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Congress wrests Himachal from BJP; BJP retains Gujarat; AAP sweeps out BJP in MCD elections

I.S. SALUJA

DECEMBER 8, 2022

NEW DELHI / NEW YORK (TIP):

The Congress on Thursday, December 8, wrested Himachal Pradesh from the BJP winning 40 seats in the 68-member Assembly in the hill state which maintained its tradition of not voting any incumbent government to power since 1985. The victory comes as a boost to the Congress which has been witnessing slide down in its popularity across the nation, in view of the election cycle in nine states in 2023 which include the Hindi heartland states of Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh which together send 65 MPs to the Lok Sabha.

According to the results declared by the Election Commission, the BJP won 25 seats, while eight state ministers, including Suresh Bhardwaj, Ram Lal Markanda and Surveen Chaudhary lost.

The Independents won from three constituencies and the Aam Aadmi Party, which had contested from 67 seats, failed to open its account.

The BJP and the Congress contested on all 68 constituencies.



Congress party workers in Himachal celebrate victory in Assembly elections

BJP created history in Gujarat by winning 156 seats out of 182, the highest ever since the inception of the state.

Congress finished a poor second with 17 seats.

AAP's dream of doing a Punjab in Gujarat was shattered with the party getting only 5 seats.

It is interesting to study the pattern of strength the BJP gained in Gujarat. The party won 9 seats in 1980; 11 in 1985; 67 in 1990; 121 in 1995, 117 in 1998, 127 seats in 2002 followed by 117, 115 and 77 in 2007, 2012 and 2017 respectively. The present historic mandate -156 seats out of 182, is the best ever in the state.

AAP created history by ousting the well-entrenched BJP in Municipal Corporation of Delhi elections. AAP won 134 seats out of a total of 250 wards, while the BJP got 104, and the Congress came a distant third with just nine. AAP wrested 77 seats from the BJP.

In By polls, The Samajwadi Party scored a major victory when it retained the Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat and wrested the Khatauli Assembly seat from the BJP.

SP candidate Dimple Yadav won the Mainpuri seat with a margin of 2.9 lakh votes, defeating Raghuraj Shakya of the BJP.

The BJP, on the other hand, wrested the Rampur seat from the SP, and BJP's Akash Saxena won it with a margin of 31,158 defeating Asim Raza of SP.

BJP wrested the Kurhani Assembly seat in Bihar, dealing a blow to the Nitish Kumar-led ruling grand alliance in the state.

BJP candidate Kedar Prasad Gupta defeated Manoj Singh Kushwaha of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) by 3,645 votes.

Read more on page 14

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY AND THE SPIRIT OF UKRAINE ARE 'TIME' MAGAZINE'S 2022 PERSON OF THE YEAR



Time magazine's cover shows Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, surrounded by other individuals and crowds of protesters woven together with bright yellow sunflowers and blue and yellow Ukrainian flags. Image / Courtesy TIME

DECEMBER 8, 2022

NEW YORK (TIP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and "the spirit of Ukraine" have been declared as TIME's 'Person of the Year' 2022 on Wednesday, December 7. The magazine, which has bestowed the honor annually since 1927, released the announcement on Wednesday, December 7, alongside a lengthy profile of the wartime leader. It credits his stewardship of Ukraine's defense - which has halted Russia's advance and regained key territories - as well as its public image. *contd on page 32*

'Diwali - Power of One' awards conferred on 5 Diplomats at UN

DECEMBER 6, 2022

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): Four veteran diplomats and a US lawmaker have been honored with this year's annual 'Diwali - Power of One' award here for their efforts in working towards a peaceful and secure world.

Hailed as the 'Oscars of Diplomacy', the award is presented to former Permanent Representatives or former High-Level members of the UN Secretariat or member state, or soon-to-be "former", who have "toiled selflessly to help form a more perfect, peaceful and secure world for all."



Honorees with Ranju Batra, Chair, Diwali Foundation, Ravi Batra, co-sponsors, and diplomats at the United Nations on December 5

Former Permanent UN and current Ambassador to Georgia to the *contd on page 32*



Padma awardee Indian-American Doctor offers 5-point 'Panchamrit' solution to cancer crisis in India

DECEMBER 8, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): An eminent Indian-American doctor has offered a five-point solution, which he calls Panchamrit, to address the cancer crisis in India. Prominent among them include declaring cancer a notifiable disease, subsidizing cancer screening, and establishing a command-and-control center. *contd on page 32*

Padma awardee Indian-American doctor Dattatreyudu Nori has offered a 5-point 'Panchamrit' solution to cancer crisis in India. 'Declare cancer a notifiable disease, subsidize cancer screening, and establish a command-and-control center'



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Winning formula: On BJP's strategy

WHILE THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY'S STRATEGY WORKS ACROSS REGIONS, THE CONGRESS NEEDS STATE-SPECIFIC TACTICS

The Bharatiya Janata Party's victory in Gujarat eclipses its loss in Himachal Pradesh: not only is Gujarat a bigger State, but the scale of the party's sweep in the western State also overshadows its narrow loss in the hill State. For the Congress, its victory in Himachal Pradesh is meagre consolation against the backdrop of its decimation in Gujarat where it had to be content with 17 of the 182 Assembly seats, as compared to 77 in 2017. With another five-year term now, the BJP will rule Gujarat for 32 years, almost matching the Left Front's 34-year rule in West Bengal that ended in 2011. The BJP increased its vote share, from 49% in 2017 to 53% now. AAP finished a distant third in Gujarat, but its furious foray into the State gained it a 13% vote share, and also national party status. AAP's entry triangulated the Gujarat contest, which worked to the BJP's advantage. The BJP made inroads

into tribal regions and rural constituencies which constituted patches of the Congress's strength, after AAP's generous promise of welfare schemes succeeded in seeding a new kind of class politics in the State. It was Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the campaign all the way for the BJP, and his popularity, which was unlinked to the performance of the State government, helped power the BJP to a historic victory.

The Himachal Pradesh outcome is instructive of the latent anti-incumbency that the BJP faces, and the Opposition's occasional capacity to harness it. The Congress ran a sedate campaign in both States. In Gujarat it did not work at all for the party, but in Himachal Pradesh, it did because of the anti-incumbency factor. In Gujarat, the combined vote share of Congress and AAP hovers around 40% - less than the

Congress's alone in 2017. In Himachal Pradesh, Mr. Modi's extensive campaigning was not enough. In Gujarat, the BJP had pulled out all the stops after it faced setbacks in 2017, while the Congress has lost steam since then. With renewed vigor, AAP will now try expanding to new territories, potentially muddying the waters for the Opposition, and aligning with the BJP's Hindutva ideology. The outcomes of Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh demonstrate that the BJP's status as the hegemon remains unchallenged in Indian politics, Mr. Modi is more popular than his party, and the Opposition is unable to create the politics or programs that can challenge the BJP. While the BJP has a universal formula that is largely successful across regions, the opposition to it can sustain only with State-specific strategies.

(The Hindu)

AAP bags MCD, too

FACES THE UPHILL TASK OF CLEARING MOUNDS OF GARBAGE

Consolidating its position in the Capital with a 'double engine', the Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday secured its maiden victory in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) elections, though barely, with 134 of the 250 wards falling in its kitty. The BJP put up a spirited fight, bagging 104 seats despite the anti-incumbency of three terms, while the Congress was reduced to nine seats and Independents won three seats. This was the first election after the MCD's reunification earlier this year. The verdict shows that the public was fed up with the corruption-ridden and non-performing local body over civic issues such as sanitation, cleanliness, maintenance of parks and roads. Delhi Chief Minister and AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal now has the onerous task of

resolving these vexing problems.

The foremost challenge confronting him relates to waste management. Delhi has three mountains of waste - in Ghazipur, Bhalswa and Okhla - oozing polluted water and toxic gases. A byproduct, methane gas, renders the dump yards inflammable, leading to frequent fires. Despite the National Green Tribunal's orders for biomining (separating discarded plastic, paper, cloth, sand, bricks etc. by passing them through a trommel) the waste dumps, umpteen extensions of deadlines to flatten the landfills and crores of rupees spent, these sites have only grown vertically in the past couple of decades.

What makes matters worse is that the garbage sites that were initially on the outskirts of the city have become

eyesores in the middle of residential areas as the National Capital Region has expanded, with newer townships coming up over the years. All this has had a devastating effect on the people's health as they are left struggling with increasing respiratory, skin and other ailments. With both the Congress and BJP at the helm of MCD affairs during their long tenures having failed to come up with effective waste management solutions, the AAP would, indeed, stand out if it can find a way out of this polluting mess. The key lies in promoting the philosophy of waste reduction, reuse and recycle, as also waste segregation at source and household levels.

(Tribune, India)

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Trump Organization Found Guilty of Tax Fraud

DECEMBER 6, 2022

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): Former President Donald Trump's business was convicted of tax fraud Tuesday, December 6, in a high-profile trial in Manhattan.

Jurors rendered a guilty verdict on their second day of deliberations over whether the Trump Organization was complicit in a scheme by top executives to avoid taxes. Trump executives reaped job perks such as rent-free apartments and luxury cars without paying personal income taxes, prosecutors argued.

Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, whose office prosecuted the case, noted the verdict's historic nature.

"For the first time in our lifetime, a jury has convicted a former President's company of criminal charges," he tweeted.

Trump himself wasn't on trial, but prosecutors accused him of knowing "exactly what was going on" within his company.

The former U.S. President had yet to respond to the verdict on Truth Social, his social media platform from which he recently called to terminate parts of the Constitution, as of Tuesday afternoon.

But Trump has previously attacked Bragg, including on Tuesday, for waging what he called a "political Witch Hunt."

Another target of Trump's ire - New York Attorney General Letitia James - commended Bragg for



"For the first time in our lifetime, a jury has convicted a former President's company of criminal charges," Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, whose office prosecuted the case, said.

securing the verdict.

"Today's guilty verdict against the Trump Organization shows that we will hold individuals and organizations accountable when they violate our laws to line their pockets," James tweeted.

The Manhattan case against Trump's company was only one of many legal threats to the former president. James herself is pursuing an even higher stakes civil case against Trump and most of his adult children, whom she has all accused of long-standing fraud, that could permanently bar his company from doing

business in New York.

By comparison, the verdict in the Manhattan case is small potatoes. The Trump Organization can only be fined up to \$1.6 million as punishment, although the reputation hit could affect the business.

Bragg's case against the Trump Organization centered around the company's former finance chief, Allen Weisselberg, who previously pleaded guilty to charges that he manipulated the company's books and his own compensation package to illegally reduce his taxes.

Weisselberg testified in the trial in exchange for a promised five-month jail sentence.

Trump Organization lawyers repeated "Weisselberg did it for Weisselberg" throughout the monthlong trial and argued he had betrayed the company's trust.

"It was my own personal greed that led to this," Weisselberg himself said in emotional testimony.

But prosecutors argued Trump himself knew about the scheme. One prosecutor showed jurors a lease Trump signed for Weisselberg's apartment and another document, initialed by the former president, that gave the go-ahead on a pay cut for an executive who got perks.

"Mr. Trump is explicitly sanctioning tax fraud," the prosecutor said.

Bragg also has a related "active and ongoing" investigation of Trump that began under former District Attorney Cyrus Vance.

Veteran actor Dharmendra turns 87 on Thursday, December 8

CELEBRATES BIRTHDAY WITH FANS, HEMA MALINI WISHES 'LOVE OF HER LIFE', SONS SUNNY AND BOBBY DEOL SHARE PICTURES FROM FAMILY CELEBRATIONS

DECEMBER 8, 2022

CHANDIGARH / NEW YORK (TIP): As Dharmendra turns 87 on December 8, social media is replete with birthday wishes for the legendary actor. Friends, family, fans... everyone has made it a point to post a special wish for their favorite star. Starting from his wife Hema Malini, who shared pictures with 'the love of her life' along with a sweet note for him on Twitter.

"Praying for dear Dharam ji's good health on his birthday today. Wisha long and healthy life filled always with happiness and joy! My prayers will be with him today and every day of our lives. HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the love of my life," she wrote.

Sons Sunny Deol and Bobby Deol also took to Instagram to wish their 'loving papa'. "Happy Birthday Papa. Love you." wrote Sunny Deol, alongside a picture of him with Dharmendra.

Bobby Deol shared a joint Instagram post with Dharmendra's grandson Karan Deol. With a picture of the three of them sitting next to a 'havan kund', they wrote, "So blessed to be your son and grandson. Happy Birthday Bade papa @aapkadharam."

Daughter Esha Deol also posted a throwback photo with daddy Dharmendra on Instagram stories.

There is a video trending on social media that shows Dharmendra's fans all excited about the day. From bringing a four-tier cake to wearing tee shirts with Dharmendra's photo embossed on it, the fans can't be happier about their favorite hero turning 87. Dharmendra made sure to express his gratitude to them in words as well as actions. In the video, he can be seen cutting the cake while his fans surround him. The actor can be heard saying 'thank you so much' to his fans.



Pictures from Dharmendra's birthday celebrations. Instagram/iamsunnydeol, iambobbydeol, viralbhayani; Twitter/@dreamgirlhema, @aapkadharam

The veteran actor also took to his Twitter handle to thank his well-wishers. He shared a picture of the four-tier birthday cake given to him by his fan club. "Loving friends, thanks love you all for your loving and huge Birthday cake," he tweeted.

He also thanked actors Sidharth Malhotra and Ajay Devgn. To the Singham star, he replied, "Jeetey raho Ajay...You are my loving neighbor and i am your

loving uncle. Love you always."

Dharmendra began his acting career in 1960 and so far he has done over 300 films. He will next be seen in Karan Johar's Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani. In his latest outing, it is being said, Dharmendra will play the role of Ranveer Singh's father opposite Jaya Bachchan. The movie also stars Alia Bhatt and Shabana Azmi.



Om Madan Garg trekked for 10 days in October along with his parents, covering an altitude gain of around 2,500m

INDIAN-ORIGIN SIX-YEAR-OLD BOY IS YOUNGEST SINGAPOREAN TO TREK TO EVEREST BASE CAMP AT AN ALTITUDE OF 5,364 METERS

DECEMBER 5, 2022

SINGAPORE (TIP): A six-year-old Indian-origin boy has become the youngest Singaporean to have trekked to the Everest Base Camp in Nepal at an altitude of 5,364 meters.

Om Madan Garg trekked for 10 days in October along with his parents, covering an altitude gain of around 2,500m from the village of Lukla at 2,860m to the base at 5,364m, according to the Singapore Book of Records.

Om, a Kindergarten 2 student from Canossaville Preschool, "managed well despite bad weather, flight cancellations, lack of creature comforts, hot days and the cold nights".

The Garg family arrived at Lukla, which is the starting point and also the gateway to the base camp trek on September 28 and reached the base on October 7.

They were accompanied by a qualified guide and two porters.

From Lukla, they trekked to Phakding and continued ahead to reach Namche Bazaar -- the trade center in the Everest region.

From Namche Bazaar, the trail goes to Tengboche, and then finally the Everest Base Camp at 5,364m.

"I threw my hat in the sky and caught it and we climbed on the top of Mount Everest Base Camp rock, and we took a photo. We flew the Singapore flag," he told Channel News Asia in an interview.

The pre-school student was awarded a certificate from the Singapore Book of Records.

His entire sojourn has been documented in a seven-part series on the family's YouTube channel, The Brave Tourist.

Three-year-old Heyansh Kumar from India is the youngest person to reach the Mount Everest base camp. Kumar was three years and seven months and 27 days-old when he achieved the milestone.

Indo-Canadian Jagrup Brar among 4 Punjabis inducted as minister in Canada's British Columbia govt

DECEMBER 8, 2022

VANCOUVER, BC (TIP): Punjabi-origin Jagrup Brar, New Democratic Party (NDP) leader, has been inducted as Minister of State in the NDP government of British Columbia (BC) in Canada on Wednesday, December 7.

The new Council of Ministers of British Columbia was sworn in at the Government House in Victoria.

Brar was born at Deon, a remote village of Bathinda.

Apart from him, Harry Bains, Rachna



Singh and Ravi Kahlon- all Punjabi-origin men- were also inducted as ministers while Nikki Sharma- a Punjabi-origin woman- was appointed as Attorney General of the BC government.

Brar is a Member of the Legislative Assembly in BC. He represents the Surrey-Panorama Ridge constituency.

Jagrup Brar, New Democratic Party (NDP) leader, has been inducted as Minister of State in the NDP government of British Columbia (BC) in Canada

Indian-origin Veena Nair wins PM's prize for Excellence in science teaching in Australia

DECEMBER 5, 2022

MELBOURNE (TIP): An Indian-origin teacher in Australia has received the 2022 Prime Minister's Prize for Excellence in science teaching in secondary schools.

Melbourne-based Veena Nair, who is ViewBank College's Head of Technology and STEAM project leader, has been awarded for demonstrating practical application of STEAM to students, and how they can use their skills to make a real impact in the world.

"To be recognized in the Prime Minister's prizes for science, I am deeply humbled. I am very grateful to my school, to my colleagues, to my students, and to my family," Nair said in a video message.

