



AUSTRALIAN CRICKET LEGEND SHANE WARNE PASSES AWAY AT 52



Legendary former Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne during an interview, in New Delhi. Photo / PTI

NEW YORK (TIP): Australia's legendary leg-spinner Shane Warne passed away in the early hours of Saturday in Koh Samui, Thailand, according to Fox News.

He was 52.

The report said, "Shane was found unresponsive in his villa and despite the best efforts of medical staff, he could not be revived."

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INDIAN AMERICAN CONGRESSMAN RO KHANNA EXPRESSES DISAPPOINTMENT OVER INDIA ABSTAINING UNSC RESOLUTION ON RUSSIA



Indian American Congressman Ro Khanna expressed disappointed over India's abstention from the UNSC resolution on Russia's aggression against Ukraine

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Prominent Indian-American Congressman Ro Khanna has expressed disappointment over India's decision to abstain from the UN Security Council resolution on Russia's aggression against Ukraine, saying it is the US and

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Russia, Ukraine agree on setting up evacuation corridors

NEGOTIATORS ALSO DISCUSSED MAINTAINING A TEMPORARY CEASEFIRE IN AREAS WHERE THE HUMANITARIAN CORRIDORS WILL BE LOCATED.

BREST, BELARUS (TIP): Russia and Ukraine have agreed on the need for humanitarian corridors to deliver aid and help civilians exit besieged Ukrainian cities, in the first apparent sign of progress in talks between the warring sides, according to an Al Jazeera report.

Russian negotiator Vladimir Medinsky reported "substantial progress" at Thursday's talks - the second round of negotiations since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine - saying the "main issue that we settled today is the salvation of people, civilians who have found themselves in a zone of military clashes".

However, he did not indicate when the safe corridors may be established.

The tentative agreement, reached
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Negotiators shake hands prior to the talks between delegations from Ukraine and Russia in Belarus's Brest region on March 3, 2022
Photo / courtesy Maxim Guchek /AFP

India abstains on UNHRC resolution to investigate human rights violations, crimes in Russia-Ukraine war

The resolution was adopted with 32 votes in favor, two against (Russia and Eritrea) and 13 abstentions, including India, China, Pakistan, Sudan and Venezuela

GENEVA/ UNITED NATIONS (TIP): India on Friday, March 4, abstained in the UN Human Rights Council on a vote to urgently establish an independent international commission of inquiry to investigate alleged human rights violations and related crimes following Russia's military operation in Ukraine.

Also read: India's Response to Russian Invasion of Ukraine legitimizes rape of a democracy (Page 2)



United Nations

India abstains on UNHRC resolution to investigate human rights violations, crimes in Russia-Ukraine war
Photo for representational purpose only

The 47-member Council voted on a draft resolution on the 'Situation of human rights in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression.'

The resolution was adopted with 32 votes in favor, two against (Russia and Eritrea) and 13 abstentions, including India, China, Pakistan, Sudan and Venezuela.

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LEGISLATION INTRODUCED IN US SENATE TO REFORM AND STOP ABUSE OF H-1B VISA SYSTEM



Photo for representation only.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Seeking to comprehensively overhaul the H-1B and L-1 visa programs, a bipartisan group of influential senators have introduced a legislation in the US Senate, which they argued will protect American workers and crack down on foreign outsourcing companies that exploit these popular visa programs to deprive qualified Americans of high-skilled jobs.

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COMMENT

India's Response to Russian Invasion of Ukraine legitimizes rape of a democracy

BY INDRAJIT SALUJA



India's response to Russian invasion of Ukraine has surprised and shocked democracies and Indians living in democratic countries of the world. India's abstention from UNSC and UNGA resolutions to condemn Russia for its invasion of Ukraine is being interpreted as legitimizing Russian rape of democratic Ukraine.

The Hindu scriptures say that the person who does not object to a wrongdoing to another person is equally guilty as the person doing wrong. Going by that high moral standard, India in siding with the wrongdoer is guilty of being an accomplice of Russia in the genocidal act.

If one closely studied the mind of the present rulers in Delhi, one would clearly see that Modi government believes in choosing interests over principles, notwithstanding the declarations of high moral standards and "Ram Rajya" of Modi and his company.

Suddenly the age-old support to Palestinians disappeared and Israel became a darling of India. What was the motivation? One, Israel offered defense equipment and training to Indian commandos to fight insurgency in J & K. Two, Israel offered technology, including the spying equipment, and of course, technologies in other fields including agriculture. However, the most glueing factor between Modi and Netanyahu was the latter's

autocratic style of functioning. It was for the same reason that Modi felt drawn to Trump who he endorsed as India's choice of the President of America in 2020 when at a rally of Indian Americans in Houston on September 22, 2019 he gave the slogan "Abki bar Trump Sarkar" (Next it is Trump administration), which was an utter violation of the US laws which prohibit a visitor to the US interfering in the internal political affairs of the country. But Modi, as Prime Minister of India, a country that the US considers its "strategic partner" committed the violation and got away with it.

India's response to Russian invasion of Ukraine, some foreign policy experts will argue, is guided by the harsh geopolitical circumstances. India has to deal with China, a growing and ambitious power in India's neighborhood. India needs the support of both the US and Russia. Hence, India treaded a path whereby it will not annoy either. However, by abstaining from the US vote to condemn Russia for aggression against Ukraine, India has clearly indicated its preference for now, whatever explanation the foreign ministry of India may give.

Once again, it has become clear to the world where the sympathies of the present government of India lie. Not with democracies. Surely not. The pattern we have seen of Modi's preference for autocrats holds.

One of the reasons which most India watchers either deliberately keep quiet about or have failed to see is the history of the political party governing India. It is the party that

admired Adolf Hitler. It is the party that considers Nathuram Godse, the assassin of Mahatma Gandhi as a patriot who rid India of a man who, according to the perception of this party, was pro-Muslim and responsible for the division of India in 1947. It is the party that wants a theocratic Hindu state by 2025 when the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (the party's volunteer corps) celebrates centenary of its foundation.

The government of India's foreign policy is not only guided by the tough geopolitical conditions but also by the desire to have the nations on its side when it goes in for a declaration of a theocratic state. Democracies of the world, including the US are not going to be supportive of the anti-democratic move of the Indian rulers. In fact, they will oppose any such move. India will then need Russia, a country that has no qualms about democratic decencies or human rights.

Modi and his people have long been preparing to realize their dream of a Hindu Nation. They want to amend the constitution and act democratically, for now, but the way they are losing power in State after States, they may fail to have the required numbers in the Rajya Sabha (the upper house, much like the US Senate) to carry out the constitutional amendment and fail in their democratic bid. So, they have plan B to ensure they achieve their dream. And that will not be a democratic way. It is then that they will need Putins of the world.

Does the scenario frighten you? I wish the world is spared another genocide.

Trumps reach deal to postpone depositions in New York attorney general investigation

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Lawyers for former President Donald Trump and the New York attorney general have reached an agreement to postpone depositions in the civil investigation into the Trump Organization until after an appeal is decided, likely pushing off any testimony for at least several months, a CNN report says.

In the deal, which was signed off by a New York state judge, both sides agreed to an expedited briefing schedule that would conclude by March 31. The Trumps would be required to sit for depositions, if they lose the appeal, 14 days after a decision is rendered.

It is not clear how quickly the appeals court will rule. Under the lower court ruling, the former President, Donald Trump Jr., and Ivanka Trump were ordered to sit for depositions by March 10.

The Trumps have argued that if New York Attorney General Letitia James wants their testimony, she should bring them before a state grand jury investigating the Trump Organization. The Trump lawyers claimed that she is trying to end-run the grand jury process,



The Trumps - Donald Trump Jr., Ivanka Trump and Donald Trump File photo

where witnesses receive transactional immunity for their testimony in New York.

But the state judge rejected the Trumps' arguments last month, noting they could invoke their Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination during

their depositions and refuse to answer questions, as Eric Trump did in 2020.

In a civil case, the jury can draw an "adverse inference" and hold it against individuals who don't answer questions.

During a recent court hearing in the civil case, Ronald Fischetti, an attorney

for Donald Trump, argued that if the former President declined to answer questions, it would be on the front pages of newspapers, which would make it harder for them to find an unbiased jury, if it came to that.

The New York district attorney's and attorney general's investigations are focused on the accuracy of financial statements Donald Trump provided to lenders, insurers and others.

In January, James said her office had found "significant" evidence "indicating that the Trump Organization used fraudulent or misleading asset valuations to obtain a host of economic benefits, including loans, insurance coverage, and tax deductions." On the financial statements, she alleged, there were numerous "misleading statements and omissions."

The burden of proof in civil investigations is lower than for criminal investigations. To bring a criminal case, prosecutors would need evidence of Trump's state of mind and whether he intended to mislead or defraud anyone when he made statements embellishing the value of his properties.

Senator John Liu calls for a review of School Governance and Mayoral accountability



Senator John Liu is seen top left.
Photo / office of Senator John Liu

Governor Hochul proposed in her executive budget the renewal of New York City's system of mayoral accountability (aka mayoral control) for four years. As mayoral accountability is set to expire on June 30, the state Senate and Assembly must also make a determination on whether to renew, amend or disapprove mayoral accountability by the state budget deadline on April 1, or via legislation before the June 30 expiration.

Senator John Liu stated, "The approaching expiration of mayoral control of our schools on June 30th demands a hard look at how to make the mayor's governance of our educational system more accountable to New York City's students and parents. For the last 20 years, stakeholders have bemoaned previous administrations' lack of checks and balances and engagement on critical issues. There remain legitimate questions about whether or not the current system of mayoral accountability that has been so widely criticized, should be continued, changed, or abandoned.

"Today, we heard a wide range of insights, criticisms, and suggestions from city and state officials, unions, parents, educators, and the general public. At stake is the future of our kids' education at a time when so many have suffered from pandemic-induced stress, and we cannot afford to risk the same mistakes of the past. Many thanks to all who testified today, and we encourage the public to continue sharing their insights about what changes, if any, they want to see in the future of school governance and mayoral accountability."

Dr. Martin Luther King Visionary Awards presented

NEW YORK (TIP): Dr. Martin Luther King Visionary Awards were presented on February 27 at a Human Rights Commission Gala honoring the Life and Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. & Black History Month.

A number of New Yorkers were presented the awards for their services to community. 12 persons received Lifetime Achievement award while 11 persons were presented award for community service. Among other awards were 3 Humanitarian awards, 2 Wellness awards, besides 2 Medals of Honor awards.

Among the awardees was Malini Shah, a well-known personality of New York. She is a prominent community leader and Activist who is currently President of her diamond company, Difference Inc. In addition to running a successful jewelry business, she is also the Founder of Nritya Kala Kendra Inc., and Indo-American Arts and Cultural Forum. Co-Founder, Indian American Association of Queens. Co-Chair Felicia's Promise, Vice President of the Center for the Women of New York.

Malini has dedicated over 40 years as a cultural ambassador to many organizations across the world. Malini is involved with many significant New York



Malini Shah (left) receives the Martin Luther King Visionary award

City cultural institutions. Her passion for helping others and community service Volunteered and Served as a Community and Cultural Liaison for Council Member Paul A. Vallone. She also volunteered and served as representative for NYC Speaker Melissa Mark-Vivirito, NYC Speaker Corey Johnson to the Museum of Arts and Design Board of Trustees in Manhattan and continues to volunteer and serve as a representative for the NYC Speaker to the Museum of Arts and Design.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



INDIAN DIASPORA COUNCIL CONDEMS THE RUSSIAN ATTACKS ON UKRAINE

NEW YORK (TIP): The Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) joins in solidarity with others globally in its unequivocal condemnation of the unprovoked Russian invasion and attack of Ukraine, a sovereign country, resulting in unwarranted deaths, destruction and displacement of countless innocent citizens fleeing

from their homes. IDC considers the invasion and attack by Russia to be unjustified, reckless and inhuman, without regard for the lives of innocent civilians. IDC supports the peaceful resolution of disputes and urges Russia and the international community to bring this war to a quick and peaceful resolution.

Interpol issues Red Corner Notices against Atul and Rajesh Gupta

JOHANNESBURG (TIP): The Interpol has issued red notices against Atul and Rajesh Gupta -- two of the three Indian-origin Gupta brothers -- who fled South Africa with their families amid investigations into their alleged looting of billions of rands from state-owned enterprises.

However, the Interpol has declined a request from the South African government to issue red notices against their wives -- Arathi and Chetali Gupta.

A Red Notice is an alert to all Interpol member states that an individual is a wanted fugitive, but is not equivalent to an arrest warrant. However, it strengthens the case of a country negotiating the extradition of wanted criminals from another state.

The Red Notice, which the South African government had applied for against the Gupta Brothers seven months ago, was issued on Monday.

The three Gupta brothers- Ajay, Atul and Rajesh- are originally from Uttar Pradesh's Saharanpur and now believed to be in self-exile in Dubai.

Justice Minister Ronald Lamola has described the move as "a positive development" which he hoped would allow justice to take its course.

South Africa's National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) has been trying for several years to extradite the Gupta brothers.

Although their exact whereabouts remains obscure,



The Interpol has issued red notices against Atul and Rajesh Gupta

South Africa last year had concluded an extradition treaty with Dubai and applied for their extradition.

The Guptas have been accused of misusing their proximity to former President Jacob Zuma to loot from parastatal companies, including the national electricity supplier Eskom, which is now severely cash-strapped, resulting in frequent load shedding across the country.

The Guptas had previously stated that their extradition was politically motivated, which has been denied by the NPA.

Zuma is currently fighting the revocation of his medical parole after serving just a few months of a 15-month jail sentence imposed by the apex Constitutional Court last year because he walked out of a hearing of the commission and refused to testify further.

Lawyers for the Guptas have confirmed that they had been made aware that the NPA had "temporarily succeeded" in having red notices issued against the brothers, but stated that they would be challenging these notices on the basis of "material misrepresentations by the NPA," according to media website.

Outgoing head of the Investigating Directorate at the NPA, Hermione Cronje, who had led the process to get the Guptas back to South Africa, has described Interpol's move as "bittersweet."

"This is my last day at the ID, so getting formal notification that these red notices have been issued - which paves the way for the Gupta brothers to be extradited - is bittersweet. So many people have worked very hard to make this a reality and my sincere [wish] is that their efforts translate, finally, into those allegedly responsible for state capture being held to account," Cronje told media.

Indian-origin BitConnect's founder Satish Kumbhani disappears

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): BitConnect's Indian founder Satish Kumbhani, who was indicted by a federal grand jury in San Diego Friday, February 25, in a global \$2.4 billion cryptocurrency Ponzi scheme, is reported to have vanished from India.

Kumbhani, 36, of Hemal, India, was charged with orchestrating a global Ponzi scheme through BitConnect, an alleged fraudulent cryptocurrency investment platform that reached a peak market capitalization of \$3.4 billion.

Kumbhani is charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit commodity price manipulation, operation of an unlicensed money transmitting business, and conspiracy to commit international money laundering.

If convicted of all counts, he faces a maximum total penalty of 70 years in prison, according to a Justice Department press release.

"Kumbhani is at large," the Justice Department said Friday, February 25. However, according to Bloomberg, a Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) attorney said in a court filing Monday, February 28 that he "has likely relocated from India to an unknown address in a foreign country."

"Since November, the commission has been consulting with that country's financial regulatory authorities in an attempt to locate Kumbhani's address. At present, however, Kumbhani's location remains unknown," attorney Richard Primoff said.

Last September, the SEC separately sued Kumbhani, claiming he fraudulently raised more than \$2 billion from investors in his cryptocurrency exchange platform, Bloomberg said. But the SEC didn't know where he was and couldn't serve him with the lawsuit.



BitConnect's Indian founder Satish Kumbhani, who was indicted by a federal grand jury in San Diego Friday, February 25, in a global \$2.4 billion cryptocurrency Ponzi scheme, is reported to have vanished from India.

Primoff asked US District Judge John Koeltl for an extension until May 30. The SEC said it wants to look for Kumbhani and if it finds him in the US, serve him with the complaint.

Prosecutors said Kumbhani created BitConnect in 2016 and the digital token, BitConnect Coin (BCC). He allegedly misled investors about BitConnect's "Lending Program," according to court documents.

Under this program, Kumbhani and his co-conspirators touted BitConnect's purported proprietary technology, known as the "BitConnect Trading Bot" and "Volatility Software," as being able to generate substantial profits and guaranteed returns by using investors' money to trade on the volatility of cryptocurrency exchange markets.

As alleged in the indictment, however, BitConnect operated as a Ponzi scheme by paying earlier BitConnect investors with money from later investors. In total, Kumbhani and his co-conspirators obtained approximately \$2.4 billion from investors.

The indictment further alleges that, after operating for approximately one year, Kumbhani abruptly shut down the Lending Program.

Kumbhani then directed his network of promoters to fraudulently manipulate and prop up BCC price to create the false appearance of legitimate market demand for it.

Kumbhani and his co-conspirators also concealed the location and control of the fraud proceeds obtained from investors by commingling, cycling, and exchanging the funds through BitConnect's cluster of cryptocurrency wallets and various internationally based cryptocurrency exchanges.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

NRIs worried as Russia-Ukraine conflict delaying flights

AMRITSAR / TORONTO (TIP):

While the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has worried the families of those stranded in Ukraine, it has also troubled the NRIs ready to return to Canada after spending their winter in Punjab.

The NRIs said flights, especially those connecting via Montreal and Toronto were getting delayed. They, however, said that flights going via Vancouver were comparatively less troublesome.

Kanwaljit Singh Sekhon of Wadala village, near Baba Bakala, who took the flight to Canada via Vancouver on Wednesday, March 2 morning, said he had to wait for six hours at the Delhi airport as the flight was late." He said due to delay from Delhi, he would now have to spend eight hours extra at the Vancouver airport.

Sekhon had to go to Edmonton, but now there was no flight available from Vancouver to Edmonton. So, he had booked a ticket for Calgary, from where he would take another flight.

"Those travelling via Montreal and Toronto have to face delay of almost 25 to 26 hours," said Gurjant Singh, who took a flight from Delhi on February 2 after a 24-hour delay. Gurjant said as the airlines did not provide boarding during the delay, they had to sleep at the airport itself.

With such stories of hardships, those who had plans to return to Canada shortly are worried. Some are even planning to leave children and women behind.

"It is very difficult to travel in such crisis especially with small children," said Gurpreet Singh, who was scheduled to travel next week. He said he was making calls to his travel agent and co-travelers, but nobody had any concrete information. (Source: TNS)



While the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has worried the families of those stranded in Ukraine, it has also troubled the NRIs ready to return to Canada after spending their winter in Punjab

Photo for representation only.

Indian American Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella's 26-year-old son passes away

SAN FRANCISCO (TIP): Tech giant Microsoft Corporation said that Zain Nadella, son of CEO Satya Nadella and his wife Anu Nadella, has died, media reported on Tuesday, March 1.

The software maker told its executive staff in an email that Zain, who was 26 years old and had been born with cerebral palsy, passed away on Monday, February 28 morning.

The message asked executives to hold the family in their thoughts and prayers while giving them space to grieve privately, the report said.

In October 2017, the CEO talked about the birth of his son in a blogpost.

"One night, during the thirty-sixth

week of her pregnancy, Anu noticed that the baby was not moving as much as she was accustomed to. So, we went to the emergency room of a local hospital in Bellevue," Nadella had said in the post.

"We thought it would be just a routine checkup, little more than new parent anxiety. In fact, I distinctly remember feeling annoyed by the wait times we experienced in the emergency room. But upon examination, the doctors were alarmed enough to order an emergency cesarean section," he added.

The CEO mentioned that Zain was born at 11:29 p.m. on August 13, 1996, all of three pounds and he did not cry.

"Zain was transported from the

hospital in Bellevue across Lake Washington to Seattle Children's Hospital with its state-of-the-art Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Anu began her recovery from the difficult birth. I spent the night with her in the hospital and immediately went to see Zain the next morning. Little did I know then how profoundly our lives would change," Nadella said.

"Over the course of the next couple of years, we learned more about the damage caused by in utero asphyxiation, and how Zain would require a wheelchair and be reliant on us because of severe cerebral palsy. I was devastated. But mostly I was sad for how



Zain Nadella (26), son of CEO Satya Nadella and his wife Anu Nadella, has died

things turned out for me and Anu," he added.

INDO-CANADIAN ACTRESS MAITREYI RAMAKRISHNAN GIVES VOICE TO PRIYA IN DISNEY'S 'TURNING RED'



Indo-Canadian actress Maitreyi Ramakrishnan of 'Never Have I Ever' Fame. Has given voice to Priya in Disney's 'Turning Red'

HOLLYWOOD (TIP): Disney and Pixar's all new feature film 'Turning Red,' which is all set for its theatrical release next week in the US has an all diverse cast. Joining the voice cast team is Canadian actress Maitreyi Ramakrishnan of 'Never Have I Ever' Fame.'

Directed by Academy award winner Domee Shi, the animated film follows the journey of a 13-year-old Canadian Chinese girl Meilin Lee. The character lineup includes Mei, her inner circle of friends and family, and members of a boy band. Filmmakers called on a rich roster of voice talent to help bring the characters to life.

"The Toronto setting of this story called for a diverse cast," says associate producer Adrian Molina. Maitreyi Ramakrishnan does the voice over for Priya, who is the protagonist's friend. Sandra Oh voices Ming Lee, Meilin's mom who is a hardworking keeper of the Lee Family Temple in Toronto's Chinatown.

The character of Priya, voiced by Ramakrishnan is a quiet wild card with a deadpan sense of humor and a calm and collected approach to school, friendship and everything else.

"I remember my first reaction on to seeing just a rough sketch of Priya while recording," says Ramakrishnan. "I was immediately so excited about how similar she looks to me—I'm talking about the bushy hair, the nose piercing, glasses and the slight eye bags from probably staying up way too late the night before!"

"I definitely was not as quiet and cool as Priya is when I was in middle school, but we both are always ready to stick up for a friend."

Priya's low-key personality was tricky to pull off, says the actor. "Sounding excited, sad or angry while also staying monotone is a very fine line to walk," she says.

"Priya is just someone with a monotone voice, but she also has feelings like every other middle school kid, so keeping that in mind definitely helped," says Ramakrishnan. "Recording early in the morning also helped to sound monotone! Not a fan of mornings."

'Turning Red' which was also set to release in Russia has been paused as Disney decided to pause all its theatrical releases due to Ukrainian invasion.

Indian American Democrat Raj Mukherji to run for New Jersey Senate

JERSEY CITY, NJ (TIP): Indian American Democrat Raj Mukherji, who represents Jersey City in the New Jersey state assembly has announced that he will run for the state Senate in the 32nd district next year.

Mukherji, 37, chairman of the Assembly Judiciary Committee, has already won endorsements from Gov Phil Murphy Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop, State Sen Brian Stack, and Hoboken's Indian American Mayor Ravi Bhalla.

"The goal of securing a brighter tomorrow for my toddler son, Leo, and infant daughter, Liana, has strengthened my resolve to keep fighting for our state," Mukherji said in a Feb 18 statement.

"So, I'm humbly asking the people of Jersey City and Hoboken to return me to the legislature, this time in the Senate," added the Marine Corps veteran and former Jersey City deputy mayor.

Murphy gave the five-term assemblyman an endorsement less than one day after a new legislative redistricting map created a new open seat in Hudson County.

"Raj represents a new generation of leadership and I know the people of Jersey City and Hoboken have no better representative, which is why I enthusiastically endorse his candidacy for State Senate," said Murphy.

"Over the past eight years, Raj Mukherji has been a tireless fighter for the people of Hudson County, representing some of the most diverse communities in our state," he said.

"Whether as a job-creating CEO, Deputy Mayor of his beloved Jersey City, local prosecutor, or as a prolific lawmaker, Raj has excelled and championed progressive values and helped shape a stronger and fairer New Jersey."

Murphy praised Mukherji's legislative accomplishments during more than eight years in Trenton, where he served as Assembly Majority Whip before taking over the Judiciary chairmanship in 2020.

"From investing in mass transit to expanding Medicaid to cover essential healthcare needs to increasing funding for our public schools to protecting open spaces, Raj has been an ally of mine in the Assembly and will no doubt continue building on his strong record of progress in the Senate," the governor said.

The newly-drawn 32nd district includes part of



NJ Assemblyman Raj Mukherji has announced that he will run for the state Senate next year

Jersey City and Hoboken, with an open Senate seat that became available after the new map pitted two veteran Democratic senators, Nicholas Sacco and Brian Stack, into the primary in the next-door 33rd district.

Mukherji was first elected in 2013 in the 33rd district, which is currently represented by Stack in the Senate.

The district, which is made up entirely of Hoboken and northern Jersey City, has a white plurality but includes the second-largest Asian American population of any district on the new map, at 32%.

The endorsements from Fulop, Stack, and Bhalla, three of the most important figures in the district, make Mukherji the prohibitive frontrunner in the Democratic primary.

"For the last eight years, Assemblyman Raj Mukherji has been a tenacious fighter for Hudson County," Stack said.

"I proudly endorse him for the State Senate, and we will work day and night for Raj to make sure our neighbors continue to be well represented in the new district." Mukherji has been an invaluable partner in preserving open space, as well as moving forward resiliency and transportation projects in the Mile Square City, Bhalla said.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

United Nations observance of International Women's Day 2022

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): The United Nations observance of International Women's Day will be held virtually on 8 March, from 10 to 11.30 A.M.

The theme for this year's observance is "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow".

The year 2022 is pivotal for achieving gender equality in the context of climate change, and environmental and disaster risk reduction, which are some of the greatest global challenges of the twenty-first century. Without gender equality today, a sustainable future, and an equal future, remains beyond our reach.

This year's IWD observance is in recognition and celebration of the women and girls who are leading the charge on climate change adaptation and response, and to honor their leadership and contribution towards a sustainable future.



Speakers include:

- H.E. Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations
- H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President of the 76th General Assembly of the United Nations
- H.E. Ms. Aminath Shauna, Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Technology, Republic of Maldives
- H.E. Ms. Amina J. Mohammad, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations
- H.E. Ms. Mathu Joyini, Chair of the 66th Commission on the Status of

of Environment, Climate Change and Technology, Republic of Maldives

Mahlatse Lesiba Ramoroka, UN Women Host

Kabelo Botlhe Dikobe, UN Women Panel Moderator

The colour for International Women's Day is GREEN.

Join the event on UN Web TV.

