure it is sulphate-free, as doing so would allow you to prevent dryness, breakage, or frizz.

## Dyeing hair

If you dye your hair, look for natural dyes, with no harmful ingredients. Free of PPD (p-Phenylenediamine), paraben, EDTA (Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid), sulfates, resorcinol, mineral oil, sodium chloride, sodium perborate, hydrogen peroxide, synthetic fragrance, gluten and ammonia and its by-products (Ethanalamine, Diethanolamine and Triethanolamine).

Source: Indian Express

## Railway lamb curry

Try this spicy lamb curry, so named as it was once cooked by the chefs working on the Indian railways in the 1900s. Lamb on the bone gives loads of flavour



### Ingredients

- 8 garlic cloves, crushed, thumb-sized piece ginger finely grated, 2 tsp turmeric
- 800g leg of lamb on the bone, cut into bite-sized pieces, 3 tbsp vegetable oil
- 10-12 curry leaves, 1 onion, finely chopped
- 450ml lamb stock, 1 medium potato, peeled and cut into chunks, 250ml coconut milk
- 2 tsp tamarind paste, rice or roti, to serve

### For the spice mix

- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 2 tsp fennel seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 6-7 dried Kashmiri chillies (or mild dried red chillies), stalks removed

### Method

#### STEP 1

Mix the garlic, ginger, turmeric and lamb together in a large mixing bowl, then leave the lamb to marinate in the fridge for 1 hr or preferably overnight.

#### STEP 2

Toast the spice mix ingredients in a dry frying pan for 12 mins over a low heat, stirring occasionally, until they release their aroma. Leave to cool, then grind to a fine powder using a spice grinder or pestle and mortar. Set aside.

#### STEP 3

Heat the oil over a medium heat in a heavy-based, large saucepan. Add the curry leaves and onions, and fry for 15-17 mins, stirring well. As the onions begin to change colour, add the lamb and fry for 10 mins. Add the spice powder and turn the heat up slightly. Stir continuously for 5 mins. Pour in the stock and season to taste. Bring to the boil, then turn down to a simmer. Put the lid on and cook for 40 mins. Stir halfway through cooking.

#### STEP 4

Tip in the potato and continue cooking for 15 mins. Add the coconut milk along with the tamarind paste and simmer for 10 mins with the lid off to reduce. Serve warm with rice or roti.



## Give it your all before leaving

Actively trying to better the relationship – such as working on breaking unhealthy habits or trying couples therapy – before you end it for good can help you avoid "could haves" and "should haves" that you might dwell on down the line. "Knowing that you gave it your all to improve the relationship and it did not work will allow

# How to break up with someone you love

you to heal faster," says Ana De la Cruz, LMFT, relationship therapist at Choosing Therapy.

### Know that it will hurt

There's no need to sugar coat it: breakups are hard, so you should keep in mind that it's absolutely normal to feel pain during this process. While this is scary, it shouldn't be a reason to go back on your decision to break up. "Breaking up with someone you love is probably the hardest decision of your life. You might feel that you are literally pulling a piece of your heart out," says De la Cruz.

### Know your "why" and stand your ground

Having a clear reason (or reasons) why the relationship needs to end can help you stand your ground throughout

the breakup process, says De la Cruz. This way, you can be prepared if your partner tries to convince you to change your mind. Stay strong and remember exactly why the relationship isn't working out for you. Tune into the logical side of your brain rather than getting overtaken by emotion.

### Don't try to be friends right away

Taking time apart and temporarily cutting contact can help you heal post-breakup. Know that it's okay that you and your ex won't be friends right away. "Trying to jump into a friendship right away will just be confusing and painful. It's possible to be friends down the road, but only once both parties have processed the breakup and moved on," says Ashera DeRosa, LMFT, relationship therapist at Whole Stories Therapy. Source: Business Insider

# Covid-19 can cause serious kidney damage, warns expert

**C**ovid-19 can badly affect kidneys of even those people who did not have any history of kidney diseases earlier. The deadly virus has caused serious long-term kidney damage in people to the extent that they needed dialysis, said a nephrologist.

While coronavirus is known to affect lungs, its damage to other organs like brain, heart and kidney is now being studied.

"Covid has been causing a lot of serious kidney issues even in people who were not affected by any kind of kidney ailment earlier. Many people affected by Covid have been showing signs of kidney damage, some so severe to the extent that they have required dialysis. Almost 30% of all people who have suffered from Covid infection have had kidney problems. People who had underlying kidney disease if they had Covid infection, they had very severe illnesses sometimes resulting in death," said Dr Samir Tawakley, Sr Consultant- Nephrology at Apollo Hospitals in a FB live session.

Elderly who are over 60 years of age, people with diabetes, with hypertension, those who have heart problems and obese are at a high risk of developing kidney related complications.



The expert says Covid can either cause direct damage to the cells of the kidney, or increase blood clotting that reduces blood flow to kidneys.

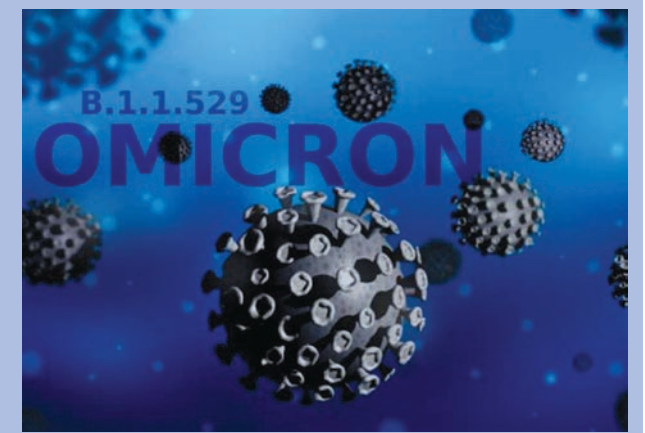
He adds that reduced oxygen level in blood also has a damaging effect on kidney structure. Opening up on the symptoms of a person who has kidney disease due to Covid, Dr Tawakley said the person will have reduced urine output, swelling all over the body, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, lethargy, restlessness,

weakness and in severe cases confusion, coma and seizures.

The expert however says that the Covid infection does not only necessarily cause chronic problems, and can also cause acute kidney injury which in most circumstances is reversible.

"Almost 35% more chances of developing a chronic kidney problem are there if you have had a covid infection as compared to the person who did not have a covid infection," says Dr Tawakley.

Source: HT



## Omicron surge could differ per country: WHO

**T**op World Health Organisation official says low hospitalisation and death rates in South Africa due to the omicron variant cannot be considered a template for how the variant will fare as it surges in other countries.

Dr. Abdi Mahamud, Covid-19 incident manager at the UN health agency, notes a "decoupling" between case counts and deaths in the country, which first announced the emergence of the fast-spreading new variant.

He said that in terms of hospitalisations South Africa remains "very low, and the death has remained very, very low."

But Mahamud says "it cannot be extrapolated from South Africa to other countries, because each is country is unique on its own". By its latest count, WHO says 128 countries had confirmed cases of the new variant that first emerged in southern Africa in November, but many other places — which may not have complete testing capabilities — are believed to have it too.

Mahamud notes that omicron has shown nearly unprecedented transmissibility for a virus.

He notes a "remarkable increase" in cases in the United States, where "we are seeing more and more hospitalisations coming along". But he did cite an increasing number of studies showing omicron affects the upper part of the body, whereas other versions devastated lung function and caused severe pneumonia that led to many deaths.

Mahamud says that could be "good news" but that more studies are needed to get a full picture.

## Hospitalisation figures may better reflect Omicron severity: Fauci

The number of hospitalisations due to the Omicron variant is a better measure to understand its severity than the traditional case-count of new infections, top US infectious disease expert Dr Anthony Fauci has said. Fauci has joined a growing body of experts who argue that case counts 'don't reflect what they used to', as data suggests Omicron is less severe but more contagious, the Guardian reported.

However, referring to the Omicron surge in the US as a "tsunami", Fauci also cautioned the public not to be fooled by preliminary data suggesting the variant lacks the severity of earlier Covid-19 variants, such as Delta.

## Simple ways to practise mindful eating

**M**indful eating is an essential part of healthy living. "As the name suggests, mindful or thoughtful eating means eating food as per quality and not quantity," said Naman Bhurani, cofounder, Vediko.

As per Bhurani, to understand what is best for ones body, it is important to know ones body type first and then mindfully choose the right food. "Everyone's body can be divided into three categories — vata, pitha, and kapha. So, people with pitha body type must consume sheesham honey and gulkand as these are natural coolants. Similarly, people having kapha body type must consume tulsi, honey and amla," he suggested.

"It must, hence, also be noted that no one diet suits everyone. Your diet depends on your goal, or results that you wish to achieve. As such, even a wrong healthy diet will not do much good to the body," he said.

### What can you do?

#### Plan your kitchen on your own

Hunger, cravings, emotional breakdowns, or joy — everything leads you to your kitchen and that's where you must invest properly. A well thought out pantry will be helpful when you are in a mood to eat something. But this also means a lot of replacements need to be done. For instance, swap packages of chips with homemade chips, or dry fruits, or fruits. This way, when you wish to reach out to unhealthy food, you'll have a better option.

#### Avoid overeating

Our body is made in a way that every time we eat wrong, it gives us signs. Unfortunately, we tend to ignore them. "Overeating is one such sign. We always know when our tummy is full but sometimes we eat more than required. This isn't good and a check is a must. Understand what your body needs and you'll see



immediate changes," he said.

#### Eat consciously

Have you realised how much you eat while watching TV? It's a common problem that's often ignored. Attending to your plate and enjoying your meals is a mandate for mindful eating. When you enjoy your meal, you'll enjoy all the flavours at different levels. Often while we're watching something and having our meal, we ignore how much we're eating.