"Many people know about STEM -- science, technology, engineering and math, but STEAM is with an A, which is for Art. Art brings in out-of-the-box thinking, and it brings in creativity because students need steam skills to innovate, to become resilient and to take risks," she said.

As a leading educator in STEAM, Nair has more than 20 years of experience in



Veena Nair has been awarded for demonstrating practical application of STEAM to students, and how they can use their skills to make a real impact in the world.

teaching science-based subjects across India, the United Arab Emirates, and now Australia.

Through her work, she has increased the number of students who receive first-

round offers to study engineering and technology subjects at university, especially young women and students from diverse backgrounds.

Nair began her teaching career in Mumbai, where she provided computers to low socio-economic schools and taught students how to code.

Nair's students participate in the Swinburne Youth Space Innovation Challenge -- a 10-week program that sees secondary students compete to create the best experiment to launch into space.

The winning project is then sent to the International Space Station. She also supports the Young Persons' Plan for the Planet program, a STEM-based enterprise development program that gives students the opportunity to engage with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as changemakers at a global level.

Via this program, she has led a team of Australian teachers to conduct STEAM workshops for teachers in low socio-economic schools in Mumbai.

She won the Educator of the Year Award by the Design and Technology Teachers' Association of Australia in 2018.

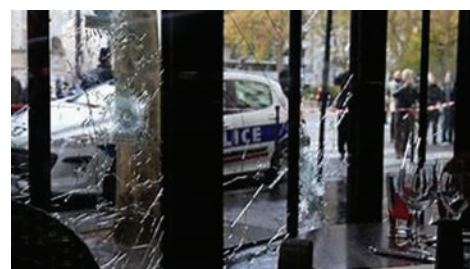
Punjabi-origin woman shot dead at a gas station in Brampton

DECEMBER 5, 2022

BRAMPTON (TIP): A 21-year-old Sikh woman was shot dead at Brampton in Canada.

PEEL REGIONAL POLICE SAID THE INCIDENT OCCURRED AT A PETRO-CANADA AT CREDITVIEW ROAD AND BRITANNIA ROAD WEST AROUND ON DECEMBER 3 AT 10.40 PM.

Life saving measures were attempted however the victim succumbed to her



A 21-year-old Sikh woman was shot dead at a gas station in Brampton

injuries, a Peel Regional Police statement said.

Police are on a lookout for the suspect who was dressed in all dark clothing and

was observed leaving the scene on foot following the incident. Calling it a targeted incident, the police have launched a homicide investigation.

No weapon has been recovered so far from the crime scene, police said.

They have asked anyone with information or dashcam footage that may have captured the moments leading up to, during, or after the incident to contact the investigators, adding that there is no threat to public safety.

The incident comes just days after 18-year-old Indian-origin Sikh Mehakpreet Sethi was stabbed to death at the parking lot of a high school in Surrey.

Britain's King Charles III inaugurates the new Guru Nanak Gurdwara in eastern England

DECEMBER 7, 2022

LONDON (TIP): Britain's King Charles III has officially inaugurated the new Guru Nanak Gurdwara and interacted with the volunteers who prepare the 'langar' and work within the local community during his first tour as monarch of Luton in Bedfordshire, eastern England.

The 74-year-old King toured the gurdwara's kitchen on Tuesday, December 6, and was shown where hot vegetarian meals are prepared daily and was also briefed on the work coordinated with a pop-up Covid vaccine clinic during the pandemic. He also sat together with community leaders in the Diwaan Hall of the gurdwara to hear the 'kirtan' (devotional song) and 'hukamnama' from the 'Guru Granth Sahib'.

"At the newly built Guru Nanak Gurdwara, His Majesty met volunteers who run the Luton Sikh Soup Kitchen Stand. The kitchen provides vegetarian hot meals seven days a week, 365 days a year at the Gurdwara," Buckingham Palace said.

"During the pandemic, the Gurdwara ran a pop-up COVID vaccine clinic, which was one of the first of its kind in the UK. The Gurdwara also encouraged other places of worship to tackle misinformation regarding vaccine hesitancy," it said.

Indian-origin Professor Gurch Randhawa, a member of the local Sikh congregation and Director of the Institute for Health Research at the University of Bedfordshire who greeted the King at the gurdwara, described the visit as "hugely auspicious".

"His Majesty the King Charles III, respecting Sikhism, entered and exited



Britain's King Charles III officially inaugurated the new Guru Nanak Gurdwara in Bedfordshire

Diwaan Hall with kirtan playing live, sat down and listened to the hukamnama from 'Guru Granth Sahib Ji'," said Randhawa.

"He met our humble volunteers who cook 500 meals per day during the week, and 1,000 meals per day during weekends, our healthcare volunteers who ran pop up Covid vaccine clinics, our Luton Sikh Soup Kitchen volunteers who serve 150 meals outside Luton Town Hall every Sunday - all these services are accessed by all faith and ethnic communities.

"The king also met children who are learning kirtan and heard them play a Shabad. All in all, a joyous occasion which I was honored to host," he said.

While on the royal tour of Luton, the King also took a ride on the city's Direct Air-Rail Transit (DART) service.

"The DART is an energy-efficient, electric cable car that will transport train arrivals at Luton Parkway to the airport, reducing carbon emissions by 70 per cent...the King met staff and apprentices who work on the DART, before taking the short four-minute ride to the airport," Buckingham Palace said.

There was also an egg throwing incident in the area at the start of the royal tour when Charles was on a walkabout of Luton town center. The monarch was briefly steered away from crowds by his security staff before continuing the tour.

INDIAN-ORIGIN BUSINESSMAN AND CHARITY WORKER, MOHAN MANSIGANI COLLECTS HONOR FROM BUCKINGHAM PALACE



Mohan Mansigani collected his Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) honor at an investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace in London.

DECEMBER 3, 2022

LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin businessman and charity worker has collected his Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) honor at an investiture ceremony at Buckingham Palace in London.

Mohan Mansigani, who is from north London, was conferred the honor for charitable services to health care in the late Queen Elizabeth II's 2021 Birthday Honors list in June last year. The trustee of the St John Ambulance charity collected the OBE from Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, St John's Ambulance Commandant-in-Chief (Youth).

"I have been lucky enough to give something back to the country that has given me so much through my work at St John and the Migration Museum," said Mansigani, who is also a Fellow of the UK's Institute of Chartered Accountants and joined St John Ambulance's board six years ago.

"As the son of immigrants and as a boy from Islington, being honored in this way is beyond my wildest dreams. I would like to dedicate this award to my wife Renu Mansigani who has selflessly taught young children's human values over the last 20 years through the Mill Hill Sai Centre and is truly worthy of recognition," he said.

Mansigani is known as a creative finance director with extensive private equity experience who has played a key leadership role in establishing Casual Dining Group, previously known as Tragus, which operated popular UK restaurant brands such as Café Rouge and Strada.

"My father came to London in 1951 with the aim of supporting his family back in India, thinking that he would return as soon as he achieved this goal. In the event he stayed and, from humble beginnings, built a successful business and raised a young family," Mansigani tells St John Ambulance - a charity providing first aid and emergency medical services primarily through volunteers.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

NRI professor based in Sweden moves Delhi HC against cancellation of his OCI card



Sweden-based NRI professor moves Delhi HC against cancellation of his OCI card
Photo/
@ashoswai/Twitter

DECEMBER 8, 2022

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Delhi High court on Thursday, December 8, asked the Centre to respond to a petition filed by Sweden-based Professor of Indian-origin Ashok Swain against the government's decision to cancel his Overseas Citizen of India card (OCI) card. Justice Prathiba M Singh issued notice to the Centre on the petition filed by Swain, a professor of peace and conflict research at Uppsala University, Sweden. Asking the Centre to respond to Swain's petition in four weeks, the HC posted the matter for further hearing in February 2023. Swain said

pursuant to a show-cause notice issued in 2020, his OIC card was arbitrarily barred in February 2022 on the allegations that he was indulging in inflammatory speeches and anti-India activities.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian origin Ramesh Balwani sentenced to 13 years in prison for fraud

DECEMBER 8, 2022

SAN JOSE (TIP): Theranos' former chief operating officer, Indian-origin Ramesh 'Sunny' Balwani, has been sentenced to nearly 13 years in prison for fraud that prosecutors said risked patient health and defrauded the blood-testing company's investors of millions of dollars.

Fremont's Balwani, 57, was sentenced on Wednesday, December 7, in California to 12 years and 11 months in federal prison for fraud that risked patient health by misrepresenting the accuracy of Theranos blood analysis technology and defrauded the company's investors of millions of dollars, US Attorney Stephanie Hinds said.



Ramesh "Sunny" Balwani is accused of defrauding the blood-testing company's investors of millions of dollars and putting patient's health at risk

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(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

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AAPI Condemns Violence Against Physicians in India

URGES GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AND BRING TO JUSTICE THOSE WHO HARM PHYSICIANS

DECEMBER 8, 2022

NEW YORK (TIP): "AAPI is very concerned by the recent and ongoing assaults on Doctors and Medical Professionals in India and joins American Kerala Medical Graduates Association (AKMG) and Kerala Medical Post Graduates Association in condemning the recent physical assault on a female Doctor at Thiruvananthapuram Government Medical College on November 23rd that was caught on the CCTV," Dr. Ravi Kolli, President of American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) said in Chicago on November 29.

The leadership of AAPI, including Drs. Ravi Kolli, President of AAPI, Dr. Vishweshwar Ranga, Chair, BOT of AAPI, Dr. Raghu Lolabhattu, Vice Chair, AAPI BOT, Dr. Anjana Samadder, President-Elect of AAPI, Dr. Satheesh Kathula, Vice President of AAPI, Dr. Sujeeth Punnam, Chair, Alumni Committee of AAPI, Dr. Geetha Nair, President of AKMG, Dr. Nigil Haroon, immediate past President of AKMG, and Dr. Subra Bhat, past President of AKMG, and the entire Executive Committee and Board Of Trustees of AAPI, stand in solidarity with our fellow physicians and medical professionals, who are on the front line, work very hard, day and night to serve and take care of patients diligently and dutifully, Dr. Kolli said in a statement issued here.

Quoting media reports last month that pointed to a very grim situation in the state of Punjab in India, Dr. Kolli said, it is shocking to learn of "Recent incidents of physical assaults and misconduct have once again instilled a sense of fear in the mind of on-duty medical staff. As per the data, compiled by the Punjab Civil Medical Services (PCMS) Association, over 400 incidents of violence against medical staff, including doctors, have been reported over the past two years."

Recalling that from ancient times, physicians across the world have been revered for dedicating their lives for the noble mission of preventing people from getting and saving millions of lives of people from illnesses, Dr. Anjana Samadder, President-Elect of AAPI said. "We as a community of physicians and individual members of this fraternity have decided to go into the medical profession with the best of intentions. We as physicians want to help people, ease suffering and save lives. Physicians of Indian origin are well known around the world for their compassion, passion for patient care, medical skills, research, and leadership."

"We strongly urge both the central and state governments to take decisive and drastic actions to curb these anti-social behaviors that endanger doctors serving patients," Dr. Ranga, BOT Chair of AAPI said. He agreed with the health experts who "want a multi-pronged approach to prevent such attacks, involving reducing the crowd by strengthening peripheral



hospitals, increasing staff and providing better security."

Dr. Satheesh Kathula, Vice President of AAPI said, "These incidents are unfortunate. We urge the federal and the state governments to provide adequate security at all hospitals and healthcare centers." AAPI supports the petition calling for justice to the Doctor attacked in Thiruvananthapuram, which has gained support from the Kerala Medical Post Graduate Association, who stated that it is unsettling that such attacks occurred in medical campuses, which are supposed to be a secure location, he added.

"AAPI members share their angst as there is not enough support from the state and federal governments and the larger society as the attacks on Medical Professionals in India continue to rise, Dr. Meher Medavaram, Secretary of AAPI said.

Pointing to the trend of increasing violence against the Medical Professionals, and the actions against the perpetrators are disproportionately low, Dr. Sumul Raval, Treasurer of AAPI said, "Medical Professionals cannot provide the best possible health services to the people until there is a safe working environment. Potential fear of violence always looms, especially in the overcrowded Government Hospitals."

Several aspiring Physicians have expressed concerns following the assault on the female doctor at Thiruvananthapuram Government Medical College last week. The attacked female Doctor is quoted to have told Dr. Sulphi N, the Indian Medical Association state president, that she was shocked and regretted her decision to pursue a career as a doctor and even as a neurosurgeon.

"Despite the noble intentions to save lives and prevent pain and suffering among the patients, Doctors and Medical Professionals continue to put their own lives on the line in the course of their jobs, it is shocking that face such attacks from the very people they are trying to help," Dr. Sujeeth Punnam, Chair, Alumni Committee of AAPI added.

Dr. Raghu Lolabhattu, Vice Chair, AAPI BOT said, "AAPI urges the

Government of India and the State Governments across the country to bring to justice those behind the cruel attacks on the physicians who have dedicated lives for serving the sick, especially during the critical Covid pandemic, risking his own life and that of his dear ones."

"We at AAPI, the largest ethnic medical organization in the United States urge the Government of India and every state in India to make all the

efforts needed to prevent violence against medical professionals and enable them to continue to serve the country with dignity, pride and security. We are shocked by the lack of coherent action against such violence and protecting members of this noble fraternity. And we want immediate action against the culprits, who have been carrying on these criminal acts." For more information on AAPI, please visit: www.aapiusa.org

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A stable bi-party system, a nod to 'Himachaliyat'

BY DEVENDER SHARMA

"HIMACHALIYAT" ENCAPSULATES THE IDEA THAT THE REGION AND ITS PEOPLE WILL DECIDE THEIR FUTURE WITHOUT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. IT ALSO EXEMPLIFIES A DIVERSE, HARMONIOUS CULTURE, EVIDENT IN THE LOCAL FESTIVALS, LANGUAGE DIALECTS, CUISINE AND CLOTHING. IT IS CLEAR, AS VISHAL SHARMA, THE RESEARCHER AND ANALYST COORDINATOR OF HPCC, EMPHASIZED, THAT THE IDEA OF HIMACHALIYAT HAS SCORED OVER HINDUTVA IN THE STATE, WITH THE CONGRESS WINNING THE WAR OF THE NARRATIVE."

The Congress's win in Himachal Pradesh can be attributed to a series of factors which includes its promise of an old pension scheme for 1,50,000 government employees, anti-incumbency linked to the poor performance of the Jai Ram Thakur government, and also intra-party factionalism within the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The result becomes more mortifying for the BJP as its national president, J.P. Nadda, is from the State.

The elections were fought on the fascinating narrative of "Riwaj Badlega versus Raaj Badlega (change of tradition versus change of government)". Speculation by a number of political analysts and the media, of a BJP win with an absolute majority, has been proven wrong. Of the 68 Assembly seats, the Congress won 40, forming an absolute majority. What has been established is that the State has a stable bi-party system. And despite its propaganda and large-scale canvassing, the Aam Aadmi Party did not emerge as the influential third force.

The winning factor

The State, till 2017, was governed on largely centrist lines but with a slight shift towards regionalism. After 2017 and Prem Kumar Dhumal's shocking defeat, things changed and Himachal Pradesh got a Chief Minister, Jai Ram Thakur, who had been handpicked by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh to take forward a Hindutva narrative that has



The Congress on counting day of the Himachal Pradesh Assembly elections

Photo / PTI

FOR THE COMMON MAN IN HIMACHAL PRADESH, BEING ROOTED AS A 'HIMACHALI' AS A WAY TO RESOLVING A NUMBER OF LOCAL ISSUES WAS PRIME, IN TURN SHAPING THE CONGRESS'S WIN

not been really touched upon by earlier BJP governments. Mr. Dhumal, for instance, did not have an RSS background, but took a regional approach. Shanta Kumar, another BJP Chief Minister with an RSS touch, believed that Hindutva would not work in the State.

"Himachaliyat" encapsulates the idea that the region and its people will decide their future without outside interference. It also exemplifies a diverse, harmonious culture, evident in the local festivals, language dialects, cuisine and clothing. It is clear, as Vishal Sharma, the researcher and analyst coordinator of HPCC, emphasized, that the idea of Himachaliyat has scored over Hindutva in the State, with the Congress winning the war of the narrative.

For the BJP, while anti-incumbency, crime and corruption and a strong national leadership and organization were the guiding factors that led to its victory in 2017, it was a different story this time. For the people, it was a choice between the narrative of Hindutva and the counter-narrative of the Opposition, which they found in the promise of an old pension scheme for government employees, unemployment, price rise, and Himachali sub-nationalism. Being rooted as a "Himachali" as a way to resolving local issues appears to have struck a chord rather than being divided into castes and communities (Brahmins,

Thakurs, Punjabi refugees, Khattris, Soods, Mahajans, Gaddis, Gujjars, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) and religious identities.

The BJP's narrative was about a Uniform Civil Code, Ram Mandir, Article 370 and ST status for the Hatti community to oblige the upper castes of Sirmour district.

'Agnipath', unemployment and graft

In Himachal Pradesh, a comparatively larger portion of its population is in government service and the public sector (about 4.15 lakh employees and pensioners, or about 10% of the population), thus playing a significant role in any election. Another major issue was the recently launched 'Agnipath recruitment scheme' in the defense services. The State is estimated to have around 2.8 lakh people in the defense services or who are ex-servicemen. Of them, 80% are from the Kangra, Una and Hamirpur districts. There are also eight lakh people who are unemployed and registered in employment exchanges across the State.