GOPIO led community delegation meets Mayor Eric Adams and his top officials



Indian American community leaders with New York City officials after an interactive meeting at the City Hall. From L to R: Mukund Mehta, Kavita Motwani, Lal Motwani, Braj Aggarwal, Ketan Shah, Karthikeya Parashar, Prof. Rajasekhar Vangapaty, Gobind Munjal, Sudhir Vaishnav, Deputy Mayor Meera Joshi, Chief Advisor Ingrid Lewis-Martin, Dr. Thomas Abraham, Dr. Vimal Goyle, Girish Patel and Beena Kothari

NEW YORK (TIP): GOPIO officials along with other Indian community organizations were invited to New York city Hall on March 1st to discuss issues



Indian American community leaders with New York Mayor Eric Adams in front of the City Hall, Front Row, from L to R: Girish Patel, Gobind Munjal, Beena Kothari, Dr. Thomas Abraham, Mayor Adams, Prof. Rajasekhar Vangapaty, Braj Aggarwal and Mukund Mehta. Rear row, from L to R: Karthikeya Parashar, Lal Motwani, Dr. Vimal Goyle, Kavita Motwani, Ketan Shah and Sudhir Vaishnav

of the Indian community and perspectives on how the community can be involved in the city. It all started with GOPIO's condemnation of the defacing of Mahatma Gandhi statue at the Union Square Park in February and GOPIO requesting Mayor Eric Adams to increase police presence in the park area as well as to apprehend and punish culprit.

City Hall was represented by Mayor Adam's Chief Advisor Ingrid Lewis-Martin and Deputy Mayor Meera Joshi. The Indian community delegation was headed by GOPIO Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham along with GOPIO-Manhattan Executive VP Prof. Rajasekhar Vangapaty, VP Dr. Vimal Goyle and Treasurer Braj Aggarwal as well as GOPIO-New York Chapter Hon. Chair Lal Motwani and President Beena Kothari.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

T-Mobile Data Breach Sparks Alert From New York AG James

THE BREACH IMPACTED MORE THAN 53 MILLION CUSTOMERS, INCLUDING MORE THAN 4 MILLION NEW YORKERS.



Letitia James is urging "current, former and prospective" T-Mobile customers to stay vigilant to prevent identity theft.

NEW YORK (TIP): In an "urgent message," New York Attorney General Letitia James confirmed that stolen sensitive customer information was put for sale on the dark web.

James is advising all New Yorkers who believe they were impacted by the huge T-Mobile data breach to take appropriate steps to protect their personal information from identity theft. This comes after several customers received alerts that their information was circulating online following the August 2021 data breach.

"I have an urgent message for T-Mobile customers and other consumers: Be aware of any misuse of your personal information and follow the guidance provided by my office to protect yourself from identity theft," James said. "Information stolen in a massive data breach has fallen into the wrong hands and is circulating on the dark web. The guidance offered by my office can help prevent identity theft. I advise all New Yorkers to maintain their financial

safety by following the guidance my office has laid out."

In August 2021, T-Mobile reported a massive data breach compromising the sensitive personal information of millions of current, former, and prospective T-Mobile customers. The breach impacted more than 53 million customers, including more than 4 million New Yorkers. Among other categories of impacted information, millions had their names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers and driver's license information compromised.

Recently, a large subset of the information compromised in the breach was discovered for sale on the dark web - a hidden portion of the Internet where cyber criminals buy, sell, and track personal information. Many individuals received alerts through various identity theft protection services informing them that their information was found online in connection with the breach, confirming that impacted individuals are at heightened risk for identity theft.

James urged anyone who believes they were impacted by the T-Mobile breach to take the following steps to protect themselves: Monitor your credit. Credit-monitoring services track your credit report and alert you whenever a change is made, such as a new account or a large purchase. Most services will notify you within 24 hours of any change to your credit report.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

What does the military offensive in Ukraine mean for women and girls?

BY ALIA EL-YASSIR, UN WOMEN
REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE
AND CENTRAL ASIA



The military attack in Ukraine is undermining access to rights for all, and UN Women is deeply concerned about the rapidly mounting humanitarian crisis inside Ukraine and in the neighboring countries. We know that women and girls will be impacted differently and disproportionately, and we will seek to ensure that their specific needs are adequately met.

UN Women will use its expertise in Ukraine and neighboring countries to identify and respond to women and girls' specific needs as they evolve. We will redirect our programming on the ground and share our gender expertise with the UN System and our humanitarian partners to help make humanitarian response plans and their implementation more gender responsive.

UN Women has been present in Ukraine since 2015, including with offices in the east. Even before the recent escalation, conflict raged in eastern Ukraine and women and girls were severely impacted. More than 1.5 million people - two-thirds women and children - were internally displaced and suffered from impeded access to healthcare, housing, and employment.

UN Women has been supporting social mobilization amongst women in the conflict-affected areas of eastern

Ukraine, advancing their resilience, livelihoods and boosting their capacities and confidence, including by helping them to form self-help groups. We've also been working closely with civil society partners and women peacemakers, supporting them with their advocacy needs to ensure their voices are heard in decision-making on humanitarian aid provision, recovery, reconstruction and conflict resolution.

Since starting our work in Ukraine, the resilience of women and girls, as well as of other groups often left behind such as young people and members of the LGBTIQ community, have greatly impressed us and guided our efforts. We aim to continue to support the efforts of our partners, calling for their rights to be protected, including to benefit equally from aid and the allocation of resources, and to participate in decision making.

As the number of Ukrainians fleeing to neighboring countries rises, we will also engage in the refugee response there. With our field presence in Moldova, UN Women plans to conduct a rapid gender assessment. A similar needs assessment of Syrian women refugees in transit in the Western Balkans in 2015 laid bare the specific challenges facing women including, family separation, psychosocial stress and trauma, physical harm and injury, lack of access to sexual and reproductive health, exploitation and gender-based violence. Our work with Syrian refugees since 2015 and the internally displaced women of Ukraine has taught us good practices to help women and girls while they are in transit and as their displacement becomes more permanent.

I join our Executive Director in her call to the



A Ukrainian woman waiting in line at the Palanca-Maiaki-Udobnoe border crossing point, between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, 1 March 2022.

Photo/ Courtesy Aurel Obreja, UN Women Moldova

international community "to keep women and girls at the center and to ensure that the humanitarian assistance planned and provided is gender-responsive." I also echo statements by the UN SG and the High Commissioner for Human Rights who have called for an end to the military action which undermines human rights and humanitarian law. But no matter how the war evolves, we will continue to identify and respond to the needs of women and girls, ensuring their voices are heard, and work closely with our UN System and humanitarian partners, as well as women's civil society organizations on the ground to help meet these needs.

(Originally published on UN Women's Regional website for Europe and Central Asia)

DAILY FACTS

What Is War?

Bombs That Cost \$100,000 Dropping From A Plane That Costs \$100,000,000 Flying At A Cost Of \$40,000 Per Hour To Kill People Living With Less Than \$10 A Day

Reactions on social media to Russian bombing of Ukraine

ekavitaayein

Worms that create silk are better than the guys that make bombs



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ALL CANDIDATES MUST HAVE VALID AUTHORIZATION TO WORK IN THE US

Hard times for the state of the union

BY NARAYAN
LAKSHMAN



"AT THE END OF THE DAY THE OLD ADAGE OF "IT'S THE ECONOMY, STUPID", CONTINUES TO RESONATE DEEPLY ACROSS THE COUNTRY AS THE TAGLINE FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM. THE REALIZATION OF THIS - THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION APPEARS TO CONCEDE - WILL REQUIRE THE ADOPTION OF STRONG SELF-INTEREST AS A GUIDING VALUE FOR POLICYMAKING EVEN WHEN IT COMES AT THE COST OF A GRADUAL EROSION OF THE GLOBAL RULES-BASED ORDER AND THE GLOBALIZATION CONSENSUS, AND THE REPUDIATION OF OLDER, CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES SUCH AS EQUAL PROTECTION OF THE LAWS."

When U.S. President Joe Biden stepped up to the podium to deliver his first State of the Union address before both houses of Congress this week, it was a historic moment for several reasons. Not only have none of his successors since 1945 delivered this address during an ongoing ground war of a similar magnitude to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but the optics of his speech captured another rare event. The two top Congressional officials who stood behind Mr. Biden as he spoke, the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Vice President, were both women for only the second time in the country's history.

The hurdles, Ukraine too

Notwithstanding the epochal times marking this event, the reality is that

FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGES AND DOMESTIC HURDLES CONFRONT U.S. PRESIDENT BIDEN IN HIS QUEST FOR A POLICY LEGACY

Mr. Biden faces grim challenges on the foreign policy front and a steep upward climb to overcome domestic hurdles before he can claim credit for any policy legacy that purports to improve the lot of his fellow citizens.

On the foreign policy side, Russian President Vladimir Putin's move to call the West's bluff and kick off a military assault of Ukraine has posed complex strategic questions to the Biden administration, which are difficult to explain away to a U.S. domestic audience. Why did Mr. Biden leave Kyiv hanging in the balance without North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership and with a virtual target on its back vis-à-vis Moscow's guns, when many among Ukraine's neighbors are treaty allies of NATO? Why, despite so many explicit signs that Russia would invade Ukraine if NATO carried on expanding its footprint eastwards across Europe, did Mr. Biden's administration not do more to either make it harder for Moscow to act in this regard or at least buy more time by persuading Mr. Putin to engage diplomatically?

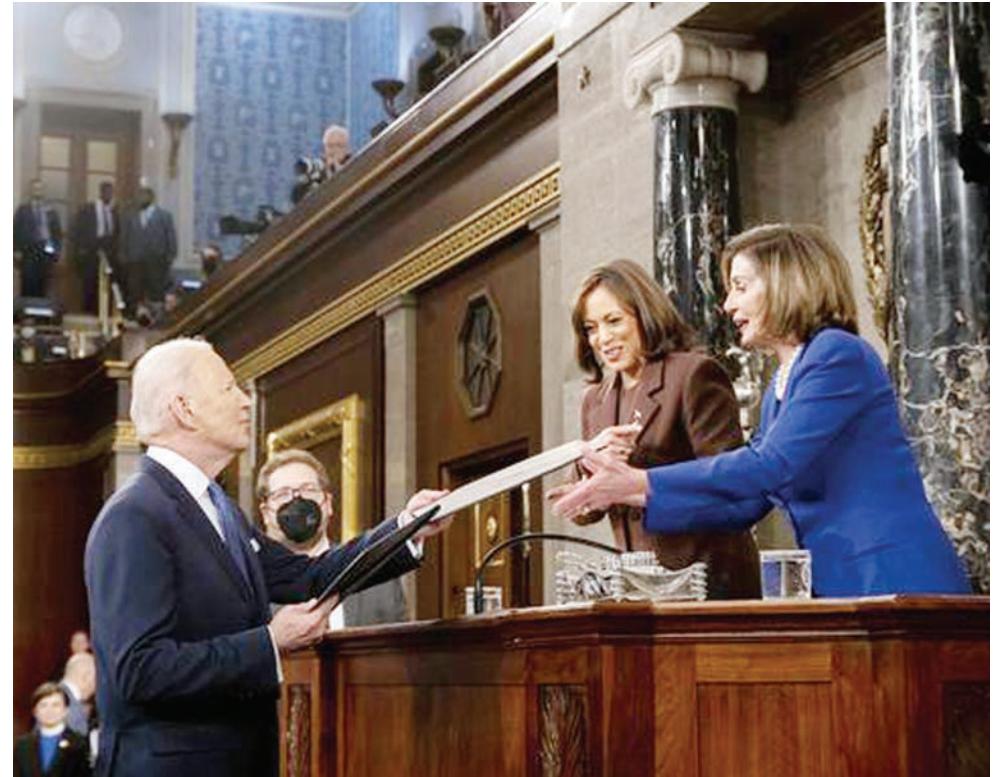
Shadow of midterm elections

Now that the sweeping economic sanctions that Washington has slapped on Russian political elites and institutions associated with Kremlin have roiled the Russian economy and brought the rouble down to historic lows, how will the Biden administration contain the spill-over effects of economic collapse and prevent them from causing a broader global recession? With the conflict intensifying and the human toll rising fast as Russian troops march on Kyiv, the U.S.'s capabilities as a superpower nation will be scrutinized closely on the world stage in the days and weeks ahead. They will almost certainly be attacked by Republicans back home as the midterm election cycle gains momentum - former U.S. President Donald Trump has already set the tenor for the debate by describing Mr. Putin's Ukraine invasion as "genius" and "savvy".

At home, much depends on the outcome of the midterm elections, especially regarding the prospects for a Democratic White House to carry out any meaningful policy reform in the two years that the Biden administration will have from the time the midterms are complete. Democrats and Republicans are evenly split in the Senate with 50 seats each, while Democrats are clinging on to a narrow 221-212 margin in the House of Representatives, both of which advantages could be lost to Democrats if the 2022 midterm election results do not favor them.

Critical issues

The keystone issues that Mr. Biden



The troika of President Biden, Vice President Harris and Speaker Pelosi at Biden's first State of the Union address

needs to convince voters on, if he is to stave off a deleterious shift in the balance of power on Capitol Hill this November, include jobs and economic recovery in the post-COVID-19 climate of uncertainty, preventing the pandemic from wreaking further havoc in future waves, if any, inflation, and social security and education reforms to ease the financial burden on middle class budgets. Almost without exception, Mr. Biden will need the support of Congress to get the heavy lifting done in these policy areas, particularly where budgetary apportionments require lawmakers' sign off. Certainly, it will matter in the foreign policy space. A recent example demonstrating the importance of Congress here is the fact that negotiations over a \$6.4 billion security and humanitarian aid package for Ukraine hit a stalemate in the Senate over the source of these funds - military spending allocation already agreed, or emergency provisions above and beyond that level. Similarly, on the domestic front, Mr. Biden's omnibus mega-bill in late 2021, seeking \$1.85 trillion for social security and climate change, came to naught in the face of cohesive opposition from Senate Republicans and some rebel Democrats who voted across the line.

The Trump impact

At the heart of the Democratic conundrum is the fact that the Mr. Trump's term in office unleashed forces that have tectonically shifted the ground under Washington politics. Whatever the charges of criminality or wrongdoing by the 45th President of the U.S., whether in terms of tax evasion or

his role in spurring on the January 6, 2021 assault on the buildings of Capitol Hill, Mr. Trump's nativist call to white America to reassert its purported supremacy has firmly embedded itself in the broader discourse and heralded a new era where political correctness is eschewed, and facts sometimes matter less than opinion.

Indeed, it is evident that Mr. Biden is seeking to walk a tightrope between traditional mainstream Democratic values and the new paradigm when he spoke at the State of the Union of "the rebirth of pride" and "the revitalization of American manufacturing", which, if it materializes, could help his administration "Lower your cost, not your wages", and ensure the U.S. builds "more cars and semiconductors in America. More infrastructure and innovation in America. More goods moving faster and cheaper in America. More jobs where you can earn a good living in America. Instead of relying on foreign supply chains, let's make it in America".

At the end of the day the old adage of "It's the economy, stupid", continues to resonate deeply across the country as the tagline for the American Dream. The realization of this - the Biden administration appears to concede - will require the adoption of strong self-interest as a guiding value for policymaking even when it comes at the cost of a gradual erosion of the global rules-based order and the globalization consensus, and the repudiation of older, constitutional values such as equal protection of the laws.

(The author is an editor with The Hindu)

What is going on inside Vladimir Putin's head? 12 experts weigh in

BY BRENDAN COLE



Nearly a week into the largest military campaign in Europe since World War Two, Russian forces have encountered fierce resistance from Ukraine while global condemnation has spurred sanctions that have roiled the Russian economy.

Before the invasion, Putin humiliated his spy chief, Sergei Naryshkin in a Russian Security Council meeting which showed the president relishing being in control.

But now with the status of global pariah, Putin's invoking of his country's nuclear threat has raised alarm at what his actions might be if he felt cornered.

Newsweek spoke to a selection of experts about what they believed could be going through Putin's mind. Their responses varied widely from those who said his apparent erratic behavior was part of a calculated grand strategy, to others who believe his increased isolation since the COVID pandemic has made him more emotional and unstable.

Questions surround the state of mind of Russian president Vladimir Putin. After his invasion of Ukraine, there are concerns at how far he might go to secure victory.

Michael McFaul, former U.S. ambassador to Russia

"Putin listens to no one inside Russia. He's been in power for over two decades, so does not take advice from anyone anymore. He also is very isolated. He is the only decision maker that matters. He alone can end this war."

"[Chinese President] Xi is the only leader in the world he respects."

Rose Gottemoeller, ex-deputy Secretary General of NATO

"Vladimir Putin has always cultivated a cool and calculating demeanor, but now he is showing increasingly erratic and emotional behavior so there is a shift."

"From our perspective, it certainly looks irrational, but no doubt that is not how Putin sees it. He's considering himself a figure of destiny, to bring the Russian-speaking peoples together again. For him, it seems, it is a vital historical objective."

Steve Pifer, former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine

"We are seeing a different Vladimir Putin from 10 or 15 years ago. He now seems more emotional, particularly when it comes to Ukraine, and he is taking a much larger risk with the invasion than one would have expected from him earlier."

"One also has to wonder about the effect of the isolation in which he has lived and worked the past two years, apparently out of concern about COVID."

Gustav Gressel, senior policy fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)

"He sees himself as the recreator of imperial Russia. The thing is with the 'madman' theory, he is playing a bit with that."

"He is rational if you know his mindset and that is a social Darwinian mindset, where military power and military strength form the core essence of the state and the core momentum of Russian identity."

"If you know his mindset, what he does is perfectly rational. It is not mad, is just that you have to adopt to this mindset."

"Everything he does today, at some point, he has written or said. It is just that we have continuously

excused him for doing so, in saying, 'that's just basically rambling, he's a hobby historian, he meant that as a joke,' etc. No, he didn't. He was serious and we are seeing it now."

Douglas Page, assistant professor of political science at Gettysburg College, Pennsylvania

"While evidence may emerge about Putin's mental instability, we also should consider the persona that Putin may be willingly crafting during this intense crisis, even when that persona reflects desperation.

"The idea that one's opponent is irrational and crazy is enticing, but this idea also can serve an important purpose for an opponent like Putin. An irrational opponent is more unpredictable and can be viewed as more willing to incur absurdly high costs in a conflict.

"For example, nuclear war would doom Russia, but an irrational Putin could raise more questions in the West about his willingness to use nuclear weapons. This perception in the West may follow Putin's objectives regarding nuclear deterrence and limiting Western involvement in Ukraine.

Ian Johnson, assistant professor of military history at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana

"His historical rhetoric suggested aspirations beyond Ukraine, restoring Russian primacy over areas formerly in Russia's orbit across Eastern Europe.

"Putin is well-versed in history. He clearly believes that he has an opportunity for a historic legacy, one that puts him in line with those figures he cites so frequently in his speeches-Peter the Great and Stalin, among them - both of whom expanded the borders of the Russian or Soviet state at the expense of their neighbors."

William Muck, political science professor, North Central College, Naperville, Illinois

"It does appear that Putin has shifted how he understands and engages with the international community. The tone and language from his recent speeches are particularly telling. Putin has been much more aggressive, provocative, and nationalistic.

"One gets the sense that he now sees himself as a historic figure. That his war in Ukraine is about rewriting the end of the Cold War and making Russia great again.

"People talk of Putin as this brilliant chess player who skillfully outplays his rivals in the international system. That may have been the case in the past, but I think the better current metaphor for his mindset is poker. Putin is a gambler, and his invasion of Ukraine suggests he is all-in on this hand.

"If he wins, it is possible he goes down in history as the figure who restored Russian greatness. However, if he loses, this may be the beginning of the end of the Putin regime in Russia."

Matt Qvortrup, political science professor, Coventry University, U.K.

"He is very out of touch and that is why he expected things to go differently."

"Rationality means you get what you want and what is good for you. For Vladimir Putin, what is good for him is not good for Russia, it is not what is good for the world, it is what will keep him in power.

"He does not want to suffer the fate of [Ex-Serbian leader] Slobodan Milosevic, or [Ex-President of Zimbabwe] Robert Mugabe, and for that reason, he would want to use any available means.

"The shocking thing is that he will be willing to go all the way. It is conceivable that he will use nuclear weapons if he is desperate and for him that might be a rational thing because that might keep him in power."

Russian president Vladimir Putin is keeping the world guessing as western intelligence says the invasion he ordered of Ukraine has not been as successful or as swift as he had hoped.



William Hague, former British Foreign Secretary

"While it is clear that a great many Russian diplomats and officials think he has made a terrible mistake, there will be nothing they can do now to restrain their isolated, paranoid, obsessive and increasingly angry president.

"Tragically for the people of Ukraine, he will have no doubts about what he must do. He will be telling his generals to go deeper, faster, more brutally and destructively if necessary." - The Times of London

"This Madness Must be Stopped". - Lord Owen, former British Foreign Secretary

"He is a very able, intelligent person, never underestimate people who you are dealing with who you don't agree with...it's easy to dismiss them as being mad. I don't believe that is a reasonable judgement of him. But he does seem to be more imperious.

"There is no check on this leader of Russia. In the old Communist days, there was a Politburo, in which you could see collective decision making. That's all gone for Putin.

"He's one single autocratic dictator and he's isolated for the last two years under COVID...you get the feeling there's nobody to even argue with him, let alone contradict him." - Channel 4

Fiona Hill, former U.S. National Security Council advisor on Russia.

"I think a lot of people are noticing that something seems to have flipped somewhat with Putin almost as if he's made a rather emotional and, on the surface, a somewhat unexpected decision.

"He's usually pretty cynical and calculating and very calm. Always very sarcastic and kind of harsh in the way that he talks about things. But the announcement that he was basically going to invade Ukraine, he was viscerally emotional.

"This is what happens if you have got the same person in power for 22 years, he's been in a bubble, especially over the last two and a half years." - MLive

Tatiana Stanovaya, founder of analysis firm R.Politik firm.

"There are people who go crazy and believe that they serve some higher power, God, or something else, perceiving themselves only as a...tool in the hands of great forces.

"Putin is not there yet, but there is something in common. For him, this higher power is the State, as it has been historically understood and he sees himself as its servant.

"The problem is that personal responsibility is diminished and you feel that you are acting on behalf of history.

"With such a vision you can go very far without remorse." - Telegram

(Source: Newsweek)

The anatomy of India's Ukraine dilemma

NEW DELHI HAS TAKEN A SUBTLE PRO-MOSCOW POSITION ON THE QUESTION OF RUSSIAN ATTACKS AGAINST UKRAINE



India needs both the US and Russia in the harsh geopolitical circumstances

New Delhi's response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine appears to have been shaped by harsh geopolitical circumstances, that it is in the middle of, than its normative beliefs or preferences. Late last week, India abstained from a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolution which called for condemning the Russian military action against Ukraine, but it went on to note its uneasiness of the Russian action in writing (a first).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin as the war broke out, called for an "immediate cessation of violence" and has so far refused to pay heed to Ukrainian Ambassador to India Igor Polikha's impassioned pleas urging Mr. Modi to mediate with Mr. Putin to halt Russian military advances. With the UNSC deadlocked, friends with both the United States/West and Russia, and passionately urged by Ukraine, New Delhi is uniquely placed to undertake some much-needed mediation between the rival sides. But it has chosen to stay on the margins and do no more than the unavoidable minimum. New Delhi just wants this to be over with.

Let us call it what it really is: New Delhi has taken a subtle pro-Moscow position on the question of Russian attacks against Ukraine. This pro-Russia tilt is not just the position of the Indian government, but is something, somewhat surprisingly, shared by much of the Indian strategic community as well. More notably, one is increasingly hearing subtle, though indirect, justifications of the Russian military actions from the doyens of the Indian strategic community. India's Russia tilt should be seen not just as a product of its time-tested friendship with Moscow but also as a geopolitical necessity.

The Russia tilt

There are four potential options India can/could choose from: Condemn Russian aggression, support Russian aggression, stay silent on Russian aggression, or express displeasure (short of condemning) and call for diplomacy.

The first option will pit India against Russia, the second will pit it against the U.S. and its allies, the third option will be read as pro-Russia, and the fourth option - which it has taken - is the least harmful. And yet, a position that does not condemn Russian aggression and one that abstains from voting on a UNSC resolution calling for "condemning Russian aggression and withdrawal of Russian forces from Ukraine" is indeed a pro-Russia position.

There are understandable reasons for India's (subtle) pro-Russia position. Let me put it this way: an aggressive Russia is a problem for the U.S. and the West, not for India. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) expansion is Russia's problem, not India's. India's problem is China, and it needs both the U.S./the West and Russia to deal with the "China problem". I would view India's response to the crisis in Ukraine in the light of this rather simple logic.

Let us look at the big picture first. There is today a sobering recognition in New Delhi about the weakening of the U.S.-led global order and the rise of China as a counter-pole, geographically located right next to India. U.S. withdrawal from the region and its decline as the principal system shaper has complicated India's place in regional geopolitics. Neighboring China as the rising superpower and Russia as its strategic ally challenging the U.S.-led global order at a time when China has time and again acted on its aggressive intentions vis-à-vis India, and when India is closest to the U.S. than ever before in its history, throws up a unique and unprecedented challenge for India. Therefore, having Russia on its side is crucial for India, more than ever. Moscow may or may not be able to moderate Chinese antagonism towards New Delhi, but an India-Russia strategic partnership may be able to temper New Delhi's growing isolation in a rather friendless region.

Second, there is an emerging dualism in contemporary Indian strategic Weltanschauung: the predicament of a continental space that is reeling under immense pressure from China, Pakistan and Taliban-led Afghanistan adding to its strategic claustrophobia; and, the emergence of a maritime sphere which presents an opportunity to break out of the same.

Herein lies the dilemma for India. New Delhi needs Moscow's assistance to manage its continental difficulties be it through defense supplies, helping it 'return' to central Asia, working together at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) or exploring opportunities for collaboration in Afghanistan. Russia, to put it rather

bluntly, is perhaps India's only partner of consequence in the entire Asian continental stretch.

On the other hand, when it comes to the vast maritime sphere, the Indo-Pacific to be precise, Russia is not of great consequence to India. That is where its American and western partners come into play. India is simply not in a position to address the China challenge in the maritime space without the active support of American and western navies and, of course, the Quad. This unavoidable dualism in the contemporary Indian strategic landscape necessitates that India balances the two sides, but doing so without a subtle Russia tilt may not be feasible at this point of time.

That said, the war on Ukraine could have major implications for India's strategic calculus. For one, Russian action in Ukraine dismissing the concerns of the rest of the international community including the U.S. will no doubt embolden China and its territorial ambitions. Second, the new sanctions regime may have implications for India's defense cooperation with Moscow. Third, the longer the standoff lasts, the closer China and Russia could become, which certainly does not help India. Finally, the more severe the U.S.-Russia rivalry becomes, the less focus there would be on the Indo-Pacific and China, which is where India's interests lie.

Impact on foreign policy

India's responses to the Russian aggression on Ukraine underline the fact that India is operating from a position of geopolitical vulnerability. While the Indian stand does reek of realpolitik, it reeks more of strategic weakness. Here is a country located in a hostile neighborhood trying to make the best of a terrible situation it finds itself in. This then means that, going forward, India's ability to be a "swing state", "major power" or a "leading power" stands diminished. So, we must expect more middle-of-the-road behavior from New Delhi rather than resolute positions on global strategic developments.