"Small practices with an intention to achieve mindfulness is all we need. Let 2022 be the reason to kickstart this healthy habit," Bhurani said.

Source: Indian Express

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## Samsung may replace Galaxy Note 22 with Galaxy S22 Ultra: Report

South Korean tech giant Samsung is gearing up to launch its Galaxy S-series flagship lineup, and now a new report has claimed that unlike the Galaxy S21, Ultra will have a Galaxy Note design.

The successor will come with a built-in S Pen, just like all the Galaxy Notes that house their S Pens, reports GSMarena.

Galaxy S22 Ultra is also expected to come with 1TB internal storage.

It is likely that the 1TB internal storage model will come packed with 16GB RAM. There will also be a 12GB RAM model and three other internal storage options -- 128GB, 256GB, and 512GB.

This won't be the first time Samsung will offer a 1TB storage version for its smartphone. A couple of years back, in 2019, the company had launched the Galaxy S10 Plus with 1TB of internal storage as well as a microSD card slot, the report said.

In addition, the Galaxy S22 Ultra, will be better at stabilising videos.

An AI-assisted Wide Shift OIS feature will help in achieving better stabilisation of videos, effectively reducing camera shake by four times when compared to the S21 Ultra.

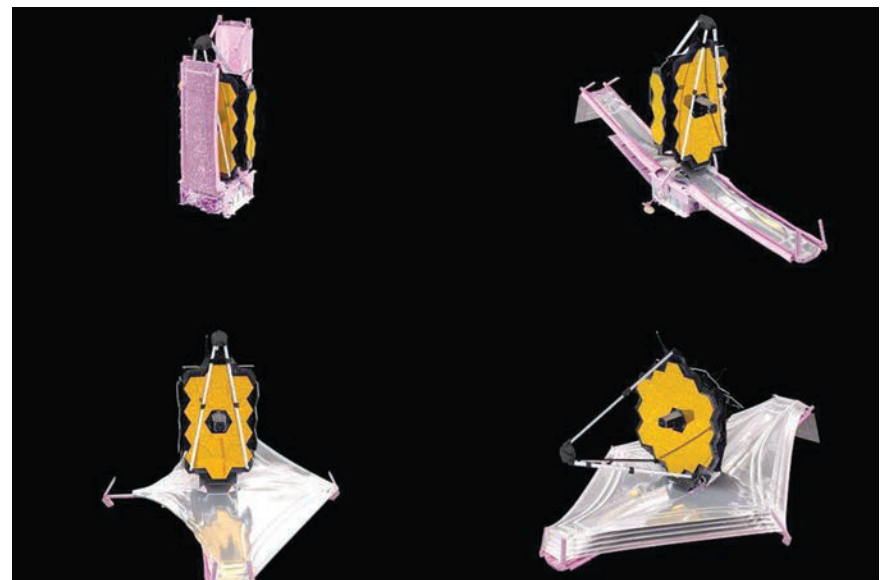
# NASA nails trickiest job on newly launched James Webb Space Telescope

NASA aced the most complicated, critical job on its newly launched space telescope Tuesday: unrolling and stretching a sunshade the size of a tennis court.

Ground controllers cheered and bumped fists once the fifth and final layer of the sunshade was tightly secured. It took just 1 1/2 days to tighten the ultra-thin layers using motor-driven cables, half the expected time.

The 7-ton James Webb Space Telescope is so big that the sunshield and the primary gold-plated mirror had to be folded for launch. The sunshield is especially unwieldy — it spans 70 feet by 46 feet (21 metres by 14 metres) to keep all the infrared, heat-sensing science instruments in constant subzero shadow.

The \$10 billion telescope is more than halfway toward its destination 1 million miles (1.6 million kilometers) away, following its Christmas Day send-off. It is the biggest and most powerful observatory ever launched — 100 times more powerful than the Hubble Space Telescope — enabling it to peer back to almost the beginning of time.



This combination of images from a computer animation made available by NASA in December 2021 depicts the unfolding of the components of the James Webb Space Telescope. (NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center Conceptual Image Lab via AP)

Considered Hubble's successor, Webb will attempt to hunt down light from the universe's first stars and galaxies, created 3.7 billion years ago.

"This is a really big moment," project manager Bill Ochs told the control team in Baltimore. "We've still got a lot of work to do, but

getting the sunshield out and deployed is really, really big."

Engineers spent years redoing and tweaking the shade. At one point, dozens of fasteners fell off during a vibration test. That made Tuesday's success all the sweeter, since nothing like this had ever been attempted before in space.

## This TV remote uses radio waves from router for charging

Samsung at the CES 2022 has showcased a new TV remote that uses radio waves from the home router to stay charged.

The company had earlier introduced a solar-powered Eco Remote for its 2021 TVs at the CES event last year.

This year, Samsung has added RF (radio frequency) harvesting capabilities that let the remote preserve its charge by "collecting routers' radio waves and converting them to energy," reports The Verge.

The new Eco Remote can also be charged from both outdoor and indoor light or over USB-C.

The TV remote "is meant to better complement Samsung's 'lifestyle' TVs like The Frame, Serif, and Sero.

Samsung's Visual Display Business is making its TVs more sustainable by adopting eco-friendly packaging and solar-cell-powered remote controls.

The remote control is made using renewable plastic and powered by photovoltaic energy rather than disposable batteries.

"Supposing that a typical TV is used for around seven years, changing the batteries in its remote just once a year would mean that 14 batteries would get used and thrown out," according to Kwanyoung Kim, a Samsung engineer.

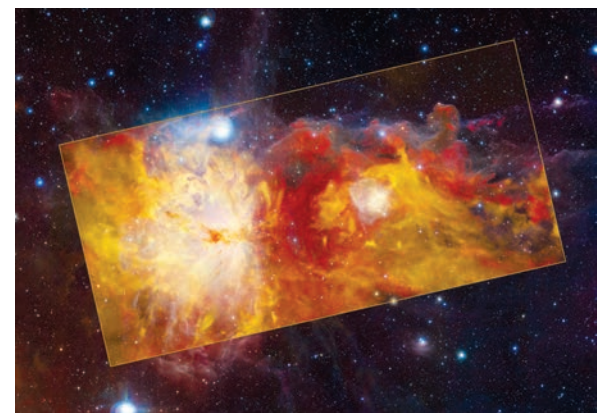
"If we apply that number to Samsung Electronics' expected annual global TV sales, it amounts to approximately 99 million discarded batteries. If we apply it to annual TV sales overall, it adds up to nearly 3.1 billion batteries," the company said last year.

Source: IANS



## European Southern Observatory releases new image of Orion's Flame Nebula

The European Southern Observatory has released a new image of Orion's Flame Nebula. Named NGC 2024, the Flame Nebula is a large star-forming region located in the Orion constellation situated about 1,400 light-years from Earth. The Orion constellations is easily visible high in the night sky. You can spot Orion's "belt" consisting of three bright blue stars.



The image was taken using the ESO-operated Atacama Pathfinder Experiment (APEX), located in the Atacama Desert. The team used radio waves to capture the fiery picture.

Former ESO astronomer Thomas Stanke and his team used the new SuperCam instrument at APEX to make the observations. "As astronomers like to say, whenever there is a new telescope or instrument around, observe Orion: there will always be something new and interesting to discover!" says Dr Stanke in a release.

The results of his observations are now accepted for publication in the journal Astronomy & Astrophysics.

In addition to the Flame Nebula, the team also observed reflection nebulae Messier 78 and NGC 2071.

A reflection nebula is created when light from a star is scattered by nearby dust clouds. In 2018, Hubble's Near Infrared Camera and Multi-Object Spectrometer (NICMOS) captured a colorful image of M78. The team also found a new small, spherical cloud to the north of NGC2071 and named it the 'Cow Nebula' globule. Studying nebulae can help astronomers understand how stars form and evolve during its lifetime.



## Xiaomi penalised Rs653 cr for evading import duty

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Chinese mobile phone giant Xiaomi has been slapped with a demand of Rs 653 crore by the Department of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) for not including royalty payments in the assessable value of the goods it imported over three years from 2017 to 2020. The DRI had acted upon intelligence that Xiaomi India was evading customs duty by undervaluation. During the investigation, searches were conducted by the DRI at the premises of Xiaomi India, which led to the recovery of incriminating documents indicating that the Chinese company was remitting royalty and licence fee to Qualcomm, US, and to Beijing Xiaomi Mobile Software. During investigations, it further emerged that the "royalty and licence fee" paid by Xiaomi India to Qualcomm and to Beijing Xiaomi Mobile Software was not being added in the transaction value of the goods imported by Xiaomi India and its contract manufacturers.

## Cairn drops all cases against India, to get Rs7,900-cr refund

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Cairn Energy has dropped all lawsuits against the Indian government and its entities in courts from the US to France and to Singapore, to now be entitled for about Rs 7,900-crore refund of taxes that were collected to enforce a retrospective tax demand. As part of the settlement reached in dispute over the levy of back taxes, the company has withdrawn all cases that were brought to collect the tax refund ordered by an international arbitration tribunal after rescinding retrospective raising of demand, according to an advertisement published in Indian newspapers on Wednesday.



# Bitcoin, Ether near multi-month lows following hawkish fed minutes

HONG KONG (TIP)

Bitcoin fell below \$43,000 on Thursday, testing multi-month lows after minutes from the Federal Reserve's last meeting showed it leaning toward more aggressive policy action, which sapped investor appetite for riskier assets.

The world's largest cryptocurrency was last at \$42,700, down 1.7%, having lost 5.2% on Wednesday. A break below last month's trough of \$42,000 would make it the weakest since September.

The token hit a record high of \$69,000 in November.