Corruption also had an impact where in the past five years, there has been the university recruitment scam, the police recruitment scam and the sanitizers scam (during the COVID-19 pandemic). A Shimla-based civil society organization, the "Forum Against Corruption", has been in the forefront in highlighting

discrepancies in university professors' recruitment, where merit and excellence were ignored. It was because of the police recruitment scam that the BJP faced youth resentment as well.

There was also the handling of the apple growers' protest by the BJP. The fruit growers of Himachal Pradesh constitute a powerful pressure group in the apple growing regions of Shimla, Kullu, Kinnaur and Madi districts. In August, under the "Sanyukt Kisan Manch", fruit growers and farmers convened in Shimla to push for a resolution of their long-pending demands which include an increase in the minimum support price (based on the quality of the fruit and the formula in Kashmir), restoration of subsidies on fungicides, insecticides, and other chemical fertilizers, reduction in Goods and Services Tax on packaging material, and a ban on imported apples.

The apple growing regions cover nearly 17 Assembly segments, in Kinnaur, Kullu and Mandi, with Shimla being a major apple-growing region. They play and have played a significant role in shaping the State's political contours, especially in old Himachal. Apple sales - the apple economy is valued at ₹6,000-crore - contribute to 13.5% of the State's GDP. Farmers are exploited by commission agents in mandis, even as the Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) remain a mute spectator.

Himachal Pradesh will retain its tag as a 'Riwaj' of change provided there is no split in the Congress. The win has opened the contest for chief ministership in the Congress, which is going to be a difficult task for the central Congress committee and the Pradesh Congress Committee to resolve.

(Devender Sharma is Assistant Professor in Political Science, Government College, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh)

It wasn't just masjid that fell

30 years ago, Ayodhya issue shook India's secular foundations & conscience



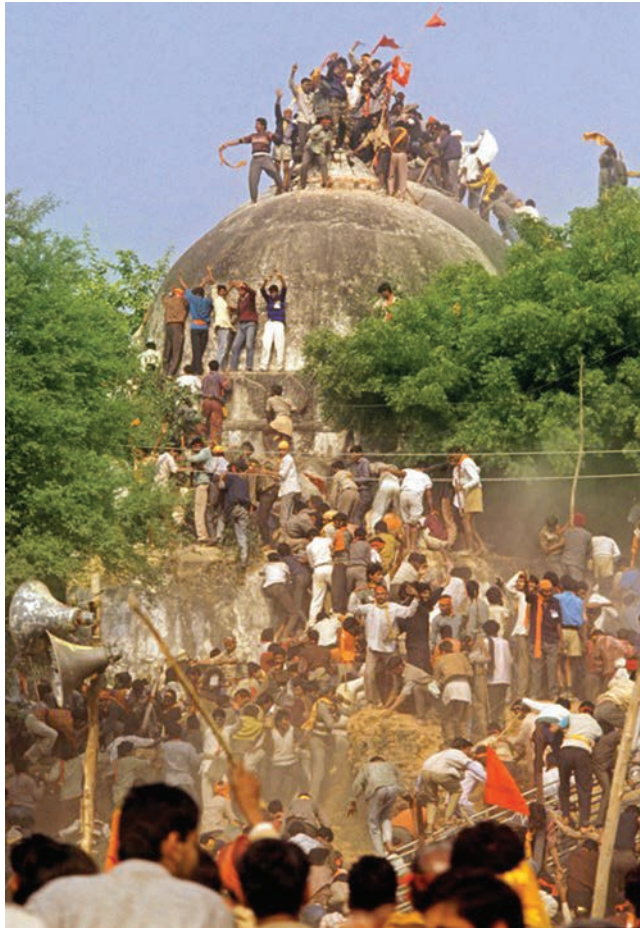
BY
ZOYA HASAN

"THE AYODHYA CAMPAIGN WAS DESIGNED TO PRODUCE AN IMAGE OF HINDUS SUFFERING AT THE HANDS OF MINORITIES, EVEN THOUGH THEY FORMED AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY AND DOMINATED DIVERSE SPHERES OF LIFE. NONETHELESS, A LARGE SECTION OF HINDUS BEGAN, CONSCIOUSLY OR SUBCONSCIOUSLY, EMBRACING THE IDEA OF A HINDU STATE WHERE CENTURIES OF SUPPRESSION BY MUSLIM INVADERS WOULD NOW BE CORRECTED. THE POLITICS OF REVENGE AND TARGETING OF MINORITIES, A HALLMARK OF MANY RIGHT-WING AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES WORLDWIDE, BECAME CENTRAL TO THE POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN INDIA TOO. HINDU UNITY WAS THUS SOUGHT TO BE CREATED NOT BY WHAT THEY SHARE BUT THROUGH THE COMMON OPPOSITION TO THE 'ENEMY WITHIN'."

It's been 30 years since the demolition of the Babri Masjid on December 6. Torn down by a mob in full public view, the destruction of the mosque occurred on the back of a massive mobilization that shook India's secular foundations. This act of political defiance testifies to the mobilizational power of religious identities and symbols in shaping the growth of majority sentiment in politics and public affairs and the systematic way in which priority has been given to these interests. Any separation of religion and the state, which was always weak in India, became even weaker after this; consequently, sectarian politics has gained new adherents.

Even if Ayodhya is not an election issue today, the polarization it engendered is more toxic than before and poses an existential threat to India's pluralist democracy.

The Ayodhya dispute tested India's resilience as a secular democracy. Constitutionally, it opened the prospect of changing both the ideological discourse and institutional politics in favor of a majoritarian idea of India, in contrast to the pluralist, non-parochial idea of the nation held in high regard earlier. Much of the



Babri Masjid demolition on December 6, 1992. Much of the dominance of the Hindu right in politics today can be traced back to the movement to demolish the Babri Masjid. File photo

dominance of the Hindu right in India's politics today can be traced back to the movement to destroy the Babri Masjid and build a Ram temple where the mosque once stood in the city of Ayodhya. The systematic push for political power wouldn't have succeeded as it has in the last 30 years without the ground prepared by the Ayodhya movement.

The Congress contributed significantly to this process by getting involved in the controversy, and that too at a time when Hindutva politics was on the rise. Even though it refrained from riding the tiger of communalism, it ended up creating a space for religious politics to play a more central role in public life. It changed the dynamics of electoral politics which undermined its own monopoly over power. The end of Congress dominance paved the way for the emergence of BJP's brand of majoritarian politics as increasing numbers of the middle classes bought into the idea that the Hindu majority has been denied its rightful place in the public sphere.

The Ayodhya campaign was designed to produce an image of Hindus suffering at the hands of minorities, even though they formed an overwhelming majority and dominated diverse spheres of life. Nonetheless, a large section of Hindus began, consciously or subconsciously, embracing the idea of a Hindu state where centuries of suppression by Muslim invaders would now be corrected. The politics of revenge and targeting of minorities, a hallmark of many right-wing authoritarian regimes worldwide, became central to the political discourse in India too. Hindu unity was thus sought to be created not by what they share but through the common opposition to the 'enemy within'.

The BJP replaced the Congress as the central pole of Indian politics after its spectacular victories in 2014 and 2019. The Supreme Court expedited the Ayodhya case with daily hearings and delivered its verdict in November 2019. Terming the demolition of the mosque an 'egregious violation of the law', the court

EVEN IF AYODHYA IS NOT AN ELECTION ISSUE TODAY, THE POLARIZATION IT ENGENDERED IS MORE TOXIC THAN BEFORE AND POSES AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT TO INDIA'S PLURALIST DEMOCRACY.

nevertheless awarded the disputed site to the Hindu nationalist litigants.

The ruling was a huge legal and political victory for the BJP. Many had thought that victory in the Ayodhya case would settle conflicts over disputed sites and communal mobilization will abate. But things did not stop there. This has become clear from subsequent events in the Gyanvapi case. Claims to Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi are a reenactment of events in Ayodhya despite the existence of the Places of Worship Act (Special Provisions) 1991 which prohibits the conversion of the religious character of any place of worship, as existing on August 15, 1947. The law is hardly an impediment when powerful forces decide to rake up these disputes. As in the case of Ayodhya, this dispute is not about law, nor even history, but about pushing the majoritarian political agenda.

Beyond these developments, the verdict gave a new fillip to the ruling dispensation to pursue the remaining key elements in the larger Hindutva plan - abrogation of Article 370, removing the special status accorded to J&K; construction of a Ram temple at Ayodhya; and imposition of a uniform civil code. Even as there was no prospect of punishment for those who planned and orchestrated the demolition of the masjid, the Bhumi Pujan for the Ram temple, though organized by the Ram Janmabhoomi Trust, became an official-cum-political function, with the PM laying the foundation for the temple. Merging of state, politics, and religion in the construction of the temple marked an important stage in the progress of Hindutva and its strategy of converting India into a majoritarian republic.

The Ayodhya issue had a deep impact on other political parties too. It forced a number of parties to acknowledge the primacy of the Hindu majority while putting them on the defensive vis-à-vis the promotion and protection of minority interests. Opposition parties have been wary of defending pluralism and secularism. The Congress's Bharat Jodo Yatra is the first serious attempt to counter the majoritarian turn in politics and improve public dialogue against division and intolerance.

Ayodhya caused a profound rupture in the political realm, thus underlining the success of religious nationalism in establishing a markedly majoritarian ethos and ethnic state, enshrined in law and policy. Furthermore, it accentuated fault lines in the social realm. This has meant narrowing of democracy, rise of a stronger authoritarian system at a political level, replacement of inclusive nationalism with religious nationalism, and decline of mutual respect and tolerance. Even if Ayodhya is not an election issue today, the polarization it engendered is more toxic than ever before, posing an existential threat to India's pluralist democracy.

(The author is Professor Emerita, Jawaharlal Nehru University)

Long-term plan needed for Punjab's progress



BY
BS GHUMAN

"TO REGAIN A LEADING POSITION, PUNJAB'S ECONOMY NEEDS TO ENTER HIGH-GROWTH TRAJECTORY AND ATTAIN A DOUBLE-DIGIT RATE BY 2047 AND 8 PER CENT GROWTH OF PER CAPITA INCOME. THESE TARGETS ARE ACHIEVABLE IN VIEW OF STRENGTHS OF THE ECONOMY SUCH AS SIZEABLE MARKET, SKILLED AND ENTREPRENEURIAL HUMAN CAPITAL, DIASPORIC SOCIAL CAPITAL AND INDUSTRIAL PEACE. THE DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH SHOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY SOCIAL SAFETY NETS TO MAKE GROWTH EQUITABLE."

The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister released the 'Competitiveness Roadmap for India@100' earlier this year, envisioning guiding principles for putting India on the trajectory of becoming a middle-income country and beyond by 2047. To achieve this vision, state-specific roadmaps need to be worked out.

The most important markers of Punjab's growth story of 75 years are the glorious journey during the implementation of the state-led model and the slide under the aegis of the market-driven model. The policy advice based on the economic journey and the theory of 'market failure' suggests reinvention of the development model to rejuvenate Punjab's economy. Can it happen when the market is dominating the economy? The answer is yes, but in the form of a hybrid model developed on the strengths of the triad - the state, the market and the social forces.

Theoretically, the state and the market are dichotomous institutions, but, in reality, the border between the two is blurred. Social forces play a soothing role in the state-market mix. In the hybrid model, the state, however, will play a leading role. The roadmap's vision is to restore the economic glory of Punjab based on sectoral strategies, linkages among sectors, investment, fiscal health, infrastructure, human resources, employment and zero-waste economy.

Punjab's economy registered a growth rate of 4.6 per cent per annum from 2011-12 to 2020-21, occupying the 20th position among states. The per capita income grew at 3.05 per cent. Leading states are growing at more than 7 per cent and registering around 6 per cent growth in per capita income. To regain a leading position, Punjab's economy needs to enter the high-growth trajectory and attain a double-digit rate by 2047 and 8 per cent growth of per capita income. These targets are achievable in view of strengths of the economy such as a sizeable market, skilled and entrepreneurial human capital, diasporic social capital and industrial peace. Double-digit growth should be accompanied by social safety nets to make growth equitable. To facilitate high growth, the structure of the economy also requires rapid structural transformations.

Currently, the service sector contributes 46 per cent to the state's income, followed by primary (31 per cent) and secondary sectors (23 per cent). By 2047, the structure of the economy should resemble that of industrial states by making the primary sector's share



Punjab's industrial profile is relatively weak. A two-pronged strategy can enable the state to become an industrial hub by 2047.

Photo for representation only

16 per cent, secondary sector 30 per cent and tertiary 54 per cent. An intersectoral strategy of strengthening backward and forward linkages among sectors will help bring structural transformations.

Agriculture is riddled with four types of crises/challenges - economic, environmental, efficiency-related and equity-linked. In the next 25 years, the agenda is to take agriculture to the next level (Agriculture 2.0), driven by precision/satellite agriculture.

The industrial profile of the state is relatively weak. A two-pronged strategy can enable Punjab to become an industrial hub by 2047. The state's industry is dominated by small units, mostly employing old technologies. Therefore, the first strategy is to upgrade the technology of the existing industry. The second is the steering of high-tech agro-based industries and the industries led by knowledge and smart technologies. To develop high-tech industries and promote innovations, the government, the industry and universities need to join hands on the pattern of the triple helix model of innovation.

Thriving on selling ideas, intangible/abstract products and professional services, the tertiary sector can become an epicenter of development in Punjab; firstly, by making service delivery more efficient. Secondly, by according priority to services such as information technology, social media, cybersecurity, environmental services, financial services, consultancy services and quinary services steered by 'gold-collar' professionals.

Punjab's performance on account of investment has deteriorated during the implementation of the market-led model. The investment-GSDP (Gross State Domestic Product) ratio declined from 32.27 per cent in 1995-96 to half (16.4 per cent) in 2019-20. To achieve the double-digit growth rate, the ratio should be scaled up to 40 per cent by 2047.

The fiscal health of Punjab is worrisome. The fiscal roadmap comprises reducing public debt-GSDP ratio

from 50 per cent to 32.5 per cent and fiscal deficit from 5 per cent to 3 per cent of the GSDP, reducing committed expenditure from 78 per cent to 50 per cent of the total revenue receipts, increasing capital expenditure from 6 per cent to 20 per cent of the total expenditure and mobilizing resources by doubling the tax-GSDP ratio from 6.1 per cent to 12.5 per cent by 2047.

The state's performance in the field of infrastructure is impressive. However, to attain double-digit growth, there is a need to improve the quality of economic, social and physical infrastructure and invest heavily in digital infrastructure.

In Punjab, investment in human resources is very low. On education, the state is spending only 2.5 per cent of the GSDP - less than half of the 6 per cent norm suggested by the Kothari Commission on education. Expenditure on health being 4 per cent of the state income is also inadequate. To improve human capital, Punjab should spend at least 6 per cent and 10 per cent of the GSDP on education and health, respectively, by 2047.

Punjab has a relatively high unemployment rate of 7.8 per cent. It should strive to attain a rate of around 4.5 per cent by 2047. The roadmap for reducing unemployment comprises skill development programs with 'apprenticeship' in vocations, including animal husbandry, electricity, driving, plumbing, computer courses, hospitality and healthcare. Long-term measures for generating employment include promoting industry and services, incentivizing startups and entrepreneurship, and developing synergy between educational institutions and the industry.

Guided by these parameters, the roadmap should incorporate inputs from experts and stakeholders. Political consensus on the roadmap should be arrived at by deliberating on it and giving it the go-ahead in the Assembly. It may be treated as a 'living document', which can be modified as and when the need arises.

(The author is a former Vice-Chancellor, Punjabi University, Patiala)

Lahore opens its first transgender school providing free education

DECEMBER 8

LAHORE (TIP): Pakistan's Punjab government has opened the first transgender public school here in the provincial capital in its bid to empower more trans persons in society.

Earlier, Pakistan's Punjab government had set up three transgender schools in the province—Multan, Bahawalpur, and D.G Khan—to educate and teach skills to trans persons.

These institutes provide free education from primary to higher secondary classes while imparting skill training that includes stitching, cooking, and beauty make-up.

The Lahore school, which was opened on Wednesday, will work in two shifts where the first half will be dedicated to imparting mainstream education while the second half will focus on teaching technical skills.

"The Lahore's school for transgender will work in two shifts. In the first, the students will be imparted education while in the second shift they will receive training in technical skills. The government will provide free books, uniforms, school bags, and pick and drop service," said a statement by the Punjab School Education Department.

A total of 36 transgender persons have been enrolled so far in the school.



The statement further said the teachers at the school also belong to the transgender community while two consultants have been engaged to help the community understand their problems.

Punjab province has 64.4 per cent of the country's transgender population with 6,709 people registered in the category. However, Lahore and its adjoining areas alone, reportedly have a population of 30,000 transgender

persons.

Access to education is the right of every Pakistanis but transgender persons face discrimination in the country and many of them struggle to find employment.