India's position also shows the unmistakable indication that when it comes to geopolitics, New Delhi will choose interests over principles. This is nothing new: New Delhi has chosen interests over principles even in the past - for instance, India has violated the principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of neighbors. The difference this time may be that India is choosing interests over principles even though the issue at hand is not directly pertaining to India. And yet, a careful reading of India's statements and positions taken over the past few days

BY HAPPYMON JACOB



"New Delhi has taken a subtle pro-Moscow position on the question of Russian attacks against Ukraine. This pro-Russia tilt is not just the position of the Indian government, but is something, somewhat surprisingly, shared by much of the Indian strategic community as well. More notably, one is increasingly hearing subtle, though indirect, justifications of the Russian military actions from the doyens of the Indian strategic community. India's Russia tilt should be seen not just as a product of its time-tested friendship with Moscow but also as a geopolitical necessity."

also demonstrates a certain amount of discomfort in having to choose interests over principles. There is perhaps a realization in New Delhi that a dog-eat-dog world, where rules and good behavior do not matter, does not help India in the long run either.

Going forward, if tensions between Russia and the West persist, balancing extremes will be a key feature of Indian diplomacy. India is perhaps already mastering the art. Consider India's "explanation of vote" during the recent vote on Russia's aggression against Ukraine: even though New Delhi abstained from voting on it (thereby siding with Moscow), it made its unhappiness about the Russian action clear in the written note.

On strategic autonomy

Finally, what does this mean for India's 'strategic autonomy'? For sure, India's strategic autonomy has been under a lot of stress for some time now. However, New Delhi's response to the recent crisis, especially its "explanation of vote" at the UNSC indicates a careful recourse to the principle of strategic autonomy: India will make caveated statements and will not be pressured by either party. In that sense, India's indirect support to the Russian position is not a product of Russian pressure but the result of a desire to safeguard its own interests. Therefore, while we may witness a steady erosion of India's strategic autonomy in the longer term - primarily as a function of the need to balance against China - we will continue to witness instances where Indian diplomacy will take recourse to the principle of strategic autonomy.

(The author teaches India's Foreign Policy at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)

International Women's Day

Consider a world where men and women are treated equally. A world without bias, stereotypes, or discrimination. A diverse, equal, and inclusive world. A world in which diversity is valued and appreciated. We can achieve women's equality by working together.

International Women's day is observed on March 8 every year on a global scale. It is all about celebrating the social, political, economic and cultural achievements of women around the world. It calls to arms all the women of the world to come together to fight against gender disparity and establish themselves as the invaluable members of society that they are. People all over the world are called to witness the incredible achievements of women and participate in activities and rallies that are targeted towards greater equality.

History

In the modern world, it is easy to forget just how far we have come in the fight for equality and recognition, not just as women but as equal and productive members of society and the human race. Whether it was during times of economic depression or the world wars, women stepped to fill roles that they were previously denied. Agitated at being denied a seat at the proverbial table, Theresa Malkiel suggested to the 'Socialist Party of America' that they organise the first ever 'National Women's Day' in 1909. A group of 15,000 women marched through the streets of New York, demanding shorter working hours, better pay and voting rights. Following this in 1910, an international conference for working women was held in Copenhagen. It was during this conference that Clara Zetkin, Kate Duncker, Paula Thiede and others proposed an annual commemoration of 'Women's Day', in order to promote equal rights.

In the following year, on March 19, 1911, the first ever 'International Women's Day' was organised by over a million people from countries like Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland. Much later, in 1975, the United Nations finally acknowledged 'International Women's Day' on a global scale and its celebration.

Significance

International Women's Day has become more than just a commemorative event over the years. It highlights the stories and extraordinary achievements of women that have on many occasions been erased. Each year, in celebration of this day, we look back to our mentors through history and work towards furthering the goal that they had set. Conferences, rallies, debates and discussions are organised and women from around the world participate in order to share their stories and make their voices heard.

What is the theme this year for International Women's Day?

The theme for the International Women's Day 2022 was announced by UN Women in December. "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow."

A key mission this year is to advance gender equality in the time of the climate crisis through women's leadership.

The hashtag #BreakTheBias is a focal



#BreakTheBias pose



point for this year's campaign to raise awareness and rally for gender equality.

International Women's Day 2022: Colors

The colors of International Women's Day are purple, green, and white. Purple is the color of justice and dignity. Green is the color of hope. White is a contentious concept that denotes purity.

Status of Women in India

Going back to our origins, we can see how vital women are to society, not only biologically, but also culturally. Women have been mentioned in our Vedas and ancient books since ancient times, and they have been assigned important positions. Because of the contributions of women, the texts of Ramayana and Mahabharat have been tremendously

influenced and due to women, they may have become the most sacred of all.

Previously, women were referred to as housekeepers. It was thought and passed down to others that women are meant to marry, take care of the house and their in-laws, and sacrifice all of their aspirations in order to realise the dreams of their husbands and children. Furthermore, women were kept out of school because families believed that only boys deserved to be educated and follow their aspirations. Women were married off at a young age, and occasionally without their consent. They have also been subjected to a slew of dehumanising practises, societal neglect, and rituals designed to limit them, and they are frequently considered commodities rather than human beings.

However, things have changed over the years. Women today are eager to take up

professions and work. Thus, they enjoy equal respect and dignity in the family. Women in free India also enjoy equal pay for equal work in comparison to men. Also, there are provisions for maternity leave for them. Furthermore, females are provided equality of opportunity under Article 16 of the Constitution of India.

The girls in urban areas are almost at par in education with the boys. But there is a less educated female population in rural areas. This has also affected the social and economic development of rural India. The poor (hygienic facilities) facilities at school and lack of female staff have affected education. Kerala and Mizoram have a universal literacy rate.

Following the development of the freedom movement across the nation, the ladies of the society began to emerge and burst through their shells. A larger proportion of women began to be given the opportunity to study and seek education. Currently, India does not have a shortage of women in the medical, technical, teaching, legal, or any other profession. India has seen an increase in the number of empowered women holding higher positions in various offices and organisations.

Women are involved in a variety of occupations and compete alongside males in a variety of disciplines such as technology, law, administration, teaching, and so on. Apart from traditional occupations, we have women who thrive in sports, such as PT. Usha, Sania Mirza, P.V Sindhu, Mithali Raj, Mary Kom, Saina Nehwal, Dipa Karmakar, and others, who have represented and inspired many aspiring sportswomen in India.

We also have women who have had a significant impact on the art and entertainment industries since their inception, as well as cultural icons in many schools of art. Indira Gandhi, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, Annie Besant, Mahadevi Verma, Nita Ambani, Sachet Kripalani, Amrita Pritam, Sushma Swaraj, Padmaja Naidu, Kalpana Chawla, Mother Teresa, Subhadra Kumari Chauhan, and others are some of the great Indian women leaders, social reformers, social workers, administrators, and literary personalities who have significantly changed the women's status.

There has been a steady transformation in the status of women in comparison to earlier periods. Women of today take part completely in areas such as politics, status, military sectors, economic, service, and technology sectors. Moreover, they have contributed wholly to sports too. Thus, they have occupied a dignified position in family and society.

However, ending crimes against women is still a challenge. Even after significant advancements in women's rights in India, they are still exploited, harassed, and abused in a variety of ways such as rape, sex discrimination, and so on. We can prevent ills by ensuring women's autonomy, also increasing participation and decision making power in the family and public life.

Key takeaways from Biden's 2022 State of the Union speech

WASHINGTON , D.C. (TIP): Only a little more than a week ago, President Joe Biden's first State of the Union address was focused largely inward, looking at the economic and public health woes besetting the U.S. But Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the war that has ensued changed all that, says an AP Report.

The speech and the war in Ukraine gave Biden both the platform and the urgent reason to talk about the fight between democracy and autocracy not as an abstraction but as an urgent reality.

Biden has repeatedly talked about the battle of between the values of liberal democracies and autocrats like Russian President Vladimir Putin as the greatest foreign policy test facing the world.

But Russia's invasion of Ukraine - and the surprising unity that U.S. and European allies have shown in response - gave the president a chance to speak about the issue in a visceral way to a global audience.

"In the battle between democracy and autocracy, democracies are rising to the moment, and the world is clearly choosing the side of peace and security," Biden said "This is a real test. It's going to take time. So let us continue to draw inspiration from the iron will of the Ukrainian people."

He celebrated the West for coming together on hard-hitting sanctions that are "choking off Russia's access to technology that will sap its economic strength and weaken its military for years to come" he announced news sanctions to close off U.S. air space to all Russian flights. and he paid tribute to Ukrainian people for "fighting back with pure courage."

Biden found himself caught in the middle of culture wars for much of his first year in office. With his State of the Union, the president who has made his long career in politics living in the ideological middle - had moments where he sought to pivot to the center.

He dismissed those on the left of his party who have advocated for reducing funding of police in the midst of national reckoning on policing in Black communities.

"We should all agree: The answer is not to defund the police. The answer is to fund the police with the resources and



President Biden addressing lawmakers at the Capitol on Tuesday, March 1. Seated behind are Vice President Kamala Harris and Speaker Nancy Pelosi

training they need to protect our communities."

After months of Republicans beating him up on immigration, he allowed that "we need to secure the border and fix the immigration system." But he also called on Republicans - and the American public - to look at the issue in a pragmatic way, alluding to the country's worker shorter as the nation emerges for coronavirus pandemic.

"It's not only the right thing to do - it's the economically smart thing to do," Biden said.

Even as he appeals to the higher ideals of democracy, Biden believes that many Americans would process the war through prices at the pump instead of geopolitical risks.

It's a jarring contrast in priorities as Ukrainians beg the U.S. and its allies for weapons to protect themselves, while the U.S. and Europe are focused first and foremost on energy costs in their own economies that are generally experiencing growth instead of an existential threat.

"I'm taking robust action to make sure the pain of our sanctions is targeted at Russia's economy - and I will use every tool at our disposal to protect American businesses and consumers," Biden said as he announced the planned release of another 30 million barrels of oil from the U.S. petroleum reserve. Gasoline prices are averaging \$3.61 a gallon, according to

AAA. But most of that increase occurred over the past year, rather than the machinations of Russia.

It's a sign that Biden sees his own political fortunes resting on family budgets and reducing inflation, perhaps even more than a land war in Europe.

Biden almost said it - the motto that disappeared with his political agenda: "Build Back Better." Or, BBB. West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin, the decisive Democratic vote in the evenly split Senate, has pronounced BBB dead with nary a eulogy.

Biden in outlining his agenda said instead, "I call it building a better America." So, what does that look like? It looks a lot like his prior agenda, except it's been slimmed down.

Capping prescription drug prices stays in the mix. So do anti-climate change policies - which are now being portrayed as ways to lower energy costs for families. Financial support to limit childcare costs is still in, though the expanded child tax credit from the coronavirus relief package is out. Universal pre-kindergarten remains a priority, but the primary goal of all of these policies is no longer to win the future as Biden once claimed. It's all about reducing inflation, the problem dogging Biden's popularity in the here and now.

Biden said the country has moved beyond the pandemic, even if it still

needs to stay vigilant against mutations. His big argument is that the country can't change its past divides, though it must address the pandemic with a united front.

He noted that most of the country can now be mask-free. Most Americans are vaccinated, and more vaccines are available if needed. Schools are open and workers can return to offices. "COVID-19 need no longer control our lives," said Biden, echoing statements he made last July 4 when the disease similarly appeared to be in the rear-view mirror.

The difference this time compared to the summer of 2020 is not only the increase in vaccinations but the lessons from the omicron and delta waves that caused infections and deaths to accelerate.

His remarks include variations on the word "job" more than a dozen times as it applied to people working. Inflation netted half a dozen mentions and forms of the word "price" in terms of costs charged were mentioned 10 times. "Pandemic" was mentioned eight times and COVID-19 appeared a dozen times.

He tried to highlight partisan unity by deploying the phrase "Democrats and Republicans" three times. Russia's invasion of Ukraine (20 mentions) supplanted China as a geopolitical rival, as China got just two mentions. And there was a clear villain: Putin was named 12 times.

As Russian invasion of Ukraine grinds on, lawmakers showed their support for Ukrainians with their sartorial choices of blue and yellow.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi wore a blue suit adorned with a lapel pin of Ukraine and U.S. flags. Rep. Eric Swalwell made do with a blue scarf.

Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah, who appeared to have a large paper Ukraine flag pinned to his suit, had a bit of wardrobe malfunction. (His Ukraine flag fell off as he waded through the packed aisle to make his way to his seat.)

Many lawmakers - and guests - also had small Ukrainian flags. In a sign of support for the Ukrainian people, the First Lady Jill Biden has an embroidered appliquéd of a sunflower, the national flower of Ukraine, sewn to the sleeve of her dress near her wrist.

The teenager who tracked Elon Musk's jet is now tracking Russian oligarchs

TAMPA, FL (TIP): Jack Sweeney, a Florida teen who tracks Elon Musk's private jet online has a new aviation-themed target: Russian oligarchs and billionaires.

The 19-year-old, who rejected Musk's \$5,000 offer to delete his Twitter account, recently launched two new automated Twitter handles - @RUOligarchJets and @Putinjet - following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The two profiles have amassed nearly 300,000 followers combined and provided nearly live updates of the

private jets' movements along with pictures of maps locating them.

Sweeney told the Wall Street Journal that people have long been telling him to start Twitter accounts like this, and those requests ramped up after sanctions took aim at Russia's richest.

Russia's oligarchs face economic chaos at home and punishment by the West after President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops into Ukraine. The United States and its allies have responded by sanctioning wealthy



Photo for representation only

individuals who are close to the Kremlin.

US expels 12 diplomats from Russia's mission to UN, Moscow calls its hostile action



Russia's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia File photo

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): The US has expelled 12 diplomats from Russia's mission to the UN, saying they engaged in "espionage activities", a move which Moscow described as a "hostile action" and gross violation of the commitments by the US as host country of the United Nations headquarters.

US Mission to the United Nations

Spokesperson Olivia Dalton said that the US had informed the United Nations and the Russian Permanent Mission to the United Nations that "we are beginning the process of expelling 12 intelligence operatives from the Russian Mission who have abused their privileges of residency in the United States by engaging in espionage activities that are adverse to our national security."

"We are taking this action in accordance with the UN Headquarters Agreement. This action has been in development for several months."

Russia's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia was addressing an end of Presidency press conference at the UN Headquarters when he got a telephone call informing him of the expulsion of his diplomats by the US. Russia was President of the 15-nation Security Council for the month of February.

"I just received the information that the US authorities have undertaken another hostile action against the Russian mission to the United Nations, grossly violating their commitments under the host country agreement. They told us they are announcing 12 people (UN diplomats) from the personnel of the Russian mission persona non grata and demanding that they leave by March

7," Nebenzia said.

He said the US authorities just visited the Russian mission and "gave us a note prescribing us to do what they demand. You know that with the Secretary-General we raised the issue of arbitration with the host country, which grossly violates its commitments under the host country agreement. So far it has not been done, but I think it's high time already. This is just hot news that I received right away."

When asked who the Russian diplomats were who had been expelled, he said he didn't know the names yet, but that they are 12 in number.

"This is sad news and another demonstration of gross disrespect to the host country agreement, to US commitments within the framework of their obligations, both under the UN Charter, the host country agreement and Vienna conventions," Nebenzia said.

When asked if Russia is going to respond to Washington's decision to expel its diplomats, he said, "I'm sure that the response will follow because it's a diplomatic practice which provides for a tit-for-tat. It's not our choice. We didn't initiate it and I think that the answer will be given but it's not for me to decide."

Nebenzia later raised the issue of the

expulsion of his diplomats at the start of the UN Security Council meeting on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

Deputy US Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Richard Mills, responding to him, said that the status of the 12 diplomats is not "really the proper subject for this meeting, especially given the gravity of what we're here to discuss which is the untold humanitarian suffering in the country of Ukraine.

"But since you have raised the issue, I will just assure my colleagues that the step that the United States government informed the Russian mission of today was taken in full accordance with the Headquarters Agreement that we signed with the UN, and that those diplomats that have been asked to leave the United States were engaged in activities that were not in accordance with their responsibilities and obligations as diplomats," Mills said.

Mills added that under Section 13(b) of the Headquarters Agreement, the Russian diplomats had been given a request to depart this country "so they do not harm the national security of the host country. And I look forward to taking the issue up where it properly belongs, which is in the Host Country Committee". (Source: PTI)

United States reaches 65,000 H-1B visa cap for 2022: USCIS

THE H-1B VISA IS A NON-IMMIGRANT VISA THAT ALLOWS US COMPANIES TO EMPLOY FOREIGN WORKERS IN SPECIALTY OCCUPATIONS THAT REQUIRE THEORETICAL OR TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The US has received enough petitions needed to reach the congressionally mandated 65,000 H-1B visa cap for the fiscal year 2022, USCIS has announced.

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China.

The H-1B visa programme is the most sought-after work visa among foreign professionals, including Indians.

As mandated by the US Congress, the US can issue a maximum of 65,000 H-1B visa regular cap and another 20,000 H-1B visa US advanced degree exemption categories every year.

US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) which screens all such applications every year on Monday announced that it has received a sufficient number of petitions needed to reach the congressionally mandated 65,000 H-1B visa regular cap and the 20,000 H-1B visa US advanced degree exemption, known as the master's cap, for fiscal year (FY) 2022.

"We have completed sending non-selection notifications to registrants' online accounts. The status for registrations properly submitted for the FY 2022 H-



Photo for representation only

1B numerical allocations, but that were not selected, will now show: Not Selected: Not selected - not eligible to file an H-1B cap petition based on this registration," it said.

The USCIS will continue to accept and process petitions that are otherwise exempt from the cap, it said.

"Petitions filed for current H-1B workers who have been counted previously against the cap, and who still retain their cap number, are exempt from the FY 2022 H-1B cap," said the federal agency.

Meanwhile, the USCIS will continue to accept and process petitions filed to extend the amount of time a current H-1B worker may remain in the US; change the terms of employment for current H-1B workers; allow current H-1B workers to change employers, and allow current H-1B workers to work concurrently in additional H-1B positions.

While the Congressional cap is 65,000; not all H-1B nonimmigrant visas (or status grants) are subject to this annual cap. Up to 6,800 visas are set aside from the 65,000 each fiscal year for the H-1B programme under the terms of the legislation implementing the US-Chile and US-Singapore free trade agreements.

Unused visas in this group become available for H-1B use for the next fiscal year's regular H-1B cap.

(Source: USCIS and PTI)

UN SEEKS US\$1.7 BILLION AS HUMANITARIAN NEEDS SOAR IN UKRAINE AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES



UN seeks US\$1.7 billion to urgently deliver humanitarian support to people in Ukraine and refugees in neighboring countries.

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): The United Nations and humanitarian partners, on March 1, launched coordinated emergency appeals for a combined US\$1.7 billion to urgently deliver humanitarian support to people in Ukraine and refugees in neighboring countries. The escalation of conflict has triggered an immediate and steep rise in humanitarian needs as essential supplies and services are disrupted and civilians flee the fighting.

The UN estimates that 12 million people inside Ukraine will need relief and protection, while more than 4 million Ukrainian refugees may need protection and assistance in neighboring countries in the coming months. UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths said: "Families with small children are hunkered down in basements and subway stations or running for their lives to the terrifying sound of explosions and wailing sirens. Casualty numbers are rising fast. (Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

GHAZIABAD: JEWELLERY WORTH RS 70 LAKH STOLEN FROM PNB BANK LOCKER; PROBE ON

GHAZIABAD (TIP)

A resident of Ghaziabad received the shock of her life when she realised that jewellery worth over Rs 70 lakh was missing from her locker in a nationalised bank. The victim, Priyanka Gupta, a resident of Ashok Nagar, filed a police complaint against the employees of Punjab National Bank (PNB) after the theft came to light. High drama ensued on Thursday as news of a bank robbery spread.

Gupta has filed a complaint at the Sihani Gate police station alleging that the jewellery worth Rs 60-70 lakh she had kept in the bank's locker has gone missing. She said that she had been using this bank account in PNB for the last 20 years and her bank locker number is 879.

She said, "In 2019, I opened my bank locker and did not use it during the Covid-19 lockdown. Last year, in February 2021, I tried opening my locker numerous times using the old key, but in vain. I informed the employees of the bank about the same to which they gave me a number, saying that they would approach me again. I contacted them two to three times but did not get any favourable result."

DECISION ON 1993 DELHI BOMB BLAST CONVICT DAVINDER PAL BHULLAR'S RELEASE DEFERRED

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Sentence Review Board (SRB) headed by Delhi Home Minister Satyendar Jain on Wednesday, March 2, deferred the decision on the early release of Davinder Pal Singh Bhullar, a 1993 Delhi bomb blast case convict who is currently lodged in Amritsar jail.

The matter has been put off till the next SRB meeting, said a Delhi government official.

The demand by Sikh groups for Bhullar's release had gained ground ahead of the assembly elections in Punjab.

The seven members of the Board include the director general of Tihar prison, secretaries of Home and Law departments and director of social welfare department of the Delhi government, a district judge and a senior Delhi Police officer.

Bhullar was convicted in connection with the killing of nine people and injuring of 31 in a bomb blast in 1993 in Delhi. Among those who survived the attack is former Youth Congress chief M S Bitta.

Bhullar was sentenced to death by a designated TADA court on August 25, 2001. He is undergoing life imprisonment after the Supreme Court commuted his death sentence.

Modi calls for concrete forms of cooperation, peace in Indo-Pacific region in virtual Quad meet

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Prime Minister on Thursday, March 3, participated in a Quad Summit and held a virtual meet with Australian and Japanese Prime Ministers Scott Morrison and Fumio Kishida, and United States (US) President Joe Biden. In the meeting, recent developments in the Indo-Pacific region were kept on the agenda among other things.

The Quad Leaders meeting reviewed the progress on Quad initiatives since the September 2021 Quad Summit. The leaders agreed on accelerating cooperation, with an objective to achieve concrete outcomes by the summit in Japan later this year.

In the meeting today, PM Modi underlined that Quad must remain focused on its objective of promoting peace & prosperity in Indo-Pacific region. He called for concrete forms of cooperation within Quad, in areas like Humanitarian & Disaster Relief, debt sustainability, supply chains & capacity-building as per the PMO.

According to PMO, Indian Prime Minister emphasised on need to return to a path of dialogue & diplomacy. Leaders also discussed other issues, including developments in ASEAN, Indian Ocean region & Pacific Islands. PM reiterated the importance of adhering to the UN Charter, respect for sovereignty & territorial integrity.

The leaders in the summit further agreed to stay in touch and to work towards an ambitious agenda for the forthcoming Leaders' Summit in Japan.

Last Quad leaders meeting was held in September and in that meeting the participating leaders had pledged to work together for ensuring peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific and the world. The four leaders had also announced a slew of new initiatives to take on common challenges amid challenges posed by China in the region.

PM blames previous govts for Indian students going abroad

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, March 3, blamed previous governments for a large number of Indian students going abroad to pursue medical education and asserted that his dispensation has been working to augment the



number of medical colleges so that students can enrol themselves within the country.

In an interaction with students from different parts of Uttar Pradesh who have returned from the war-hit Ukraine, Modi also empathised with those students and their families who have expressed their anger, even at him, after facing hardships in Ukraine.

"I think it is natural for them to feel angry in this crisis," he said, adding that they have been facing hardships and braving cold.

The government has launched "Operation Ganga" to evacuate Indian citizens, mostly students, from Ukraine which has been attacked by Russia. When they are no longer agitated and begin to understand the magnitude of the exercise, they will show their affection as well, the prime minister said, as many students expressed their thanks to him and lauded his government for rescuing them when they had lost all hope.

A strong India is the answer to these troubles, Modi said, expressing his sympathies with the students who, he added, had to go through such an experience at a young age.

"If medical education policies were right earlier, then you would not have to go abroad," he said, adding that no parents want their children to go overseas at such a young age.

Supreme Court rejects report of Maharashtra backward classes panel

NEW DELHI (TIP)

In yet another setback to the Maharashtra government, Supreme Court on Thursday, March 3, rejected the interim report of the State Backward Classes Commission, which had recommended restoration of 27% quota for Other Backward Classes in local bodies.

"The report itself mentions that the same is being prepared in absence of empirical study and research by the commission. Having failed to do so, the Commission should not have filed the interim report," said a bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar and C T Ravikumar.

"As a result, it is not possible to permit any authority, much less the State Election Commission, to act upon the recommendations made in the

said report. For the time being, we do not intend to dilate on the correctness of each of the observations made by the commission in the interim report. We, however, direct all concerned not to act upon the interim report as submitted," the court said.

The bench also directed the State Election Commission to notify the election process in local bodies where it is due without further delay and to comply with its earlier order by which it had directed that the OBC seats be treated as general category ones. On December 6, 2021, the apex court had stayed elections to the 27 per cent OBC category in Maharashtra local bodies, stating that the state government before deciding to earmark the quota had not followed the mandatory triple-test laid down by it.

Source: The Indian Express

UP polls: Phase-6 registers moderate 55.79 per cent voter turnout

LUCKNOW (TIP)

A total of 57 constituencies across 10 districts covering the religious-political belt of UP from Ambedkarnagar in the central region to Gorakhpur and Kushinagar in the far east bordering Bihar and Nepal on the other side recorded a moderate – 55.79 per cent – voters' turnout in the penultimate phase of ongoing 7-phased Assembly election of the state on Thursday, March 3.

However, the voting continued till 6 pm and the final figures of Phase-6 will be revised by the state election commission on Friday. After phase-6, voting for 292 of the 403 Assembly seats has been completed. The final phase of polling in the remaining 54 seats across seven districts including Varanasi will be held on March 7.

The bigwigs whose fate was sealed in phase-6 included UP CM Yogi Adityanath who made his debut in assembly electoral politics from Gorakhpur Urban. Others included BJP deserter Swami Prasad Maurya from Fazilnagar in Kushinagar, leader of opposition in state assembly Ram Govind Chaudhury of SP from Bansdih and UP Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lallu from Tamkuhiraj also in Kushinagar. Besides the fate of seven Yogi ministers was also at stake in this phase.

ACTIVE COVID CASES IN COUNTRY DIP TO 69,897

NEW DELHI (TIP)

With 6,396 people testing positive for coronavirus infection in a day, India's total tally of Covid cases rose to 4,29,51,556, while the active cases dipped to 69,897, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Friday.

The death toll climbed to 5,14,589 with 201 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The daily Covid cases have remained less than one lakh for 26 consecutive days.

The active cases comprised 0.16 per cent of the total infections, while the national recovery rate had further improved to 98.64 per cent, the ministry said.

A reduction of 7,255 cases has been recorded in the active caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The daily positivity rate was recorded as 0.69 per cent and the weekly positivity rate as 0.90 per cent, according to the ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,23,67,070 while the case fatality rate was recorded as 1.2 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide vaccination drive has exceeded 178.29 crore.