The fall "correlated with the 'risk off' move across most traditional asset classes," said Matt Dibb, COO of Singapore-based crypto fund distributor, Stack Funds, pointing to the declines in the Nasdaq in particular.

Moves in cryptocurrency markets are becoming more aligned with those in traditional markets as the number of institutions trading both crypto and other assets grows.

The Nasdaq plunged more than 3% overnight in its biggest one-day percentage drop since February, after Fed minutes showed U.S. policymakers had discussed reducing the bank's balance sheet at their December meeting, when they also decided to accelerate finishing their bond buying programme.

Share markets in Asia sold off on Thursday as well, while U.S. Treasury



yields edged higher.

Ether, the world's second-largest cryptocurrency which underpins the ethereum network, lost 5.2% on Wednesday, and touched its lowest level since October, before bouncing back slightly to \$3,460.

Crypto analysts were also watching to see whether anti-government protests in Kazakhstan, which were initially

sparked by rising fuel prices, would affect the bitcoin network.

The central Asian nation was the world's second-largest centre for bitcoin mining, Britain's Cambridge Centre for Alternative Finance said last year.

The Kazakh government late last year began cracking down on some miners, fearing the energy-intensive process was using too much power. *Source: Reuters*

## Hughes, Airtel form JV for sat broadband

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Hughes Communications India Private Ltd and Bharti Airtel have formed a joint venture to provide satellite broadband services in India, the companies said on Wednesday.

The combined India VSAT operations of both companies will offer a range of satellite and hybrid network solutions to business and government customers.

The JV combines the Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) businesses of both companies to offer flexible and scalable enterprise networking solutions using satellite connectivity for primary transport, back-up and hybrid implementation.

The agreement, announced in May 2019, has received all statutory approvals, including those from the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and Department of Telecom (Government of India) and the joint venture has been formed.

"We are pleased to commence this joint venture, further delivering on our commitment to serve the growing demand for always on, always available network connectivity for enterprise and government customers," said Partho Banerjee, president and managing director, HCIPL. The partnership will bring synergies to the forefront, including multi-orbit solutions, for the benefit of customers across the length and breadth of India, he added.

Ajay Chitkara, director and chief executive officer, Airtel Business, said: "With the combined capabilities of Airtel and Hughes, customers will get access to next generation satellite connectivity backed by proven enterprise grade security and service support." HCIPL has a combined base of over 200,000 VSATs including Airtel VSAT customers, the company is the largest satellite service operator in India, well positioned amid the changing regulatory environment to serve the emerging connectivity requirements of business and government customers with an enhanced product portfolio and operational efficiencies.

## Reliance takes 26% stake in delivery firm Dunzo for \$200 million

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Reliance Industries Ltd's retail arm has invested \$200 million for a 25.8% stake in Indian online delivery platform Dunzo to get a foothold into the rapidly growing market of superfast dispatch of household goods.

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani-owned Reliance Industries said on Thursday its retail arm led a \$240 million funding round in Bengaluru-based Dunzo which offers lightning fast delivery of groceries and medicines and even offers to pick up and drop off documents and other items.

Demand for services like Dunzo and SoftBank-backed Swiggy's Genie has boomed during the pandemic when people were ordered to remain indoors and only delivery of essential items was allowed. This massive demand has also led players to intensify their battle in ensuring users are able to get their orders in 15 minutes or less.

Dunzo, which counts Alphabet Inc's Google and Lightrock among its backers, will use the funds to expand to 15 cities from its current seven-city operation.

Last month, Grofers which offers online delivery, rebranded itself as Blinkit with a promise to speed up deliveries. The company makes 10-minute drop-offs to customers with the help of more than 100 partner stores or warehouses in eight cities. Reliance has been ramping up its JioMart e-commerce arm in an effort to stave off competition from Amazon.com and Walmart Inc's Flipkart in an e-retail market India forecasts will be worth \$200 billion by 2026. Last year, Reliance also offered mom-and-pop stores, known as 'kiranans', the option to order goods on JioMart Partner with deliveries promised within 24 hours, circumventing the usual route of going through salesmen representing consumer giants.

Shree Ganeshaya Namah



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JAN 10 TO JAN 16, 2022



**Aries**

Ganesha says dear Aries natives, you are most likely to enter a new phase of your life this week. You will be given ample opportunities in the first half of the week but due to the negative transition of the moon, you are likely to make bad choices. On your professional front, the second half of the week will be very profitable for engineers and people dealing in the business of metallurgy. If you are owning a sole proprietorship business, you will benefit from the transition of Jupiter in your 11th house. Holidays and festivals this week will bring you closer to your romantic partner or spouse. Spending lots of time together will surely create a kind of new understanding between both of you, therefore, the situation is likely to improve on your romantic fronts. Your health will be adversely affected in the latter half of the week but there is nothing serious to worry about and hence you must take care of yourself.



**Taurus**

Dear Taurus natives, the second week of the year will bring you peace and tranquility as you will be relieved from all your domestic issues. The property you have been keeping an eye on will be available at a very good bargain in the second half of the week. On commercial fronts, you will be able to add a few more digits to your income level. The first half of the week would not be a fortunate time to deal in share markets and other digital currencies. If you are having a stable job right now, you will be asked to make certain amendments today. This week, your romantic fronts will be all well, your partner will be too busy to attend to your grievances but your mutual understanding will save you from conflicts. Your children are likely to suffer from injuries in the latter half of the week as suggested by the negative transition of Ketu. Your health will not suffer this week hence you do not need to worry at all.



**Gemini**

As you enter the second week of this entirely new year, you will have your hopes high and you will be able to see your goals clearly. This week you will get yourself into a new business or more probably will find the best suitable partner for your existing business. Your economic fronts or finances might suffer in the latter half of the week but you will be able to manage things well. You will not be able to spend much time with your loved ones this week. As far as your relationship is concerned, your

partner will be very busy the entire week. Their professional obligation will leave no room for both of you to spend time together. Your health will be all well in the first half the half of the week while your second half of the week will bring you minor infections.



**Cancer**

This week, you will step out of your comfort zone and will explore multiple options for your career. If you are working in the banking sector, your walking style and your methods will need some alterations. The second half of the week is not a good time to take advice and trust other people's opinions. For people involved in academics and appearing for various exams this week, you will do well than expected. On your romantic front, you will fail to make extraordinary plans for your loved one this week. Your emotions will not appear clear in the first half of the week, which will bother your romantic life. By the end of the week, the unsettled dust between your partner and you will be cleared with the help of a close friend. Your health will not need any attention this week.



**Leo**

The position of Mars indicates that you will have some amazing money dealings this week as a result of your earlier endeavors. You will see significant improvements in your financial house in the first half of the week. This week, if you are going to invest in the stock exchange or treasuries, you are likely to earn significant and unanticipated returns. It has always been hard for you to deal with relationship issues but this week you will have to face a few of those. Your ideal views regarding relationships will be altered this week but, your partner and you will resolve everything nicely. If you are a patient of blood pressure or diabetes then you will have to be very careful this week.



**Virgo**

This week, you'll take risks and see what's in the carton for your corporate future. Don't be distracted by competing ideas; instead, make your personal commercial rulings. Follow your own workflow and adapt it to the needs of your job or project. The remaining will be handled off automatically. You must avoid investing a lot in the share market this week.

Your partner and you will discuss family planning this week. As there is no negative impact of Rahu and Shani on your zodiac this week, it is a fortunate

period to plan any religious event or anything good. Your health will remain stable throughout the week.



**Libra**

This week, you will feel more active as good energies will surround you. You have been feeling diverted for a long period of time recently but, situations around you will help you get aligned this week. Not everyone you meet will be worth trusting and hence you must be a little careful well spilling your beans in front of all the people you meet. If you are in the field of medics or paramedics, you will have to be very vigilant during your working hours. Along with all the energy you divert towards the good things, you might feel a little bit exhausted by the end of the week. Rather than tying false hopes with your current relationship, you will act more practical when it comes to marriage and romance this week. Do not allow your children to get indulged in dangerous sports this week. Your fitness fronts will need a little turn of the head.



**Scorpio**

This week you will hardly leave anything incomplete and unattended. Your consistent need of staying under the guidance of someone else will dissolve this week. You will act more independently and this will make you more accountable and pragmatic. On your professional front, you might not have much of the monetary gains but, the experience you get will speak for itself. As your 6th house will be blessed by the radiating Lord Sun, you are more likely to come in touch with people who might be the next step of your corporate ladder. With the support of your family and friends, you are likely to make a very good announcement regarding your personal life in the latter half of the week. Your relationship with your spouse will stay in the limelight the entire week. Your health will lay a little low this week.



**Sagittarius**

This week your hardcore efforts will surely pay off in the way better than you expected. You will get indulge in festivities and events on your professional and social fronts. Legal issues pertaining to fixed assets will see the light of improvement this week. It is surely a fortunate week to keep your eye on the money market and intraday transactions. Although the new relationship has faced peaks and drops lately, this week your bond will improve significantly. People trying to move



## BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JAN 10 TO JAN 16, 2022

### Jan 10

Ganesha says you are going to have a good day at work. You may come across many investment opportunities that may turn favorable shortly. A property case will sort out in your favor and take the load off your mind. You will feel blessed to have a wonderful and understanding partner by your side. You and your partner will have a great day. Your love for your partner will increase and it will make your bond stronger than ever.

### Jan 11

Ganesha says this is going to be a favorable day for you. You may wish to spend quality time with loved ones and execute plans on the professional front. Today you may help someone in the family in choosing a career path or some course. Your partner will be a bit possessive and demanding today. You should avoid expressing your emotion today and try to understand the feeling of your partner. Avoid planning anything in the evening.