The country's upper house—Senate—had unanimously approved a bill in 2018 for the protection of the rights of transgender people, empowering them to determine their own gender identity. (PTI)

PAKISTANI PASSPORT RANKS 4TH LOWEST IN WORLD

DECEMBER 8

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan has been ranked 94th, sharing the slot with Somalia, in terms of passport strength while the UAE has topped the list of the world's most powerful ones.

According to the list issued by Arton Capital, a Pakistani passport mandates travel to only 44 countries without a visa, The Express Tribune reported.

Below Pakistan are Iraq (ranked 95th), Syria (96th) and Afghanistan (97th).

In comparison, the passports of Yemen (93rd), Bangladesh (92nd), North Korea, Libya and Palestine (91st) and Iran (90th) have been declared more powerful than that of Pakistan.

However, the passport of the UAE has been declared the most powerful across the world, The Express Tribune reported. UAE nationals can travel to 180 countries without a visa. Citizens of countries, including the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and others do not require a visa to visit 173 countries. Similarly, the people of the US, Poland, Ireland, Denmark, Belgium, New Zealand, Portugal and Norway can travel to 172 countries without a visa. Passports of every country in the world became powerful during this year as they are trying to acquire economic benefits by making travel facilities easier, The Express Tribune reported. (IANS)

Will continue to be 'steadfast friend' of Sri Lanka: India

DECEMBER 8

COLOMBO (TIP): India on December 8 said it will continue to be a "steadfast friend" of Sri Lanka and is committed to strengthening the bilateral economic partnership for mutual benefit, as it thanked President Ranil Wickremesinghe for holding "successful" talks on debt restructuring.

Wickremesinghe during the inaugural session of the Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2022 on Monday said that it held "successful" talks with India on debt restructuring and will also begin discussions with China, as the island nation scrambles to get assurances from major bilateral creditors to close a crucial deal with the IMF.

Sri Lanka, which is trying to secure a USD 2.9 billion bridge loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), is also looking at financial assurances from its major creditors—China, Japan and India—which is the requisite for Colombo to get the bailout package.

Replying to Wickremesinghe's tweet on holding the "successful" talks on debt restructuring, the Indian High Commission here tweeted, "Thank you H.E President @RW_UNP. #India will continue to be a steadfast friend of #SriLanka and stand by our brethren. We are committed to strengthening the

bilateral economic partnership for mutual benefit." Sri Lanka has large debt rollover volumes (Gross Financing Need) running up to 37 per cent of GDP in 2022, which the IMF wants to bring down.

The exact GFN target is not known, but other countries under restructuring have levels around 15 per cent, and some less, the EconomyNext reported.

China, however, continues to be ambivalent about its stand on loans to Sri Lanka as it is set for talks with the IMF for debt restructuring of several recipient countries of Chinese finances, which are defaulting on their external debt. Sri Lanka, which went bankrupt earlier this year, had announced a default on over USD 51 billion in foreign loans, including that of China.

China has also announced assistance of 500 million RMB (about USD 74 million) for the supply of essential goods, but it remained silent about former Lanka president Gotabaya Rajapaksa's request to defer the loan repayment.

India has rushed about USD 4 billion in assistance in the form of line credit and other modes to help Sri Lanka this year, which has virtually declared insolvency and defaulted on all foreign loans. (PTI)

NEPALI CONGRESS-LED COALITION INTENSIFIES TALKS WITH LIKE-MINDED PARTIES TO FORM GOVERNMENT

DECEMBER 8

KATHMANDU (TIP): Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's Nepali Congress-led five-party coalition, which is two seats away from a simple majority after securing 136 seats in the 275-member House of Representatives, has intensified negotiations with like-minded parties to form the new government.

Nepali Congress (NC) has emerged as the single largest party with 89 seats after the election commission allocated seats to all the political parties under the proportional voting system on December 7.

The other partners of the ruling alliance have together secured 47 seats - CPN-Maoist Centre (32), CPN-Unified Socialist (10), Loktantrik Samajwadi Party (4) and Rashtriya Janamorcha one.

The C. K. Raut-led Janamat Party, which secured only one seat in the House of Representatives (HoR) under the first-past-the-post category, got 5 seats under the proportional representation (PR) category, which means that the party will have a total of six members in the House.

Last week, Prime Minister Deuba met Raut at the PM's residence and discussed matters relating to forging cooperation in the days ahead, sources said.

If the Janamat Party backs the NC-led coalition, the ruling alliance will have the support of 142 lawmakers - four more than 138 required to form a government.

On Sunday, NC leader Ram Chandra Poudel said that the government to be formed now will provide political stability, good governance, development and employment in the village.

Meanwhile, former prime minister K P Sharma Oli-led CPN-UML has received the highest votes under the proportional voting system while the NC and CPN-Maoist Centre have secured second and third positions, respectively.

The CPN-UML has secured 34 seats under the proportionate voting followed by the NC with 32 seats and CPN-Maoist Centre with 14 seats. Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) has received 13 seats while Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), Janata Samajwadi Party (JSP) and Janamat Party have received 7, 5 and 5 seats respectively.

After the allocation of proportionate votes, the opposition CPN-UML has 78 seats.

Similarly, RSP has secured 20 seats followed by RPP 14 seats and JSP 12 seats. The Loktantrik Samajwadi Party has got 4 seats, Nagarik Unmukti Party 3 seats, Rastriya Janamorcha 1 seat, and Nepal Majdoor Kisan Party 1 seat in the HoR. (PTI)

**WHITE HOUSE SUPPORTS
PASSAGE OF BILL THAT
ELIMINATES PER COUNTRY
QUOTA FOR GREEN CARDS;
INDIAN-AMERICANS SET
TO BENEFIT**

DECEMBER 08, 2022



Photo for representation only

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The White House has supported Congress to pass a legislation that seeks to eliminate the per country quota on green cards to allow US employers to focus on hiring people based on merit, not their birthplace, a bill if passed would benefit several hundreds of thousands of immigrants especially Indian-Americans.

A Green Card, known officially as a Permanent Resident Card, is a document issued to immigrants to the US as evidence that the bearer has been granted the privilege of residing permanently. This week, the House of Representatives is scheduled to vote on the Equal Access to Green Cards for Legal Employment (EAGLE) Act of 2022. The EAGLE Act would eliminate a per-country cap on employment-based green cards- a policy that disproportionately affects Indian immigrants.

If passed, this legislation would phase out the per-country caps over the course of nine years to ensure that eligible immigrants from less populated countries are not excluded as the EAGLE Act is implemented.

"The administration supports efforts to improve our immigrant visa system and ease the harsh effects of the immigrant visa backlog," the White House said. "Accordingly, the administration supports the House passage of HR 3648, the Equal Access to Green Cards for Legal Employment (EAGLE) Act, and its goal of allowing US employers to focus on hiring immigrants based on merit, not their birthplace, by eliminating the "per country" limitation on employment-based immigrant visas (green cards)," it said. These changes would take effect over a nine-year transition period to ensure that no countries are excluded from receiving visas while the per-country caps are phased out.

During the transition period, visas would also be set aside for nurses and physical therapists to address urgent needs in the healthcare industry, and for employment-based immigrants and their family members who are not currently in the United States, the White House said.

*(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)*

American basketball star Brittney Griner is freed as part of a prisoner swap with Russia

DECEMBER 8, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Brittney Griner, the American basketball star imprisoned in Russia, was released on Thursday, December 8, after 10 months of captivity after President Biden agreed to a swap for Viktor Bout, an imprisoned Russian arms dealer known as the "Merchant of Death," the president said.

On Thursday morning, Mr. Biden tweeted a picture of himself and Cherele Griner, Ms. Griner's wife, in the Oval Office, with the words: "Moments ago I spoke to Brittney Griner. She is safe. She is on a plane. She is on her way home."

Paul Whelan, another American held prisoner, was not released on Thursday despite months of efforts by U.S. diplomats to include him as part of the deal with the Russians for the exchange with Mr. Bout.

Ms. Griner, an All-Star center with the W.N.B.A.'s Phoenix Mercury and a two-time Olympic gold medalist, was serving a nine-year prison sentence that put her at the center of a fraught geopolitical showdown between Washington and Moscow. In February, she was stopped at an airport near Moscow after customs officials found two vape cartridges containing hashish oil in her luggage.

Her case became an international cause because she was seen as a hostage held by President Vladimir V. Putin's government as Russia was subjected to a broad swath of international sanctions in response to its invasion of Ukraine a week after her arrest. The Biden administration's efforts to negotiate a prisoner swap with Russia for her and Mr. Whelan, had stalled for months as she was sent to a penal colony outside Moscow.

Ms. Griner was described by one of her lawyers this fall as struggling emotionally and increasingly worried that she would not be freed. She was permitted outside once a day to walk for an hour in a small courtyard, according to her lawyer, and otherwise confined to a cramped cell with two cellmates. She



President Biden with Cherele Griner, Ms. Griner's wife, VP Kamala Harris and Secretary of State Blinken in the Oval Office on December 8,

slept on a specially elongated bed to accommodate her 6-foot-9 frame.

American officials met with her in the penal colony last month for the first time since a Russian court rejected her appeal and reported that she was doing "as well as can be expected," as a White House spokeswoman put it at the time. Ms. Griner turned 32 while in custody and her family continued to press for her release.

Mr. Whelan, a former U.S. Marine who later worked as a corporate security executive, was arrested at a Moscow hotel in December 2018 and convicted in June 2020 on espionage charges that the U.S. government says were manufactured. Administration officials sought his release as part of a package deal with Ms. Griner for Mr. Bout.

Officials said Thursday that the Russians refused to include Mr. Whelan as part of the agreement, leaving the president to agree to a "one-for-one" swap much like he did in April when he agreed to release Konstantin Yaroshenko, a Russian pilot, in exchange for Trevor Reed, an ailing former U.S. Marine held for two years on what his family considered to be bogus charges of

assault.

The trade for Mr. Bout gave Moscow back one of the most notorious arms dealers of modern times, earning the nickname "Merchant of Death" as he evaded capture for years. He was convicted in 2011 by a New York jury on four counts that included conspiring to kill American citizens. Prosecutors said he had agreed to sell anti-aircraft weapons to drug enforcement informants who were posing as arms buyers for the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

In July, American officials expressed frustration publicly that their Russian counterparts were refusing to engage in what the officials called a "substantial offer" to secure her release in exchange for Mr. Bout. For months, American diplomats said that Mr. Putin seemed uninterested in even discussing the offer.

Earlier this month, a top Russian diplomat said publicly that the chance for a deal that would free Ms. Griner was increasing. But U.S. officials dismissed his comments, saying that they continued to be stonewalled by the Russians, who were not seriously negotiating a deal for Mr. Bout.

Scientist who worked at Wuhan lab makes startling revelation, says covid was man-made virus

DECEMBER 6, 2022

NEW YORK (TIP): In what appears to be an astonishing revelation, a US-based scientist, who worked at a controversial research lab in China's Wuhan, has said that Covid-19 was a "man-made virus" that leaked from the facility.

Covid was leaked from Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), a state-run and funded research facility, two years ago, the New York Post reported, quoting US-based researcher Andrew Huff's statement in the British newspaper The Sun.

In his latest book, "The Truth About Wuhan," epidemiologist Huff claims that the pandemic was caused by the US government's funding of coronaviruses in China. Excerpts of Huff's book have been

out in the UK-based tabloid The Sun.

According to the New York Post report, Huff is the former vice president of the EcoHealth Alliance, a non-profit organization based in New York that studies infectious diseases.

Huff claims in his book that China's gain-of-function experiments were conducted with inadequate security, resulting in a leak at the Wuhan lab, according to New York Post.

The Wuhan lab has been the center of heated debates over the origins of Covid, with both Chinese government officials and lab workers denying that the virus originated there. "Foreign laboratories did not have the adequate control measures in place for ensuring proper biosafety,



Covid was leaked from Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), a state-run and funded research facility, two years ago, the New York Post reported, quoting US-based researcher Andrew Huff's statement.

biosecurity, and risk management, ultimately resulting in the lab leak at the Wuhan Institute of Virology," Andrew Huff, said in his book. *(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)*

US Congress passes landmark Bill protecting same-sex marriage, LGBT advocates hail move

DECEMBER 8

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The US House of Representatives on Thursday, December 8, gave final congressional approval to legislation that provides federal recognition of same-sex marriages, a measure born out of concern that the Supreme Court could reverse its support for legal recognition of such relationships.

The House vote was 258-169, with all of the chamber's Democrats and 39 Republicans voting in favor - though 169 of the chamber's Republicans voted against it and one voted "present". The measure now goes to Democratic President Joe Biden's desk for signature into law. The Respect for Marriage Act, as it is called, won Senate approval last month.

The legislation won the support of LGBT advocates as well as a number of religious organizations and entities, including the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, though many American religious conservatives still oppose gay marriage as counter to biblical scripture.

It is narrowly written to act as a limited backstop for the 2015 Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage nationwide, known as Obergefell v. Hodges. It would allow the federal government and states to recognize same-sex and interracial marriages as long as they were legal in the states where they were performed. It makes concessions for religious groups



New Yorkers enjoy the Pride Parade

Instagram photo/ Filip Wolak

and institutions that do not support such marriages.

The measure would repeal a 1996 US law called the Defense of Marriage Act, which among other things denied federal benefits to same-sex couples. It bars states from rejecting the validity of out-of-state marriages on the basis of sex, race or ethnicity. The Supreme Court in 1967 declared prohibitions on interracial marriage unconstitutional.

But the legislation would not bar states from blocking same-sex or interracial marriages if the Supreme Court allowed them to do so. It also ensures that religious entities would not be forced to provide goods or services for any marriage and protects them from being

denied tax-exempt status or other benefits for declining to recognize same-sex marriages.

In a speech on the House floor ahead of the vote, Democratic Speaker Nancy Pelosi condemned the "hateful movement" behind attacks on LGBT rights in the United States.

The legislation "will help prevent right-wing extremists from upending the lives of loving couples, traumatizing kids across the country and turning back the clock on hard-won prizes," Pelosi said.

Republican Representative Jim Jordan said the bill was "dangerous and takes the country in the wrong direction." When the Senate passed it by a vote of 61-

36, 12 Republicans joined 49 Democrats in supporting it. Most Senate Republicans voted against it.

A broader version of the bill - without the explicit protections for religious liberty - passed the 435-seat House in August, with the backing of all the Democrats and 47 Republicans. But to get the necessary 60 votes in the Senate to proceed with the legislation amid opposition by many Republican senators, its co-sponsors added an amendment clarifying that religious groups could not be sued under it.

The legislation was written by a group of Democratic and Republican senators in response to fears that the Supreme Court, with its increasingly assertive conservative majority, could someday strike down the Obergefell ruling, potentially jeopardizing same-sex marriage nationwide. The court has shown a willingness to reverse its own precedents as it did in June when it overturned its landmark 1973 ruling that legalized abortion nationwide.

The Supreme Court's conservative majority on Monday appeared ready to rule that a Christian web designer has a right to refuse to provide services for same-sex marriages in a case the liberal justices said could empower certain businesses to discriminate based on constitutional free speech protections.

Reuters says about 568,000 married same-sex couples live in the United States, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

US will continue to encourage New Delhi to uphold its commitments to protect religious freedom for all

DECEMBER 07, 2022

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): India, the world's largest democracy, is home to a great diversity of faiths, the United States said Tuesday, December 6, noting that it will continue to encourage New Delhi to uphold its commitments to protect religious freedom for all.

The United States has designated 12 countries, including China, Pakistan and Myanmar, as "countries of particular concern" for the current status of religious freedom in these nations. Announcing this on Friday, December 8, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said around the world, governments and non-state actors harass, threaten, jail, and even kill individuals on account of their beliefs.

"INDIA OF COURSE, IS THE WORLD'S LARGEST DEMOCRACY. IT'S HOME TO A GREAT DIVERSITY OF FAITHS. OUR ANNUAL REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM OUTLINES SOME OF THE CONCERNS WE'VE TAKEN NOTE OF WHEN IT COMES TO INDIA. WE CONTINUE TO CAREFULLY MONITOR THE RELIGIOUS FREEDOM SITUATION IN ALL COUNTRIES AND THAT INCLUDES IN INDIA," STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON NED PRICE TOLD REPORTERS HERE.



US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said that India is home to a great diversity of faiths, and the US will continue to encourage New Delhi to uphold its commitments to protect religious freedom for all

The Biden Administration, he said, will continue to encourage the Indian government to uphold its commitments to protect religious freedom for all.

"We engage officials regularly on steps they can take to advance religious freedom. As the world's two largest democracies, the United States and India, we're also committed to an enduring project," he said.

"This is the project that Secretary (of State, Tony) Blinken spoke to previously. The project that our founders put it, of striving to form a more perfect union. This is a project for both of our countries. We have worked together, and we can work together to show that our democracies can meet our peoples' needs. We must continue to hold ourselves to our core values including respect for human rights like freedom of religion and freedom of belief or expression," he said in response to a question.

"That, in turn, makes our respective democracies even stronger. Secretary Blinken, given the totality of the facts and the circumstances, determined that religious freedom concerns in India do not warrant a country of particular concern designation or placement on the special watch list. But of course, these are conversations that we continue to have with our Indian partners and with partners around the world," Price said.