Source: PTI

After Pandemic Corona, JLF starts again in Jaipur from March 5

Jaipur Literature Festival to pick up topical issues of Ukraine-Russia Conflict, climate Change



DR. YASHPAL GOYAL
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

JAIPUR (TIP): After Pandemic Corona outbreak since 2020 in India, Jaipur Literature Festival's 15th edition beginning in Pink City from March 5 will pick up a some of the topical issues of Ukraine-Russia Conflict, Geo-politics of war, Climate Change, new world order besides holding a whole range of literary sessions.

Sanjoy K Roy, its Managing Director of Teamwork, told a press conference here on March 2 that finally the JLF organizer has chosen a five star hotel by leaving the old heritage 'Diggi Palace' due to traffic problems and other administrative regulations. It will be in a hybrid mode, March 5 to 9 on virtual mode, and from March 10 to 14 the sessions would be on ground and visitors would be allowed to witness the live discussions among noted writers, Roy added.

Like the previous years' edition, JLF will have 500 speakers, including four Nobel laureates and will have sessions covering art of fiction, poetic imagination,

Russia-Ukraine War: Indian student reportedly shot at in Kyiv, says VK Singh

NEW DELHI (TIP)

An Indian student has reportedly been shot at and injured in Ukrainian capital Kyiv, Minister of State for Civil Aviation VK Singh said on Friday, March 4.

Singh is in Poland currently to facilitate the evacuation of Indians stranded in war-hit Ukraine.

"Today, we heard reports that a student leaving Kyiv was shot at. He was taken back to Kyiv. This will happen in a fighting," the minister told mediapersons.

Recently on March 1, a young Indian medical student, Naveen SG of Karnataka, was killed in shelling in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv when he ventured out to buy food for himself and fellow students.

Singh said the Centre is making efforts to ensure that the maximum number of students can come out of Ukraine with as less loss as possible.

India has been evacuating its citizens through special flights from Ukraine's western neighbours such as Romania, Hungary and Poland as the Ukrainian airspace has been shut since February 24 due to the Russian military offensive.

Flight carrying 185 Indians stranded in Ukraine lands in Mumbai

An Air India Express flight from Bucharest carrying 185 Indians stranded in Ukraine landed in Mumbai on Friday, an official said.



Union minister Raosaheb Danve welcomed the passengers as soon as the Air India Express Flight IX 1204 landed at 2 am.

This was the fourth evacuation flight to have landed in Mumbai. Another flight, this one from Budapest, is likely to land in Mumbai around 8 am on Friday, the official said.

Interacting with passengers, Danve said the evacuation operation would continue till all those stranded in war-torn Ukraine were brought back to India.

Ukraine's airspace is shut since February 24 and India has been evacuating its citizens by special flights from that country's western neighbours like Romania, Hungary and Poland.

Source: PTI



Sanjoy K Roy, Managing Director of Teamwork, addresses the press conference in Jaipur on March 2.

travel, science, history etc. The prestigious festival will showcase a variety of exhibiting numerous dialects of Rajasthan-Centric literature.

In a statement, Rajasthan Tourism Minister Vishvendra Singh said he was delighted to note that JLF was returning on-ground in the Pink City after two years. The festival will truly provide an exceptional platform for both Indian and global authors and thought leaders to engage and strengthen literary heritage and culture.

This time both the literary sessions as well as music in the evening will be held in the hotel campus, Apurav Kumar, MD of the Clarks Group, told the joint press con-

ference. On a question on the impact of the Ukraine-Russia war, they said, "We may lose a few good speakers as two writers have already cancelled their visits to India".

The rich programme will feature, among others, a session with Bruno Maçães, decorated author, international commentator and advisor to some of the world's leading companies on geopolitics and technology, who will be exploring the study of an emerging world order that is competitive and driven by the need to adapt and survive in increasingly hostile natural environments. In conversation with former diplomat and author Navtej

Sarna, Maçães will discuss book Geopolitics for the End Time: From the Pandemic to the Climate Crisis.

On clean energy, Rahul Munjal, the Chairman & Managing Director at Hero Future Energies, one of India's leading Independent Power Producer, is committed to positive environmental impact by increasing the share of renewables. Joining him will be, Amitabh Kant, the CEO of the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) and a key driver of initiatives such as Make in India, Startup India, Incredibly India and God's Own Country and academician Siddharth Singh, author of The Great Smog of India. Munjal and Kant will discuss the future of clean energy and climate action.

Simon Mundy, Financial Times journalist and author of Race for Tomorrow: Survival, Innovation and Profit on the Front Lines of the Climate Crisis, will speak on the question of what impact a single person can have in the face of the global climate crisis.

The earth has witnessed five major mass extinction events over the last 500 million years - responsible for the erasure of nearly three-quarters of its species each time. A series called The Urgency of Borrowed Time will feature Pranay Lal, natural history writer, biochemist and public health advocate who is also author of the celebrated books Indica: A Deep Natural History of the Indian Subcontinent and Invisible Empire: The Natural History of Viruses. The session will explore the fate of dinosaurs and species sealed by extinction events, and the role of humankind in the surging climate crisis.

Tears, anger at airport as Indian students return from Ukraine

As soon as Chahat Yadav walked out of the airport and saw her family, she tossed away her luggage and ran towards them, crying inconsolably.

Yadav's father Narendra Kumar and other relatives had reached Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport on Wednesday, March 2, to receive the second-year medical student studying in Ukraine's Ternopil city. The relieved family could not hold back their emotions as they saw Yadav and huddled around her, hugging, kissing and in tears.

Yadav was among nearly 200 Indian students who had just landed in New Delhi from Poland on Wednesday after trying for days to escape the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began last Thursday, forcing nearly 20,000 Indian students to flee the former Soviet nation.

"The Ukraine military was only letting the Ukrainians and Europeans across the border," Chahat told Al Jazeera as she held a bouquet of red flowers handed to those returning from Ukraine by Indian authorities at the airport.

"But I don't know why Indians were being stopped and pushed back," the young student said, alleging many Indians were beaten by the Ukrainian forces as they tried to cross the border.

'Sleepless nights'

When a Russian attack on Ukraine became imminent, Yadav's father Kumar tried to book a ticket for her. But it was not easy with high demand and few flights.

Kumar, who lives with his extended family in Gurugram on the outskirts of the Indian capital, bought an online ticket for Yadav for February 20 but the airline did not confirm the ticket.

He later booked a transit flight to India via Qatar for February 23 at a steep cost of 50,000 rupees (\$660). Yadav, who was double-vaccinated against coronavirus and was carrying her RT-PCR report along with her, was not allowed to board the flight to Qatar, Kumar said.

The problem: Yadav had taken an Indian-made Covaxin shot, which, Kumar said, was only "partially approved [by Qatar]". "They refused to consider her RT-PCR report... A serology antibody test [was required] to board the flight," he said.

When Russia invaded Ukraine the next day on February 24, Kumar said the thought of losing her daughter "gave him sleepless nights".

"I would be lying if I said the thought of losing my daughter in Ukraine did not cross my mind. It happened several times and took away my sleep," Kumar told Al Jazeera.

"When I saw my daughter today, I couldn't believe that she was finally back."

Getting home was not easy for Yadav and other Indian students.

On the evening of February 25, a day after Russian troops entered Ukraine, Chahat and her friends left Ternopil for Poland on a private bus they had hired for the trip.



Indian students arriving from Ukraine seen at Indira Gandhi International
Photo: [Bilal Kuchay/Al Jazeera]



Family members of Indians trapped in Ukraine wait for their arrival at Delhi airport.
Photo: [Bilal Kuchay/Al Jazeera]

They reached the Poland border around midnight, only to find a 35km line of vehicles desperate to leave the country. They had no choice but to cover the remaining distance on foot. Many students threw away some of their luggage to be able to make the journey.

They walked all night in bone-chilling cold and reached the border the next morning. But crossing into Poland was not easy, with thousands camped there. Yadav spent two nights at the border in sub-zero temperatures before she was allowed to cross.

'Near-death experience'

Another medical student, Rajarshi Shyam, 21, reached Delhi on Wednesday. He had travelled from Ukraine's Vinnytsia to Romania. "We faced problems at the border. It was very crowded. It was a near-death

experience," he told Al Jazeera.

Like Chahat, Rajarshi also had to walk for several kilometres on foot to reach the Romania border. He was also forced to dump some of his luggage, including his clothes, on the road.

Still, says Rajarshi, he was lucky to have crossed the border in his first attempt, unlike many of his friends who were either turned back or forced to spend days at the border.

Many Indian and African students have alleged facing racial discrimination and violence from Ukrainian officials at the borders.

Meanwhile, thousands of Indians remain stranded in Ukraine as Russia escalates its attack on cities such as Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest, where many Indian students study medicine.

Source: Al Jazeera

No food, water:
Over 600
students stranded
in Ukraine city cry
for help

Even as the Indian government has successfully evacuated thousands of citizens from war-torn Ukraine, over 600 students from the country stuck in the northeastern city of Sumy are crying for help. A student asserted that hope they will soon be evacuated as "continuous firing and bombing" by the Russian forces has left them completely terrified. They also complain of an acute shortage of food and water.

Considering Sumy lies in the northeastern peninsula of Ukraine, it is difficult for the students to travel to the western border, from where they can reach neighbouring Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Moldova, under the current circumstances.

Not a single Indian student has been evacuated from the Sumy State University, located close to the Russian border has been evacuated. "More than 600 Indian students are stuck here in Sumy university. The embassy has neither evacuated us nor given any assurance to that effect. Since the last five days, there has been continuous firing, shelling and bombing in the city," Viraj Walde, who hails from Nagpur in Maharashtra, told news agency PTI.

"Before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, temporary advisories were given to the students and the university informed us that those having exams can wait. Hence, we waited for the exams to start," Walde added.

"But now, the students are terrified and their mental state is deteriorating. Food and drinking water supplies are depleting. Even the banks and ATMs are running out of cash," he said.

Meanwhile, the Indian embassy has sent advisories asking them to use only the western border of Ukraine and reach the neighbouring countries of Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Moldova. Since Sumy city is located in the north-eastern part of Ukraine, it is impossible for them to travel all the way to the western part of the country amidst the current situation.

"The border in Ukraine's western part is located almost 1,500 kms away from Sumy, whereas the Russian border is just 50 kms away. The railway station in Sumy has also been closed due to bombing, and traveling via road is like committing suicide since Russian and Ukrainian forces are fighting against each other at such places," he told PTI.

Crossing from hell to heaven: Indians evacuated from Ukraine recall border chaos

For Akansha Singh, escaping from Ukraine to Romania was "like crossing from hell to heaven" after walking for hours in harsh weather and facing chaotic scenes at the war-torn country's borders.

Singh is one of 182 people, including an infant, who were evacuated by the government from Ukraine. The 182 people mostly comprised medical students from universities in cities in the western part of Ukraine like Vinnytsia, Ternopil and Chernivtsi. Their Air India express flight left from Bucharest International Airport in Romania and landed at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) in Mumbai early Thursday.

As several students, who spoke with the Indian Express, thanked the Indian government for their help, many said the toughest part of their journey was at the Ukrainian border where they had to spend at least two days after walking eight to 10 kilometres with heavy luggage in severe cold and snowfall.

Singh, a Bhopal resident pursuing medicine from a university in Ternopil said, "If the evacuation process was properly organised it would have saved us one entire day. I saw women fainting multiple times. When we crossed from Ukraine to the border it felt like we crossed from hell to heaven."

Adwait Gade, 18, a resident of Panvel who went to Vinnytsia in December last year, said, "At the border people were pushing each other for three to four hours. I spent two nights at the Ukraine border and we did not have blankets and spent sleepless nights on the road bearing -5 degrees Celsius. There was too much chaos and rush."

Chaos, discrimination

Mumbai's Muskan Dhariwal, 21, a third-year medical student in Vinnytsia, said the Ukrainians fired in the air to control more than 2,000 students. "The situation got more chaotic as we did not understand their language and they did not speak English. Nothing was organised. I did not sleep for



Students arriving from Budapest to Delhi in the third evacuation flight. (Image: @DrSJaishankar/Twitter)

many days and we used to run to bunkers below our university campus four to five times a day every time their siren was sounded. Now I just want to sleep!"

Gade and Dhariwal said they also faced some discrimination at the border. "There was a restaurant near the border and it was not that we could not afford it but they preferred Ukrainians first over foreigners." Dhariwal said staff at a Turkish restaurant did not allow them to use the washroom "because we are Indians. That hurt me."

Disorganised evacuation

Several other students also told the Indian Express that the Indian embassy and Ukrainian officials could have organised the evacuation process better to save time. "There was not a single person from our embassy at the border. There were thousands of students from India stranded there and Ukrainians were being evacuated before us. Only 50 students were being allowed at a time," said Krishna Yadav.

Vivek Patel, another student studying at Ternopil, said he volunteered to control the crowd and saw Ukrainians pushing people. "There was no one at the border to organise the evacuation. Some were stuck for three days and some got to cross over in a day's time which is unfair."

Source: The Indian Express

No report of students taken hostage in Ukraine, says India after Russia's claim



The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has said it has not received any reports about Indian students being held hostage in war-hit Ukraine.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has said it has not received any reports about Indian students being held hostage in war-hit Ukraine.

MEA Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, "We have not received any reports of any hostage situation regarding any student. We have requested the support of the Ukrainian authorities in arranging special trains for taking out students from Kharkiv and neighbouring areas to the western part of the country."

"Our Embassy in Ukraine is in continuous touch with Indian nationals in Ukraine. We note that with the cooperation of the Ukrainian authorities, many students have left Kharkiv yesterday," he said.

He added that India has been coordinating with the countries in the region including Russia, Romania, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Moldova for the evacuation process.

He said, "A large number of Indian nationals have been evacuated from Ukraine in the last few days. We appreciate the help extended by the Ukrainian

authorities to make this possible. We thank Ukraine's western neighbours in receiving Indian nationals and for accommodating them while they waited for flights to take them back home."

Russia on Wednesday claimed that Ukraine had taken Indian students hostage. Russia's Ministry of Defense in a briefing said while Russia was trying to evacuate Indian students from Kharkiv the Ukrainian forces had taken Indians hostage.

In a statement by the ministry's official representative, Major General Igor Konashenkov said: "According to our data, in Kharkiv, the Ukrainian authorities are forcibly detaining a large group of Indian students who want to leave the Ukrainian territory and go to Belgorod."

Further, he said, "The Armed Forces are ready to take all necessary measures for the safe evacuation of Indian citizens. And send them home from the territory of Russia with their military transport planes or Indian planes, as the Indian side proposed to do."

Source: India Today

Indian restaurant in Budapest serves free meals to evacuees

Maharaja, the oldest Indian restaurant in Budapest, has been serving free meals to Indian students being evacuated from war-torn Ukraine via the Hungarian capital.

Kulvinder Singh Jham, the restaurant owner, said being a devout Sikh, he immediately opened a langar (community kitchen) to serve the free food. "It was Monday. I did not realise their numbers would increase so rapidly. On Tuesday, 300 students arrived in Budapest. On Wednesday afternoon, we prepared 800 meals and at night another 1,500 students arrived," Jham told HT over the phone.

Jham, who has lived in Europe for 40 years and set up Maharaja in 1994, said the students were expecting help from the Indian Embassy. "The embassy initially provided readily available food such as sandwiches, but the students needed warm cooked food. Many of them were starved and traumatised."

Jham said the students went through terrible experiences. "Some boys said they were offered money



and rifles to fight for Ukraine. All were stopped by soldiers at the border because Ukraine does not allow men aged between 16 and 60 to leave the country. The students had to prove that they are not Ukraine nationals. Most of them preferred to board trains to Hungary thinking the Russians might stop and confiscate buses heading for Romania and Poland."

He said Hungary allowed entry without visa and set up registration centres. "Train fares have also been

done away with. A terminal at the airport has been opened only for Indian students." Jham said Indian ambassador Kumar Tuhin's tenure ended and he returned to Delhi in November. "Since there was no ambassador here when the crisis began, the government sent him back because he is acquainted with the ground situation."

Jham said they met Tuhin and Union minister Hardeep Singh Puri, who appreciated the idea of setting up the langar. "The government is evacuating the students. A thousand of them are scheduled to leave on Friday."

Jham said he has around a dozen employees and packing the food was a problem but friends and neighbours volunteered to help. "I wake up at 4 am and start getting ingredients for the meals." Jham said the plight of the students has touched them and many of them start crying on seeing friendly people. "They cannot seem to believe that their nightmare is over."

Source: HT

India in history this Week

MARCH 4, 2022, TO MARCH 10, 2022

04 MARCH

- 1879 Bethune College of Calcutta was established in 1879.
 1906 Hakim Abdul Majeed started the Hamdard dispensary in Delhi in 1906.



- 1924 In 1924, Shyam Lal Gupta composed the song Raising the Flag.
 1951 Eleven countries participated in the first Asian Games in Delhi in 1951.
 1961 In 1961 I.N.S. Vikrant was brought to Belfast.

05 MARCH

- 1931 Mahatma Gandhi ended the Civil Disobedience Movement.
 1905 Sushila Didi, a freedom fighter who was instrumental in the revolutionary activities of Bhagat Singh, was born in Punjab.
 2010 GP, one of the famous entrepreneurs of India. Birla died.
 1783 Establishment of Geological Survey of India.
 2009 Indian industrialist Vijay Mallya bought Bapu's legacy for Rs 18 lakhs
 1949 The Jharkhand Party was founded in India in 1949.
 1990 The government announced an interim relief of Rs 360 crore for the five lakh victims of the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy.
 2002 The Commonwealth Summit was held in 2002.
 2008 India successfully test-fired the BrahMos missile from the sea into the ground.



- 2009 IFFCO (Indian Farmers Fertilizer Co-operative Limited) became the first company in the world to make annual sales of 10 million tonnes of fertilizer in 2009.

06 MARCH

- 1886 The first nurses' nightingale is published.
 1915 Mahatma Gandhi and Tagore had their first meeting in Shantiniketan in 1915.
 1947 The Economic Times started editing from Bombay.
 1962 The great revolutionary Ambika Chokrovarti

died in 1962.



- 1971 Sunil Gavaskar started his Test career in 1971.
 1990 India won the Indira Gandhi Gold Cup hockey tournament.
 1991 Chandrasekhar resigned as Prime Minister in 1991.
 2000 India and China first spoke in Beijing on the security issue.

07 MARCH

- 1956 A huge steel tube plant was opened in Jamshedpur on this day in 1956.
 1987 Sunil Gavaskar made history. Please tell that on this day, he scored 10,000 runs in a Test match.
 1994 India and Iraq signed three Memorandum of Understanding in Tehran.
 1998 Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was given the leadership of BJP's MP Party.
 1835 Proposal was made to promote the propagation of European literature and science in India.
 1985 The first antibody test for AIDS, the ELISA-type test, was started.
 2007 Pakistan and India prepared in 2007 to help investigate terrorism.



- 1961 Renowned freedom fighter and senior leader Govind Ballabh Pant died in 1961.

08 MARCH



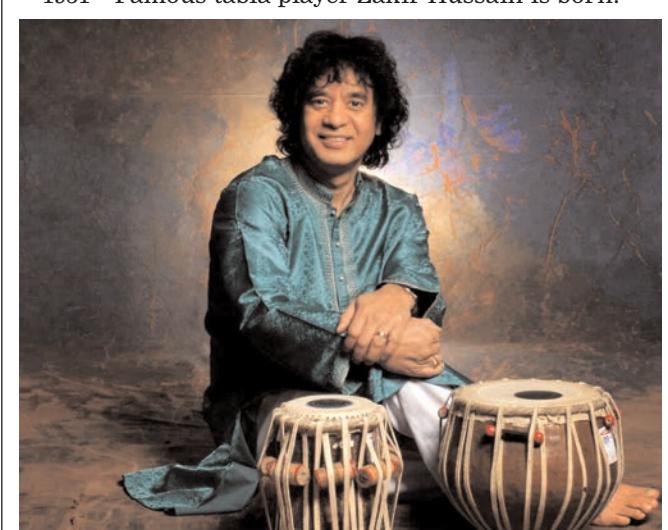
- 1909 International Women's Day is started to

celebrate.

- 1948 Air India International was established.
 1535 Bahadur Shah found Fateh at Chittor Fort.
 1673 Chhatrapati Shivaji burst upon the fort of Panhala.
 1930 Mahatma Gandhi started the Civil Disobedience Movement.
 1986 BJP leader Advani was elected party president.
 1998 Indian Airlines flew with all women crew members.
 1833 The great journalist Vishwanath Narayan was born.

09 MARCH

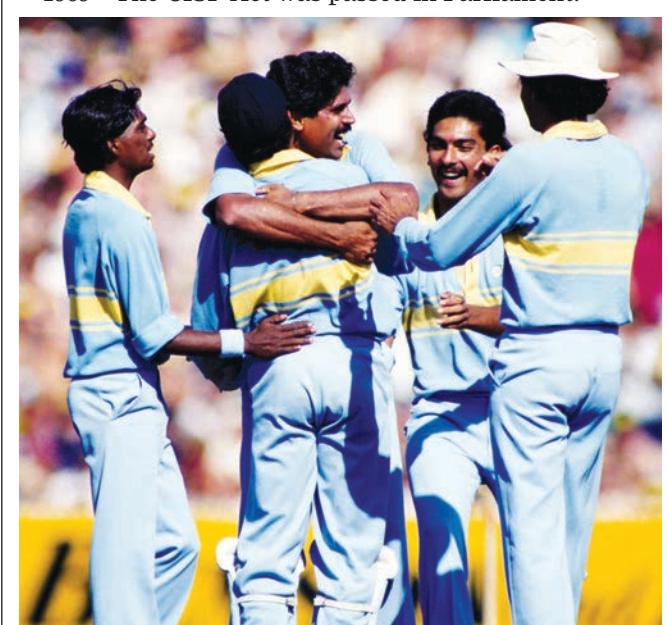
- 1951 Famous tabla player Zakir Hussain is born.



- 2007 Indian doctors in Britain get legal success on discriminatory migrant rules.
 1999 Indian-based, British-based industrialist Swaraj Paul was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Central Birmingham in 1999.

10 MARCH

- 1922 Mahatma Gandhi was arrested in 1922 on charges of treason.
 1969 The CISF Act was passed in Parliament.



- 1985 India won the Benson and Hedges Cricket World Cup in 1985.
 2010 The Women's Reservation Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament.
 1932 Born in 1932 of Udupi Ramchandra Rao, a space scientist and former president of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization).
 1945 Famous Congress leader Madhavrao Scindia was born on this day in 1945.



Shanaya Kapoor's big debut in Karan Johar production 'Bedhadak'

Actor Sanjay Kapoor and The Fabulous Lives Of Bollywood Wives star Maheep Kapoor's daughter Shanaya Kapoor is set to make her big Bollywood debut with the film Bedhadak, which will be directed by Shashank Khaitan and it will be produced by Karan Johar. Sharing her first look from the film, KJo wrote: "Introducing the gorgeous Shanaya Kapoor as Nimrit in Bedhadak. An enchanting force to look out for, I can't wait to see the energy she brings onto the screen." Shanaya announced her association with the project with these words: "I am extremely grateful and humbled to join the Dharma Family with Bedhadak - directed by the brilliant Shashank Khaitan. I can't wait to kickstart this journey, I need all your blessings and love."

Sharing Lakshya's first look from the film, Karan Johar wrote: "Looks that will melt your heart just as easily as his smile will. Presenting Lakshya as Karan in Bedhadak. Directed by the maestro of emotions, Shashank Khaitan."

Source: NDTV

Disha Patani makes Tiger Shroff's birthday super cute

Tiger Shroff celebrated his 32nd birthday with a super cute greeting from his rumoured girlfriend Disha Patani. She posted a video of the birthday boy staring into the camera with the caption: "Happiest b'day my best friend. Thank you for inspiring millions of us with your hardwork and most beautiful soul. You're beautiful."

In the music video Befikra, Disha Patani and Tiger Shroff shared screen time for the first time. They later appeared together in the 2018 hit action film Baaghi 2. The actress appeared alongside Tiger in the Baaghi 3 song Do You Love Me. In Radhe: Your Most Wanted Bhai, Disha appeared alongside Tiger Shroff's father, Jackie Shroff.

Tiger Shroff was most recently seen in Baaghi 3, in which he co-starred with Shraddha Kapoor. The actor is best known for his roles in movies such as War, Heropanti, The Flying Jatt, the Baaghi series, and Student Of The Year 2. This year, the actor has an impressive slate of films. Heropanti 2, Baaghi 4, and Ganapath are among his upcoming projects. In 2020, the actor made his singing debut. He will also appear in the Akshay Kumar film Bade Miyan Chote Miyan.



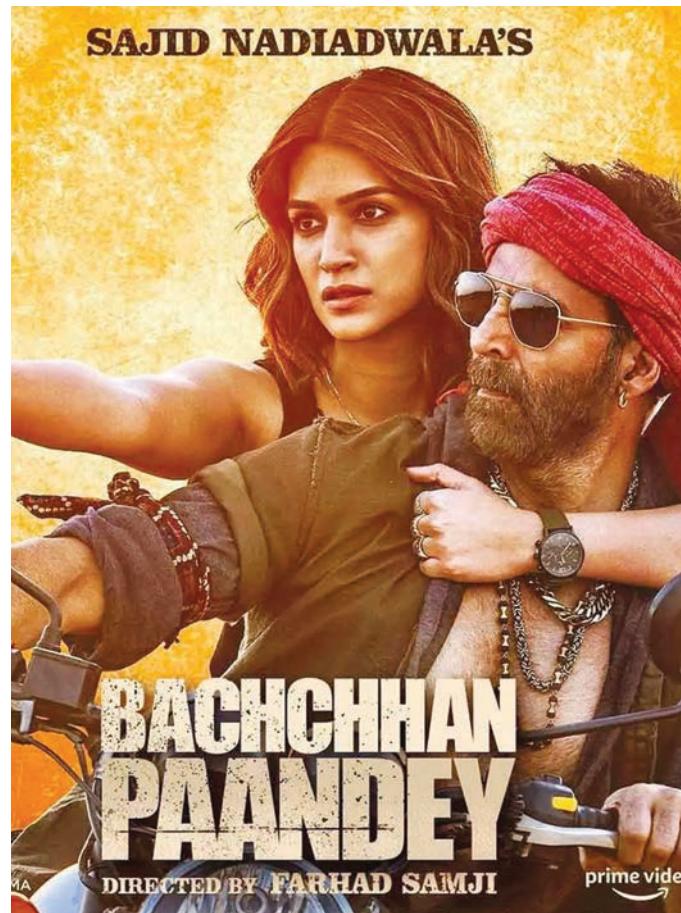
Akshay-Kriti portray Bachchan Paandey's caring side in new song Meri Jaan

Meri Jaan Meri Jaan, the second song from Akshay Kumar's film Bachchan Paandey, was released on Tuesday. On his Instagram account, Akshay uploaded the song and remarked, "Jiske bulaane par Bachchan chale jaaye, jiske liye Bachchan marne ko taiyaar ho jaaye (On whose call Bachchan goes, for whom Bachchan is willing to die)." The song depicts the relationship between Akshay Kumar and Kriti Sanon, the film's two stars. It contrasts with the film's first song, 'Maar Khayegaa', which had Akshay in a scary persona that was well received by the audience.