### Jan 12

Ganesha says today you may have an emotional day. This day may bring lots of opportunities for you. You will feel extraordinarily motivated today. You may plan to travel today. Today you

are likely to use your creativity to renovate your house or office. Your focus on your goals will be good today. At work, you may meet some new people and with the help of that, you are likely to get a big order in terms of business and work.

### Jan 13

Ganesha says today, you need to be careful concerning whom you trust. Investments related to land and property will bring you wealth. Your day at work will be good and you may get a new project. You may also receive opportunities to travel abroad. Today you may meet someone to whom you may feel attracted and connected. If you are in a relationship, you and your partner may have a good time. If you are in a relationship you may decide to formalize your bond and decide to tie a knot.

### Jan 14

Ganesha says today will be a productive day as you will witness new opportunities in your life. Today you'll need to focus on your goal. You may have an outing with the entire family. Your enthusiasm and leadership skills to work hard will help you to solve all your problems. Your family may receive some good news. There will be some good opportunities coming on the way.

### Jan 15

Ganesha says you will have a great day today. Even though there aren't major positive things that'll happen today, sweet little gestures made by your loved one will keep you happy and satisfied throughout the day and will make you happier. Your health is on its way to improving as well today. Your love life is doing great. Work on being more open-minded. Make time for some for your partner today out of your busy schedule. Express your feelings more, it will yield positive results for you as Venus is on your side today.

### Jan 17

Ganesha says you will obtain some enticing opportunities that might make you uncomfortable in the beginning but will keep you very happy today. You are bolder than usual and will be more prone to taking risks you wouldn't otherwise take. You will have a great time with your loved ones today. You will make great progress by learning in your business as well hence all in all a good day today for your health as well.

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JAN 03 TO 09, 2022

### CONTD FROM PAGE 32

forward from a toxic connection will be able to drop down the emotional baggage they have been carrying. This week, you might face issues related to throat infection and tonsils and hence, follow home remedies regularly.



### Capricorn

This week, the planets he knows zodiac will be aligned in such a manner that you will attain positive results of anything and everything you do. Although your professional fronts will be extremely strong, a minor financial crisis will affect you in the latter half of the week. If you are a student or you have just enrolled yourself in a new course or stream of education, you will be able to adapt to most of the things by the end of the week.

This week you will hardly find time to think about new relationships and marriage. Newlyweds will take this week to adjust and get along while people will have been knowing each other for a long time will take the relationship for granted. Venus will have a drastic impact on your relationship no matter how hard you try to drive a new romantic connection. You will sail in a pink pot of help this week and hence, you need not worry about your fitness at all.



### Aquarius

Dear Aquarius natives, although your year did not start with a Big Bang or events you anticipated, this week will bring you lots of positivity. In case you have been longing to get the outcomes of your past investment, this week will be very fruitful in that regard.

If you are involved in the field of manufacturing or automobiles, your O.E.E will improve in the first half of the week.

Old debts will bother you a little in the latter half of the week. Minor disagreement might affect your relationship this week as Venus will not be in a fortunate position throughout the week. Your health might get affected due to drastic changes in weather conditions, therefore, be careful.



### Pisces

Dear Pisces natives, this week you will be able to make new resolutions and proper plans regarding your career and professional life. Things you have been admiring about since long will finally find their way to you. Your nature will win the hearts of the people around you. If you are worried about monetary issues or some unresolved payments, the

transition of Venus in your 4th house will certainly bring good solutions. If you have a regular job, the first half of the week will be very hectic as you will have to meet strict deadlines. Your romantic fronts will be well equipped this week. Your partner will give you good space and this will make your individuality flourish in many ways. If you are married, your spouse will make you feel a little more competitive and that will help you raise your bars on your professional fronts. Health will not be a matter of concern for the entire week and hence, keep cool and stay relaxed.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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# Ganga Sagar Snan

**G**anga Sagar Snan, also famous as 'Ganga Sagar Mela' or 'Ganga Sagar Yatra' is a significant gathering of the Hindu pilgrims during the auspicious time of 'Makar Sankranti'. It is an annual observance that takes place at the Sagar Island or 'Sagardweep' in the state of West Bengal. Hindu devotees in thousands of number gather at this place to take a holy dip in Ganga River before She merges in the Bay of Bengal. During the Ganga Sagar Snan, a biggest fair is organized that fetches devotees from each and every corner of the country. The Ganga Sagar fair starts few days before and ends one day after Sankranti.

Ganga Sagar Snan is a very religious and important ritual for Hindu devotees. This festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm and zeal in the culturally rich state of Bengal. Ganga Sagar Snan is only done during Makar Sankranti (an astrological event that marks the transition of Sun from Sagittarius to Capricorn Zodiac sign) and falls on the 14th of January, every year. On this day, devotees from various parts of the country and abroad, come to take a dip in holy water of Ganges. It is believed that by performing this ritualistic bath, all the sins of the person will be washed away. Ganga Sagar Snan is observed with great fanfare all over the country. The festivities may vary from region to region, but the spirit of this festival remains unchanged.

**Ganga Sagar Snan 2022 is on January 14 Friday**

## Rituals during Ganga Sagar Snan

Hindu devotees gather at around 3am on the day of Ganga Sagar Snan to perform the worshipping ceremony of legendary Kapil Muni. After the completion of Kapila puja, the Yagna and Maha Puja are performed.

On the day of Ganga Sagar Snan, devotees get up very early to take the holy dip at the time of sunrise. They offer 'arghya' to the rising Sun and offer prayers to Sun God. While taking the holy dip, devotees express their gratitude towards Goddess Ganga and pray for Her divine blessings.

Devotees also keep a strict fast on the day of Ganga Sagar Snan and abstain from eating or drinking anything till the time of completion of puja rituals.

After completing the Ganga Snan rituals, devotees also visit the Kapilmuni Temple, located nearby. It is a unique and one-of-its-kind temple in India that is dedicated to Saint Kapil

## Significance of Ganga Sagar Snan

Ganga Sagar Snan is one of the most important annual events for people of Hindu community. This day is dedicated to worshipping Goddess Ganga and Sun God. The observance of Ganga Sagar Snan on the day of Makar Sankranti also holds a special relevance. Makar Sankranti is an auspicious day in the Hindu calendar that is dedicated to worshipping Lord Surya. On this particular day, Sun transits to Capricorn from Sagittarius and it marks as the beginning of the good times in the Hindu culture, when all auspicious activities can be performed. According to the Hindu legends it is believed that one who perform the sacred Ganga Sagar Snan will be pardoned for all sins and in the end attain 'moksha' or salvation.

## Mythological Story of Gangasagar

GangaSagar, the sacred place of India is primarily important for the temple of Kapil Muni, the great saint who as per the myth was Lord Vishnu. According to the Mythology Kardam Muni had to go through his marital Kardam Muni agreed on this under a condition that Muni wished to Lord Vishnu to have him as his son. To fulfill Muni's wishes, Lord Vishnu had taken birth on this earth as the son of Debahuti and Kardam Muni. They used to name their son Kapil. Soon the boy completed his education, he became famous for the introduction of the doctrine "Sankhya Philosophy".

Kapil Muni's mythological 'story is related to the story of bringing the holy river Ganga at this place. On the suggestion of the sage Aurva, King Sagara started to perform 'Ashvamedha Yagna' which is supposed to be a vehicle to propitiate Lord Hari himself. The sacrificial horses were set out to roam free around the country



before closing the "Yagna". Debraj Indra hid one of the sacrificial horses. With a view to concluding the sacrifice, King Sagara commanded his sixty thousand sons to go, search and locate the lost horse. The sons of Sagara were deluded as Indra (the Lord of the senses) destroyed their sense of discrimination. Finding the horse tied close to the hermitage of sage Kapila, the sons of Sagara started abusing the sage of stealing the horse and in fact wanted to kill him with their weapons.

## History of Gangasagar Mela

At this point, the sage opened his eyes and blaze of anger came out of his eye-balls, which burnt King's sons & consigned their soul into hell instantly. Sagara was very sad at the death of his sons. He wanted to bring back the horse and purify the soul of his sons. Then Raja Sagar sent his grandson Anshuman in search of his 60,000 sons and the lost horse. He traced his uncles' footsteps and arrived at Kapil Muni's Ashram'. He saw the lost horse and mound of ashes near the hermitage. He brought the horseback from the sage. He also begged him to redeem the soul of the 60,000 sons of King Sagar. Kapil Muni suggested he bring the Ganga on 'Prithvi' so that her holy water can only give them 'Mukti' (emancipation). So King Anshuman and thereafter his son Dilip started to perform 'Tapasya' (penance) to bring the Ganga on earth. Neither Anshuman nor his son Dilip was successful In this task. They died before finishing the 'Tapasya'. Bhagirath, the son of Dilip and great-grandson of Sagara was determined to get their task done. Vishnu, the preserver when prayed by Bhagiratha agreed to allow the heavenly Ganga issuing from his big toe to come down on earth. Ganga apprehended the devastation of the earth by the pressure of her flow. Only Shiva's powerful hair could control the force of Ganga. Bhagiratha requested Shiva to help him. As soon as Ganga flowed down, Lord Shiva collected her water in his hair in the form of many small streams. Ganga then followed Bhagiratha to the place where the ashes of his ancestors were lying. Holy water flowed on and purified the ashes of Bhagiratha's ancestors. Thereafter Ganga is also called 'Bhagirathi' after the name of Bhagiratha. The ocean becomes popular as 'Sagar' after the name of King Sagara. This island as the estuarine of Sagara and Ganga comes to be known as "Sagardwip".



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"If Hindus don't maintain Hinduism, who shall save it?"

"If India's own children don't cling to their faith, who shall guard it?"

"Indians alone can save India, and India and Hinduism are one."

# Jodhpur: The Blue City

The former capital of Marwar, Jodhpur, is one of the most enchanting cities of Rajasthan, with its mighty Mehrangarh fort overlooking the city. The city is called the Blue City as it looks completely blue from an aerial view because of its blue walls and blue houses.