Ahead of the announcement of the annual designation by the State Department, there were massive lobbying efforts by groups like Indian American Muslim Council and pressures from organizations like the US Commission for International Religious Freedom to designate India as a Country of Concern.

**MCD poll result:
AAP marks maiden
win ending 15-yr
BJP rule**

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) witnessed a sweeping win in the MCD election 2022 by gaining a total of 134 seats. This marks the 15-year rule by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the maiden win for the AAP. Following the win, Delhi chief minister and AAP convenor Arvind Kejriwal sought PM Narendra Modi's blessing and urged BJP and Congress to work together to make Delhi a better place.

AAP gained a majority by winning 134 while the BJP bagged 104. The Congress managed to win just nine wards. The MCD has 250 wards and the simple majority mark is 126.

Three Independent candidates, including Shakeela Begum from Seelampur in northeast Delhi, have also won.

AAP's transgender candidate Bobi won from Sultanpuri-A defeating her Congress rival Varuna Dhaka by over 6,700 votes.

Following the win, Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal said, "I want the cooperation of the BJP and Congress to work for Delhi now. I appeal to the Centre & ask for PM's blessings to make Delhi better. We have to make MCD corruption-free. Today, the people of Delhi have given a message to the entire nation." He also congratulated Delhi for the win.

CM also promised to end corruption and bribery culture in the MCD.

BJP began the day by leading in the initial trends for nearly one and a half hours. But, the trends started shifting as the AAP gained the lead and maintained thereafter until the final results were declared.

Himachal Pradesh elections

Congress secures 43.9% vote share, BJP close behind with 43%, AAP gets only 1.1%

SHIMLA (TIP)

The Congress secured 43.90 percent vote share as it wrested Himachal Pradesh from the BJP, winning 40 seats in the 68-member Assembly in the hill state which maintained its tradition of voting incumbent government out of power since 1985.

Despite getting 43 percent vote share, the BJP could only manage to win 25 seats, with many segments witnessing lower victory margins.

Three Independents also emerged victorious in the assembly polls, results for which were declared on Thursday, December 8.

The vote share was up for the Congress as against previous assembly elections.

The BJP and the Congress contested on all 68 constituencies, while the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) fielded its candidates on 67 seats, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) on 53 and the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) on 11 seats.

The AAP failed to open its account and the CPI-M also did not win any seat while its sitting MLA from Theog also lost.

The AAP received 1.10 percent votes, the CPI-M 0.66 percent, the BSP 0.35 percent, and Independents and others got 10.39 percent, while 0.59 percent went to NOTA.

The gap of less than one per cent between Congress and BJP vote shares was highlighted by both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP chief J P Nadda in their address to party workers in Delhi after the poll results were declared.



The BJP had given the slogan of "Raj nahin, riwaz badlega", which translates to "the convention will change, not the government", but failed to buck the trend. Himachal Pradesh has not voted any incumbent government back to power since 1985.

Nadda thanked the BJP workers for their hard work in his home state Himachal Pradesh and asserted "raj may have changed, but 'riwaz' also changed as there was a gap of less than 1 percent in the vote share of the top two parties".

In the 2017 state elections, the BJP had won 44 seats, the Congress 21, the CPI(M)

one and Independents two. The BJP had then got 48.8 per cent votes, the Congress 41.7 per cent, Independents 6.3 percent and the CPI(M) had got 1.5 per cent, while NOTA attracted 0.9 per cent votes.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi thanked the people of Himachal Pradesh for the "decisive win" of his party and assured them that every promise made by the party will be fulfilled.

Conceding defeat, Chief Minister Jairam Thakur said he respected the mandate of the people and submitted his resignation to the governor.

Source: PTI

Gujarat election result: How BJP scripted a historic victory

GANDHINAGAR (TIP)

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has once again swept the Gujarat Assembly, and this time with a historical landslide victory. This is the seventh straight victory for the saffron party in the state since 1995. And while the party may at this point be used to winning here, this triumph is especially significant because of two reasons.

First, the BJP is the only party after the Left Front in West Bengal to has won seven consecutive elections in a state. No other party in India has been able to do this so far.

Second, the BJP broke all the records for the number of seats won by any party in the state. It took 156 seats of the state's 182 assembly seats a record in its own right. The previous record was for 149 seats in 1985 when the Indian National Congress under Madhav Singh Solanki won the assembly. This was the election when the INC implemented the "KHAM" (Koli-Kshatriya, Harijan, Adivasi, and Muslim) theory where the government increased the reservation quota for OBCs.

The dominance of the BJP in the state can be explained by three things: The dominance of Hindutva politics, Modi magic, and economic prosperity.

Hindutva politics

Gujarat has been a laboratory for Hindutva politics for a long time. It has a history of Jan Sangh's politics. In the 1980s, after the emergence of the BJP, Gujarat was the first state where the party received a double-digit vote share. Since 1995, the BJP has been receiving more than 43 per



cent of the vote share. In 2022, the BJP's vote share was 53 per cent.

Modi magic

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been a phenomenon that has changed electoral mathematics on several occasions. "Modi magic" in Gujarat is based on three components. Modi is perceived as a person who brought development to the state, improved law and order, and maintained peace. He is also perceived as a non-partisan leader in the caste-ridden society of Gujarat.

Verdict in numbers

The BJP did well in terms of both seats and votes. First, the party has not just maintained its urban dominance but has also improved emphatically in the rural constituencies as well. Overall, the BJP received 52 per cent votes. For urban seats, this went up to 63 per cent. On the other hand, the INC received just 21 per cent votes, and the Aam Aadmi Party received 13 per cent votes.

In the 2017 assembly polls, the BJP scored 58 per cent of votes in urban areas, while the INC received 36 per cent of the votes. Prior to the results, many presumed that the AAP could cut into the BJP's vote share in urban areas. However, the results suggest that it was the INC who suffered losses to the AAP.

In rural constituencies, the INC used to be a close challenger to the BJP. However, in 2022, the INC lost this position as well. The BJP received a 48 per cent vote share in rural assembly seats while the INC received just 30 per cent – 14 percentage points less than what it received in the 2017 elections.

Earlier, the BJP and Congress had close contests in Saurashtra and the North Gujarat region. In this election, however, this trend has also changed significantly. Barring North Gujarat, the BJP received more than 50 per cent of the votes in Central and South Gujarat and the Saurashtra region. In North Gujarat, the BJP received 47 per cent vote share. On the other hand, the INC received 37 per cent of the votes in North Gujarat, 27 per cent each in Central Gujarat and the Saurashtra region, and just 21 per cent votes in South Gujarat.

Source: India Today

No plan yet to reintroduce NJAC, govt tells House

The Centre told the Parliament on Thursday that it currently has no plan to reintroduce the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC), which was struck down by the Supreme Court in 2015.

Responding to a question by Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge and CPI(M) MP John Brittas, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju in a written response said, "at present, there is no such proposal." Kharge and Brittas had asked if the government proposed to reintroduce NJAC with suitable modifications. The Centre's response comes at a time when it is at loggerheads with the judiciary over the process of appointment of judges.

Last week, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankar had remarked that it was "never too late to reflect" on the NJAC, while underlining the "primacy of the will of the people."

The Constitution (99th Amendment) Act, which established the NJAC and the NJAC Act, were passed by the Parliament in 2014 to set up a commission for appointing judges, replacing the Collegium system. The NJAC would give the government a foot in the door on appointment of judges. The laws were repealed in October 2015 after the Supreme Court struck them down.

SC shuts last window for probe into 1989-90 Pandits' killings

The Supreme Court has dismissed a curative petition seeking a probe by a central agency or any other court-appointed agency into the alleged mass murders and genocide of Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu and Kashmir during 1989-1990.

"In our opinion, no case is made within the parameters indicated in the Supreme Court decision in Rupa Hurra vs Ashok Hurra case," the apex court said while dismissing the petition.

A curative petition is the last legal recourse in the Supreme Court and it is generally heard in the chamber unless a case is made out for reconsideration of the verdict.

The petition was dismissed by a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and comprising Justices SK Kaul and SA Nazeer and the court said that no case was made out of the curative petition. The petition filed by a body of Kashmiri Pandits, 'Roots in Kashmir', stated that the Supreme Court was not justified in dismissing the curative petition at the admission stage in 2017 merely on the presumption that the instances referred to in it pertained to 1989-1990. It stated that no significant purpose would emerge as evidence is unlikely to be available at this late juncture.

Samajwadi Party retains Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat; BJP wins Rampur

LUCKNOW (TIP)

The Samajwadi Party (SP) on Thursday, December 8, won the by-election from the Mainpuri Lok Sabha constituency, retaining the legacy seat of its founder Mulayam Singh Yadav, while the BJP secured the Rampur assembly constituency, a long-time stronghold of former state minister Azam Khan, for the first time.

The saffron party, however, received a setback in the Khatauli assembly seat that went to the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), an SP ally.

In Mainpuri, SP candidate Dimple Yadav, Mulayam's daughter-in-law, won by 2.88 lakh votes, three times the party patriarch's victory margin in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections when he secured the seat for the fifth time.

While the bypoll to the Mainpuri parliamentary seat was necessitated by Mulayam's death in October, the disqualification of SP's Azam Khan and BJP's Vikram Singh Saini as MLAs from Rampur and Khatauli led to the by-elections on these two assembly seats. Azam lost his Assembly membership from Rampur, which he won in 2022 for 10th time, following his conviction in a hate speech case.

Dimple led in all the five assembly segments, including the Lodh-dominated Bhongaon where Mulayam lagged behind by 25,510 votes in 2019. The Lodhs are largely BJP supporters. Dimple bagged 6.18 lakh votes (64 per cent) followed by BJP's Raghuraj Singh Shakya (3.29 lakh) and NOTA (6,125). The BJP's vote share declined in the by-poll in comparison to 2019 when its candidate Prem Singh Shakya had got 4.30 lakh votes (44 per cent). But the BJP replaced Prem Singh Shakya with Raghuraj Singh Shakya, a former two-time SP MP.

In Rampur, BJP's Akash Saxena defeated SP's Asim Raja with a margin of 34,136 votes by getting 62 per cent of votes. In the 2022 assembly polls, Azam had defeated Saxena with a margin of 55,141 votes.

The SP is attributing the low turnout of Muslim voters as the main factor behind its defeat in the constituency that the community comprises 56 per cent of the total electorate.

Raja's defeat is a setback for Azam, his political mentor. In the Rampur Lok Sabha elections in June this year, Azam got SP ticket for Raja who had lost the seat to the BJP. The Lok Sabha by-poll was held as Azam had resigned as MP after he was elected to the Assembly. The Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP), an SP ally in the 2022 assembly polls, got only 169 votes, behind 726 NOTA votes.

The BJP for the first time tried to woo Muslims by reaching



SP candidate Dimple Yadav waves at supporters after her victory in Mainpuri by-election in Mainpuri on Thursday. Photo: PTI

out to the community by deploying Pasmanda Muslims among others. "That tactic did not work much. But the BJP got majority of the Dalit votes in Rampur in the absence of the BSP and that helped in win," said a party leader.

In the Khatauli assembly constituency (Muzaffarnagar district), RLD candidate Madan Bhaiyya defeated BJP's Rajkumari by a margin of 22,143 votes. While Bhaiyya got 54 per cent of the total votes, Rajkumari polled 41.72 per cent.

In 2022, Rajkumari's husband Vikram Singh Saini had won the seat for second consecutive term after getting 45.34 per cent vote whereas RLD got 38 per cent votes. Vikram was disqualified as MLA after his conviction in a case related to the 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots. Source: *The Indian Express*

Collegium a multi-member body whose tentative decision cannot be brought in public domain: SC

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Supreme Court on Friday, December 9, dismissed a plea seeking to disclose the details of a collegium meeting held on December 12, 2018 under the Right to Information Act.

A bench of Justices MR Shah and CT Ravikumar said that only resolutions drawn and signed by all collegium members can be said to be a final decision. Tentative resolutions drawn upon discussion and consultation among the members cannot be said to be final unless they are signed by all of them, it said.

"Collegium is a multi-member body whose tentative decision cannot be brought in the public domain," it said.

The top court said it cannot place reliance on media reports and the interview of a former member of the collegium and doesn't want to comment on statements made by the former judge.

In a resolution passed on January 10, 2019, the collegium, whose combination was changed due to the retirement of Justice MB Lokur, mentioned that in its meeting on December 12, 2018 only consultations were held on certain names but no final decision was taken.

The top court passed the verdict on a petition by RTI activist



Anjali Bhardwaj against a Delhi High Court order dismissing her plea seeking the agenda of the Supreme Court Collegium's meeting held on December 12, 2018, when certain decisions were purportedly taken on the elevation of some judges to the apex court. Source: PTI

India in history this Week

DECEMBER 9, 2022, TO DECEMBER 15, 2022

09 DECEMBER

1946 The first meeting of the Constituent Assembly that made the country's highest law was on this day.



- 1946 UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi was born.
- 1971 During the Liberation War, the Indian Army had pierced the air campaign Meghna Heli Bridge.
- 1484 The great poet and saint Surdas was born.
- 1758 The thirteen-month-long war of Madras began in India. This was the most dangerous war between Britain and France in India.
- 1898 Belur Math was established in Kolkata.
- 2001 United National Party leader Ranil Vikram Singhe was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka.
- 1825 Rao Tula Ram, a prominent hero of the Sepoy Mutiny was born.
- 1913 India's first female photo journalist Homi Vyarawala was born.

10 DECEMBER

- 1878 The freedom fighter leader G. Rajagopalachari was born.
- 1878 Birth of Muhammad Ali Johar, one of the founders of Jamia Millia Islamia in Rampur.



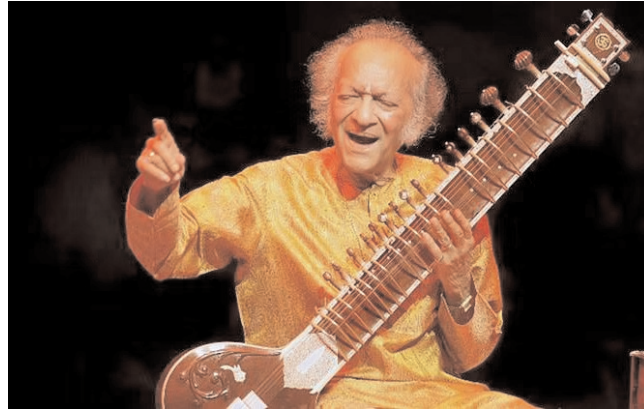
- 2001 Dada Muni, one of the stalwarts of Indian cinema, said goodbye to the world.
- 1992 The first hovercraft service of the country was started in Gujarat.
- 1998 Amartya Sen was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in Stockholm.

11 DECEMBER

- 1911 Dilip Kumar, one of the greatest actors of Indian cinema, was born.



- 1935 Former President of the country Pranab Mukherjee was born in Birbhum in West Bengal.
- 1969 Vishwanath Anand, the emperor of chess, was born.
- 2011 Pandit Ravi Shankar died.



- 1845 First Anglo-Sikh War: The Sikh army crossed the Sutlej River in Punjab.
- 1858 Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay and Yadunath Bose became the first Bachelor of Arts subjects from the University of Calcutta.
- 1946 Rajendra Prasad was appointed the President of the Constituent Assembly.
- 1967 In western India, a magnitude 6.5 earthquake killed 170 people.
- 1687 The East India Company formed a municipal corporation in Madras (India).

12 DECEMBER

- 1911 The capital of India was shifted from Calcutta to Delhi.
- 1971 All the facilities provided to the former kings by the Indian Parliament were canceled.
- 1992 Giant Buddha statue was installed in Hyderabad's Hussain Sagar lake.
- 1990 TN Seshan appointed as Chief Election Commissioner.
- 1996 Signing of 30-year treaty on the sharing of Ganga water between India and Bangladesh.
- 2001 India gave two cheetah helicopters and weapons to Nepal.
- 1964 Famous Hindi poet and litterateur Maithilisharan Gupta died.

13 DECEMBER

- 1232 Iltutmish, the ruler of the Ghulam dynasty, captured Gwalior.
- 1996 Kofi Annan was elected Secretary General of the United Nations.
- 2001 The Indian Parliament was attacked by terrorists.
- 1921 The Banaras Hindu University was inaugurated by the 'Prince of Wales'.
- 1955 India and the Soviet Union accepted the Panchsheel agreement.
- 1961 Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi started his Test match career against England in Delhi.



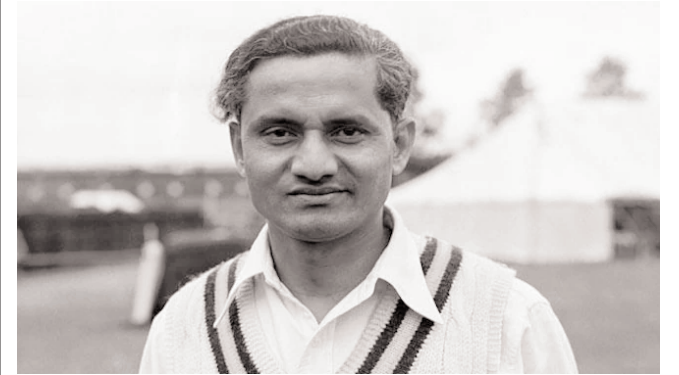
1998 Mahatma Ramchandra Veer was awarded the

"Bhai Hanuman Prasad Poddar Rashtra Seva" award from the Bada Bazaar Library in Kolkata.