The song begins with Akshay and Kriti in a romantic embrace while the words "Bhakuaal bhari mohabbat" (loosely translated to "impressive romance") show across the screen. Amid the romantic song, Akshay's character Bachchan Paandey exhibits his compassionate side as he and Kriti dance about in lush greenery, monuments, and even in the midst of a lake.

The scene then moves to the centre of the lake, where we find Akshay and Kriti standing on a boat, tenderly gazing at each other before we see the pair in front of a heritage structure. As the song concludes, fans are treated to a brief glimpse of a scenario from the film in which Akshay appears to attack Kriti with a hammer. Kriti's cry is heard, but the screen goes black before we see what happened. B Praak sang the song and composed the music, while Jaani penned the lyrics.

Fans reacted positively to the song right away. One person wrote, "Best romantic song of the year." Several of them were delighted to see Akshay collaborating with B Praak and Jaani once more. Source: Filmfare



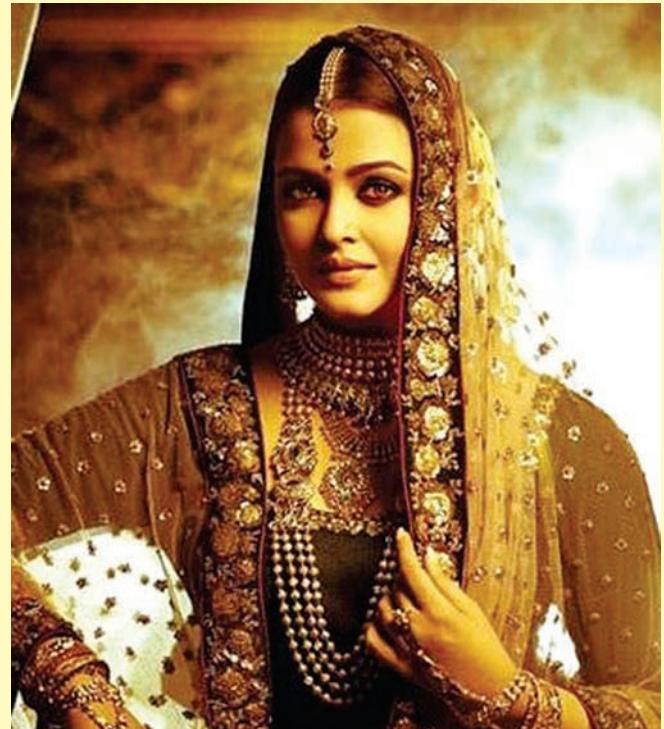
Mani Ratnam's 'Ponniyin Selvan' to be released on September 30

The first part of filmmaker Mani Ratnam's much-anticipated historical spectacular 'Ponniyin Selvan' will be released on September 30 this year. The production company Lyca Productions revealed the news, while wishing its chairman Allirajah Subaskaran a happy birthday. 'Wishing our Chairman Allirajah Subaskaran a very happy birthday! The Golden Era comes to the big screens on Sept 30th!', the company tweeted along with the film's first look poster.

The film is based on acclaimed writer Kalki's classic Tamil novel 'Ponniyin Selvan'. The one-of-a-kind narrative centres around the early life of prince Arulmozi Varman, who eventually known as the legendary Raja Raja Chozhan.

Vikram, Aishwarya Rai, Trisha, Karthi, Jayam Ravi, Jayaram, Parthiban, Lal, Vikram Prabhu, Prabhu, and Prakash Raj appear in the film, which Mani Ratnam describes as his 'dream project'.

The film has the best in industry handling each of its departments. The soundtrack for this epic historical drama is composed by A.R. Rahman, while the cinematography is by Ravi Varman. Thotta Tharani, a National Award-winning art director, is in charge of production design, while Sreekar Prasad, Mani Ratnam's trusted editor, is in charge of editing.





Bullet Train: First trailer of Brad Pitt's film is packed with action

Brad Pitt's effortless action-comedy avatar takes centre-stage in the trailer of the upcoming film 'Bullet Train', unveiled on Wednesday.

As per The Hollywood Reporter, with a screenplay by Zak Olkewicz, the film is based on 'Maria Beetle' by Kotaro Isaka.

The Oscar-winning actor stars in the stylish action-thriller from the director of 'Deadpool 2', David Leitch.

Nearly three-minutes long, the first trailer for the film is packed with action and Pitt's unique brand of charming humour.

Pitt headlines an ensemble cast of eclectic assassins, all with their own objectives, set against the backdrop of a non-stop ride through modern-day Japan.

In addition to Pitt, 'Bullet Train' stars Joey King, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Brian Tyree Henry, Andrew Koji, Hiroyuki Sanada, Michael Shannon and Benito A Martinez Ocasio.

Spooked Courteney Cox sold her house because it was haunted!

Hollywood actress Courteney Cox sold her house because it was haunted and faced multiple complaints about spirits from guests and former owner Carole King. While appearing on 'Jimmy Kimmel Live' and being asked about her experiences with ghosts, the 57-year-old actress told the host: "I have had one. I didn't believe at first, but I lived in this house in Laurel Canyon, which is in LA, obviously. It was Gypsy Rose Lee's house and Carole King."

Courteney shared how the 'Tapestry' singer-songwriter came over and did a seance with her and though she was too starstruck to be fully immersed in the experience, she listened as she explained about the people who had left a supernatural mark on the home, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

She continued: "So Carole King came over to my house and she said there had been a divorce that was really ugly, and there was a ghost in the house. And I was like, 'Yeah, whatever'. But other people who had stayed there with me, like friends of mine, said they felt an encounter with a woman who was sitting on the edge of the bed. And I was 'Yeah, whatever'."

The 'Scream' star even did a seance with Carole but didn't pay attention to it because she was so "in awe" of the '70s music icon.

Source: IANS

Pamela Anderson to 'tell the real story' in Netflix documentary

Pamela Anderson has announced an "intimate" and "definitive" new documentary at Netflix.

The actor and activist revealed on Instagram that her years-in-the-making movie would land at the streamer, in the wake of the controversial Hulu series Pam & Tommy, which was made without her approval or involvement.

The statement reads: "My life. A thousand imperfections. A million misperceptions. Wicked, wild and lost. Nothing to live up to. I can only surprise you. Not a victim, but a survivor. And alive to tell the real story."

The as-yet-untitled documentary comes from director Ryan White, whose credits include Netflix docuseries The Keepers and 2019's Ask Dr Ruth; Anderson's son, Brandon Thomas Lee, will be among the producers. It will feature exclusive access to Anderson as well as to her personal journals.

A Netflix tweet added that the film will "feature the pop culture icon setting the record straight as she looks back on her professional path and her personal journey".

The announcement comes soon after the launch of Pam & Tommy, the narrative series that relives the fallout from the leaked sex tape between Anderson and Tommy Lee, starring Lily James and Sebastian Stan.

Anderson was allegedly contacted by the production for her involvement but was uninterested. "I wish it had been different," James said in an interview with Porter, adding that she also



reached out to Anderson personally. "My sole intention was to take care of the story and to play Pamela authentically."

Those close to the former Baywatch actor have claimed that the star is unhappy that the project exists. In May

2021, Courtney Love claimed the existence of the show was causing Anderson "complex trauma". A source also told Entertainment Tonight that it was "very painful for Pamela Anderson and for anyone that loves her".

Source: The Gurdian



'West Side Story' star Ariana DeBose set for 'Kraven the Hunter'

West Side Story star Ariana DeBose has been added to the cast lineup for the Sony/Marvel movie 'Kraven The Hunter.' DeBose, who, according to rumours, will play the role of Calypso joins Aaron Taylor-Johnson who plays the titular character.

Calypso is a voodoo priestess who utilizes magic potions, and besides being an adversary of Spider-Man, she is also the occasional partner and lover of Kraven.

'Triple Frontier' helmer J.C. Chandor will direct. Art Marcum, Matt Holloway and Richard Wenk will write the script. Avi Arad and Matt Tolmach are producing.

With ties to Spider-Man, Kraven was introduced in 1964 as a Spider-Man villain. He was born Sergei Kravinoff, he considers himself to be the world's greatest hunter, a moniker he earns at first through his prowess at tracking and killing big game, often with his bare hands. His drive to maintain his grip on his title leads him to ingest a serum that gives him super-strength and stamina and slows down his ageing considerably. He's known for wearing a jacket made from a lion's head and mane. DeBose will next appear in Matthew Vaughn's action film 'Argylle' from Apple, starring opposite Henry Cavill, Bryan Cranston, Samuel L. Jackson and Dua Lipa.



35 killed, over 80 injured in blast at Shia mosque during Friday congregation in northwest Pakistan

PESHAWAR (TIP): A powerful suicide blast ripped through a crowded Shia mosque during the March 4 congregation in Pakistan's northwestern Peshawar city, killing at least 35 people and wounding more than 80 others, in one of the deadliest attacks in the restive province, bordering Afghanistan.

A rescue official said the blast occurred at a Jamia mosque in Qissa Khwani bazaar area in Peshawar when the worshippers were offering Friday prayers.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the blast.

Asim Khan, media manager of Lady Reading Hospital, said 30 bodies had been brought to the hospital so far, according to Dawn newspaper.

The toll is likely to go up.

At least 80 people have been injured, according to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa minister Kamran Bangash, the paper said.

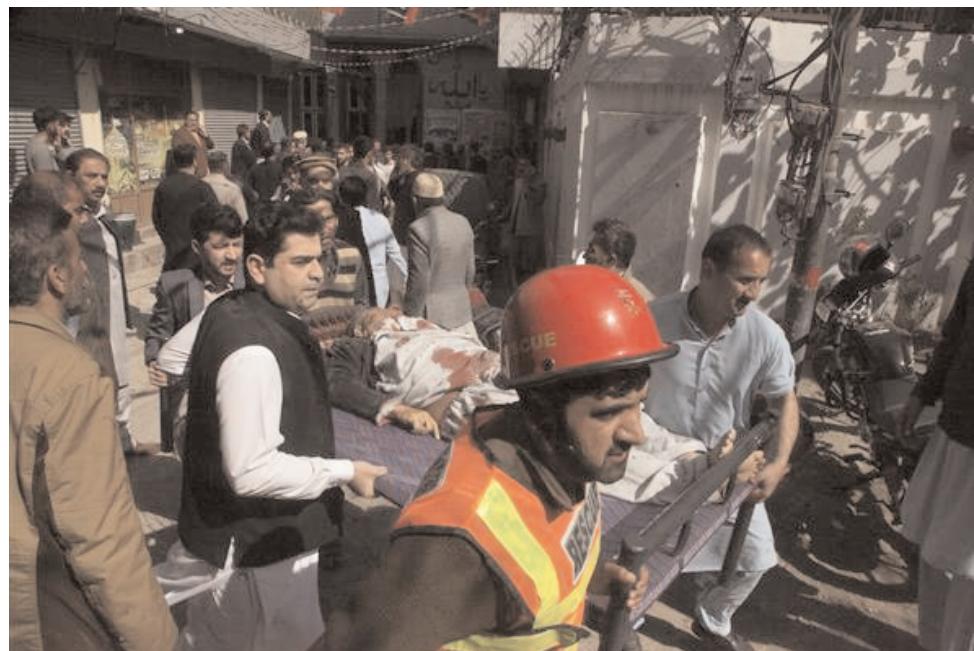
Talking to the media, Peshawar SSP Operations Haroon Rasheed Khan said the explosion was a suicide blast.

There were two attackers but only one of them was a suicide bomber, he said.

An emergency has been enforced in the hospital and doctors on leave were called for duties.

Officials said the condition of 10 injured is stated to be critical.

Capital City Police Officer Peshawar Ijaz Ahsan said two attackers tried to enter the mosque and fired at the policemen standing guard. One



policeman was killed while the other was critically injured, he said.

The blast occurred following the firing incident, he added.

President Arif Alvi condemned the blast and expressed grief over the precious lives lost.

Prime Minister Imran Khan strongly condemned the Peshawar blast while Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed sought a report of the incident from the Chief Secretary and IG of the province.

Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Mahmood Khan condemned the blast and vowed to bring the perpetrators of this heinous act to justice.

He said targeting people in a place of

worship is an inhuman and cruel act and directed authorities to ensure the best medical care to the injured.

He has convened an emergency meeting at Chief Minister's House to review the overall security situation in the province, bordering Afghanistan.

"Heart-wrenching terrorist incident in Peshawar in which so many precious lives have been lost. Words can't adequately condemn the sheer brutality. Terrorism continues to remain our foremost national challenge. Prayers & condolences are with the bereaved families!" PML-N President and Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehzad Sharif tweeted. (PTI)

PAKISTAN LIKELY TO REMAIN ON FATF'S GREY LIST FOR FOUR MORE MONTHS: REPORT

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan is likely to remain on the grey list of global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog FATF until June for failing to meet some of the targets under the additional criteria, according to a media report on March 4. Pakistan has been on the grey list of the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) since June 2018 for failing to check money laundering, leading to terror financing, and was given a plan of action to complete it by October 2019. Since then, the country continues to be on that list due to its failure to comply with the FATF mandates. The concluding session of the plenary meeting of the FATF is due on Friday and includes Pakistan's review on the agenda, the Dawn newspaper reported. (PTI)

Higher oil prices push Sri Lanka into deeper economic crisis

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka's already dire economic crisis has deepened as oil prices hover near USD 110 a barrel. Vehicles are stranded with empty tanks, power cuts are depriving students of study time for exams and shopping mall air conditioners are being switched off to conserve energy.

The South Asian island nation already was so short of hard currency that authorities had restricted imports of cars and fertilizer. It's now having to scrape into dwindling reserves to pay for ever more costly oil needed to keep the economy running.

Authorities have announced countrywide power cuts extending up to 7 1/2 hours a day because they can't supply enough fuel to power stations. Hydropower, the other energy mainstay, often runs short during the dry season. It will only end with monsoonal rains

that usually begin in May.

"We can't find diesel, naphtha and furnace oil, all three kinds and therefore we have been compelled to go for such an extended power cut," Sri Lanka's Public Utilities Commission Chairman Janaka Ratnayake told reporters. Bus services vital for many workers are also in trouble, unable to find diesel and sometimes stranding passengers mid-route.

Ravindra Mendis, owner of seven-passenger buses, said four are idled for now due to the fuel crisis. "This diesel shortage is a severe hardship," Mendis said as he waited patiently to buy fuel at a station in Gampaha town, 24 kilometers (15 miles) north of the capital, Colombo.

"We are losing revenue and time, since we have to spend hours waiting in long lines to buy diesel," he said. (AP)

MYANMAR PARDONS CELEBRITIES JAILED FOR ANTI-MILITARY VIEWS

BANGKOK (TIP): Several top Myanmar celebrities who were detained for criticising the army's seizure of power were released from prison March 2 under pardons issued by the military government, state-run television reported.

The celebrities released from Insein Prison in Yangon include prominent film industry figures Lu Min, Wyne, Pyay Ti Oo, his wife Eaindra Kyaw Zin, and popular male model and actor Paing Takhon, MRTV reported.

All had been arrested for supporting the protest movement against last year's seizure of power by the military, which ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. They had been charged with incitement, which carries a possible three-year prison sentence, for encouraging government employees to join the protests.

The TV report said the reason for their release was so they could participate in nation-building through their work in the arts.

The report also said that Win Min Than, a popular blogger on beauty and fashion, received a pardon for her conviction for incitement but remained detained because she was also convicted of unlawful association.

A Malaysian who was convicted and imprisoned on drug charges in 2019 was also given a pardon on Wednesday for what was described as humanitarian reasons.

More than 12,000 people have been arrested since the army takeover in February last year, and more than 9,400 remain in detention, according to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, an advocacy group that monitors arrests.

Shortly after its takeover, the military government began issuing arrest warrants for celebrities, charging them with incitement for "spreading news to affect state stability." More than 100 celebrities were featured on wanted lists with their photos on state-run media. At least 15 were arrested last year, about half of whom were convicted by special courts inside Insein Prison.

Charges were dropped against 24 artists and 10 social media personalities last October under an amnesty order from Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, head of the ruling military council.

At least four prominent artists including singers who were convicted on the same charge of incitement remain in prison, according to lawyer Khin Maung Myint.

The authorities continue to issue new arrest warrants, and according to the state-run Myanma Alinn Daily newspaper, at least 240 people have been arrested by security forces since Jan. 27 this year. (AP)

MORE THAN 200 GUNMEN KILLED IN NIGERIA SECURITY OPERATION

KADUNA (TIP): At least 200 gunmen were killed in the past three days in Nigeria's central-northern state of Niger during a security operation to clear armed gangs from the area, a state commissioner said on March 3.

Gunmen have terrorised citizens in the north and northwest of the country and have gained notoriety for kidnapping hundreds of students and villagers for ransom and killing dozens.

The Niger regional commissioner in charge of internal security, Emmanuel Umar, said some leaders of the armed gangs, known locally as bandits, were among those killed during an operation led by the army and volunteers from local vigilante groups and community leaders.

In a statement, Umar said 60 motorbikes, which the gangs use to raid villages, weapons and cattle, were recovered from gunmen operating from camps deep inside the vast forests in the state.

An army spokesman did not immediately respond to questions.

At least four Nigerian security personnel were killed when their patrol vehicle detonated a landmine in Niger last month, and gunmen killed an unknown number of people.

Niger regional authorities said last year that Islamist militants had established a presence in one locality for the first time. Last month, President Muhammadu Buhari said the military had begun a major offensive against militants there. Reuters

4 RUSSIAN FIGHTER JETS VIOLATE SWEDISH AIRSPACE

RUSSIA (TIP): The Swedish Armed Forces said that four Russian fighter aircraft have violated the country's airspace.

In a statement, the Forces said that it conducted an operation with JAS 39 Gripen aircraft of the rapid readiness unit, which documented and photographed the incident.

"This demonstrates that our readiness is good. We were on site to secure the territorial integrity and Sweden's borders. We have complete control of the situation", said Air Force Commander Carl-Johan Edstrom.

The Swedish airspace was violated by two Russian SU 27 and two Russian SU 24. The incident was brief and took place east of Gotland, out at sea.

"With the current situation as backdrop, we take this incident very seriously. Russia's conduct is unprofessional and irresponsible", says Air Force Commander Edstrom. IANS

Sydney braces for flash floods as rain disaster moves south

SYDNEY (TIP): Sydney was preparing on March 2 for dangerous flash flooding as population centers farther north began a massive cleanup operation after record floods that have claimed at least 14 lives along Australia's east coast in recent days.

The torrential rain — as much as 20 centimeters (8 inches) — is forecast for Australia's largest city and surrounding areas late March 2 and early March 3, Australia's Bureau of Meteorology said.

"In the Sydney area, we have minor to major flood warnings current," meteorologist Dean Narramore said. In the New South Wales town of Lismore, 600 kilometers (370 miles) north of Sydney, a fourth death was confirmed on Wednesday as floodwaters drain from homes and searchers knock on doors.

The body of a man, aged in his 70s, was found in a flooded apartment, a police statement said. A man's body had been found floating in a main street earlier on Wednesday. The population of 28,000 people was inundated when Wilsons River peaked Monday afternoon at its highest level since records began in 1880. Authorities expect the death toll to rise in Lismore and its surrounding areas.

Dozens of suburbs remain flooded in



Brisbane, Australia's third-most populous city 750 kilometers (470 miles) north of Sydney, after the river that snakes through its center peaked on Monday. The Queensland state capital had received 80% of its average annual rainfall within a few days.

The cleanup effort is underway and

8,000 volunteers had enlisted for what is known as the Mud Army, which helps those who were inundated. Queensland has accounted for nine of the deaths from the flooding disaster that has resulted from a low-pressure system that is moving south. (AP)

4,000 luxury cars like Lamborghinis, Bentleys sink in the Atlantic Ocean as the cargo ship catches fire

NEW YORK (TIP): Nearly 4,000 luxury cars like Porsches, Lamborghinis, Bentleys and Volkswagen -- along with several high-end electric vehicles -- have sunk aboard a cargo ship in the Atlantic that caught fire last month.

Felicity Ace ship was carrying both electric and non-electric vehicles, and a fire broke out on the ship as it was travelling from Germany to the US, reports Insider.

While it's unclear exactly what started the fire, captain Joao Mendes Cabecas of the port of Hortas said lithium-ion batteries in EVs aboard the ship caught fire.

A salvage team was able to board the ship over the last weekend but to no avail.

The ship management company, MOL Ship Management Singapore, said the ship sank about 253 miles off the coast of the Azores, an archipelago in the mid-Atlantic that's an autonomous region of Portugal.

All 22 crew members were evacuated from the ship and were safe.

"The 22 crew members did not need



4,000 luxury cars like Lamborghinis, Bentleys sink in the Atlantic Ocean
Photo for representation only. — File photo

medical assistance on arrival, having been taken to a local hotel. The owner of the ship 'Felicity Ace' is in contact with the logistic agent in order to draw up a plan for the towing of the ship," the navy had said.

The Felicity Ace ship was heading

from Germany to a port in Rhode Island, the US, when it issued distress signals this week.

According to Importinfo.com, the electric vehicles may have been Audi E-tron Sportbacks.

(Source: IANS)

Ukraine claims 3 soliders killed, 2 wounded in Russian attack on nuclear plant

KYIV (TIP): Russian troops are shelling Europe's largest nuclear power station in Ukraine.

"We demand that they stop the heavy weapons fire," Andriy Tuz, spokesperson for the plant in Enerhodar, said in a video posted on Telegram. "There is a real threat of nuclear danger in the biggest atomic energy station in Europe." The plant accounts for about one quarter of Ukraine's power generation.

Tuz told Ukrainian television that shells were falling directly on the Zaporizhzhia plant and had set fire to one of the facility's six reactors. That reactor is under renovation and not operating, but there is nuclear fuel inside, he said.

Firefighters cannot get near the fire because they are being shot at, Tuz said. A live-streamed security camera linked from the homepage of the nuclear power plant showed what



appeared to be armoured vehicles rolling into the facility's parking lot and shining spotlights on the building where the camera was mounted.

There are then what appear to be

bright muzzle flashes from vehicles and then nearly simultaneous explosions in the surrounding buildings. Smoke then rises and drifts across the frame. (AP)

US STANCE ON RUSSIA'S SECURITY INTERESTS HYPOCRITICAL: BERNIE SANDERS

MOSCOW (TIP): Independent US Senator Bernie Sanders recently called out the US for being "hypocritical" in not accepting Russia's argument of "spheres of influence."

For the last 200 years, recalled Sanders in the US Senate, America had operated under the Monroe Doctrine which gave it the right to intervene against any country that might threaten its alleged interests.

Under this doctrine, the US undermined and overthrew at least a dozen governments. In 1962, it came to the brink of a nuclear war with the Soviet Union in response to the placement of Soviet missiles in Cuba, which the Kennedy administration saw as an unacceptable threat to US' national security.

In 2018, Donald Trump's Secretary of State Rex Tillerson called the Monroe Doctrine "relevant today as it was the day it was written". In 2019, former Trump National Security Adviser John Bolton declared "the Monroe Doctrine is alive and well".

"To put it simply, even if Russia was not ruled by a corrupt authoritarian leader like Vladimir Putin, Russia, like the US, would still have an interest in the security policies of its neighbours. Does anyone really believe that the United States would not have something to say if, for example, Mexico was to form a military alliance with a US adversary?" asked Sanders.

(TNS)

Russia's offer to foreign firms: stay, leave or hand over the keys

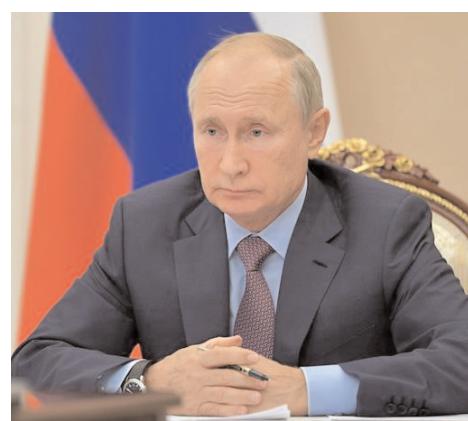
MOSCOW (TIP): Companies and investors across the world faced Russian dilemmas on March 4 as they weighed up an offer from Moscow to fast-track their exits from the country and allow them to hand over holdings to local managers until they return.

The options offered by First Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Belousov came one week since Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a day after French bank Societe Generale warned that it could be stripped of its Russian operations, which sent a chill through companies seeking to stay put in the country.

Belousov outlined three alternatives for foreign firms.

"The company continues to work fully in Russia," he said in a statement. "Foreign shareholders transfer their share to be managed by Russian partners and can return to the market later," he added, and: "The company permanently terminates operations in Russia, closes production and dismisses employees." No route comes without risks. Those staying on could face a backlash in Western markets where the public have rallied to Ukraine's cause, those transferring shares could be handing over the keys with few guarantees, while those quitting may face a big loss at best, or might have to sell for a nominal sum.

Russia's invasion has prompted the United States and Europe to impose sweeping sanctions, affecting everything from global payments systems to a range of hi-tech products, which make doing business in Russia increasingly complex



and precarious.

For ordinary Russians, it means deep economic pain.

Some multinationals such as energy majors BP and Shell have already said they are quitting, while others have held off signing off from Russia for now. TotalEnergies has said it would stay but not invest more.

IKEA announced plans to close stores on Thursday but said it would pay its 15,000 Russian staff for at least three months.

Italian tyre maker Pirelli said on Friday it was constantly monitoring developments through a specially constituted "crisis committee", adding it did not expect to halt either of its two Russian plants.

Its rival, Finland's Nokian Tyres, said last week it was shifting production of some product lines out of Russia.

But there are no easy fixes even for those looking for the exit, when there are limited trading counterparties. (Reuters)

'WILL BE 10 TIMES LARGER THAN CHERNOBYL', UKRAINE WARNS RUSSIA ON NUCLEAR-PLANT ATTACK

KIEV (TIP): Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba on Friday warned against Russian troops firing at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which is the largest in Europe, saying that if it blows up then the disaster would be "10 times larger" than Chernobyl. In a tweet early March 4 morning, the Minister said: "Russian army is firing from all sides upon Zaporizhzhia NPP, the largest nuclear power plant in Europe. Fire has already broke out.