Jodhpur is also famous for its temples, lakes and snacks. The magic lies in the streets of the old city itself, with hundreds of shops, guesthouses, eating joints, and vendors make it a bustling chirpy town, especially near the landmark clock tower and Sardar Market.

Nearby Jaswant Thada and Umaid Bhawan Palace are also among the top attractions in Jodhpur.

Seen in the backdrop of the movie, *The Dark Knight Rises*, Jodhpur attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world. Jodhpur is conveniently located in the centre of Rajasthan making it easier for people visiting Jodhpur to explore other destinations of the state.

## Mehrangarh Fort

Mehrangarh, also known as Mehran Fort was built by Rao Jodha in 1459 in Jodhpur, is one of the largest forts in the country. It is situated at the top of a 410 feet elevated hill and guarded by massive walls. One of the most easily recognisable forts in Jodhpur, it has appeared in many Hollywood and Bollywood productions such as *The Lion King*, *The Dark Knight Rises*, and the more recent - *Thugs of Hindostan*. The entrance of the fort, atop a hill, is majestic and has seven gates. These are called Victory Gate, Fateh Gate, Gopal Gate, Bhairon Gate, Dedh Kamgra Gate, Marti Gate and finally Loha Gate. Each of these was built at different times and serves a very specific purpose. While one still has marks of cannon balls being hit on it, the other has spikes that can protect it from elephant and animal attacks. However, Victory Gate was built to commemorate the win of Maharaja Man Singh over Jaipur and Bikaner armies. The fort also has opulent palaces such as the Sheesh Mahal (Glass Palace) and Phool Mahal (Rose Palace).

The intricate carvings on the walls of the fort, the sprawling courtyards, its impressive history, striking palaces, museums and galleries allure tourists from all over the world. The fort also has one of the well-stocked museums of Rajasthan. There are six different galleries in the Mehrangarh Museum: Elephant's howdahs, Palanquins, Daulat Khana, Armoury, Paintings and the Turban Gallery. National Geological Monument, Nagnecha Mataji Temple, Chamunda Temple and Rao Jodha Desert Rock Park are the tourist attractions in Mehrangarh Fort.

## Jaswant Thada

In the royal state of Jodhpur lies Jaswant Thada, a splendid marble cenotaph monument that is also a mausoleum for the kings of Marwar. The memorial was built in the honour and memory of Maharaja Jaswant Singh II by his son Maharaja Sardar Singh in 1899 and is still used by the Marwar Royal Family as cremation grounds. The beautiful edifice is made out of



intricately carved marble that is offset vibrantly against the red steps that lead up to the entrance. Jaswant Thada in Jodhpur is considered as an architectural landmark and must be seen by one and all. On the steps leading up to the monument, one can see local musicians and folk dancers entertain the visitors.

## Mandore Garden

Famous royal cenotaphs, Mandore Garden is located just 9 kilometres away

Undoubtedly, the most beautiful and famous of these cenotaphs is the one that belongs to Maharaja Ajit Singh. The structures inside the garden are undoubtedly its most striking feature, the Hall of Heroes for instance - has 16 figures of warriors carved from a single rock.

Voted as the Best Hotel in the world, Umaid Bhawan Palace is also a major tourist attraction in Jodhpur. Apart from being a heritage hotel, it is a museum and the residence of the Royal Family of the present owner, Raja Gaj Singh.

Because of its location on the highest point in Jodhpur, the Chittar Hill, it is also referred to as the Chittar Palace. Built-in 1943, the palace was commissioned in 1929, was built in order to provide employment to the drought and grief-stricken farmers of the area and thus took longer to complete. Umaid Bhawan Palace offers amazing hospitality along with heritage walks to unforgettable dining experiences. It was recently in the news for being the site of the Bollywood Superstar Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas - a renowned Pop Star from the Band - One Direction.

At present, the 347 - room palace has been divided into three parts. One part is the residence of the royal family, where the tourists are not allowed to enter. The second houses a museum which displays a rich collection of photographs, arms, clocks, stuffed animals and many other possessions of the royal family.

The third part of the palace has been converted into a five-star hotel and offers the most exquisite services to its clientele. It is one of the most popular hotels in Jodhpur. Perched atop the mighty Chittar Hill, this palace is often referred to as the Chittar Palace too. To add to the beauty of the palace, there is a beautiful garden outside with lush greenery and different varieties of flowers.

## Toorji Ka Jhalra

Constructed in 1740, Toorji Ka Jhalra, commonly called stepwell of Jodhpur, is an intricate design of stepwell, one of the few remaining structures depicting the traditional water management systems of Jodhpur. This architectural wonder was built by the queen-consort of Maharaja Abhaya Singh, a sign of the age-old tradition of the region where royal women were in charge of overseeing the public water works. The design and structure help onlookers comprehend the lifestyle of the earlier generations who had used it in its prime, with the site serving as the local watering hole for its time.

This 250-year-old structure was made using the famous rose-red sandstone found in Jodhpur. More than 200 feet in depth, it was once adorned with intricate carvings of dancing elephants, medieval lions, cow waterspouts, and niches that showed various deities. There were two levels of access and a separate tank which were meant to receive water from the wheel system powered by the bullocks. Its impressive design attracts many tourists, and is regarded as a fun place by locals and visitors to engage in harmless, recreational water games in order to beat the heat.

from Jodhpur in Mandore which was once the ruling seat of the Pratihara dynasty. The garden is a part of the more massive Mehrangarh Fort, and also houses the famous Hall of Heroes and the temple of Three Hundred Million Gods. The garden also has a Government Museum, which is full of artefacts and old relics.

The most striking feature of the garden is the gorgeous cenotaphs or 'dewals' that can be found spread all across the Mandore Gardens.

# History This Week January 7 to January 13

**"A SMALL BODY OF DETERMINED SPIRITS FIRED BY AN UNQUENCHABLE FAITH IN THEIR MISSION CAN ALTER THE COURSE OF HISTORY." MAHATMA GANDHI**

## January 7

January 7, 1714 - A patent was issued for the first typewriter designed by British inventor Henry Mill "for the impressing or transcribing of letters singly or progressively one after another, as in writing."

January 7, 1782 - The first U.S. commercial bank opened as the Bank of North America in Philadelphia.

January 7, 1989 - Emperor Hirohito of Japan died after a long illness. He had ruled for 62 years and was succeeded by his son, Crown Prince Akihito.



President Clinton

January 7, 1999 - The first presidential impeachment trial in 130 years began as members of the U.S. Senate were sworn in by Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist to decide whether President Clinton should be removed from office. House prosecutors had delivered two articles of impeachment charging Clinton with perjury and obstruction of justice.

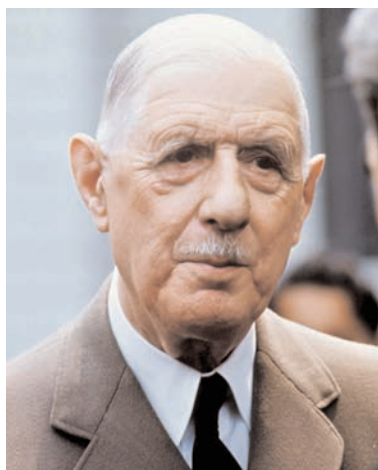
Birthdays - Millard Fillmore (1800-1874) the 13th U.S. President was born in a log cabin in Cayuga County, New York. He was a Whig who became president upon the sudden death of Zachary Taylor in 1850 from cholera. Best remembered for signing five bills concerning slavery known as the Compromise of 1850 which temporarily prevented civil war in the U.S. He was not re-nominated by his party.

## January 8

January 8, 1798 - The 11th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, preventing lawsuits against a state by anyone from another state or foreign nation.

January 8, 1815 - The Battle of New Orleans occurred as General Andrew Jackson and American troops defended themselves against a British attack, inflicting over 2,000 casualties. Both sides in this battle were unaware that peace had been declared two weeks earlier with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent ending the War of 1812.

January 8, 1918 - Amid the ongoing World War in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson proposed his Fourteen Points, calling for a reduction of arms, self-determination for governments, and the creation of a League of Nations, all intended to serve as a basis for resolving the conflict and establishing a lasting peace in Europe.



Charles de Gaulle

January 8, 1959 - Charles de Gaulle took office as the first president of France's Fifth Republic. De Gaulle had led the Free French government in exile during Nazi occupation. Following the war, he advocated a strong presidency to balance the powerful National Assembly. He was chosen to head the new government following years of political instability in which no French government was able to stay in power for more than a few months. On this day in 1966, he took office for a second term.

January 8, 1964 - President Lyndon Johnson declared War on Poverty during his State of the Union message before Congress.

January 8, 1982 - The American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) Company was broken up as a result of an antitrust suit. AT&T gave up 22 local Bell system companies, opening the U.S. telephone system to competition.

January 8, 1987 - The Dow Jones industrial average first topped the 2,000 mark.



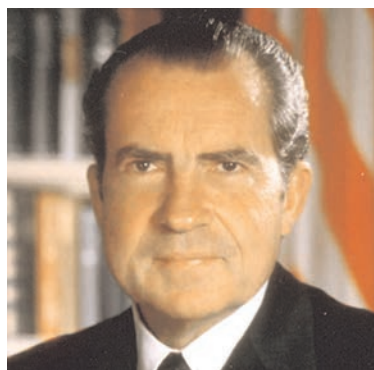
Elvis Presley

Birthdays - Elvis Presley (1935-1977) was born in Tupelo,

Mississippi.