- 2008 For the fifth phase of Jammu and Kashmir, 57% polling was held in 11 assembly constituencies.
- 2012 In the final match of the blind Twenty20 World Cup, the Indian cricket team defeated Pakistan by 30 runs to take the title of world winner.
- 1955 Former Defense Minister of India and former Chief Minister of Goa Manohar Parrikar was born.



2000 Former captain of the Indian cricket team, Vijay Samuel Hazare became the first person to receive the 'Castrol Lifetime Achievement Award'.



14 DECEMBER

- 1924 Director, producer, showman Raj Kapoor was born.
- 1901 Mahatma Gandhi reached Rajkot via Porbandar.
- 1960 The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was established.
- 2005 11 Hindus are condemned with life imprisonment for their involvement in the killing of Muslims in the 2002 Gujarat violence.
- 2011 Poisonous liquor banned in India kills 166 people in West Bengal.

15 DECEMBER

- 1950 The iron man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel died.
- 1749 Chhatrapati Shivaji's grandson Shahu died.
- 1953 India's S. Vijayalakshmi Pandit was elected the first woman president of the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly.
- 1991 Filmmaker Satyajit Ray was awarded a Special Oscar for his achievements in the cinema world.



Vijayanand is an entertaining film that reminds one of Bollywood of old



BY
MURTAZA ALI KHAN



L to R: Bharat Bopanna, Anand Sankeshwar, Nihal Rajput, Siri Prahlad



A Still from Vijayanand

Vijayanand, the latest offering from Kannada cinema, tells the story of Vijay Sankeshwar and how he overcame insurmountable odds to establish India's largest logistics firm VRL Group. The film is also releasing in Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, and Telugu. Directed by Rishika Sharma, the biopic focuses on Sankeshwar's journey as a maverick who is never afraid to take risks based on his own hunches, often going against his own family and friends. In the second half of the film, the focus shifts to Vijay's 16-year-old son Anand (older Anand is portrayed by Bharat Bopanna who is also the story's narrator) who joins his father in his quest to take the enterprise to new heights. The film stars Nihal Rajput, Prakash Belawadi, Anant Nag, Siri Prahlad, and Bharat



Nihal Rajput as Vijay Sankeshwar in Vijayanand

Nihal, who essays the part of Vijay Sankeshwar, in the film previously worked with Rishika on the 2018 film 'Trunk.' "We had got the appointment to make a short presentation to Mr. Anand Sankeshwar regarding a film we had in our mind and at the time we had no idea that it will turn into a series of meetings that would culminate in Mr. Sankeshwar offering to produce our proposed biopic," reveals Nihal.

As for Anand Sankeshwar, it was the team's exhaustive research that got the job done. "The kind of research they had done was really something that was very impressive. And I think all that research has yielded excellent results as I have had the pleasure of seeing the film and I can tell you that we have a film that the audiences will love," opines Anand Sankeshwar.

Nihal's portrayal of Vijay Sankeshwar is easily the film's highlight. He is able to essay the different phases of Vijay's life with great conviction. When we first meet him, Vijay is a youthful man who is brash and impulsive and keen on impressing his father. At first he gets a new printing machine which revitalizes his father's business. But later on, when he decides to make a first into transportation business he not only faces opposition from his own father but also has to battle the muscle power of his opponents. Gradually, Vijay mellows down to become a seasoned politician and newspaperman and Nihal never misses a note during his measured performance.

The intentions of makers of 'Vijayanand' are pretty clear. They want to present Vijay Sankeshwar as a man of high morals and values. This is in contrast with a film like Mani Ratnam's 'Guru.' Having said that 'Vijayanand' and 'Guru' also share a lot in common. 'Vijayanand' is an entertaining film with immaculate period detail and a meaty storyline that reminds one of Bollywood of old. It's exactly the kind of story that Bollywood has told time and again but of late they seem to have forgotten the art.

(Murtaza Ali Khan is an Indian Film & TV Critic / Journalist who has been covering the world of entertainment for over 10 years. He tweets at @MurtazaCritic and can be mailed at: murtaza.jmi@gmail.com).



Siri Prahlad and Vijay Rajput in Vijayanand

Bopanna.

ENJOY MORE HOLIDAY FUNTAINMENT

BY MABEL PAIS



Kwanzaa Children's Art.

Photo / Courtesy NJPAC



Kwanzaa Marketplace

Photo / Courtesy NJPAC

KWANZAA FAMILY FESTIVAL

ALL ARE INVITED TO GATHER FOR A FULL DAY OF CELEBRATIONS AT NJPAC'S ANNUAL KWANZAA FAMILY FESTIVAL

Free children's activities, performances, Artisan Marketplace and more

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2022 10AM - 10PM

Thousands are expected to gather on the campus of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) on December 17 as the venue's annual Kwanzaa Family Festival returns as an in-person celebration. The festival has been held at NJPAC for more than a decade, and activates the Arts Center's entire campus during one of its busiest holiday weekends.

"We are so excited to welcome our whole community back to this so-much-loved celebration, one of the longest-running Arts Center traditions," said Eyesha Marable, NJPAC's Assistant Vice President of Community Engagement. "It's something we've been looking forward to over the past two years. Virtual events are great, but there's nothing like seeing this whole building filled with families, children and elders enjoying the season."

FESTIVAL: MARKETPLACE, ACTIVITIES & PERFORMANCES

Free performances will be held every hour in the Arts Center's Prudential Hall Lobby from 10AM to 10PM. Free family activities including dance and drumming classes, face painting, storytelling, child-friendly arts and crafts workshops, plus a coat and toy give-away for the children of the community, will be held throughout NJPAC's indoor campus from 10AM to 2PM. Each event and activity embodies one of the seven principles of Kwanzaa, a holiday dedicated to celebrating African-American culture and community.

A Kwanzaa candle-lighting ceremony and a Vibunzi - a tradition of honoring young people with an ear of corn (or in this case, a slice of cornbread) to represent the hope for the future they bring - will be a highlight of the day's celebration.

In addition, the Arts Center's annual Kwanzaa Artisan Marketplace featuring local crafters, artists and merchants, will fill both the Prudential Lobby and the hallways outside Prudential Hall's First and Second tier entrances all weekend.

The Marketplace will also be open on Friday, December 16, from 7 to 11PM, before and after a

performance by Cuban Salsa Stars Willy Chirino and Leoni Torres (njpac.org/event/willy-chirino-leoni-torres), on Saturday, December 17, from 10 AM to 10 PM before and after 'The Hip Hop Nutcracker' (njpac.org/event/hip-hop-nutcracker-5/) and on Sunday, December 18 from 2 to 6PM, before and after The State Ballet Theatre of Ukraine's performance of the traditional holiday ballet, 'The Nutcracker' (njpac.org/event/the-nutcracker-the-state-ballet-theatre-of-ukraine)

The Marketplace will be open throughout the festival and during Saturday's two performances of NJPAC's own genre-blending holiday production.

For the first time, the Kwanzaa Festival is presented in collaboration with a collective of the city's other anchor cultural institutions including the Newark Museum of Art, Newark Arts, Newark Symphony Hall, and the Newark Public Library, as well as in partnership with the City of Newark.

REGISTRATION

Registration for the Family Festival opens at 9AM in person, and activities continue from 10AM to 2PM; to get the full schedule, visit to get a complete schedule of activities, visit njpac.org/about/community-engagement/virtual-kwanzaa-festival-and-marketplace. Families can also register in advance at NJPAC.org or through the registration form at njpac.tfaforms.net/145?id=a2F8X00008wMn9UAE

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa was created in 1966 by activist and author Maulana Karenga to offer people of African heritage a holiday that would celebrate their culture. Kwanzaa encompasses seven days dedicated to seven principles, also known as the Nguzo Saba. The Kwanzaa principles are Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith). Each activity or event at NJPAC's Kwanzaa Festival embodies one of the seven principles.

THE HIP HOP NUTCRACKER



Hip Hop Nutcracker

Photo / Courtesy NJPAC

Featuring MC Kurtis Blow

Saturday, December 17, 2022 2PM & 7:30PM @ Prudential Hall

NJPAC's original holiday extravaganza remixes and re-imagines Tchaikovsky's ballet with supercharged hip hop choreography (njpac.org/event/hip-hop-nutcracker-5/).

A dozen unstoppable all-star dancers go full-out from start to finish, wrapping the classic story of 'The Nutcracker' in New York City style. Expect twists, turns and tons of fun in this full-length show that celebrates love, community and the magic of the season. Kurtis Blow, one of hip hop's founding fathers, sets the mood as NJPAC's guest MC.

THE NUTCRACKER: STATE BALLET THEATER OF UKRAINE



Ukraine Theater's Nutcracker.

Photo / Courtesy NJPAC

Sunday, December 18 @ 3:00 p.m. @ Prudential Hall

In what has become an annual NJPAC tradition, the State Ballet Theater of Ukraine returns with the beloved holiday favorite, 'The Nutcracker' (njpac.org/event/the-nutcracker-the-state-ballet-theatre-of-ukraine). Set to Tchaikovsky's classic score and featuring brand new choreography and productions by Andrey Litvinov, the State Ballet Theater of Ukraine premiered this revised version of "The Nutcracker" to a full house in Dnipro, Ukraine, on December 30-31, 2020. Choreography and design lasted for many months with the pandemic constantly disrupting the process. Fortunately, this new interpretation of a timeless classic still managed to be completed.

TICKETS : For tickets to the Nutcracker events, visit NJPAC.org or the box office at 1 Center Street, Newark, NJ or call 888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722).

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC)

NJPAC, located in downtown Newark, N.J., is America's most diverse performing arts center, and the artistic, cultural, educational and civic center of New Jersey - where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day.

NJPAC brings diverse communities together, providing access to all and showcasing the state's and the world's best artists while acting as a leading catalyst in the revitalization of its home city.

Through its extensive Arts Education programs, which have reached almost 2 million children, NJPAC is shaping the next generation of artists and arts enthusiasts. NJPAC has attracted more than 10 million visitors since opening its doors in 1997, and nurtures meaningful and lasting relationships with each of its constituents.

For more information on NJPAC, location, transportation, directions and parking, visit njpac.org or the box office at 1 Center Street, Newark, NJ or call 888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722).

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Facebook: facebook.com/NJPAC

YouTube: NJPACtv

Follow NJPAC's Standing in Solidarity Series Online:

Website: njpac.org/takeastand

Hashtag: #NJPACTakeAStand

Youtube: Standing in Solidarity playlist

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

BELOVED AMERICAN HOLIDAY CLASSIC COMES TO LIFE AT WHARTON

BY MABEL PAIS



It's A Wonderful Life.

Photo / courtesy whartonarts.org

Wharton Community Players of Wharton Arts, New Jersey's largest non-profit community performing arts education organization, present a family-friendly production of 'It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play' (myboxoffice.us/program/wharton-community-players-present-its-a-wonderful-life-the-radio-play-1794) in the intimate Wharton Black Box Theater in Berkeley Heights, NJ, December 9-18, 2022.

Audiences are welcome to eight shows during the holiday season from December 9-18 in what is sure to be an uplifting event for the entire family. John A.C. Kennedy directs Joe Landry's "outstanding" and "inspiring" (KPBS San Diego) live radio play adaptation of Frank Capra's film 'It's a Wonderful Life.'

Opening night is on Friday, December 9. Ticket holders for the evening performance on Saturday, December 17 will be treated to a complimentary pre-show reception in the Wharton Arts lobby.

The beloved American holiday classic comes to captivating life as a live 1940s radio broadcast with the

help of an ensemble cast. Five Wharton Community Players actors perform the voices of dozens of characters to portray the story of idealistic George Bailey as he considers ending his life one fateful Christmas Eve. As in the movie, George must learn that "no man is a failure who has friends" when he must face off against local robber baron and curmudgeon Henry F. Potter.

It's a 'Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play' is "a surefire reminder of what this season is all about" - Edge Magazine.

Kennedy said, "Like live theater, live radio was an exciting genre where anything could happen. This staged radio production of 'It's a Wonderful' Life delivers the dynamic, uplifting message of the classic American Christmas story along with a few surprises, thanks to the relationships between our quirky radio personalities. And isn't any live performance a little more exciting when something unexpected happens and performers must adapt on the fly?"

TICKETS

Purchase tickets at www.WhartonArts.org. Seniors and Students receive discounts.

WHARTON ARTS

Wharton Arts' mission is to offer accessible, high quality performing arts education that sparks personal growth and builds inclusive communities.

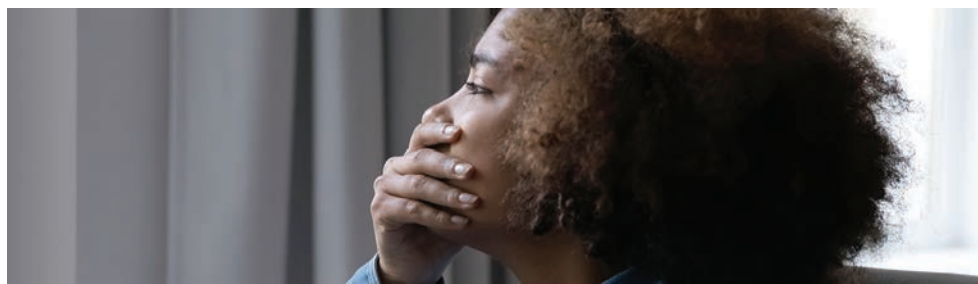
Wharton Arts' vision is for a transformative performing arts education in an inclusive community to be accessible for everyone.

Wharton Arts is New Jersey's largest independent non-profit community performing arts education center serving nearly 2,000 students through a range of classes and ensembles. The 5 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Chorus, an auditioned choral ensemble program for students in grades 3-12, encourage a love and appreciation of choral music while nurturing personal growth and creative development. The 15 ensembles of the New Jersey Youth Symphony, which serve over 500 students in grades 3-12 by audition, inspire young people to achieve musical excellence through high-level ensemble training and performance opportunities. Based in Paterson, the Paterson Music Project is an El Sistema-inspired program of Wharton Arts that uses music education as a vehicle for social action by empowering and inspiring young people to achieve their full potential through the community experience of ensemble learning and playing. From Pathways classes for young children to Lifelong Learning programs for adults, the Wharton Performing Arts School has a robust musical theater and drama program and offers both private and group classes for instruments and voice for all ages and all abilities. With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and that performing arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton Arts offers need-based scholarships.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' extraordinary teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained to enable the students to achieve their personal best.

NJPAC EVENT DISCUSSES SUPREME COURT DECISION

Supreme Revenge: Battle For The Court



"Supreme Revenge."

Photo / Courtesy NJPAC

The Supreme Court overruled Roe v. Wade this year, marking an end of nearly half a century of the constitutional right to abortion. As states establish their own abortion guidelines and restrictions, there's no question that women of color will be disproportionately affected.

At NJPAC's community event, the panel will discuss the impact on Black and Brown communities in the context of the documentary 'Supreme Revenge: Battle for the Court,' which shows how our nation's highest court solidified its conservative majority.

TO PARTICIPATE:

Register at njpac.tfaforms.net/145?id=a2F8X000008xmRrUAI
Watch the film **Supreme Revenge: Battle for the Court** on PBS.org (pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/supreme-revenge) from home on your own schedule.

Join the panelists for a virtual panel discussion at 7PM on Monday, December 19.

PANELISTS:

Jackie Cornell, Chief Government Relations Officer with Planned Parenthood of Northern, Central, and Southern New Jersey (PPNCSNJ), and the Executive Director

of Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey (PPAFNJ)

Kimberly Mutcherson, Co-Dean and Professor of Law at Rutgers with a focus on reproductive justice

Joshua Prager, Journalist and Author of The Family Roe

Dr. Simone Manigault, Pediatrician who specializes in adolescent care

MODERATOR:

Amol Sinha, Executive Director of ACLU New Jersey.

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC)

For more information on NJPAC, location, transportation, directions and parking, visit njpac.org or the box office at 1 Center Street, Newark, NJ or call 888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722).

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- YouTube: NJPACTv

FOLLOW NJPAC'S STANDING IN SOLIDARITY SERIES ONLINE:

- Website: njpac.org/takeastand
- Hashtag: #NJPACTakeAStand
- Youtube: Standing in Solidarity playlist



Amol Sinha, moderator.

Photo / Courtesy NJPAC

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



Deepika Padukone to unveil FIFA trophy at the final

Bollywood star Deepika Padukone has added another feather to her cap, as she will be unveiling the FIFA World Cup trophy at the final match. She would be the first Indian actor to achieve this feat.

Earlier this year, she had the opportunity to become the member of Cannes Film Festival jury. Deepika is the only Indian in the list of the World's Top 10 most beautiful women. From being chosen as the global face of luxury brands to now heading to Qatar for the final match to unveil the FIFA trophy, she has come a long way.

Dhanush tops IMDb list of most popular Indian stars, followed by Alia and Aishwarya

Actor Dhanush, who was most recently seen in the Tamil movie Naane Varuvean, and has become a global star with The Gray Man, has grabbed the top spot in the IMDb list of Top 10 Most Popular Indian Stars of 2022.