"If it blows up, it will be 10 times larger than Chernobyl! Russians must immediately cease fire, allow firefighters, establish a security zone." Citing Ukrainian officials, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said that there has not been any change in the radiation levels at plant site in the wake of the fire.

The IAEA also said that the fire has not affected "essential" equipment and personnel at the nuclear power plane were "taking mitigatory actions". The global nuclear organisation further said that it is consulting with Ukraine "and others with a view to provide maximum possible assistance to the country as it seeks to maintain nuclear safety and security in the current difficult circumstances".

But in the wake of the "serious situation" at the plant, IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi has warned Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmygal and the country's nuclear regulator and operator of the severe danger if the reactors were hit by the ongoing Russian firing. Ukraine currently has four active nuclear plants, including Zaporizhzhia which reportedly accounts for some 25 per cent of the country's power, the BC reported.

It also deals with nuclear waste at sites like Chernobyl, which is now under Russian control. The latest developments come on the ninth day of Russia's continuous military assault on Ukraine. Since the Russian invasion began on February 24, intense shelling and bombing has continued across Ukraine, including capital Kiev and the second largest city of Kharkiv. On Wednesday, Russian troops seized the port town of Kherson, a provincial capital home to about 250,000 people, making it the first major Ukrainian city to fall.

Ukraine has so far reported over 2,000 civilian casualties and UN estimates have revealed that over one million people have fled to neighbouring countries such as Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Hungary and Moldova.

At least 160,000 others are currently displaced within Ukraine. Meanwhile, the European Union believes that figure could climb to seven million, and that 18 million Ukrainians will be affected by the war. (AP)

BRITAIN HEAPS SANCTIONS ON RUSSIA, BELARUS

LONDON (TIP): Britain has piled on further sanctions against Russia and also imposed a first wave of punitive measures against Belarus for its role in the invasion of Ukraine. Russian ships have been banned from British ports in a fresh raft of UK sanctions against Moscow announced on March 2. The ban includes any vessels owned or operated by anyone connected to Russia, with UK authorities given new powers to detain Russian vessels.

In what was termed as the "first tranche" of sanctions against Belarus, four senior defence officials and two military enterprises have been sanctioned with immediate effect under the UK's Russia sanctions regime.

"We are inflicting economic pain on Putin and those closest to him. We will not rest until Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is restored," maintained United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Liz Truss. (PTI)

SWITZERLAND ADOPTS EU SANCTIONS

GENEVA (TIP): The Swiss president says Russia's attack on Ukraine is "unacceptable" and Switzerland will adopt European Union sanctions, including asset freezes, targeting Russians — all but depriving well-heeled Russians of access to one of their favourite havens to park their money. Ignazio Cassis told a news conference March 2 that Russia's invasion was intolerable on moral and political grounds. AP

MEDIA MOGUL USES UK PAPER FOR ANTI-WAR PLEA

LONDON (TIP): Russia-born media mogul Evgeny Lebedev has used the UK newspaper he owns to implore Russian President to end the Ukraine invasion. London's Evening Standard features a front-page statement by Lebedev headlined "President Putin, please stop this war". AP

ISRAEL SENDS HUMANITARIAN AID TO HELP UKRAINE

TEL AVIV (TIP): Israel has begun sending 100 tons of humanitarian aid to assist people caught up in the fighting in Ukraine.

An El Al plane was loaded with dozens of cardboard boxes March 2 at the country's main international airport.

Israel's Foreign Ministry says it is sending medical equipment and medicine, water purification systems, thousands of tents, blankets, sleeping bags and coats. The planes will land in Poland and the aid will be sent to Ukraine from there.

(PTI)

China's Congress to focus on boosting slowing economy

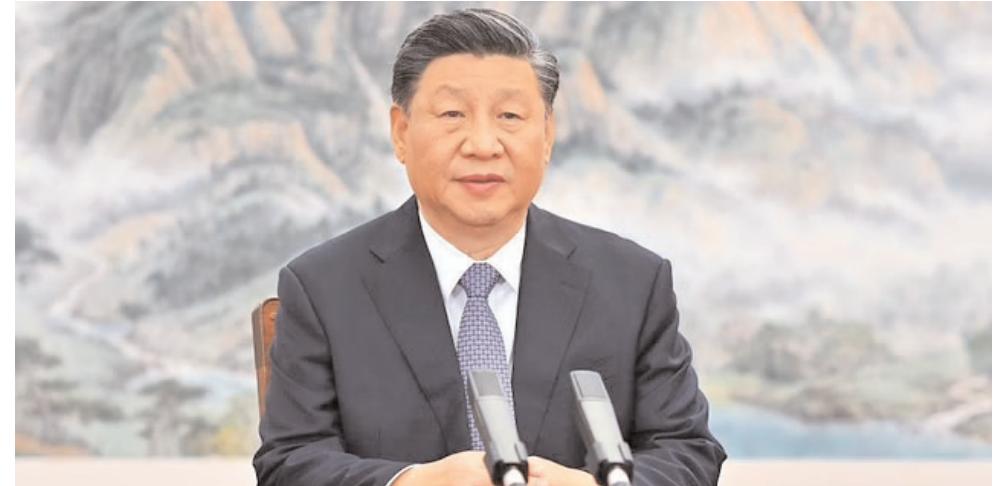
BEIJING (TIP): A property downturn, slowing economy and war in Ukraine loom large over this week's annual convening of China's legislature, with policymakers expected to focus on shoring up faltering growth. The rubber-stamp parliament starting March 4 in Beijing gathers some 3,000 members of the National People's Congress (NPC) for highly choreographed meetings over bills, budgets and personnel changes.

The ruling Communist Party uses the opportunity to tout its achievements while also setting the country's economic blueprint and GDP target for the year ahead. Much of the NPC's agenda is unknown until during -- or even after -- the multi-day meeting, with many sessions taking place behind closed doors. But this year, concerns are bound to centre on the country's sluggish economic growth, partly down to a crunch in the crucial property sector -- which makes up as much as a quarter of national output. Stringent "zero-Covid" measures including harsh lockdowns and closed borders have also been a major blow to manufacturing hubs, tourist centres and port cities.

Meanwhile, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has raised the prospect of spiking food and oil prices, with fears over supplies of crucial commodities from the region being affected. Commerce Minister Wang Wentao admitted to journalists this week that China's economy faces "huge" pressure this year.

GDP and stability

Beijing traditionally announces its



new economic growth target at Premier Li Keqiang's annual "state of the nation" speech at the NPC, followed by his rare - but heavily stage-managed - press conference.

China's GDP growth slowed sharply in the final months of 2021 despite an earlier pandemic bounceback, as it grappled with tepid domestic demand and a property downturn. The country's communist leaders have long based their legitimacy on the argument that their model of government represents economic growth and continuity for China's massive population.

But as much of the rest of the world now reopens, China is increasingly out of step, as continued Covid-19 restrictions weigh on consumer confidence. Maintaining stability will be crucial as the Communist Party gears up for a pivotal meeting this fall the -20th party congress -that is expected to easily secure President Xi

Jinping a third term.

In 2020, there was no GDP target set at all, and last year Li announced a modest goal of "above six percent". Amid the unpredictability, analysts expect Beijing to announce a similarly open and attainable target this year.

"We expect the growth target to be set at 'above five percent,'" UOB economist Ho Woei Chen said in a recent report, adding that pace would match the past two years' average of 5.1 percent. Iris Pang, ING's chief economist for Greater China, expected the range could be higher after the country easily exceeded last year's target.

And infrastructure would probably form a key part of the government's support for the economy, predicted ANZ Research senior China strategist Zhaopeng Xing. He expected "double-digit growth in infrastructure investment" in the first quarter, on top of tax cuts and the central bank's earlier interest rate cuts. (AFP)

COVID cases reported globally dropped by 16 per cent last week: WHO

GENEVA (TIP): The number of new coronavirus cases reported globally dropped by 16 per cent last week, marking a month-long decline in COVID-19 infections, according to figures from the World Health Organisation.

In its weekly report on the pandemic issued late Tuesday, the UN health agency also said that deaths fell by 10 per cent, continuing a drop in fatalities first seen last week. WHO said there were more than 10 million new cases and about 60,000 deaths globally.

The Western Pacific was the only region where COVID-19 increased, with about a third more infections than the previous week. Deaths rose by 22 per cent in the Western Pacific and about 4 per cent in the Middle East, while declining everywhere else.



WHO said the omicron variant remains overwhelmingly dominant worldwide; among virus sequences shared with the world's largest publicly accessible database, more than 99.5 per cent were omicron while only 0.3 per cent were delta.

In the last month, none of the other worrying variants - including beta, gamma, lambda or mu - have been reported, although WHO said there were

surveillance challenges in many countries. Numerous countries across Europe including Britain, Sweden and Denmark, have released nearly all their COVID-19 restrictions as cases have fallen dramatically while immunization campaigns have progressed.

In the US, scientists have estimated about 73 per cent of the population is now immune to omicron and that any future spikes of disease will require far less disruptive interventions to control epidemics.

Still, WHO has repeatedly said it is too early to declare the pandemic over and warned that if the coronavirus is allowed to continue spreading, it will have further chances to mutate into a potentially more deadly or transmissible version. (AP)

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Achieve natural lipstick look like a pro

With new trends, everyone likes to apply makeup using techniques that make it look natural. These days, applying products is more about accentuating your original features than creating a perfect face. Everyone wants to hide the dark spots, scars and bags under the eyes. But that is where they want the role of makeup to end. For the rest of the face, women are looking for a natural or no-makeup look that just helps them do away with a few imperfections and allows them to flaunt their appearances.

Moisturise The Delicate Skin Of Lips

Are your lips chapped or cracked? The flaking is maybe due to dead skin. Hence, it is crucial to apply lip balm or any other moisturising product on the lips. It makes the lips look plump and soft. It will prevent the lipstick from filling the cracks. Moisturisation is not necessary only for skin, but it also ensures the smooth application of lipstick. Just like you prep your skin before applying makeup, similarly, you must put a little lip balm 10 minutes before applying lipstick. The skin will absorb nutrients and nourishment.

Pro Tip: Centre Light And Edges Dark

If you look closely into a mirror, you will notice that the centre has a lighter pigmentation than the edges. Therefore, you must remember this trick while applying the lip colour. When you choose to achieve a no-makeup look, you must pick a bright and light colour for the area inside. Generally, muted shades of pink blend effortlessly with dark pigment on the edges.

Always Choose A Neutral Brown Lip Liner

Most of us have brown or dark pink edges. Hence, neutral or brown shades of lip liners work best when you wish to achieve a natural look. The method of application involves applying a thin line of liner on the edges. Once you



Image Courtesy: Deepika Padukone/Instagram

are happy with the lining, take a brush and smudge the liner inwards. You must ensure to blur the lining and get rid of any harsh texture around the edges. The soft lines will blend quickly with the lipstick.

Use Fingers To Apply The Lipstick

You do not need any brush or special tool. Did you know that you can apply lipstick, eye shadow, blush, foundation and highlighter with your fingers? Many makeup artists still prefer to apply multiple makeup products with the tips of their fingers. You must remember to press the product into your skin.

Hence, to avoid the cakey look, you must apply the lipstick with your fingers. Not only it will get applied smoothly, but it will also blend seamlessly. It will allow the lips to absorb the pigmentation and prevent the development of a thick coating that just stays on the top of the skin.

Thin And Sheer Textures Are The Best

Matte lipsticks or full coverage

lip pigments are not the right choices for achieving a natural look. With light-textured lipstick, the colour of the product blends effortlessly with the natural pigment of your lips.

A sheer lipstick sits better on the skin and offers a natural shine to the lips. If you choose to wear fresh shades, they will help you achieve the desired look without putting in much effort. Such shades do not brighten up your lips and make them pop. But, they sit on the skin in a subtle manner.

Remove The Excess Product

Even with fingers, you can apply the lip colour in excess. The extra product does not penetrate the layers of your skin, but it stays on the top. It creates a cakey texture that gives an undesired look.

You can blot off the excess product using tissue paper. It absorbs the excess pigmentation and tones down the saturation. It also prevents the lipstick from coming off on a glass when you drink water from it.

Source: HerZindagi

Skip heavy foundation

A thick layer of foundation will end up into the cracks, revealing the fine lines you are trying to cover. Begin with a moisturiser followed by a primer and then a light liquid foundation or BB cream. You can also use skin plumping serum after the moisturiser for a youthful glow.

Moisturise the eyelids

While doing your moisturising regimen, include the eyelids. Dry eyelids will show fine lines and will crease your eyeshadow, making the signs of ageing more prominent. Priming your eyelids before applying eye makeup is another way to

conceal signs of ageing.

Groom the brows

A good set of eyebrows can make you look young in a jiffy, so take care of them. Find the right brow shape that suits your face. If the eyebrows have become thin or grey, groom them with an eyebrow pencil.

Exfoliate and moisturise the lips

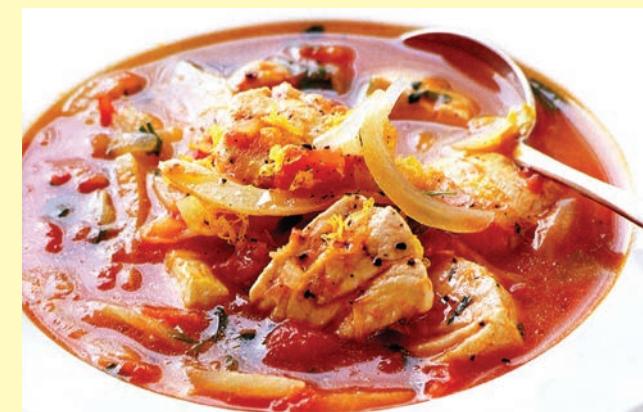
Well moisturised and soft lips not only look youthful, but also make your lipstick perform better. Ensure to exfoliate your

lips every two weeks to get rid of loose skin and keep your lipstick from bleeding. Keep your lips moisturised at all times to avoid cracks showing on the lips.

Plump up those lips

Succulent, plum lips are associated with youthfulness. Before applying a lipstick, apply foundation lightly on the lips. Line and fill the lips with a lip liner. Now apply a lip-plumping lipstick or apply a layer of gloss over your regular lipstick for that plumping effect.

FOOD



Tomato Fish

An authentic Bengali recipe, this dish is made using tomato, fish, yoghurt and melange of spices. A curry recipe ideal to serve with boiled rice, Tomato Fish is perfect for occasions like dinners and buffets. Enjoy this simple recipe at home.

INGREDIENTS

250 gm tomato
1 large onion, 2 teaspoon turmeric
2 teaspoon ginger paste
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1 pinch salt, 1 tablespoon coriander leaves
500 gm fish, 2 tablespoon yoghurt (curd)
1 teaspoon red chilli
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon sugar, 3 tablespoon refined oil.

Method

- Remove any pin bones from the fish fillets and cut into large chunks. Rub 1 ½ tsp turmeric powder and 1 tsp salt over the fish and set aside for 10 minutes.
- Boil water in a pan. Make a cross cut on the stem side of the tomatoes. Plunge the tomatoes in boiling water for 30 seconds and remove. Peel the tomatoes and chop them finely. Also, chop onions very finely.
- Heat oil in a large pan. Spread the fish pieces on the pan and fry till golden in color. Turn and fry on the other side as well. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.
- Add the onions to the same pan. Saute for 5-6 minutes till soft and cooked. Add the turmeric powder, red chili powder, cumin powder, coriander powder, ginger paste, sugar and chopped tomatoes. Mix well and cook for 4-5 minutes till the tomatoes are tender.
- Remove from fire, cool slightly and blend in a blender to get a coarse paste. Return the paste to the pan on the fire. Add 1 cup water and bring to a boil.
- Reduce the heat and allow to simmer for a minute. Whisk the yoghurt and add to the simmering curry.
- Add the fish pieces along with any juices and simmer for 4-5 minutes. Add the chopped coriander and mix well.
- Remove from fire and serve hot with rice or rotis.

Skincare tips to look younger



Extreme climatic events may cause anxiety, depression: IPCC report

Extreme climate conditions can cause mental health issues like anxiety, depression, acute traumatic stress and sleep problems ranging from mild to severe which may even require hospitalisation, said the latest IPCC report on climate change.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group II's report titled 'Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability', released on Monday, warned that a wide range of climatic events and conditions will have detrimental impacts on mental health. "The pathways through which climatic events affect mental health are varied, complex and interconnected with other non-climatic influences that create vulnerability."

"The climatic exposure may be direct, such as experiencing an extreme weather event or prolonged high temperatures, or indirect, such as mental health consequences of undernutrition or displacement," said the report. The IPCC report has cautioned that not eliminating emissions will cause serious harm to the world, especially South Asia with increased unbearable heat waves, food and water scarcity and



sea level rise.

The report also mentioned non-climatic moderating influences which range from an individual's personality and pre-existing conditions, to social support, to structural inequities. "Depending on these background and contextual factors, similar climatic events may result in a range of potential mental health outcomes, including anxiety, depression, acute traumatic stress, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicide, substance abuse, and sleep

problems, with conditions ranging from being mild in nature to those that require hospitalization," the report, approved by nearly 200 countries said. Referring to a study, the report said that in Canada, an association was found between mean heat exposure of 28 degree Celsius within four days of exposure and greater hospital admissions for mood and behavioural disorders, including schizophrenia, mood, and neurotic disorders.

Source: PTI

Research finds ultrasound scans can diagnose prostate cancer

The one thing that rings a bell in everyone's minds and makes them scared is when they're asked to take an MRI, the procedure that is used to detect cancer. But, new research has found that the good old ultrasound scan can also be used to detect cancer. The research found that ultrasound tests can be used to detect cases of prostate cancer.

The results of the study have been published in 'Lancet Oncology'.

Researchers at Imperial College London, University College London and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust have found that a new type of ultrasound scan can diagnose most prostate cancer cases with good accuracy in a clinical trial involving 370 men.

The ultrasound scans missed only 4.3 per cent more clinically important prostate cancer cases - cancer that should be treated rather than monitored - compared to magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scans currently used to detect prostate cancer.

MRI scans are expensive and time-consuming. The team believed that an ultrasound scan should be used as a first test in a community healthcare setting and in low and middle-income countries which do not have easy access to high-quality MRI scans.

They said, it could be used in combination with current MRI scans to maximize cancer detection. Professor Hashim Ahmed, the lead author of the study and Chair of Urology at Imperial College London, said, "Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the UK. One in six men will be diagnosed with the disease in their lifetimes and that figure is expected to rise."

"MRI scans are one of the tests we use to diagnose



prostate cancer. Although effective these scans are expensive, take up to 40 minutes to perform and are not easily available to all. Also, there are some patients who are unable to have MRI scans such as those with hip replacements or claustrophobia fears. As cancer waiting lists build as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a real need to find more efficient and cheaper tests to diagnose prostate cancer," he added.

"Our study is the first to show that a special type of ultrasound scan can be used as a potential test to detect clinically significant cases of prostate cancer. They can detect most cases of prostate cancer with good accuracy, although MRI scans are slightly better," he said.

Source: ANI



Suramin reduces drug resistance in mycobacteria, says study

Harmful bacteria that cause diseases like TB and leprosy has become resistant to antibiotics warranting novel strategies to control it, says a study by Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology (RGCB), Thiruvananthapuram.

The study, published in the journal 'Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy' reveals application of antibiotics results in a two-phase killing of bacteria with a significant part of it being killed rapidly while a smaller part endures the antibiotic and persists in the environment for extended periods.

"The persisters also get killed because they remain susceptible to antibiotics, but the killing rate is much slower. Non-compliance with the duration of antibiotic therapy results in a relapse of infection caused by the persisters," a press release from RGCB said.

Recent reports too say antibiotic persisters (APs) of mycobacteria develop resistance upon treatment with lethal doses of ciprofloxacin or rifampicin.

Research demonstrated that the persister population of *M. smegmatis* generated by antibiotic treatment showed high levels of reactive oxygen species (ROS), which consequently resulted in the rapid emergence of drug resistance to single and multiple antibiotics.

Strategies to tackle drug-resistant strains include identification of new antibiotics or targeting the bacterial mechanisms that reduce the rate of evolution of resistance, RGCB said.

"We took the second approach as identifying new and potent antibacterial antibiotics takes time and should pass rigorous safety standards before using human therapy," Dr. Krishna Kurthkoti, a scientist and researcher at RGCB, said. He conducted the study.

The study tested the efficacy of suramin, a WHO-approved drug, used for treating sleeping sickness and infections.

"It showed that a combination of Suramin during antibiotic therapy reduced the emergence rate of drug resistance in *M. smegmatis* and *M. tuberculosis* under laboratory conditions. Since Suramin is already an approved drug, its repurposing to control the emergence of drug resistance would increase the life expectancy of existing drugs providing valuable time to develop and approve new antibiotics," the release said.

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Fitbit recalls millions of 'Ionic' smartwatches after battery burn reports

Google-owned wearable brand Fitbit on Wednesday said it is recalling its 'Ionic' smartwatch following reports of an overheating battery and potential burn injury.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) in the US said in a statement that at least 115 people in the US—and 59 globally—have reported an overheating battery on the device.

There were 118 reports of burns, with two reports of third-degree burns and four reports of second-degree burns.

"Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled Ionic smartwatches and contact Fitbit to receive pre-paid packaging to return the device" the commission warned.

The lithium-ion battery in the Ionic smartwatch with the model number FB503 can overheat, posing a burn hazard.

There are around 1 million of these smartwatches in the U.S. and in addition, about 693,000 were sold internationally.

"Customer safety is always Fitbit's top priority and out of an abundance of caution, we are conducting a voluntary recall of Fitbit Ionic smartwatches," the company said in a statement.

Source: IANS

Researchers build low-cost solar-powered desalination system that could help provide portable water

A team of researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Shanghai Jiao Tong University in China have come up with an inexpensive passive solar evaporation system that can be used to clean wastewater or desalinate saline water in order to provide potable water. Most modern attempts at solar desalination use some kind of wick to draw salty water through the device. But these wicks face the problem of salt accumulation, which causes the system's efficiency to drop and requires regular and periodic maintenance, making it much more expensive and much less practical.

The new research findings have been published in a paper in the journal Nature Communications by MIT graduate student Lenan Zhang, postdoctoral associate Xiangyu Li, professor of mechanical engineering Evelyn Wang, and four others.

In order to avoid the problem of salt accumulation, the team created a wick-free system. Their system features a layered design with dark material at the top to absorb the sun's heat, followed by a thin layer of water that sits above a perforated layer of material, which itself sits above a reservoir of salty or non-potable water like a tank or a pond.

"The recent development has been using wicking structures and novel materials to achieve high performance. But because of

Tons of space junk likely to punch hole up to 20-metre in moon

The moon is about to get walloped by 3 tons of space junk, a punch that will carve out a crater that could fit several semitractor-trailers.

The leftover rocket will smash into the far side of the moon at 5,800 mph (9,300 kph) on Friday, March 4, away from telescopes' prying eyes. It may take weeks, even months, to confirm the impact through satellite images.

It's been tumbling haphazardly through space, experts believe, since China launched it nearly a decade ago. But Chinese officials are dubious it's theirs.

No matter whose it is, scientists expect the object to carve out a hole 33 feet to 66 feet (10 to 20 meters) across and send moon dust flying hundreds of miles (kilometers) across the barren, pockmarked surface.

Low-orbiting space junk is relatively easy to track. Objects launching deeper into space are unlikely to hit anything and these far-flung pieces are usually soon forgotten, except by a handful of observers who enjoy playing celestial detective on the side.

SpaceX originally took the rap for the upcoming lunar litter after asteroid tracker Bill Gray identified the collision course in January. He corrected himself a month later, saying the "mystery" object was not a SpaceX Falcon rocket upper stage from the 2015 launch of a deep space climate observatory for NASA.

Gray said it was likely the third stage of a Chinese rocket that sent a test sample capsule to the moon and back in 2014. But Chinese ministry officials said the upper stage had reentered Earth's atmosphere and burned up.

But there were two Chinese missions with similar designations—the test flight and 2020's lunar sample return mission—and U.S. observers believe the two are getting mixed up.



The U.S. Space Command, which tracks lower space junk, confirmed Tuesday that the Chinese upper stage from the 2014 lunar mission never deorbited, as previously indicated in its database. But it could not confirm the country of origin for the object about to strike the moon. "We focus on objects closer to the Earth," a spokesperson said in a statement.

Gray, a mathematician and physicist, said he's confident now that it's China's rocket.

"I've become a little bit more cautious of such matters," he said. "But I really just don't see any way it could be anything else."

Jonathan McDowell of the Harvard and Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics supports Gray's revised assessment, but notes: "The effect will be the same. It'll leave yet another small crater on the moon."

Source: AP

Apple expected to launch iPhone SE 5G with Touch ID on March 8



capture pressure, you restrict mass flow. Only the freshwater is evaporating. This leaves a lot of salt in this confined porous structure. This accumulates so much salt, that the system stops being efficient. This creates a reliability issue. We utilise natural convention to avoid using such materials," Xiangyu Li told indianexpress.com.

After a lot of experimentation, the researchers determined the optimal size of the holes drilled through the perforated material (which was polyurethane during the experiments): 2.5 mm across. During the experiment, the holes were made using a high-pressure waterjet but Li doesn't rule out the possibility of using other methods to create them.

Apple event called 'Peek Performance' has just been announced. The iPhone 13 maker will host its first event of 2022 on March 8. The new Apple event will be hosted virtually. Apple is expected to announce the new iPhone SE 5G alongside a couple of more products.

Apple did not reveal what it plans to unveil at the March 8 event. The Apple event invite includes the Apple logo glowing in shades of Blue, Purple, Orange and Yellow. One of the multiple products that could launch on March 8 is the new iPhone SE 5G.

The upcoming iPhone is rumoured to feature the same iPhone SE 2020 design. It will come with a faster A15 Bionic chip for 5G network support. The budget iPhone will also feature a 4.7-inch display. The iPhone will have thick bezels at the top and bottom of the display, with the latter making room for the iconic Home button for Touch ID. The iPhone SE 5G is also rumoured to come with a 12MP rear camera and a 12MP front camera sensor.



Alongside the iPhone SE 5G, Apple might also launch a new iPad Air. The colourful invite does suggest that Apple will launch a product in multiple colour options, which does hint at the iPad Air 5. Apple has not refreshed the iPad Air lineup since 2020. Therefore, we can expect the new iPad Air 2022 to launch at the Apple event on March 8. The new iPad will get some under the hood improvements like a faster chip, 5G connectivity and an updated FaceTime camera with features like Centre Stage.



INVESTORS' WEALTH CLIMB RS 1.99 LAKH CRORE AS STOCKS BOUNCE BACK

NEW DELHI (TIP)

As the equity markets bounced back on Thursday, March 3, after a steep decline in the previous session, investors' wealth grew by Rs 1,99,397.83 crore in early trade.

The BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 527.72 points to 55,996.62, tracking positive trends in Asian markets. Sentiments also improved after stock exchanges in the US closed in the positive zone in the overnight session.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies jumped Rs 1,99,397.83 crore to Rs 2,53,51,701.18 crore in early trade on Thursday.