## January 9

January 9, 1960 - With the first blast of dynamite, construction work began on the Aswan High Dam across the Nile River in southern Egypt. One third of the project's billion-dollar cost was underwritten by Soviet Russia. The dam created Lake Nasser, one of the world's largest reservoirs, at nearly 2,000 square miles and irrigated over 100,000 acres of surrounding desert. The dam was opened in January of 1971 by President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and President Nikolai Podgorny of the Soviet Union.



Richard M. Nixon

Birthdays - Richard M. Nixon (1913-1994) the 37th U.S. President, was born in Yorba Linda, California. He served as vice president under Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953-61, then made an unsuccessful run for the presidency, narrowly losing to John F. Kennedy. Nixon ran for governor of California in 1962 and lost. He then told reporters he was leaving politics. However, he re-emerged in 1968 and ran a successful presidential campaign against Hubert Humphrey. He won reelection by a landslide in 1972 but resigned two years later amid impeachment proceedings resulting from the Watergate scandal.

Birthdays - Carrie Lane Chapman (1859-1947) was born in Ripon, Wisconsin. She was the women's rights pioneer who founded the National League of Women Voters in 1919.

## January 10

January 10, 1776 - Common Sense, a fifty-page pamphlet by Thomas Paine, was published. It sold over 500,000 copies in America and Europe, influencing, among others, the authors of the Declaration of Independence.

January 10, 1861 - Florida became the third state to secede

from the Union in events leading up to the American Civil War.

January 10, 1863 - The world's first underground railway service opened in London, the Metropolitan line between Paddington and Farringdon.

January 10, 1878 - An Amendment granting women the right to vote was introduced in Congress by Senator A.A. Sargent of California. The amendment didn't pass until 1920, forty-two years later.



The flying boat airplane

January 10, 1912 - The flying boat airplane, invented by Glenn Curtiss, made its first flight at Hammondsport, New York.

January 10, 1920 - The League of Nations officially came into existence with the goal of resolving international disputes, reducing armaments, and preventing future wars. The first Assembly gathered in Geneva ten months later with 41 nations represented. More than 20 nations later joined; however, the U.S. did not join due to a lack of support for the League in Congress.

January 10, 1922 - Arthur Griffith was elected president of the newly formed Irish Free State.

January 10, 1946 - The first meeting of the United Nations General Assembly took place in London with delegates from 51 countries. The U.N. superseded its predecessor, the League of Nations.

January 10, 1984 - The U.S. and Vatican established full diplomatic relations after a break of 116 years.

## January 11

January 11, 1861 - Alabama seceded from the Union in events leading up to the American Civil War.

January 11, 1964 - The U.S. Surgeon General declared cigarettes may be hazardous to health, the first such official government report.

January 11, 1990 - In Lithuania, 200,000 persons demanded political independence from Soviet Russia after Mikhail Gorbachev,

leader of the Soviet Union, publicly warned that separatism could lead to tragedy. Independence was achieved in September of 1991, three months before the collapse of the Soviet Union itself.



Alexander Hamilton

Birthdays - Alexander Hamilton (1755-1804) was born in the British West Indies. He was a founder of the United States who favored a strong central government and co-authored the Federalist Papers, a series of essays in defense of the new Constitution.

## January 12

January 12, 1932 - Hattie W. Caraway, a Democrat from Arkansas, was appointed to the U.S. Senate to fill the term of her deceased husband. Later in the year, she became the first woman elected to the Senate.

January 12, 1991 - Congress authorized President George Bush to use military force against Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait.

January 12, 1996 - The first joint American-Russian military operation since World War II occurred as Russian troops arrived to aid in peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia.

January 12, 1999 - President Bill Clinton sent a check for \$850,000 to Paula Jones officially ending the sensational sexual harassment legal case that ultimately endangered his presidency. The president withdrew \$375,000 from his and Hillary Rodham Clinton's personal funds and got the remaining \$475,000 from an insurance policy. The lawsuit had exposed the president's affair with Monica Lewinsky and resulted in investigations by Independent Counsel Ken Starr that led to Clinton's impeachment by the House of Representatives and subsequent trial in the Senate.

(Read more on [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news))



## Nadal enjoys victory in comeback at Melbourne Summer Set

MELBOURNE (TIP)

Rafael Nadal won his first singles match in five months on Thursday, Jan 6 at the Melbourne Summer Set, where he defeated Lithuanian qualifier Ricardas Berankis 6-2, 7-5 to reach the quarterfinals.

"Super happy to be back in the competition. It's difficult to imagine a better place than here [at] the beginning of the season in Australia," Nadal said. "It's only the first match after a while. Honestly, I have been going through some difficult, challenging moments the past year-and-a-half, but in general terms I am super happy to be back in the competition."

"Of course, it's important to start with a victory, [which] gives me the chance to play another time tomorrow and that's the main thing at this moment because I didn't play for such a long time." The Spaniard had not played a singles match since the Citi Open last August due to a left foot injury. The 35-year-old returned to action in doubles on Wednesday, when he partnered Jaume Munar to victory.

Nadal hit some bumps as he worked his way back into rhythm, letting slip a break advantage in the second set. But ultimately, the Spaniard was never in trouble and he triumphed after one hour and 32 minutes. He broke at love to close out the match, letting loose one of his trademark fist pumps after striking a final forehand winner.

The top seed won 78 per cent of his first-serve points and claimed 48 per cent of his return points in his first ATP head-to-head clash against Berankis. Nadal will next play Dutchman Tallon Griekspoor or Australian Alexei Popyrin.

After his win, Nadal withdrew from his next doubles match against Andrey Golubev and Franko Skugor due to fatigue.

Earlier, third seed Daria Kasatkina broke a hoodoo against Madison Keys with her first win in eight encounters against the American, 7-6(4), 2-6, 6-3, while second seed Simona Halep secured a Summer Set 1 quarterfinal berth with a routine 6-2, 6-1 victory over doubles partner and compatriot Elena-Gabriela Ruse.

Source: IANS

# South Africa beat India by seven wickets in 2nd Test, level series

JOHANNESBURG (TIP)

South Africa captain Dean Elgar produced a heroic unbeaten innings of 96 runs to lead his team to a seven-wicket victory over India in the second Test at the Wanderers on January 6.

Elgar defied a hostile Indian attack and body blows from balls that struck him on a difficult pitch to deliver a match-winning performance as he led a successful 240-run chase, fittingly hitting a boundary to secure the victory.

South Africa reached 243/3 near the end of a rain-restricted fourth day to level the series after India had won the first Test in Pretoria by 113 runs, with the deciding match to come in Cape Town, starting on January 18.

The home team were 118/2 overnight but had to wait as the first two sessions on Thursday were washed out by rain.

Elgar and Rassie van der Dussen eventually resumed their run chase under cloudy skies with the outcome still in the balance as the pitch was expected to favour the formidable India attack.

But the two batsmen continued their partnership and added 57 more runs in the first hour's play as they took on the tourists' bowling, before Van der Dussen edged Mohammed Shami to first slip and was out for 40.

South Africa still needed 65 to win when the wicket went down and might have quickly spiralled into trouble had Shardul Thakur held onto a catch when new batsmen Temba Bavuma hit the second ball he faced straight back at the bowler.



South Africa's Dean Elgar and Temba Bavuma celebrate winning the second Test. Reuters

Thakur was unable to hold onto a stinging shot, and Bavuma went on to make full use of his good fortune to finish 23 not out.

But Elgar was the hero, showing a dogged fighting spirit and leading by example to hand his young team an important and morale-boosting win. He faced 188 balls, hitting 10 boundaries, and was deserving of a century.

It was the first time South Africa had beaten India at the Wanderers.

After their victory, South Africa have made a huge leap in the World Test Championship points table. The side was reeling at 8th position after the loss to India in Centurion, but have

now reached within touching distance of the visitors.

With 50 percentage points, the Proteas stand fifth on the table. India, however, endured a loss of 9.07 PCT but retained their fourth place in the tally.

Australia and Sri Lanka sit comfortably at the top of the table with 100 PCT respectively, as both sides are undefeated in this cycle of the Championship so far. The Pat Cummins-led side are enjoying a brilliant run in the Ashes series, having secured rather straightforward victories in all of their first three Tests. Sri Lanka, meanwhile, had defeated West Indies 2-0 in the home Test series in November-December.

## Jemimah, Shikha left out of squad for women's WC

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Top-order batter Jemimah Rodrigues and seasoned pacer Shikha Pandey were today dropped from India's 15-member squad for the women's ODI World Cup scheduled to be held in New Zealand from March 4 to April 3.

Left-handed batter Yastika Bhatia and the pace duo of Meghna Singh and Renuka Singh made the cut. The trio made waves during the Australia tour last year.

Renuka Singh Thakur, 25, hails from Parsa village in Rohru and has already played three WT20Is in Australia last year.

This is the first time the right

arm medium fast bowler has been selected for 50 overs tournament.

Rodrigues, who impressed in the T20I leagues in England and Australia, was not consistent enough in international cricket. Shikha, too, has been ignored due to her inconsistent form. Another top-order batter, Punam Raut, part of the team in England and Australia, has also been dropped with the selectors including more power-hitters in the side.

The same squad has been named for the preceding five ODIs against hosts New Zealand, beginning February 11.

Source: PTI

## Barcelona fight back to advance in Copa del Rey

Champions Barcelona survived an early scare as they fought back to secure a 2-1 win at third-tier side Linares Deportivo in the Copa del Rey on Wednesday that sent them into the Round of 16.

Barca made the trip to Andalucia missing several players due to Covid-19 and injuries, but coach Xavi Hernandez still decided to rest some key names for the last-32 tie and they fell behind in the 19th minute to a Hugo Diaz header. Xavi then brought on Frenkie de Jong, Gerard Pique, and Ousmane Dembele in the second half, with the French winger equalising with a low long shot that keeper Brimah Razak failed to stop.