The actor appeared in five titles this year—The Gray Man, Maaran, Thiruchitrambalam, Naane Varuven and Vaathi. Dhanush is followed by Brahmastra actress Alia Bhatt, who also starred in the pan-India magnum opus RRR, Gangubai Kathiawadi and the streaming movie Darlings (her debut as producer), this year.

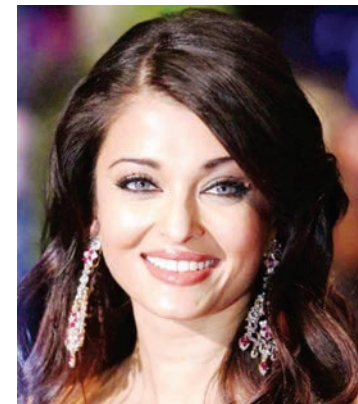
Talking about her inclusion in this year's list, Alia said, "2022 has by far been the most memorable year I've had at the movies. I am forever thankful and grateful for the love the audience gave my films this year and feel honoured to have collaborated with our country's finest filmmakers and artistes. I hope I can continue to entertain the audience for as long as I face the camera! Love and light."

The list comprises stars who consistently ranked the highest on the IMDb weekly ranking chart throughout 2022. These rankings are based on the actual page views of the more than 200 million monthly visitors to IMDb worldwide.

The third spot was grabbed by Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, who returned to cinema after five years with Mani Ratnam's ambitious Ponniyin Selvan: Part I, which proved to be one of the biggest movies this year at the box-office.

Alia's co-stars from RRR Ram Charan Teja and N.T. Rama Rao Jr. landed 4th and 8th spot, respectively. Yashoda actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu was placed at the 5th spot followed by Hrithik Roshan at 6th spot and Kiara Advani, who captivated audiences Jug Jugg Jeeyo and Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2 in 2022 acquiring the seventh spot on the list. Pushpa: The Rise star Allu Arjun grabbed the 9th spot followed by K.G.F. star Yash at the 10th position.

Source: IANS



Katrina Kaif turns muse for 'photographer' Vicky Kaushal

Actors Katrina Kaif and Vicky Kaushal, who will be celebrating their first wedding anniversary on December 9, are currently enjoying a vacation together. While the location of the holiday remains unknown, Katrina shared a picture from her vacation and gave photo credit to husband Vicky.

In the photo, Katrina poses naturally for the camera. She captioned the image, "Pahadon mein.....??: Husband."

Netizens were quick to praise Vicky Kaushal's photography skills. One follower wrote, "Vicky is a great photographer," while another fan commented, "Vicky jiju is a nice photographer." Many fans also wished the couple for their wedding anniversary and posted multiple heart emojis.

Recently, Vicky posted a reel of himself performing on the song "Kya Baat Hai". In the caption, he mentioned that Katrina has requested him not to make such videos. The actor wrote, "My wife begs me not to put up such videos, but I can't help it. Hopefully one day she'll say... 'KYAA BAAT HAI!!' ???????????????"

Filmmaker Farah Khan commented on Vicky's post, "Don't listen to her!", while choreographer Dharmesh complimented Vicky and wrote, "Bhai moves."

Source: The Indian Express



Raveena slips into red dress as she poses with red roses and candles

Raveena Tandon has shared some solo pictures clicked in a romantic setting. However, she gave a funny caption as she shared them on Instagram. She is seen in a strapless red dress, with a rose in her hair and red hearts in the background as she poses behind red candles and a row of several red roses.

Sharing them on Instagram, Raveena wrote, "Mem Batti, Gulaabo, aur mien." She didn't reveal the reason behind the celebration.

A fan commented on her post, "Membatti gulag aur ap ka sahab deadly combination, koi bechara mar jana h aj (candles, roses and you make a deadly combination, it will kill someone today)." Another wrote, "Raveena mam you are looking very beautiful and always young whenever come to Instagram." One more fan commented, "looking beautiful and gorgeous darling."

Raveena had recently attended designer Manish Malhotra's intimate birthday celebration at his home on Sunday. In the pictures, she was seen sitting on veteran actor's Rekha's lap or sitting on the floor besides her as they both joined Manish and others for some fun pics.

Raveena was last seen in KGF Chapter 2. She had also made her OTT debut with her web series Aranyak. She played a cop in Aranyak and was the lead actor.





Margot Robbie says she improvised a kiss with Brad Pitt during Babylon

Margot Robbie found the perfect opportunity to kiss her co-star Brad Pitt during the filming of her next movie, Babylon. The Australian actor reunites with her Once Upon A Time in Hollywood co-star in Damien Chazelle's Babylon, which releases in select theatres on December 23. Margot, who plays an up and coming actor Nellie LaRay in the film, admitted that she took the opportunity to improvise a kiss scene with Brad Pitt even though it was not part of the script.

Speaking about the behind-the-scenes moments on the much anticipated film with E! News, Margot admitted, "That wasn't in the script," she said of the kiss. "But I thought, When else am I gonna get the chance to kiss Brad Pitt? I'm just gonna go for it."

The actress further revealed that the kiss scene "was just great," but in order to keep it in the film, she had to convince director Damien Chazelle. "I said, 'Damien, I think Nellie would just go up and kiss Jack,'" the 32-year-old actor said. "And Damien was like, 'Well, she could—wait, hold on. You just wanna kiss Brad Pitt.' And I was like, 'Oh, so sue me. This opportunity might never come up again.' And he was like, 'It does work for the character,' and I was like, 'I think so.'" When the scene was over, Margot revealed that "He [Damien] was like, 'No, do it again. That really works.' I was like, 'Oh great,'" said the actor.

Babylon is directed by Damien Chazelle, whose earlier works include Whiplash, La La Land, and First Man. For La La Land, Damien had won the Academy Award for Best Director. Babylon, which also stars Diego Calva, Jean Smart, Tobey Maguire and Phoebe Tonkin in pivotal roles, is a comedy-drama film that traces the decadent time period of 1920s Hollywood when it was moving out of the silent era films.

Source: HT



Jennifer Lawrence dissed for claiming there's no female action film lead before her

Hollywood star Jennifer Lawrence has been widely criticised after claiming that there's no female action movie lead before her.

Speaking with actress Viola Davis, she said: "I remember when I was doing 'Hunger Games', nobody had ever put a woman in the lead of an action movie because it wouldn't work - because we were told girls and boys can both identify with a male lead, but boys cannot identify with a female lead."

She added: "And it just makes me so happy every single time I see a movie come out that just blows through every one of those beliefs, and proves that it is just a lie to keep certain people out of the movies. To keep certain people in the same positions that they've always been in."

Many quickly disagreed with Lawrence as Franklin Leonard, founder of The Black List, said on Twitter in response to the interview: "It is untrue that no one had ever put a woman in an action movie before Jennifer Lawrence in 'Hunger Games'."

Source: IANS

Julia Roberts' viral gown has BFF George Clooney's framed pictures

If you can't do what Julia Roberts did for her BFF George Clooney, are you even a BFF? 'Erin Brockovich' star Julia Roberts wore a gown covered with photos of Hollywood star George Clooney.

The two have worked together in many movies like 'Ocean's Eleven', 'Ocean's Twelve', 'Money Monster' and 'Ticket to Paradise'. The 55-year-old actress made her fun fashion statement to show support for George, 61 at the Kennedy Center Honours ceremony in Washington DC, reports 'The Mirror'. Her dress featured framed snaps of the actor throughout his career, dating from his early days as Doug Ross on ER. The actress rounded up her look with a black jacket. George won a lifetime achievement honour for his role in US cultural life. Julia appeared in the first two instalments of 'Oceans' franchise as Tess Ocean, with George playing her on-screen husband Danny Ocean. The latter character appeared in three films as part of the series.

Source: IANS



Dwayne Johnson reacts to reports calling Black Adam flop

Amid reports that DC's latest superhero venture Black Adam has been a flop despite the millions it has made, the film's lead star Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson has come out in its defence. The actor has shared profit margin figures of the film and said that it is a 'fact' that the film has made a profit. While Dwayne did not address the reports doubting the film's success directly, his tweet came soon after several such reports emerged.

On Wednesday evening, Dwayne took to Twitter to share a news article about Black Adam's profitability. Alongside, he wrote, "Waited to confirm with financiers before I shared this excellent #BlackAdam news - our film will PROFIT between \$52M-\$72M. Fact." The accompanying article by Deadline was an explainer on how the film has been profitable.

Black Adam has made \$387 million globally. Two days ago, a Variety report had quoted a source saying that the film would end up causing a loss of over \$100 million to the production house Warner Bros. The report said that the studio



spent close to \$500 million on the film in production and publicity. However, Dwayne denied that and added that the film had done great business, comparing it with a Marvel rival. "At almost \$400M worldwide we are building our new franchise step by step (first Captain America did \$370M) for the DC future," he further tweeted.

SEVERAL INJURED IN EXPLOSION OUTSIDE INDONESIAN POLICE STATION

DECEMBER 7

BANDUNG (TIP): A man blew himself up on December 7 outside a police station on Indonesia's main island of Java in what appeared to be the latest in a string of suicide attacks in the world's most populous Muslim nation.

Bandung Police Chief Aswin Sipayung said a man tried to enter the Astana Anyar police station with a motorcycle and detonated explosives where police were lining up for morning assembly, injuring at least three officers. (AP)

17 GOING ON 16: SOUTH KOREANS TO GET YOUNGER ON PAPER

The current system, widely known as "the Korean age", recognises people as a year old at birth and also adds a year to their age every January 1 -- rather than on their birth date.

SEOUL (TIP): : Where in the world can you shave a year or two off your age? South Korea -- which has just passed a set of bills to abandon its traditional system of calculating ages.

The current system, widely known as "the Korean age", recognises people as a year old at birth and also adds a year to their age every January 1 -- rather than on their birth date.

But on Thursday, Seoul's National Assembly passed bills requiring the use of the international age-counting system for official documents. It will be implemented by June next year.

The decision was made to "resolve the social confusion caused by the mixed use of age calculations and the resulting side effects", the National Assembly said in a statement.

Besides the Korean age system, the country also has another method mostly used to determine the legal drinking and smoking age -- it counts one's age from zero at birth and a year is added on January 1. And it also uses the worldwide standard for some medical and legal records since the 1960s. This means that, for example, as of December 9, 2022, a person born on December 31, 1992 is 29 under the international standard, 30 under the South's system of calculating the age to drink, and 31 under the "Korean age" method. President Yoon Suk-yeol has been campaigning on the change, citing the administrative and social expenses resulting from having multiple ways of counting people's age.

Some South Koreans were delighted by the news.

"I'm getting two years younger -- I'm so happy," one wrote on Twitter.

"I turned two years old so soon after I was born as I was born in December. Finally, I'm about to get my real age back!" (AFP)

German police set to make more arrests after thwarted coup plot

DECEMBER 8

BERLIN (TIP): The German police plan further arrests as they investigate a far-right group that prosecutors say was preparing to overthrow the state and install a former member of a German royal family as national leader.

Investigators have said the group, many of whom were members of the Reichsbuerger (Citizens of the Reich) movement, planned to install aristocrat Heinrich XIII Prinz Reuss as leader of a new state and found evidence that some members planned to storm the Bundestag and arrest lawmakers.

Heinrich is a descendant of the Royal House of Reuss in the eastern state of Thuringia. Aged 71, he has been working as a real estate developer and was arrested in the financial capital Frankfurt on December 7.

Nineteen of the alleged plotters were remanded in custody on Wednesday, while another six were set to go before a judge on Thursday, prosecutors said. Many of the suspects are over 50, and they encompass right-wingers, Covid deniers and people who reject the modern German state.

Holger Muench, head of the federal police office, told broadcaster ARD on Thursday that the number of suspects in



the case now stood at 54, and that that figure could rise.

"We have a dangerous mixture of people who are following irrational convictions, some with a lot of money, others in possession of weapons and a plan to launch attacks and expand their structures," Muench said.

The discovery of the alleged plot came as a shock in one of Europe's most stable democracies and largest economy.

"It's not really comprehensible: you

hear about such plans from other countries but for this to happen outside my front door?" said Melanie Merle, who lives close to the apartment in the financial capital Frankfurt where Heinrich was arrested. "The government we have is not ideal but probably better than what they had planned," she laughed.

Neither the House of Reuss nor Heinrich's office responded to requests for comment. — Reuters

Iran protesters call for strike; prosecutor says morality police shut down, interior ministry silent on issue

DECEMBER 4

DUBAI (TIP): Protesters in Iran called on Sunday for a three-day strike this week, stepping up pressure on authorities after the public prosecutor said the morality police whose detention of a young woman triggered months of protests had been shut down.

There was no confirmation of the closure from the Interior Ministry which is in charge of the morality police, and Iranian state media said Public Prosecutor Mohammad Jafar Montazeri was not responsible for overseeing the force.

Top Iranian officials have repeatedly said Tehran would not change the Islamic Republic's mandatory hijab policy, which requires women to dress modestly and wear headscarves, despite 11 weeks of protests against strict Islamic regulations.

Hundreds of people have been killed in the unrest which erupted in September after the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Kurdish Iranian woman who was detained by the morality police for flouting the hijab rules.

Protesters seeking to maintain their challenge to Iran's clerical rulers have called for a three-day economic strike and a rally to Tehran's Azadi (Freedom) Square on Wednesday, according to



individual posts shared on Twitter by accounts unverified by Reuters.

President Ebrahim Raisi is due to address students in Tehran on the same day to mark Student Day in Iran.

Similar calls for strike action and mass mobilisation have in past weeks resulted in an escalation in the unrest which has swept the country - some of the biggest anti-government protests

since Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The activist HRANA news agency said 470 protesters had been killed as of Saturday, including 64 minors. It said 18,210 demonstrators were arrested and 61 members of the security forces were killed. Iran's Interior Ministry state security council said on Saturday the death toll was 200, according to the judiciary's news agency Mizan. (Reuters)

RUSSIAN AIRFIELDS DAMAGED IN DRONE ATTACK

DECEMBER 6

KYIV (TIP): A third Russian airfield was ablaze on Tuesday from a drone strike, a day after Ukraine demonstrated an apparent new ability to penetrate hundreds of kilometers deep into Russian air space with attacks on two Russian air bases.

In a new display of defiance from Kyiv, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy traveled to an eastern city near the front line Tuesday, while Russia reported that strategic sites inside the country were hit by drone attacks for a second day.

A fire broke out at an airport in Russia's southern Kursk region that borders Ukraine after a drone hit the facility, the region's governor said Tuesday. In a second incident, an industrial plant 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the Ukrainian border was also targeted by drones, Russian independent media reported, apparently missing a fuel depot at the site.

Federal authorities did not immediately blame Ukraine. But Tuesday's reported strikes were carried out a day after Moscow blamed Kyiv for unprecedented, similar attacks on two air bases deep inside Russia.

The attacks on the Engels base in the Saratov region on the Volga River and the Dyagilevo base in the Ryazan region in western Russia were some of the most brazen inside Russia during the war. In the aftermath, Russian troops carried out another wave of missile strikes on Ukrainian territory struck



homes and buildings and killed civilians.

Ukrainian officials have not formally confirmed carrying out the drone attacks, maintaining their apparent policy of deliberate ambiguity as they have done in the past when it comes to high-profile attacks on Russian targets.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Russian authorities will "take the necessary measures" to boost protection of key facilities in view of the Ukrainian attacks.

Speaking in a conference call with reporters Tuesday, Peskov said that "the Ukrainian regime's course for continuation of such terror attacks

poses a threat." Peskov reaffirmed that Russia sees no prospects for peace talks now, adding that "the Russian Federation must achieve its stated goals."

Russia and Ukraine said on Tuesday they had exchanged 60 prisoners of war (POWs) on each side in the latest of a series of such swaps. Russia's defence ministry said the freed Russian soldiers would be flown to Moscow to receive medical care.

In a video shared by the ministry, men in military clothing were shown walking off a bus and making phone calls. "All is well, alive and well. I'll be home soon," one freed prisoner said. — AP

Amnesty International Canada says it was hacked by Beijing

DECEMBER 6

TORONTO (TIP): The Canadian branch of Amnesty International said December 6 it was the target of a cyber attack sponsored by China.

The human rights organisation said it first detected the breach October 5 and hired forensic investigators and cyber security experts to investigate.

Ketty Nivyabandi, Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada, said the searches in their systems were specifically and solely related to China and Hong Kong, as well as a few prominent Chinese activists. The hack left the organisation offline for nearly three weeks.

US cyber security firm Secureworks said there was no attempt to monetise the access, and "a threat group sponsored or tasked by the Chinese state" was likely behind the attack because of the nature of the searches, the level of sophistication and the use of specific tools that are distinctive of China-sponsored actors.

Nivyabandi encouraged activists and



journalists to update their cyber security protocols in light of it.

"As an organization advocating for human rights globally, we are very aware that we may be the target of state-sponsored attempts to disrupt or surveil our work. These will not intimidate us and the security and privacy of our activists, staff, donors, and stakeholders remain our utmost priority," Nivyabandi said.