Tech Mahindra was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, climbing over 3 per cent, followed by Wipro, HCL Technologies, Tata Steel and Infosys.

In the previous trade, the BSE benchmark index tanked 778.38 points or 1.38 per cent to finish at 55,468.90.

GOVT MAY OFFLOAD UP TO 25% OF ITS SHARE IN LIC IN NEXT 5 YEARS

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Even as the finance ministry is keeping an eye on global market conditions and whether they warrant deferring the initial share sale of the state-run Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), it is firming up a long-term, five-year plan to divest up to 25% of its equity in the firm, two officials familiar with the matter said on condition of anonymity. That may mean the initial share sale of 5% being followed up with a so-called FPO or follow-on public offer of 5-10% more within a year, they added.

Wide participation of policyholders, employees, retail investors and financial institutions will enhance transparency and efficiency in managing affairs of LIC, in which the government will always hold the majority stake and exercise management control, the two people confirmed, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"After the IPO, which has been scheduled this month, government may gradually reduce its shareholding in LIC depending on its disinvestment targets and market appetite. The size and the timing of such offerings cannot be decided in advance," one of the two said.

Crypto gains currency as Russia-Ukraine conflict escalates

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Although several countries have banned cryptocurrency, the decentralised money has become a mainstream component of the global financial system. This means that it will inevitably become a part of international conflict, for better or worse and as Russian armies enter Ukraine, this is on full show.

As the war with Russia rages on, Ukrainian officials urged netizens on Twitter to send cryptocurrency. Since then, according to reports, cryptocurrency investors have given the Ukrainian government and a foundation backing the country's military, more than \$22 million in digital assets.

The turmoil in Ukraine has brought the burgeoning industry under increased attention, with politicians and regulators concerned that the cryptocurrencies could be used by Russian firms and government officials to circumvent sanctions. However, as more traditional crowdfunding techniques face challenges, cryptocurrency has created a way for investors all across the world to quickly shift funds to Ukrainian soldiers.

In the case of crypto donations, Ukraine's Vice Prime Minister Mykhailo Fedorov on February 26 shared wallet addresses on Twitter, urging people to "Stand with the people of Ukraine", while adding that "now accepting cryptocurrency donations. Bitcoin, Ethereum and USDT".

Later, in the same Twitter thread, he wrote: "The people of Ukraine fighting for our freedom are forever grateful to Gavin Wood @gavofyork for the generous donation of \$5M of @Polkadot \$DOT as



promised publicly. Thank you from all of us here in Ukraine working for a peaceful future."

As of now, some reports have claimed that Ukraine has received at least \$11 million through anonymous Bitcoin donations.

Separately, Come Back Alive, a Kyiv-based organisation that raises funds to arm and train Ukrainian military men, had a page taken down by the crowdfunding platform Patreon, which stated that the page had broken its rules prohibiting support of military activities. But now the organisation is getting funds from a crypto collective called UkraineDAO, which was formed last week by some crypto enthusiasts.

According to a report it was said Come Back Alive had pledged to use the funds to provide medical assistance to war victims rather than armed soldiers.

Additionally, it was also reported that Since Kremlin launched its attacks on

the neighbouring country, cryptocurrency donations to Ukrainian volunteer and hacktivists groups have increased dramatically.

Sam Bankman-Fried, the billionaire CEO of crypto exchange FTX US, revealed in a tweet that they had given \$25 to each Ukrainian on their platform.

These activities highlight the fact that at this time of crisis, donors who might have otherwise given their money to huge charities have turned to cryptocurrencies as an alternative.

But in a separate scenario, cryptocurrency exchanges have refused Ukraine's request to suspend all Russian accounts.

As reported recently, major cryptocurrency exchanges such as Coinbase and Binance have refused to comply with Ukraine's request to freeze all Russian accounts, claiming that doing so would damage people and go against their values.

Source: News18

Oil surges to \$111/barrel as Russian supply woes rise

LONDON (TIP)

Oil prices surged on Wednesday, March 2, as supply disruption fears mounted following hefty sanctions on Russian banks amid the intensifying Ukraine conflict, while traders scrambled to seek alternative oil sources in an already tight market.

Brent crude futures rose by more than \$8, touching a peak of \$113.02 a barrel, the highest since June 2014, before easing to \$111.17, up by \$6.20 or 5.9% by 0950 GMT.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures also jumped more than \$8 a barrel, hitting the highest since August 2013 before losing some steam to trade up \$5.86 or 5.7% to \$109.27 a barrel.

"Due to limited diversification options, any disruption to Russia's energy exports will result in another energy crisis in Europe," said Kaho Yu, principal Asia analyst at risk consultancy Verisk Maplecroft.

"Although the US has called for a global oil reserve release, oil prices are likely to remain above \$100 unless significant alternative supplies enter the market." Russian oil exports account for around 8% of global supply.

Exxon Mobil on Tuesday said it would exit Russia oil and gas operations as a result of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. The decision will see the firm pull out of managing large production facilities on Sakhalin Island in Russia's Far East.

While Western powers have not imposed sanctions on energy exports directly, US traders at hubs in New York and the US Gulf are shunning Russian crude.

Source: Reuters

Ashneer Grover is 'no longer a founder' of BharatPe; company can take legal action for 'spinning lies'

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Payment startup BharatPe has stripped its co-founder Ashneer Grover of all positions for his alleged "misdeeds" and may take further legal actions, including clawing back of some of his shareholding.

BharatPe said Grover quit after receiving the agenda for an upcoming Board meeting that included submission of an independent audit regarding his conduct.

The Board of the company met last evening following which a statement was issued. The company said it reserves the right to take action based on the report's findings.

"The Grover family and their kin engaged in extensive misappropriation of company funds, creating fake vendors through which they siphoned money away from the company's account and grossly abused company expense accounts in order to enrich themselves and fund their lavish lifestyles," it alleged.

Source: PTI



Shree Ganeshaya Namah



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

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - MARCH 07 TO 13, 2022

**Aries**

Ganesha says, you'll be in the desire to see unfamiliar communities this week. You will explore your love for wilderness and you will be able to spend some time with it this week. nature will be your instructor this week! In the latter half of the week, you and your family will have a good time. This week, your children could prepare a treat for you. This week is not a good week to spend money since you will be tempted to overspend and squander money on frivolous purchases. Your romantic fronts will be affected by the presence of Rahu in your zodiac, try to keep yourself away from negative things.

**Taurus**

This week, you'll be in a generous mood. This week, you'll be doing charitable work and spending more time with youngsters. You have a natural ability to make a positive impact in people's lives, and this week you will seek good fortune for doing so. It's possible that your competition may try to drag you down. Without a doubt, you will transcend this and prove yourself more deserving of people's regard. Your spouse will assist you in effectively managing your funds. They will assist you in becoming a better person. Your fitness goals will take a backseat for a while. You'll be alright by the end of the week.

**Gemini**

This week, you'll be extremely attentive and receptive to novel ideas. This week, you'll be really useful in the development of a program at work. This week, your imagination will come in handy. This week, make the most of your cognitive abilities. Some will try to fill your ears by portraying your mate as a bad guy. Stay away from folks who attempt to bring out the worst in you. Pay no heed to what others have to say and do what you want. This week, your health may require modest care since you may be experiencing occasional headaches.

**Cancer**

This week, you'll be more responsible. You'll split your time between resting at home and having a good time with friends. If you're in a relationship, you'll notice that the flame has been reignited. You will embark on a new era in your social life, one that

will be more vibrant. Your hectic schedule will prevent you from taking a break in the second part of the week. You'll be able to relax if you don't overcommit yourself everywhere. Your partner will have to be more careful as their health is likely to get affected. your health will be fine this week.

**Leo**

This week, you'll be soaring and in the limelight at work and in your human society. This will encourage you to make judgments that you will stick to. This week will bring you invites and accolades. This week, you may experience a dip in your vitality. Do not lose hope; you will soon regain your composure. Your partner will give you chance to rectify your mistakes this week; take this chance to make your relationship better. your health will be fine this week! stay Calm.

**Virgo**

This week will provide you lots of opportunities to bask in the glow of appreciation. Friends will bring you joy and raise your spirits. This week, you'll be more upbeat about life. Your loved ones' kind efforts will keep you in a good mood. If you're having a difficult time at home, don't say anything to maintain the peace. Avoid becoming involved in any type of conflict. Your partner will help you fight your professional difficulties this week. you will also join a new fitness regimen this week.

**Libra**

You'll be the centerpiece, and your nearest and dearest will be delighted to shower you with affection. Your individual circumstances will improve, allowing you to indulge in a delightful pleasure. If you harness your energies for your own good, it will be more beneficial. There may be some ambiguity surrounding one strong relationship, requiring you to second-guess what's going on. Your relationship looks better than the last week. you will also think about engagement/ marriage and discuss the same with your partner. Your health will be alright but you will find it difficult to adapt to the new atmosphere.

**Scorpio**

This week, you'll be a people pleaser, seeking out new amusing friends to keep your attention piqued. This week, sentiments will dominate your thinking. On the professional front, you will make significant achievements. You will be called for a meeting that will be proven to be beneficial to you in the future. In the latter half of the week, you may not receive the recognition you believe you need for your accomplishments. This should not detract from your sense of self-worth. Your partner will bring goodness and happiness to your life this week. they will try to solve the issues you have been facing this week. your health will not go through any major drawback; take good care of your children's health.

**Sagittarius**

This week, you'll be in a fantastic mood. For those on the lookout, a new relationship might be on the way. This week, you'll create some very memorable memories. You'll also be emotionally inclined, which will pull out the greatest in you. If the moon's adverse influences impact you, try not to glance back over your shoulder and keep going forward. Make and stick to healthy objectives. Your relationship fronts will be stable and you will be all settled end your partner will try to support you in all your emotional meltdowns this week. You might face minor hindrances in your health as you will have to go through problems in the latter half of the week.

**Capricorn**

This week, you'll be in a powerful and fervent mindset. Your self-assurance will skyrocket. This week, you'll be able to use the enchantment to relieve any anxiety. Everyone you will be in a good mood because of you. You'll be incredibly busy, which might lead to a few angry exchanges. Do not vent your frustrations on your family. Overall, your romantic fronts will settle down things for you. Your partner will support you in everything you do this week. your health will get affected in the first half of the week, take good care and you will be fine.

CONT'D ON PAGE 31

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : MARCH 07 TO 13, 2022

MARCH 7 : Ganesha says your day will be full of joy and laughter. You'll spend today jumping and skipping as a lot of physical activity will be done by you today, which is a great thing. Your mental health and your financial stability are both at peace today. You and your partner need to make your own mark at your work, and you are absolutely fine with your partner working all day and night. In fact, one of you rise and makes the other benefit and rise as well. It will all work out well. Hence be each other's biggest fans and cheerleaders.

MARCH 8 : Ganesha says today will be amazing for your personal life, provided you stay focused and do not get lost daydreaming. You need to be ready for a whole day of fun as you have a lot of plans. Try to be as present as you can be. Your love life is doing great. Work on being more expressive and honest. Express your feelings more, it will yield positive results for you as Venus is on your side today. A lot of love and appreciation from your family members will make you extremely happy today. You will experience a positive shift in everyone's behavior towards you today be it your partner, family or friends, which will make you feel like the happiest person in the world today.

MARCH 9 : Ganesha says you will experience a positive shift in your life today, which will keep you excited throughout the day. Today you're doing great in

your life. Consider that the stars are in your favor today. Your wealth and your love life will make people very jealous of the life that you're living right now. You will learn that whenever you talk about your happiness and your success even the closest of your friends might not reflect with the same amount of joy hence showing that they're not really happy for you. Work on being social and presenting yourself like you own the place you walk into. Do not let second thoughts hinder your confidence today. Today is a fun filled day for you as you spend your time working and exploring nature.

MARCH 10 : Ganesha says you will come across some really positive people in your life today and this will make you happy as well as inspire you to be the best version of yourself. An exhilarating and amazing day has been planned out by your cousins for you. Your business will work out great for you today. Your loved ones will please you with praises and appreciation for all that you have done to get to this point today. Everyone is happy about how good your relationship is going which is the positive highlight of the day for you today.

MARCH 11 : Ganesha says you will obtain success in anything you set your sight on today. If you are awaiting a promotion you are likely to get the good news today itself hence all in all a good day for you today. Gains from speculative activities are indicated. Your good reputation will grow and spread far and

wide. Your day will be good. Your hard work may attract success and also make your boss happy. You may organize your budget by today so that you know where to spend and where to save. You will take extra care in managing your money today. You may get a great property deal as your stars shine bright on the financial front for you today.

MARCH 12 : Ganesha says today, you may strive to implement new ideas that are likely to benefit you in the long run. A courageous attitude may take you places. You are likely to do what your heart desires. You and your partner may spend quality time with each other today. You may plan a road trip today as well. If you are single you may get married soon. Your day will be extraordinarily good. You may meet your old friend which may bring back your happy memories.

MARCH 13 : Ganesha says your health is doing so much better than in the last few days. You will feel like a new person today as you go through the day full of energy and enthusiasm. You and your partner may enjoy your day together. You and your partner may share a lot of emotions today, which may bring you together and which may help you to understand each other. You are likely to take one step at a time at work, which may help you to maintain focus on the task at hand. Your attention may help you to enjoy the perks of your profession. Today your confidence level will be at its peak.

CONT'D FROM PAGE 30

Aquarius

You'll be bold and vocal this week. You'll be in the desire to get started on anything productive. You'll be open to meeting new folks. You might also start a new business or start anything from scratch. You could feel uneasy doing some tasks in the second half of the week. You'll be tempting fate things since you'll be thinking about the repercussions. Just stay calm and collected. Your relationship will front looks strong this week only for single people. You will have to be more careful if you are married as your seventh house will not align well with the position of Venus. Your health fronts also look strong as you will recover from your old ailments this week.

Pisces

This week, you'll be more likely to solve complicated challenges. This week, a money-making possibility is likely to arrive at your doorstep. This week, you'll make new interactions. There's a potential that a little gathering may take place this week. Your children will make you pleased and provide you delight. The first part of the week is not a good time to participate in funds pursuits since you may lose a lot of money. Before you stand united, carefully select your companions. Your relationship fronts will stay all good and fine. Your health will not need any attention at all this week and hence you will be more carefree and comfortable.

॥ SHREE GANESHAY NAMAH ॥



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Nastur Bejan Daruwalla

Horoscope for March 2022

The Indian Panorama brings you Monthly Horoscope by **NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA**

We know March month as a new beginning month because of some traditional purposeful days and weeks. Also, there are some astrological changes this month like there will be a full moon in some signs. Ganesha says, this month there will be cherished changes you will face in your zodiac sign. We will list all the good and bad things that you can expect in this third month of 2022. For the month of March, its structure and days are very helpful compared to other months. And also, this month holds something really special in it, money and familywise. We will give you complete knowledge about this new month based on your zodiac sign.

Each sign has its changes and transit in the planets and stars systems. There will be some new changes we will see this month, and how it will affect your zodiac sign and life. If it is good, then fine but there are some bad times then how to overcome them. All this will be answered by Ganesha.

Aries



Ganesha says that Aries natives have the perfect time to bond in a family and friends relationship. Whether it is personal life or professional life, make a team to help you grow in work. You will have a great time this month and you will be learning many new things this month. There will be many new things which will be interesting in life. It is advised that you learn about this new idea in life. There is a chance it will bring great benefits to your life. After that, there will be a reduction in your stress in life for the rest of the year. And you will enjoy the most gala time of your life.

Taurus



Ganesha Says to Taurus natives that this month is the creative month for you. The month will give you good opportunities to explore new things in life and direction which you always wanted to try. But there will also be some major obstacles and issues you will face in this journey for your personal reasons. Work hard on your issues and you will definitely reach the goal without any worries this month. After that, for the rest of the year, there will be less stress and issues in your life. And everything will fall into place as you always wanted it.

Gemini



Ganesha says that Gemini natives will have reflective views on their personal and professional life this month. If you own things this month then you will successfully do it but you will get some major feedback on it. This month will be fully beneficial and the complete growth in your life. Everything will fall in place as you always wanted it in your personal life. March is the month of profit for you. So, grab this opportunity and work hard on it. To make the rest of the year easy-going and peaceful.

Cancer



Ganesha says the Cancer natives will pass through some good times this month. The month will be favourable and stable for you. There will be good times in getting the long-time issues solved related to family, friends, or other things. March is the month for you when you will get the things you wanted in life. And try your best to make everything fall in place easily with care and love. You will truly find happiness and peace this month.

Leo



Ganesha indicates that Leo natives will have a good time related to family and friends. You have to be courageous and hard working for every goal you want to achieve. There will be great support from family and friends in your life. This will keep you going happily in life without any worries. There will be just good times in this month after some time and effort given by you will give you complete results. After the hard work, the results will be completely amazing and worthwhile in your life.

Virgo



Ganesha says that Virgo natives need to be careful of the changes they will see this month. Most importantly you don't need to go out of the way if you don't feel the same way. In this case, it will hurt you in life. It is advised to choose your directions wisely and trust yourself carefully with the decisions you make this month. Otherwise, if you are planning something big this month will not fall in place and you will have a hard time in life. Make sure to deal with this carefully this month. Then you will be relaxed for the rest of the year and face good times in a year with lesser worries.

Libra



Ganesha says that this upcoming March Month is the most beneficial month for Libra. Where you will have good money and a constant wealth support source. With that, there will be a supportive family and business. Things will be good in your professional life and full of joy in your life. Just be careful not to get carried away in this way of life. Other than that, this will be one of the happiest months for Libra natives. If you successfully deal with this month and prepare yourself for the rest of the year, then you will have well times entire year with lesser worries and problems.

Scorpio



Ganesha says that the role and responsibility and decisions making this month. Whether it is in personal life or professional life you will see a rise in yourself by making important decisions. There will be good times you will have this month but it will come with certain responsibilities which you need to fulfil completely by choosing a perfect direction. If you did that successfully then nothing can stop you in your personal and professional life. And for the rest of the year, there will be many things to be sorted out for you. And it will be just a happy and peaceful year laid ahead of you in 2022.

Sagittarius



Ganesha says that Sagittarius natives can face some issues in their personal life. You might have a hard time in your personal life. Where there will be tension, conflict, or not getting a proper way of communication. But apart from all of these, there will be great good times in career and money flow. This will keep you going this month. And help you to overcome personal life problems in minimum time. After that, you will be less worried about every aspect of life for the rest of the year.

Capricorn



Ganesha says that for the Capricorn natives this month will be passionate in both personal and professional life. You will have many things planned in your life and have a certain idea to execute in your career and family. This month is perfect for you to work on it because it will give you direct openness in this month. Alongside that, you will have support from family and your spouse which will help you greatly in every aspect of life taking new steps. And there will also be a good income source. This month is perfect for you to work passionately on your desired things in life with fewer issues.

Aquarius



Ganesha says this month is one of the most worrying months of this year for the natives. There will be new openings, guidance, path, and direction in your life which will confuse you a lot. In your professional life, new doors can be opened but make sure to choose the directions wisely. So, choose the door wisely, and for your personal life also. You will be intrigued and fall in love with your partner but it is not sure they will reciprocate the same for you. Make this month of March a worthy month for you by overcoming all the problems with peace and calmness.

Pisces



Ganesha says this month for the Pisces natives is an amazing month. Where you will work hard on new things and make them worthy. And take some major decisions in career life. By doing this you will overcome all the problems in life, and this is really beneficial for the long-term life. Apart from that, your personal life will be happy, stable, and peaceful for you. This will work as a great support system for you in life with no worries and issues. And you will have a good time after some tough decisions and times in life.

To Sum Up

Every month there is a new type of change astrologically by transits. And this affects every zodiac sign. For the month of March, there will be some transit and the Moon enters zodiac signs. But most importantly how it will affect your sign and how you can overcome a hard time in life and enjoy a good time in this month is all needed as guidance and solutions.

Phulera Dooj: the festival of flowers

The festival of Phulera Dooj is considered as auspicious and supreme day. This festival is celebrated in all regions of North India especially this festival is an important day in the areas of Braj, Mathura and Vrindavan. This festival is completely dedicated to Lord Krishna. Shukla Paksha Dwitiya is marked in the month of Phagun in Phulera Dooj, the Hindu calendar. Phulera Dooj falls between Vasant Panchami and the festival of Holi. Due to its special philosophy, which shows Lord Krishna preparing for the upcoming Holi, Krishna is held in temples.

Phulera literally means 'flower' which refers to flowers. It is believed that Lord Krishna plays with flowers. Therefore, on this day, Holi is played with colorful flowers with Lord Krishna. This festival brings happiness and joy in the lives of people.

History

According to Hindu belief, Krishna's lover Radha was upset with him as he was not able to meet her due to work in Vrindavan. As a result, flowers, cattle started dying. On learning this, Krishna immediately left for Mathura. He reached on the second day of Phalgun month and played Holi with flowers to enlighten her mood.

This day is also known as Abuja Muhurta, which means one can start any auspicious work without seeing the Panchang. The ardent devotees of Radha-Krishna get special blessings from them on this day.

Legend

According to a story the union of Krishna and Radha took place on this day. Lord Krishna was not coming Vrindavan to meet Radha because of which Radha and gopis got angry and sad. Due to which the forest of Mathura started drying up and all the flowers withered. When Lord Krishna came to know about the drying forest he went to Vrindavan to meet Radha. Due to the arrival of Krishna the forest became green and flowers bloomed again. Krishna plucked the blossomed flower and threw it at Radha to tease her. Radha did the same, after seeing this the gopis and cowherds present there also started throwing flowers at each other. Since then the festival of Phulera Dooj started in Mathura to celebrate the union of Krishna and Radha.

The festival of Phulera Dooj is dedicated to Lord Krishna. Devotees worship Lord Krishna with full devotion and seek his blessings to lead a life of prosperity and happiness. People play with flowers, idols of Lord Krishna and Radha are adorned with flowers. Many cultural programmes and fairs are organized in temples of Lord Krishna. Devotees sing bhajans in praise of the deity to worship them. On this day, the idol of Shri Krishna is decorated with a white dress and is seated under a colored cloth and a mandap adorned with flowers.

Most important ritual of this day is to play Holi with Lord Krishna with colors of flowers. In some temples, a bit of color is smeared on the face of Lord Krishna, to mark the arrival of the Holi celebrations. Temples are decorated with lights and flowers and a piece of colourful cloth containing color is attached to the waist of the idol of Lord Krishna depicting that he is ready to play Holi. After this, the ceremony of Shayan Bhog is performed and the colourful cloth is removed from his waist.

Special 'Bhog' is prepared on this day which includes 'Poha' and other special dishes. After being offered to Lord Krishna, this 'Bhog' is distributed among the devotees as 'Prasad'. 'Sandhya Aarti' and 'Samaj Me Rasiya' are the major rituals of the day. Many plays and religious activities are carried out in temples depicting several aspects of Lord Krishna's life and his Leela.

People call it the most suitable and auspicious day for marriage. Marriage rituals are performed in Krishna temples in many places of North India and marriage is performed in front of God with great reverence. If a person is planning to start a new business venture, then there can be no better day than Phulera Dooj. In short it can be said that the festival of Phulera Dooj is a symbol of how Lord Krishna gets back the affection and love that he receives from his devotees. Devotees on this day observe fast and worship Lord Krishna and Radha to seek their blessing for a happy life.



Date and time

- Date : Friday, 04 March 2022
- Dwitiya Tithi Begins - 09:36 PM on March 03, 2022
- Dwitiya Tithi Ends - 08:45 PM on March 04, 2022
- Did you know: Phulera Dooj is a day that is free from all defects. Therefore, on all the auspicious functions especially in marriage ceremonies, on the day of Phulera Dooj, no Muhurta is required. Most marriages are held in India on this day.

How to celebrate Phulera Dooj?

Many Hindu households across India, are decked with flowers and rangoli on this day. Delicacies are prepared to offer to Lord Krishna or in Krishna temples. The most popular preparation is poha, often distributed as prashad. The belief also says that Radha-Krishna fulfills one's desires on this day. Devotees across Vrindavan usually shower flowers to express Radha-Krishna's love.

- On this particular day, devotees worship and offer prayers to the deity Lord Krishna. The grand festivities take place in various regions of Northern India. Devotees adorn and decorate the idols or statues of the deity both in homes and in the temples.
- The most important ritual which is performed is playing Holi with Lord Krishna with colorful flowers.
- In the Braj region, on this particular day, grand festivities take place in the honor of the deity.
- The temples are also decorated with flowers and lights and the idol or statue of Lord Krishna is placed in a decorated and colorful mandap.
- A small piece of colored cloth is knotted on the waist of Lord Krishna's idol symbolizing that he is getting ready to play Holi.
- After completing the ritual of 'Shayan Bhog', the colored cloth is removed.
- Sacred food (special bhog) is cooked on the day

of Phulera Dooj comprising Pohas and various other special savories. The food is first offered to the deity and then the same gets distributed among all the devotees in the form of prasad.

- The two primary rituals performed on this day are 'Samaj Mein Rasiya' and "Sandhya Aarti".
- There are various religious events and plays that take place in the temples, in which devotees participate and perform on Krishna Leela and other stories of Lord Krishna's life.
- Bhajan-kirtan is performed in the honor of the deity.
- A slight gulal (color) is spread on the idol of the deity symbolizing the upcoming festivity of Holi.
- To conclude, the priests sprinkle gulal (colors) on all the people who are gathered in the temple.

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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."



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Nainital: The Lake District

Natural beauty abounds in the state of Uttarakhand's Lake District. Boaters flock to hill-ringed Naini Lake, which according to mythology is one of the emerald eyes of Shiva's wife. A hike or horseback ride to the top of Naina Peak (aka China Peak), the highest point, provides stunning views of the snow-capped Himalayas. To share a prime vantage point with family members of all ages, take the aerial lift up to Snow View; there's also a small marble temple at the top dedicated to Dev Mundi.

Places to visit

Naini Lake

Situated in the centre of Nainital, Naini Lake (short for Nainital Lake) is a beautiful natural fresh body lake. The lake is in crescent or kidney shape and is one of the most famous lakes of the Kumaon region. Bounded by Naina Peak on North West, Tiffin Point on the South West and snow-capped peaks on the north, the Nainital Lake offers a breathtaking view, especially during early morning and sunset. It is most famous for boating, picnic and evening walk.

The Nainital Lake is a charming beauty that is surrounded by seven different peaks namely Ayarpata, Deopata, Handi Bandi, Cheena Peak, Alma, Laria Kanta and Sher Ka Danda. The lake itself can be divided into two distinct sections, the northern part called Mallital and southern region called Tallital. Coniferous trees that cover the hillside add charm to the raw beauty of the place. You can also visit Naina Devi Temple on the shores of the lake. A pretty lake that once a European man fell in love with, Naini Lake today serves as a major tourist spot for people from all over the country.