A few minutes later, young academy striker Ferran Jutgla scored the winner with a cross-shot from the corner of the box after a counter-attack.

"I am very happy to help the team, to do what the coach asks me to do," Jutgla told reporters. "They came out very strong, perhaps a little stronger than us."

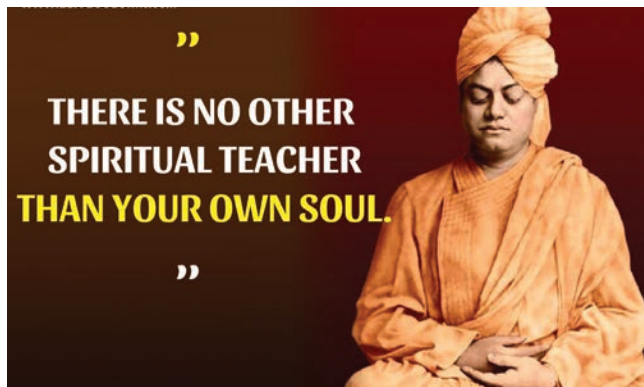
Barca joined Espanyol, Real Sociedad, Valencia, Real Betis, Rayo Vallecano, Mallorca and third-tier Atletico Baleares, who eliminated LaLiga side Celta Vigo with a 2-1 win, as the first clubs to advance into the last-16.

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## The multifaceted persona of Swami Vivekananda

We also need to effectively use all the technological developments such as electronic media, computers, and the Internet to bring the masses into the mainstream. Swamiji was always positive and modern in his approach, and his followers will also have to be so. Distance education can be used to 'reach the unreached', even in remote forest and hill tribes and communities.

### Spiritual Awakening: Need of the Hour



The Spiritual Vivekananda

Swamiji wanted to eradicate poverty, but he wanted even more the eradication, through spiritual awakening, of selfishness, disunity, jealousy, and corruption, which can happen. These stumbling blocks of human progress could be neutralized by propagating the character, teachings, and religion of Sri Ramakrishna, who preached the divinity of humankind, of the universe, and the harmony of all religions. 'This', Swamiji said, 'is the only spiritual practice, the only worship, this verily is the means, and this the goal'.

Swamiji's call for a national consciousness was unique. In his essay 'Aryans and Tamilians', he showed the essential unity of the nation and refuted the Aryan invasion theory. He said that the whole of India was of one race only, called Aryan in the North and Dravidian in the South, both originating from the race that inhabited India from prehistoric times. Next, he wanted to arouse the dormant spiritual consciousness of the nation through the repropagation of moksha, spiritual freedom, and the temporal ideal of intellectual and economic development based on dharma. He wanted everyone to strive for one's self-realization through service, renunciation, and sacrifice. This path would lead to concentration, meditation, and realization, which the rishis of old attained through years of tapasya, austerities. Therefore, Swamiji exhorted: 'They had hundreds of Rishis in ancient India. We will have millions—we are going to have, and the sooner every one of you believes in this, the better for India and the better for the world'.

Sainthood, that is, the ideal of an all-round development of the personality can be attained by keeping before us the fourfold goals of human life: righteousness (dharma) wealth (artha) sensual pleasure (kaam) and emancipation (moksh). This quest can transform the powers of the body and the mind into healthy channels of expression, helping thus to reduce distortions arising from selfishness.

### Dharma, Artha, and Kama

Artha and Kama are interconnected. Wealth enables one to enjoy pleasures through the senses; pleasures in turn create the need for more wealth. Thus, a circle is created of wealth leading to enjoyment, and thirst for more enjoyment leading to more wealth. But the thirst for enjoyment has to be controlled for the following two reasons: (i) The senses have their limitations and therefore overstretching them brings in diseases and premature death; and (ii) sense enjoyment invariably leads to possessiveness and selfishness affecting others' freedom. Therefore, these clashes and struggles would

not be conducive to happiness.

Who is to control this thirst for enjoyments? The individual has to do it through his or her own conscience. There is no other way. Dharma should form the basis for the acquisition of wealth and enjoyment. The modern argument that there is no need for dharma or values in procuring wealth or enjoyment seems absolutely shallow. Besides, one soon learns the harsh truth that wealth and enjoyment destroys oneself. The Bhagavadgita says that God incarnates again and again to guide humanity along the lines of a new dharma to suit a new age. Such an avatara has come again in the form of Sri Ramakrishna. In a glorious tribute to his Master, Swamiji declares: 'Sri Ramakrishna, the fulfilment of the Indian sages, the sage for the time, one whose teaching is just now, in the present time, most beneficial. And mark the divine power working behind the man. The son of a poor priest, born in an out-of-the-way village unknown and unthought of, today is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and tomorrow will be worshipped by thousands more. Who knows the plans of the Lord!'.

By glorification of the human being, Swamiji reiterates that one's caste is not a barrier for the highest secular or religious achievement. This is also the message of the Mahabharata, which says that neither birth, sacraments, ancestry, or studies make a person dvija, twice born, but character and conduct alone does. Swamiji describes how we can achieve happiness in this world: 'Man thinks foolishly that he can make himself happy, and after years of struggle finds out at last that true happiness consists in killing selfishness' (1.84). This happiness can be at the physical, mental, moral, or spiritual level, the durability and intensity increasing at each succeeding level. This happiness is directly proportional to freedom, and spiritual joy is the highest because it gives freedom.

### Food, Education, and Happiness

Food is an important aspect of human happiness. Swamiji advises us: 'Certain regulations as to food are necessary; we must use that food which brings us the purest mind'. But fanaticism regarding choice of food—vegetarian, non-vegetarian, vegan, or 'vegetarian'—should be eschewed. The food that one is habituated to from one's childhood should be good for that aspirant, though after an increase of spirituality that too changes accordingly. Education plays a vital role in making a person happy. Hence Swamiji often called good education 'man-making', because it promoted a person's all-round growth: physical, intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual. He defined education as 'the manifestation of perfection already in man'. An educated person should develop a strong will power, which comes from the power of knowledge and emotions coming together. This will power should guide one along the right path, to work efficiently, and achieve the maximum with a minimal expenditure of energy. Education should make people good-natured, kind, philanthropic and courageous to fight for just causes.

As the whole of creation has issued out of the supreme Soul, and the jiva is a part of this supreme Soul, a person has the knowledge of everything 'hidden within one's mind'. Education is 'uncovering' this dormant knowledge. This concept of education, as an inside-out manifestation, gives everyone the opportunity and hope to reach very high, provided one struggles hard enough.

Proper education develops an enlightened society in which, necessarily, the majority have to be householders. Swamiji speaks about how men and women can live happily in their families: 'The householder is the basis, the prop, of the whole society. A good householder is expected to earn well and spend well. Swamiji calls this a 'worship', equivalent to a monastic's spiritual practices, because behind both is the same virtue of self-surrender and self-sacrifice, prompted by the feeling of devotion to God and to all that is his. Again, the householder has to be a person of character.

Swamiji says: 'Chastity is the first virtue in man or woman'. The husband should look upon all other women as his mother, daughter, or sister. The wife has the greater responsibility of bringing back a wayward husband through the power of her love and chastity.

A householder should behave towards his or her family members as a 'nurse' in a rich man's house, believing that all of them are not one's own but really God's! A householder, to his enemies, must be a hero; he must resist them and never talk of non-resistance. To his friends and relatives he should be gentle. He should eschew bad habits like gambling, company of the wicked, and soon and struggle to earn a good name. The householder's life is a training in selflessness, service, sacrifice, and renunciation, to become 'a sannyasin without a garb' and quickly attain moksha.

### Ethics

Morality in both individual life and social life is mostly based on fear of societal censure. But Vivekananda gave a new theory of ethics and new principle of morality based on the intrinsic purity and oneness of the Atman. Ethics, according to Vivekananda was nothing but a code of conduct that helps a man to be a good citizen. He said we should be pure because purity is our real nature, our true divine Self or Atman. Similarly, we should love and serve our neighbors because we are all one in the Supreme Spirit known as Paramatma or Brahman.

### Religion

One of the most significant contributions of Swami Vivekananda to the modern world is his interpretation of religion as a universal experience of transcendent Reality, common to all humanity. This universal conception frees religion from the hold of superstitions, dogmatism, priest craft and intolerance. He believed that every religion offered a pathway to the eternal supreme - supreme freedom, supreme knowledge, supreme happiness. This can be accomplished by realizing one's Aatma as part of Paramaatma.

### Education

Swami Vivekananda laid the greatest emphasis on education for the regeneration of our motherland. According to him, a nation is advanced in proportion as education is spread among the masses. He said that our process of education should be such that it helps the students to manifest their innate knowledge and power. He advocated a man-making character-building education. He said that education must make the students self-reliant and help them face the challenges of life. He was highly critical of the so-called educated who do not care for the poor and downtrodden.

He was in complete agreement with the methods and results of modern science. He did not discard reason in favor of faith. He recognized intuition or inspiration as a higher faculty than reason. But the truth derived from intuition had to be explained and systematized by reason.

Though growth of Nationalism is attributed to the Western influence but Swami Vivekananda's nationalism is deeply rooted in Indian spirituality and morality. His nationalism is based on Humanism and Universalism, the two cardinal features of Indian spiritual culture. Unlike western nationalism which is secular in nature, Swami Vivekananda's nationalism is based on religion which is life blood of the Indian people. The basis of his nationalism are: deep concern for masses, freedom and equality through which one expresses self, spiritual integration of the world on the basis of universal brotherhood. "Karmyoga" a system of ethics to attain freedom both political and spiritual through selfless service. His writings and speeches established motherland as the only deity to be worshiped in the mind and heart of countrymen.

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The multifaceted persona of Swami Vivekananda



A Message to Youth

**Youth Icon**

Swamiji believed that if our youth is determined, there can be nothing impossible for them to achieve in the world. He urged youth to have dedication to the cause to attain success. Pursuing a challenge with utmost dedication is really the road to success, for our youth. His birthday on January 12 is celebrated as National Youth Day and the week commencing from that day is known as the National Youth Week. As part of National Youth Week celebrations, the Government of India holds the National Youth Festival every year. The youth festival aims to propagate the concept of national integration, spirit of communal harmony, brotherhood, courage and

adventure amongst the youth by exhibiting their cultural prowess in a common platform.

Swami Vivekananda belonged to the 19th century, yet his message and his life are more relevant today than in the past and perhaps, will be more relevant in future. Persons like Swami Vivekananda do not cease to exist with their physical death - their influence and their thought, the work which they initiate, go on gaining momentum as years pass by, and ultimately, reach a fulfilment which they envisaged.

(Amarjit Singh Anand is a thinker and writer. He is a regular contributor to The Indian Panorama. He can be reached at [amar1ujagar1pritam@gmail.com](mailto:amar1ujagar1pritam@gmail.com))



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CONTD FROM PAGE 1

**Biden accuses Trump and...**

Notably, almost no Republicans joined Biden and the Democrats in what some hoped would be a day of reconciliation. Instead, it was a fresh and jarring display of a nation still deeply torn by the lies that led to the riot, by its unsettled aftermath and Trump's persisting grip on a large swath of the country. "For the first time in our history, a president not just lost an election, he tried to prevent the peaceful transfer of power as a violent mob breached the Capitol," Biden said. "You can't love your country only when you win." Biden's criticism of the defeated president was rife with condemnation for the assault that has fundamentally changed Congress and the nation, and has raised global concerns about the future of American democracy.

His voice booming at times, reverberating in the ornate Statuary Hall where rioters had laid siege, the president called on Americans to remember what they saw Jan 6 with their own eyes: the mob attacking police and breaking windows, a Confederate flag inside the Capitol, gallows erected outside amid calls to hang the vice president - all while Trump sat at the White House watching on TV.

"The former president's supporters are trying to rewrite history," Biden said. "They want you to see Election Day as the day of insurrection and the riot that took place here on January 6 as a true expression of the will of the people. Can you think of a more twisted way to look at this country, to look at America? I cannot." Until the anniversary, Biden had mentioned the attack only sparingly but he aggressively weighed in Thursday and coupled his message with a call for voting rights legislation that Democrats have long been urging.

The president's remarks drew a stark contrast with the false narratives that persist about the Capitol assault, including the continued refusal by many Republicans to affirm that Biden won the 2020 election. Five people died in the Capitol siege and its immediate aftermath.

"We must be absolutely clear about what is true and what is a lie," Biden said. "The former president of the United States of America has spread a web of lies about the 2020 election." Yet even as the president spoke, the vanquished Trump gave no signs of letting go, a show of the division in the country emphasized by the silence and absence of most Republicans to join Biden at the Capitol.

From Florida, Trump revived his unfounded attack on the elections. He accepted no responsibility for sending the thousands of supporters to the Capitol that day when he told them to "fight like hell". By Thursday evening, he was sending out a fundraising appeal.

Even among congressional Republicans who condemned the attack in the days afterward, few spoke that way now - some joining in Trump's false portrayals.

"What brazen politicization of January 6 by President Biden," tweeted

Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, a sometimes Trump confidant who had initially said he had abandoned Trump after the riot only to quickly embrace him again.

Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell - who at the time said Trump was "practically and morally" responsible for the attack - issued a statement that highlighted the gravity of that day, but also said some Democrats were trying to exploit it for other purposes. He was absent, with a contingent attending the funeral of former colleague Sen. Johnny Isakson in Georgia. Rep. Liz Cheney, vice chair of the House committee investigating the attack and one of the few GOP lawmakers attending the Capitol ceremonies, warned that "the threat continues." Trump, she said, "continues to make the same claims that he knows caused violence on January 6." "Unfortunately, too many in my own party are embracing the former president, are looking the other way or minimizing the danger," she told NBC's "Today" show. "That's how democracies die. We simply cannot let that happen." She was joined by her father Dick Cheney, the former vice president and now a Republican Party elder. They were the only members of the GOP seen for a moment of silence on the House floor.

Dick Cheney was greeted by several Democrats and said in a statement: "I am deeply disappointed at the failure of many members of my party to recognize the grave nature of the January 6 attacks and the ongoing threat to our nation." Throughout Thursday, lawmakers shared their experiences of being trapped in the House or rushed away from the Senate, as the siege raged for hours. Rep. Dan Kildee of Michigan showed a shard of glass from one of the Capitol's broken windows he carries in his pocket. "January 6 is not over," he said, choking up. "The threat, and the lie that fuels that threat, continues to rear its head." He said: To truly protect our democracy we need truth." The House panel investigating the insurrection plans to spend the coming months exploring and revealing what happened with public hearings.

Biden and his administration have come under criticism from some in his party for not adequately explaining how they believe democracy is at risk or pushing Congress hard enough to pass election and voting rights legislation that is stalled by a Republican filibuster in the Senate.

Barack Obama, the former president, said "nothing is more important" on the anniversary than ensuring the right to vote. "Our democracy is at greater risk today than it was back then," Obama said in a statement.

Biden's address, and that of Vice President Kamala Harris who is leading the administration's efforts on the voting and elections legislation, appeared as a direct response to critics.

"We must pass voting rights bills," Harris said in her address. "We cannot sit on the sidelines." House Speaker Nancy Pelosi drew on history with a hope that Americans would turn to their "better angels" to resolve differences.

Lawmakers held an evening vigil on the Capitol steps. (Source: Agencies)

**Bad Weather, Farmers...**

It was decided that he would go by road, which would take more than two hours. He then proceeded to travel by road after confirmation of necessary security arrangements by the Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab," the statement said, adding, "Around 30 km away from National Martyrs Memorial in Hussainiwala, when the PM's convoy reached a flyover, it was found that the road was blocked by some protesters. The PM was stuck on the flyover for 15-20 minutes. This was a major lapse in the security of PM."

The statement noted that the Prime Minister's schedule and travel plan were communicated well in advance to the State government. "As per procedure, they have to make necessary arrangements for logistics, security as well as keep a contingency plan ready. Also, in view of the contingency plan, Punjab Government has to deploy additional security to secure any movement by road, which was clearly not deployed. After this security lapse, it was decided to head back to Bathinda airport," it stated.

Punjab Chief Minister Channi, on the hand, said there was no security lapse on the part of the Punjab administration, and that Special Protection Group which is responsible for Prime Minister's security took sudden decision to go by road, without the advance information to Punjab State authorities responsible for security of VIPs.

Reports came in that huge arrangements were made for Prime Minister's rally where a gathering of 100,000 was expected, but weather played foul and people just could not make it to the venue, leaving chairs and open spaces around unoccupied, and that was one of the reasons for Prime Minister to get back, in stead of waiting for the police to clear the roads of protesting farmers and go ahead to address the rally. Punjab government has since submitted the report to Home Ministry of India. Meanwhile, many BJP leaders have demanded action against the erring Punjab administration officials, and some have gone further and demanded imposition of President's rule in Punjab, alleging that the present Channi government is not able to maintain law and order, and that fair elections cannot be held with his government in power.

The days to come are likely to witness interesting political jugglery, given the fact that Punjab is in no mood to welcome BJP. (With inputs from PTI)

**Veteran Indian American...**

A 28-year veteran of the US Department of State, he has held a number of senior US government positions including Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia in Washington, DC and US Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives. A part of the US Chamber USIBC represents top global companies operating across the United States, India, and the Indo-Pacific.

Amid dynamic growth within the US-India commercial partnership, it serves

as the premier voice of industry and create connections between businesses and governments across both countries, a chamber release said. Through its flagship Washington, DC and New Delhi offices and presences across both countries, USIBC works with members to identify and advance key policy priorities, it said. Recognizing that US-India trade is increasingly driven by new business hubs, USIBC is also focused on strengthening connections between cities and states.

Keshap's predecessor Biswal, a former US Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, will remain deeply involved with USIBC as the US Chamber's Senior Vice President of International Strategy and Global Initiatives and South Asia.

"The US-India Business Council is a critical and vital voice in driving ever closer commercial cooperation between the world's two largest democracies," said Myron Brilliant, Executive Vice President and Head of the International Division of the US Chamber of Commerce.

"We're ecstatic to have Ambassador Keshap as USIBC's next President. His deep expertise, and deep global network will empower the organization to even greater heights and serve our members well."

"As the next President of USIBC, I'm honored and excited to continue my involvement in shaping and strengthening the robust relationship between the United States and India. I'm thrilled to join the US Chamber's international powerhouse team and be part of the world's largest and most influential advocacy organization," said Keshap. "India and its inspired citizenry hold a special place in my heart, and I believe there is no better place to continue this journey than serving as President of USIBC, which is committed and dedicated to enhancing commercial ties between the two countries," he added. "With the two countries on the cusp of entering an even more robust era in our strategic partnership, I feel privileged and honored to lead USIBC."

"I'm thrilled to welcome my former State Department colleague to the US Chamber family," said Biswal. "Ambassador Keshap brings a wealth of experience and knowledge of India and the Indo-Pacific to his new role."

"Across multiple US administrations, he has been instrumental in expanding US-India strategic and economic cooperation and growing commercial ties across multiple sectors," she said.

"I look forward to working with Atul and the entire USIBC team to deliver to our members and leaders in both countries unmatched experience, advocacy, and networks to further deepen the US-India partnership."

Keshap's previous positions included Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and Pacific Affairs and US Envoy for Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.

He has also served in a number of distinguished roles at the National Defense University, the White House National Security Council, and in diplomatic postings in Washington and abroad, including in India from 2005-2008.

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