Snow View Point

Snow View Point in Nainital stands at a dizzying altitude of 2270 meters above sea level and is one of the most attractive tourist spots of the area. As the name suggests, Snow View Point offers a panoramic view of the mighty Himalayas draped in a blanket of milky-white snow. One can see a picturesque view of all three important peaks- Nanda Devi, Trishul and Nanda Kot peaks together from this point.

A huge pair of binoculars has been installed at the Snow View Point that allows you to take a closer look at the Himalayan range and its magical peaks. If you look closer, you will find a small temple housing the images of Ram, Sita, Laxman, Hanuman with Durga and Shiva. An aerial cable car connects you to the Snow View Point directly from the Mall Road of Mallital and shows you a spectacular view of the beautiful town.

Mall Road Nainital

The Mall Road of Nainital, which runs parallel to the Naini Lake, connecting the two ends of the hill town (Mallital and Tallital), is the prime shopping, food and cultural centre of the wonder that is Nainital. Whether it is digging into some luscious food or shopping for the cutest local woollens that are to be found, Mall Road is your



go-to for it all.

Officially named as Govind Ballabh Pant Marg, the Mall Road in Nainital was built by the Britishers. Today, the road is synonymous to the town of Nainital. You can see unwary tourists taking a stroll at Mall Road at all times of the day. Entry to heavy vehicles and traffic is prohibited during the peak season of May, June and October.

Tiffin Top

Tiffin Top is a very famous tourist attraction in Nainital, also popularly called Dorothy's Seat. A fantastic picnic spot in its own right, one gets a complete view of the town of Nainital and its surrounding hills in the Kumaon region from this location. Adventure activities such as rappelling and rock climbing are conducted at Tiffin Top as well. The beautiful Tiffin Top is surrounded by trees of Cher, Oak, and Deodar. Naini Lake and Kumaon Hills look lovely when seen from here. On clearer days, one can also get hold of the majestic view of Nanda Devi.

The attraction got its name as Tiffin Top after people started to have lunch on top of the hill on Dorothy's Seat. Tiffin Top is also called Dorothy's Seat because it was constructed in the loving memory of the English artist named Dorothy Kellett by the army officer Col J.P. Kellett. The officer lost his wife Dorothy whilst she was aboard a ship to be with her four children.

Eco Cave Gardens

Famous for its interconnected rocky caves, hanging gardens and the musical fountain, the Eco Garden are a set of six small caves in the shape of various animals. Located in the Mallital area of Nainital, you need to crawl your way in. In the evenings, you can see the spectacle of the musical fountain with various audio video effects.

The Eco Cave Garden is set up to give tourists a glimpse of the natural habitat of the Himalayan Wildlife by constructing different caves for different animals, similar to their natural home. Lit with petroleum lamps, the most popular caves are Tiger Cave, Panther Cave, Apes Cave, Bat Cave and Flying Fox Cave. Visiting Eco Cave Garden is not recommended for old people and toddlers.

High Altitude Zoo

Established in 1984, Pt. G.B. Pant High Altitude Zoo or Nainital Zoo is situated on the Sher ka Danda hill in Tallital, Nainital. Perched at a height of 2100 metres and spread over an area of 4.6 hectares makes it the only one of its kind. The zoo is home to several endangered species and is a popular tourist spot.

The Nainital Zoo is managed by the fund that comes from the entry fees and is managed by the Bharat Ratna Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant High Altitude Zoo Management Society. The major wildlife spotted at the zoo includes Himalayan Bear, Himalayan Civet, Hill Partridge, Tibetan Wolf, Sambar, Barking Deer, Royal Bengal Tiger among other species of birds and animals. During the winter season, the bird enclosures are covered with curtains to keep them warm.

contd from page 1

Russia, Ukraine agree on setting up...

in Belarus, came as Russian forces continued to surround and attack Ukrainian cities, including the capital, Kyiv, and the second-biggest city of Kharkiv.

Thousands are thought to have died or been wounded in the eight-day conflict, while more than one million people have fled the fighting in what the United Nations has called the swiftest exodus of refugees this century.

Ukraine's negotiator, Mykhailo Podolyak, said the two sides have agreed to set up "communication and cooperation lines" as soon as possible to facilitate the evacuation of civilians.

A temporary halt to fighting in select locations was also possible, he said.

"That is, not everywhere, but only in those places where the humanitarian corridors themselves will be located, it will be possible to cease fire for the duration of the evacuation," he said.

The two sides also saw eye-to-eye on the delivery of medicines and food to the places where the fiercest fighting was taking place, Podolyak said, adding that the two sides will continue the work at "the third round at the earliest possible time".

The delegations also discussed "the military aspect" and "a future political settlement of the conflict", according to the Russian negotiators. The third round will take place "in the coming days", also in Belarus, they said.

John Herbst, a former United States ambassador to Ukraine, called the agreement on humanitarian corridors a "positive sign".

"If the political will is there to make it happen, it could be a matter of one day or two days," he told Al Jazeera.

"It's interesting that even as Moscow is dictating unconditional surrender terms to the conflict, they are willing to consider this. I think that may be because of the pounding they are receiving globally for their barbarous campaign," he added. (Source: Al Jazeera)

Australian cricket legend Shane...

"The family requests privacy at this time and will provide further details in due course," the statement added.

Shane Warne's international career spanned 15 years and saw him take 708 Test wickets - No. 2 in the list of Test wicket-takers.

An iconic name in international cricket, Warne, since making his debut in 1992, played 145 Tests for Australia, picking up 708 wickets with his leg-spin. In his 194 ODI appearances, Warne snared 293 scalps.

Warne, who made his Test debut against India at the iconic Sydney Cricket Ground, was named as one of Wisden's Five Cricketers of the Century for his unparalleled achievements in a 15-year career between 1992 and 2007.

In 2013, he was inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame.

He helped Australia win the World Cup in 1999 and took more wickets than any other bowler in Ashes cricket, the tally standing at 195.

He later played in the Indian Premier League (IPL) and other Twenty20 competitions before retiring from all international cricket in 2013 but continued to be involved in the game as a broadcaster.

A flamboyant personality both on and off the field, Warne also found success as a commentator and was considered among the sharpest analysts of the game.

Warne has passed away on a day when Australian cricket was in mourning after the death of watchkeeping legend Rod Marsh.

Warne had condoled Marsh's demise in a tweet this morning.

"Sad to hear the news that Rod Marsh has passed. He was a legend of our great game & an inspiration to so many young boys & girls. Rod cared deeply about cricket & gave so much-especially to Australia & England players. Sending lots & lots of love to Ros & the family. RIP mate," Warne had posted. (With inputs from PTI)

Indian American Congressman...

not Russia that will stand with New Delhi against China's current expansionist plans.

India, China and the United Arab Emirates on Friday, February 25, abstained from the US-sponsored resolution against the Russian aggression which was vetoed by Moscow. As many as 11 of the 15 members of the UN Security Council voted in favor.

Five countries-the US, the UK, Russia, China and France-are permanent members of the council and have veto powers. India is a non-permanent member and its current two-year term expires this year.

"In 1962, President (John F) Kennedy stood with India against China's invasion. It is the US, not Russia, that will stand with India against China's current expansionist plans," Khanna tweeted on Friday, February 25.

"This is the time for India to stand with the free world against Putin. Abstention is not acceptable," said the three-term Democratic Congressman from California.

Echoing Khanna, Congressman Eric Swalwell also termed India's move as "disappointing".

"Rep Ro Khanna and I represent the largest Indian-American districts and this vote is contrary to what we hear from our constituents. Indian-Americans believe in territorial integrity and human rights," said Swalwell, who is serving as representative for California's 15th congressional district that covers most of eastern Alameda County and part of central Contra Costa County.

Abstaining from the UNSC resolution that "deplores in the strongest terms" Russia's "aggression" against Ukraine, India on Friday said dialogue is the only answer to settle differences and disputes.

In the country's explanation of vote in the Council, India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T S Tirumurti said New Delhi is "deeply disturbed by the recent turn of developments in Ukraine and urge that all efforts are made for the immediate cessation of violence and hostilities".

He said that no solution can ever be arrived at, at the cost of human lives.

"Dialogue is the only answer to settling differences and disputes, however daunting that may appear at this moment. It is a matter of regret that the path of diplomacy was given up. We must return to it. For all these reasons, India has chosen to abstain on this resolution," Tirumurti said.

India abstains on UNHRC resolution...

The countries voting in favor included France, Germany, Japan, Nepal, UAE, UK and the US.

The resolution, which strongly condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine, decides to "urgently establish an independent international commission of inquiry" to "investigate all alleged violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, and related crimes, in the context of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine, and to establish the facts, circumstances, and root causes of any such violations and abuses."

A day before the resolution was adopted, India said at the Urgent Debate Thursday regarding the human rights situation in Ukraine at the 49th Human Rights Council Session in Geneva that it is greatly concerned over the steadily worsening humanitarian situation in Ukraine.

India urged for an immediate cessation of violence and an end to hostilities. "No solution can ever be arrived at the cost of human lives. Dialogue and diplomacy are the only solution for settling differences and disputes," India said.

India called for respect and protection of human rights of people in Ukraine and safe humanitarian access to conflict zones.

"We are also deeply concerned over the safety and security of thousands of Indian nationals, including young Indian students, who are still stranded in Ukraine. We are working together with neighboring States for their evacuation," it said.

Three human rights experts will be appointed to the Commission of Inquiry by the President of the Human Rights Council for an initial duration of one year.

The Commission will be mandated to "identify, where possible, those individuals and entities responsible for violations or abuses of human rights or violations of international humanitarian law, or other related crimes, in Ukraine, with a view to ensuring that those responsible are held accountable."

The resolution expressed grave concern at the ongoing human rights and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and calls on Russia to "immediately end its human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law in Ukraine".

It also calls for the "swift and verifiable" withdrawal of Russian troops and Russian-backed armed groups from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders.

India has abstained on two resolutions on Ukraine in the 15-nation Security Council and one in the 193-member General Assembly in the last one week.

The UN General Assembly this week overwhelmingly voted to condemn Russian aggression against Ukraine and demanded that Moscow "completely and unconditionally" withdraw all of its military forces from the territory of Ukraine.

India abstained on the resolution, which received 141 votes in favor, five against and a total of 35 abstentions. (Source: PTI)

Legislation introduced in US Senate...

The H-1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in specialty occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China.

The H-1B visa programme is the most sought-after work visa among foreign professionals, including Indians. The L-1 visa is a non-immigrant visa for the purpose of work in L-1 status. It is valid for a relatively short amount of time.

The H-1B and L-1 Visa Reform Act will reduce fraud and abuse, provide protections for American workers and visa holders, and require more transparency in the recruitment of foreign workers, the senators said.

Introduced by Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and Senator Chuck Grassley, Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, the legislation is co-sponsored by Senators Richard Blumenthal, Tommy Tuberville, Sherrod Brown, Bill Hagerty, and Bernie Sanders.

The H-1B and L-1 Visa Reform Act will require US Citizenship and Immigration Services to prioritize for the first time the annual allocation of H-1B visas. The new system would ensure that the best and brightest STEM advanced degree students educated in the United States receive preference for an H-1B visa, and also prioritize other US advanced degree holders, those being paid a high wage, and those with valuable skills. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

The legislation explicitly prohibits the replacement of American workers by H-1B or L-1 visa holders and clarifies that the working conditions of similarly employed American workers may not be adversely affected by the hiring of an H-1B worker, including H-1B workers who have been placed by another employer at the American worker's worksite, a media release said.

"Reforming the H-1B and L-1 visa programs is a critical component to fixing America's broken immigration system," Durbin said. "For years, outsourcing companies have used legal loopholes to displace qualified American workers, exploit foreign workers, and facilitate the outsourcing of American jobs. Our legislation would fix these broken programs, protect workers, and put an end to these abuses," he said.

History This week March 4 to March 10

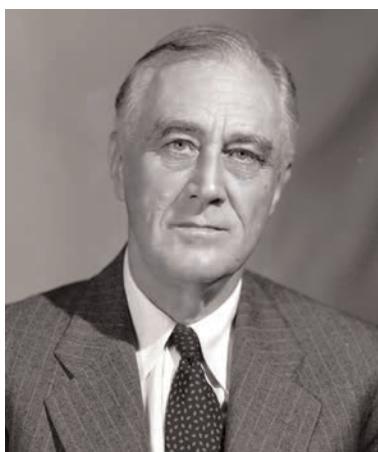
"HISTORY, DESPITE ITS WRENCHING PAIN, CANNOT BE UNLIVED; BUT IF FACED WITH COURAGE, NEED NOT BE LIVED AGAIN." - MAYA ANGELOU.

March 4

March 4, 1681 - King Charles II of England granted a huge tract of land in the New World to William Penn to settle an outstanding debt. The area later became Pennsylvania.

March 4, 1789 - The first meeting of the new Congress under the new U.S. Constitution took place in New York City.

March 4, 1830 - Former President John Quincy Adams returned to Congress as a representative from Massachusetts. He was the first ex-president ever to return to the House and served eight consecutive terms.



President Franklin D. Roosevelt

March 4, 1933 - Newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office and delivered his first inaugural address attempting to restore public confidence during the Great Depression, stating, "Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself..."

His cabinet appointments included the first woman to a Cabinet post, Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins.



Casimir Pulaski

Birthday - Revolutionary war hero Casimir Pulaski (1747-1779) was born in Poland. Before aiding in the American Revolution, he was a military

leader in Poland's struggle against Imperial Russia. He joined the Americans in 1777 and fought alongside General Washington at Brandywine, then served at Germantown and Valley Forge. He was mortally wounded during a heroic charge in the Siege of Savannah, Georgia.



Knute Rockne

Birthday - American football legend Knute Rockne (1888-1931) was born in Voss, Norway. He coached the Notre Dame Football team for 13 seasons, amassing an overall record of 105 wins, 12 losses and 5 ties. He became famous for his locker room pep talks and the saying, "Win one for the Gipper." He was killed in an airplane crash on March 31, 1931, in Kansas.

March 5

March 5, 1770 - The Boston Massacre occurred as a group of rowdy Americans harassed British soldiers who then opened fire, killing five and injuring six. The first man killed was Crispus Attucks, an African American. British Captain Thomas Preston and eight of his men were arrested and charged with murder. Their trial took place in October, with colonial lawyer John Adams defending the British. Captain Preston and six of his men were acquitted. Two others were found guilty of manslaughter, branded, then released.

March 5, 1868 - The U.S. Senate convened as a court to hear charges against President Andrew Johnson during impeachment proceedings. The House of Representatives had already voted to impeach the President. The vote followed bitter opposition by the Radical Republicans in Congress to Johnson's reconstruction policies in the South. However, the effort to remove him failed in the Senate by just one vote

and he remained in office.

March 5, 1933 - Amid a steadily worsening economic situation, newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed a four-day "Bank Holiday" to stop panic withdrawals by the public and the possible collapse of the American banking system.

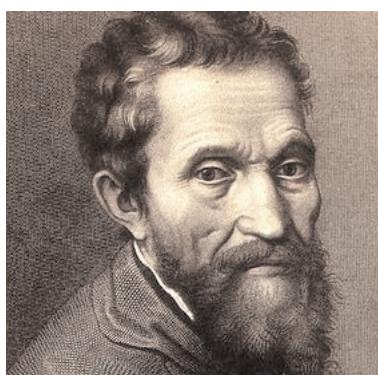


Winston Churchill

March 5, 1946 - The "Iron Curtain" speech was delivered by Winston Churchill at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. Churchill used the term to describe the boundary in Europe between free countries of the West and nations of Eastern Europe under Soviet Russia's control.

March 6

March 6, 1836 - Fort Alamo fell to Mexican troops led by General Santa Anna. The Mexicans had begun the siege of the Texas fort on February 23rd, ending it with the killing of the last defender. "Remember the Alamo" became a rallying cry for Texans who went on to defeat Santa Anna in the Battle of San Jacinto in April.



Michelangelo

Birthday - Renaissance genius Michelangelo (1475-1564) was born in Caprese, Italy. He was a painter, sculptor, architect, poet and visionary best known for his fresco on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and his sculptures David and The Pieta.

March 7



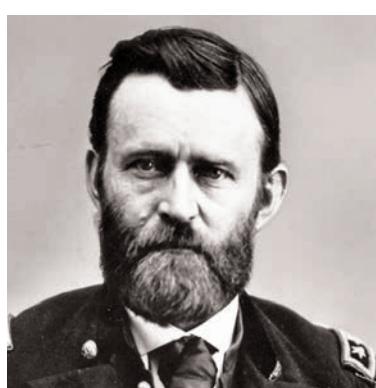
Stephen Hopkins

Birthday - Stephen Hopkins (1707-1785) was born in Providence, Rhode Island. He was the state's colonial governor and was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

March 8

March 8, 1863 - During the American Civil War, Confederate Colonel John Mosby, leader of Mosby's Rangers, captured Union General E.H. Stoughton at his headquarters in Fairfax County Courthouse, Virginia.

March 9



Ulysses S. Grant

March 9, 1864 - Ulysses S. Grant was commissioned as a Lieutenant General and became commander of the Union armies.

Birthday - Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci (1451-1512) was born in Florence, Italy. He explored South America and the Amazon River, believing he had discovered a new continent. In 1507, a German mapmaker first referred to the lands discovered in the New World as America.

Birthday - Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin (1934-1968) was born in Gzhatsk, Russia. On April 12, 1961, he became the first human in space, orbiting in



Yuri Gagarin

a capsule 187 miles above the Earth's surface in a flight lasting 108 minutes. His space flight caused a worldwide sensation and marked the beginning of the space race as the U.S. worked to catch up to the Russians and launch an American into space. President John F. Kennedy later asserted the U.S. would land a man on the moon before the end of the 1960's.

March 10

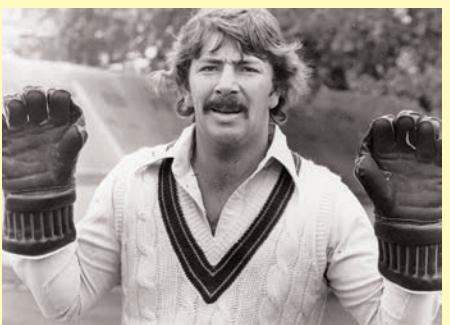
March 10, 1862 - The first issue of U.S. government paper money occurred as \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills began circulation.

March 10, 1880 - The Salvation Army was founded in the United States. The social service organization was first founded in England by William Booth and operates today in 90 countries.



Claire Boothe Luce

Birthday - Politician and playwright Claire Boothe Luce (1903-1987) was born in New York City. She served in the House of Representatives from 1943 to 1947 and then became the first woman appointed as U.S. ambassador to a major country (Italy).



ROD MARSH, AUSTRALIAN CRICKET GREAT, DIES AT AGE 74

Rod Marsh, an Australian cricket great and the wicketkeeper who formed a prolific wicket-taking partnership with pace bowler Dennis Lillee, has died a week after suffering a heart attack during a fundraising event in Queensland state. He was 74. The Sport Australia Hall of Fame on Friday confirmed Marsh, who played 96 test matches for Australia from 1970 to 1984, had died in an Adelaide hospital. Marsh held a test record of 355 dismissals by a wicketkeeper, including 95 off the bowling of Lillee. He also played 92 one-day internationals for Australia before retiring from top-flight cricket in February 1984. A left-handed batter, he was the first Australian wicketkeeper to score a century in test cricket, and finished his career with three. He later led the national cricket academies in Australia and in England and was the inaugural head of the International Cricket Council's world coaching academy in Dubai. In 2014, he was appointed as Australia's chairman of selectors and held the position for two years.

FORMULA ONE TERMINATES CONTRACT WITH RUSSIAN GP FOLLOWING UKRAINE INVASION

Formula One will no longer race in Russia after the sport terminated its contract with the promoter of the Russian Grand Prix, it said on Thursday, in response to the country's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine. The event, which was set to move to a new track outside St Petersburg next year from its current Sochi Olympic park venue, had a contract until 2025. The sport announced the cancellation of the 2022 race, originally scheduled for Sept 25, last week. "Formula One can confirm it has terminated its contract with the Russian Grand Prix promoter meaning Russia will not have a race in the future," a statement from the sport's commercial rights holder, which decides the calendar, said. Formula One's move to effectively pull out of Russia comes after the sport's governing body, the FIA, on Tuesday condemned the country's invasion of Ukraine but said Russian and Belarusian drivers could still take part in its competitions in a neutral capacity. British federation Motorsport UK on Wednesday banned Russian and Belarusian license holders from racing in the country.

Never thought I would play 100th Test, says Virat Kohli

MOHALI (TIP)

Star batter Virat Kohli, who became the 12th Indian to achieve the milestone of playing 100 Tests, says he "never thought" he would come this far and make this landmark appearance.

Having scored only 4 and 15 in his debut Test against the West Indies in 2011, Kohli has come a long way in a decade-long journey in which he has amassed 7962 runs at a stellar average of 50.39 in the longest format.

"I honestly never thought I would play 100 Test matches. It has been a long journey. We played a lot of cricket over the course of playing those 100 Test matches," Kohli said in a video posted by the BCCI.

"A lot of International cricket. I am just grateful that I've been able to make it to 100."

Kohli will join an elite list of Sunil Gavaskar, Dilip Vengsarkar, Kapil Dev, Sachin Tendulkar, Anil Kumble, Rahul Dravid, Sourav Ganguly, VVS Laxman, Virender Sehwag, Harbhajan Singh and Ishant Sharma to play 100 Tests.

"God has been kind. I have worked really hard for my fitness. It's a big moment for me, for my family, for my coach, who is also very happy and very proud of this Test match as long as I am concerned," Kohli said.

In times of 3 formats, I played 100 Tests; next generation can take that from my career: Kohli

Basking in the glory of becoming only the 12th Indian cricketer to play 100 Tests, Virat Kohli on Friday said he wants the "next generation" to take inspiration from the fact he could achieve the milestone despite playing in all three formats through a gruelling international schedule.



Head Coach Rahul Dravid presents Virat Kohli with his 100th baggy blue to commemorate his 100th appearance in whites.

Indian cricket's reigning superstar was felicitated by the BCCI on Friday commemorating his landmark 100th Test match - the first game against Sri Lanka here.

"In present-day cricket, with the amount we play with three formats and an IPL, the one takeaway the next generation can take from me is that I played 100 games in the purest format," Kohli said after being felicitated by Rahul Dravid.

Due to bio-bubble restrictions, it was Dravid, who presented Kohli with a commemorative cap and also a glittering memento.

Kohli had his actor wife Anushka Sharma for company and brother Vikas Kohli was in the stands.

From the BCCI, president Sourav

Ganguly, secretary Jay Shah, treasurer Arun Dhumal and vice-president Rajiv Shukla were in attendance.

Coach Dravid gave a warm speech, waxing eloquent about his longevity and asked him to "double it up".

"It is a special moment for me. My wife is here and so is my brother. Everyone is very proud. It is indeed a team game and it couldn't have been possible without you.

"Thanks to the BCCI as well," Kohli said. Kohli joined an illustrious list comprising Sunil Gavaskar, Dilip Vengsarkar, Kapil Dev, Sachin Tendulkar, Anil Kumble, Rahul Dravid, Sourav Ganguly, VVS Laxman, Virender Sehwag, Harbhajan Singh and Ishant Sharma, who played 100 Tests for the country.

Source: PTI

Russian, Belarusian athletes banned from Winter Paralympics

Faced with threats of withdrawals and growing animosity in the Athletes Village, organizers of the Winter Paralympics on Thursday reversed course and expelled athletes from Russia and Belarus.

The about-face came less than 24 hours after the International Paralympic Committee announced it would allow Russians and Belarusians to compete when the Games open on Friday, but only as neutral athletes with colors, flags and other national symbols removed because of the invasion of Ukraine.

The Paralympics in Beijing, which follow the Winter Olympics, close on March 13.

"The war has now come to these Games and behind the scenes many governments are having an influence on our cherished event," IPC President Andrew Parsons said Thursday after announcing the ban.

"We were trying to protect the Games from war."



Parsons said the IPC underestimated the negative reaction to letting Russians and Belarusians compete — even as neutral athletes. The Athletes Village, which Parsons hoped would be a place of harmony, he now depicted as a tinderbox.

And it was not only Ukrainians resenting the Russian and Belarusian participation, but across the board.

"We don't have reports of any specific

incidents of aggression or anything like that," Parsons said.

"But it was a very, very volatile environment in the (Athletes) Village.

"It was a very rapid escalation which we did not think was going to happen. We did not think that entire delegations, or even teams within delegations, will withdraw, will boycott, will not participate."

The first instance came when Latvia said its curlers would refuse to play against the Russians in a scheduled group game.

IPC spokesman Craig Spence described a stark change in just over 12 hours from athletes, administrators and politicians. He said the talk was "now we're thinking of going home. We're not playing."

"That threatens the viability of this event. So that's a huge change," Spence said.

The atmosphere in the Village is not pleasant."

Source: AP

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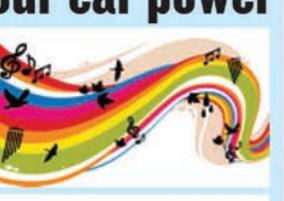
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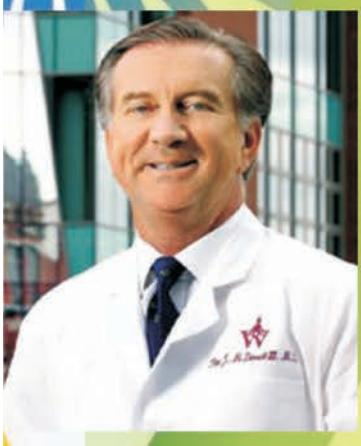
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Message from
Peter J. McDonnell,
M.D. Director Wilmer Eye
Institute, Johns Hopkins
University, USA on the
occasion of laying the
foundation stone on
December 10, 2020

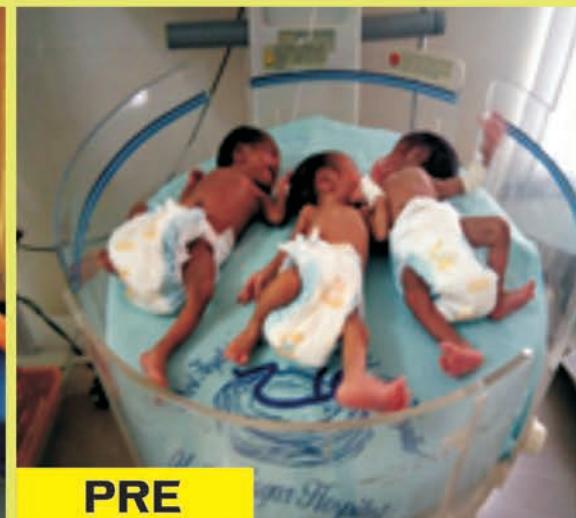


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