Amnesty is among organisations that support human rights activists and journalists targeted by state actors for surveillance. That includes confirming

cases of activists' and journalists' cellphones being infected with Pegasus spyware, which turns the devices into real-time listening tools in addition to copying their contents.

In August, the cyber security firm Recorded Future listed Amnesty and the International Federation for Human Rights among organisations that Chinese hackers were targeting through password-stealing schemes designed to harvest credentials. It called that particularly concerning given the Chinese state's "reported human rights abuses in relation to Uyghurs, Tibetans and other ethnic and religious minority groups." Amnesty has raised alarms about a system of internment camps in China that swept up a million or more Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities, according to estimates by experts. China, which describes the camps as vocational training and education centers to combat extremism, says they have been closed. The government has never publicly said how many people passed through them. (AP)

FIVE SENTENCED TO DEATH IN IRAN FOR KILLING SOLDIER

DECEMBER 6

CAIRO (TIP): Iranian authorities sentenced five persons to death for allegedly killing an officer affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard, state media said December 6. Eleven others received lengthy prison sentences.

The 13 men and three minors had been charged with killing Ruhollah Ajamian, an official from the Basij, a paramilitary volunteer branch of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard, according to the report from IRNA, Iran's state news agency.

The five individuals sentenced to death Monday were charged by Iran's Revolutionary Court, along with eight others. Three boys were charged by Iran's criminal court, according to the official reports.

Iran's judiciary spokesperson, Masoud Setayeshi, who is cited in the report, provided no official evidence to support any of the mentioned accusations. — AP

REPORT REVEALS WAGE THEFT PROBLEM FOR MIGRANT WORKERS IN AUSTRALIA

DECEMBER 5

SYDNEY (TIP): A new union report found on December 5 that migrant workers in Australia are facing a disturbing wage theft problem and called for reforms to strengthen protection for the group.

Union NSW, the peak body for the state of New South Wales (NSW) trade unions, surveyed 7,000 job advertisements in foreign languages across more than 10 industries, reports Xinhua news agency.

Over 1,000 migrant workers also shared their experiences when working or applying for work in Australia.

It revealed that over 60 per cent of the job ads audited offered illegal rates of pay, below the relevant award wage.

The retail industry was the worst offender, with around 85 per cent of foreign language ads surveyed offering below the minimum award, followed by cleaning, transport, building and construction, hospitality and hair and beauty.

More than one-third of migrant workers surveyed also reported being paid or offered a lower salary because of their visa type, while more than one-quarter received lesser salaries because of their nationality.

Unions NSW Secretary Mark Morey said it is disturbing that employers were still targeting workers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. "It's alarming that employers unashamedly exploit and underpay vulnerable migrant workers, all while Australia experiences lagging migration rates and deals with claims of labour shortages. (IANS)

Sikh History This Week

DECEMBER 9, 2022, TO DECEMBER 15, 2022

9th December

1710 Baba Gurbakhash Singh (Banda Bahadur) escapes Mughal forces.



1946 Nehru introduces assurances for Sikhs in Constituent Assembly.

1979 The Dal Khalsa in its first annual conference at Gurdaspur passed a resolution demanding the declaring of Amritsar as a "Holy City." The Youth (Dal Khalsa and the Sikh Students Federation) had long since been demanding the declaration that Amritsar was a Holy City. The SGPC chief, G. S. Tohra, had met the Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, on September 24, 1980, and had asked her to make a declaration to that effect. When more than six months had passed and there was no movement in that case, the Sikh Youth decided to organise a procession to press the Sikh demand. A joint meeting of the Dal Khalsa and the Sikh Students decided to take out such a procession on May 31, 1981.



10th December

1710 Bahadur Shah issued the orders to kill Sikhs.
1841 Battle for the conquest of Tibet by Sikhs.
1988 Conference on Sikh Studies, Long Beach

11th December



1705 Guru Gobind Singh escapes Mughal forces in Macchiwara.

1710 Baba Gurbakhash Singh (Banda Bahadur) escaped unhurt from the fort Lohgarh.



1836 Sardar Zorawar Singh captured Ladakh.

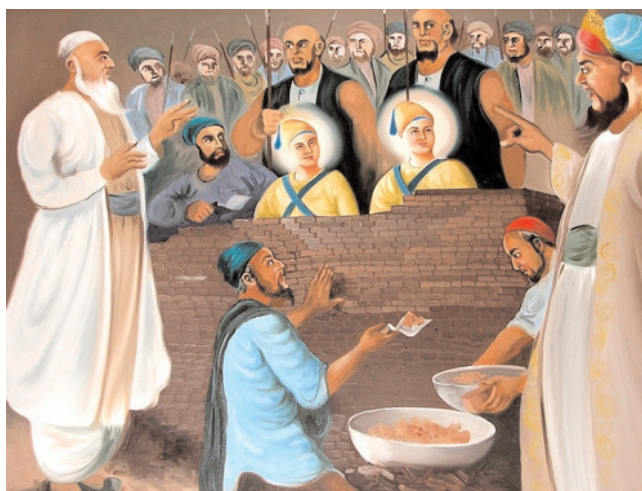


1845 Sikhs cross Sutlej River and surprise British, causing outbreak of Anglo-Sikh War.

1991 Khalistan Flag was hoisted at CSU Chico.

12th December

1704 SHAHEEDHI, Chotae Sahibjadhae, Sakka Sirhind.



1762 Abdali left Sikh Homeland after defeat. Sikhs became de facto rulers of their land.

1841 Zorawar Singh dies while fighting the Lhasa force.

1844 Dogra Hira Singh attempted to escape to Jammu. Sham Singh and Jawahar Singh with 6000 troops caught up with and killed the fleeing Dogras.

1920 Inaugural meeting of SGPC at Sri Akal Takhat.

1921 Master Dalip Singh of Gossal attended a diwan at Rukha Kalan and delivered a lecture.

1922 Shahadat of Sardar Banta Singh and Juyala Singh Babbar.

1923 Munder carnage takes place.

1987 Akalis refuse to talk with Government of India unless their 5 points were fulfilled.

13th December

1845 Lord Hardinge, the Governor General of British forces, issued the proclamation of War against the Sikhs.



1923 Maharaja Ripudaman Singh Nabha passed away.
1924 Sardar Sundar Singh Babbar of Hayatpur dies during trial.

14th December

1705 Imperial forces give solemn assurances of safe conduct at Anandpur. Subsequent events proved these promises to be hollow.



1920 Shiromani Akali Dal was established to assist the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and launch Gurudwara Sudhar (Restitution) Movement.

15th December



1887 Maharani Bamba, wife of Dalip Singh, passed away in London.

1923 Bhai Pheru Morcha.

1924 14th Shaheedhi Jatha of 500 Akalis marched from Amritsar to Jaito.

1941 Independent Hind Forces were established.

1983 Jarnail Singh Bhindrawalae moved his resident into the building neighboring Sri Akal Takhat.

1990 International Conference on Sikh Studies held in New York.

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Qualities women look for in a man

Want to steal a woman's heart? A sculpted body and killer looks may not be enough anymore as millennial women want their partner to be a responsible, mature, empathetic person who can also express emotions effectively. According to a survey, women also find qualities like good sense of humour, confidence, intellect impressive in men. However, this doesn't mean that modern women do not like to be wooed at all. Apparently, as per this survey, guys who are romantic, arrange dates, present flowers, and treat them like royalty are their preferred choice.

Here are some characteristics of men that are appealing to women, according to extramarital dating app Gleeden.

- **Be a leader:** Most women are drawn to guys who take responsibility for their actions and are unwavering in their beliefs. A person's ability to lead is an indication of maturity. Women are drawn to guys with strong convictions who follow through on their decisions. Making long-term plans and being resolute in the pursuit of your objectives will make your girl stick to you like velcro or get you one.
- **Express much?** According to recorded history, man has not yet mastered the ability to be emotionally expressive. However, society is changing very quickly these days. In order to improve understanding, people are acknowledging their emotions and condition them. A woman is most attracted to men who speak up and say what they mean. As we all know, communication is the key to every relationship.
- **Humour match:** Relationships shouldn't always be taken seriously. Another characteristic that automatically makes the connection enjoyable is having a sense of humor and making unexpected jokes. The laid-back aspect of your personality is also revealed, which is a commendable trait. Grumbling is a trait in men that women find undesirable. Everything is made great by being able to communicate freely with everyone, perceiving humour in circumstances, and laughing easily beside her.



- **Fitness freak:** To impress a lady, a man does not necessarily need to be a gym fanatic or have six-pack abs. However, women favour guys who are concerned about their health. One who adheres to a schedule maintains a healthy diet with occasional deviations and is aware of how to stay away from bad habits. Finding a spouse has little to do with being healthy, but a positive outlook can help you live a fulfilling life and have more self-confidence.
- **How modest are you?** One of the most important characteristics that most women seek is modesty. Outspokenness, charity, and honesty are further feminine appeal traits that are always observed, along with humility. Nothing appeals to a woman more than a man with a great sense of self. A man who exudes confidence is autonomous and capable of handling any circumstance. The woman may rely on her spouse and feel safe even in the long run.
- **Bookworm:** Women favour males who are brighter and more inventive. Someone who reads spends time learning more and expanding their horizons. A man who enjoys learning new things and is passionate about reading literature, science, goth, fiction or non-fiction, etc.

Source: HT

FOOD

Green Coriander Rice

Coriander rice is a fragrant, tasty and spiced rice made with fresh coriander leaves, basmati rice, spices and veggies. There are many variations of making this savory rice dish. The recipe comes together in less than 40 minutes and makes for a hearty, filling weekday lunch or dinner.

Ingredients

1 cup rice, 1 green capsicum, large, 1 onion, medium, 1 tsp ginger garlic paste, 30ml curd, 2 Tbsp coriander mint and green chilli paste, 1 tsp garam masala, 1/2 tsp cumin seeds, 2 bay leaves, 1/2 tsp coriander powder, 1 tsp olive oil, Salt.

Method

- In a non-stick vessel, heat oil and add cumin seeds.
- Once the seeds crackle, add the bay leaves, stir gently and add chopped onions.
- Cook the onions till they turn brown. Now add ginger garlic paste, coriander mint paste and curd to the vessel and cook well.
- Once the masala is cooked well, you will start getting a lovely aroma and this is the correct time to stir in the dry masalas.
- Cook for 5-6 minutes, time to add the crunchy capsicum. Once done, add the rice and 1 1/2 cups of water. Cover the vessel with a lid and let it cook for 15 minutes or till the rice is done.
- Garnish with some coriander and serve fresh.



Hair straightener: Here's how often you should use it

We all know that using heating products on our tresses will lead to damage but it is difficult to completely abstain from them. Heat styling isn't just for vanity but also keeps the hair looking neat. You don't want to go out with frizzy and shabby hair!

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that excess heat styling can leave your hair damaged beyond repair. From immediate issues like dryness and roughness to more serious problems like brittleness, hair fall and split ends, heavy use of heat appliances can leave your hair devoid of nourishment and health.

So, clearly, the need is to ensure that we use heat styling carefully to strike the right balance between looking gorgeous and keeping our hair healthy.

As a thumb rule, you should try to use heat appliances as few times as possible but a more concrete answer to this question depends on your hair type and also the current health of your hair.

If you have naturally straight hair, it is advisable that you use heating appliances once a week at the maximum.



Image courtesy: Shutterstock

The main reason is that using heating appliances on your hair, which is generally known to be easy to manage, too often can leave it dry and frizzy.

Curly

For those who have curly or wavy hair, the duration stays the same. Most people

with curly or wavy hair tend to use a blow dryer or straightening iron to make their hair more manageable. But, using heat on the tresses every day can damage the hair cuticles severely. Not only will it make the hair rough and frizzy but will also lead to breakage.

Treated hair

If you've coloured your hair or have been through the process of rebounding, you should ideally stay away from using heat styling. Such treatments often cause extreme damage to the hair due to exposure to strong chemicals. Hence, you'll notice that chemically treated hair often is prone to dryness, split-ends, breakage, dullness and a loss of volume. In fact, most hairstyling professionals recommend taking extra care of hair that is coloured or chemically treated. So, it is best to steer clear of heating appliances if you fall into this category.

Hair fall

If you're already going through excess hair fall, it is best to cut down your use of heating appliances to once in two weeks. In fact, you must avoid it as much as you can. This is because your hair health is already suffering and needs attention. You must find out the reason behind your hair fall instead of trying to find a quick fix in the form of styling using heating products.

Source: Healthshots

Common workplace fumes, dusts may heighten rheumatoid arthritis risk

According to research published online in the *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, breathing in everyday occupational dust and fumes from substances including vapours, gases, and solvents may increase the chance of developing rheumatoid arthritis.

The results also suggest that they may increase the harmful effects of smoking and genetic illness vulnerability.

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic autoimmune inflammatory joint disease marked by excruciating pain and functional impairment. Up to 1 per cent of people worldwide are impacted.

It is well known that smoking increases a person's risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis, but it is unknown what effect inhaling dust and fumes from the workplace may have.

In a bid to find out, the researchers drew on data from the Swedish Epidemiological Investigation of RA. This comprises 4,033 people newly diagnosed between 1996 and 2017 and 6,485 others matched for age and sex, but free of the disease (comparison group).

Personal job histories were provided and used to estimate the amount of individual exposure to 32 airborne workplace agents, using a validated technique.

Each participant was assigned a Genetic Risk Score (GRS), according to whether they carried genes that could increase their chances of developing rheumatoid arthritis.

Rheumatoid arthritis is characterised by the presence or absence of anti-citrullinated protein antibodies or ACPA for short. ACPA positivity denotes a worse prognosis with higher rates of erosive joint damage.

Nearly three-quarters of those with rheumatoid arthritis testing positive (73 per cent) and negative (72 per cent) for ACPA had been exposed to at least one workplace dust or fume compared with around two-



thirds (67 per cent) of people in the comparison group.

Analysis of the data showed that exposure to workplace agents was not only associated with a heightened risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis, but also seemed to boost that risk further by interacting with smoking and genetic susceptibility.

Exposure to any workplace agent was associated with a 25 per cent heightened risk of developing ACPA-positive rheumatoid arthritis, overall. And this risk increased to 40 per cent in men.

Specifically, 17 out of 32 agents, including quartz, asbestos, diesel fumes, gasoline fumes, carbon monoxide, and fungicides, were strongly associated with an increased risk of developing ACPA-positive disease. Only a few agents—quartz dust (silica), asbestos, and detergents—were strongly associated with ACPA-negative disease.

Source: ANI

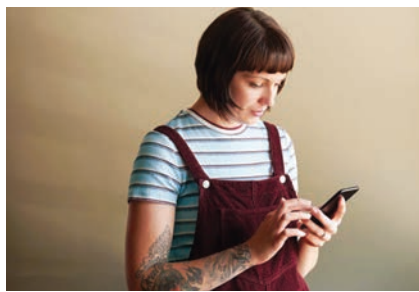
Get your posture right while using mobiles or be ready to suffer back, neck pain

With the growing addiction of mobile phones, people are also becoming victims of degenerative spinal changes, especially in the cervical, thoracic and lumbar regions.

Our posture at the time of receiving and making mobile calls can potentially give rise to musculoskeletal issues. A host of studies have linked the wrong posture while using phones with pain and dysfunction.

The joints of the body suffer from wear and tear process while it is active and it gets repaired during the period of rest. If we use the joints in abnormal posture for long time or pressure the joints in a single posture for long times, it will suffer for more wear and tear and one point will come where the wear and tear will be more in comparison with the repairs and the degeneration will start in the joints, Dr Uma Kumar, Head of Department, Rheumatology, AIIMS, told IANS.

"When we hold the mobile in hands, not only the fingers are used



but our hands, elbow, muscle and neck are involved as we usually watch the mobile while bending the neck from natural position which is over the head and complete straight," Dr Kumar said.

AIIMS doctor said that there is a constant weight of brain, skull and muscles over the neck which falls on cervical spine. So if we work or watch the mobile in wrong way, the weight proportionally increase the pressure on the spine and muscles creating pains.

"When you tilt your head or angle it forward, the cervical spine's (neck) muscles, tendons, and ligaments support the head. During exertions on the neck, it's the neck's

intervertebral discs that help the force to be absorbed and distributed evenly," Dr Kumar said.

Talking about the increasing number of such patients, Dr Kumar said "In OPD, we often meet patients complaining of pain in waist, fingers or neck due to following the wrong posture." Long-term forward head posture may also increase the risk for accelerated degenerative spinal changes, warned Dr Kumar. Rather tilting the head down, keep it up and bring the mobile and laptop up to meet the eyes, she advised.

"Our head has around 5 to 8 kgs of weight, if we tilt it in any direction, it will exert more pressure on supporting muscles of neck, due to the gravitational force, but on long standing fixed position (prolong sitting on computer and use of mobile) it will result into the muscles fatigue, pain and degenerative disorders due to chronic long bad posture," said Dr Kaushal Kant Mishra, Director, Bone and Joint Institute, Fortis Escort Hospital.

Source: IANS



Vaccine-linked heart inflammation high in males after 2nd dose: Study

A meta-analysis of 23 studies, including 854 patients aged 12 to 20 years with mRNA vaccine-associated myopericarditis (rare acute heart inflammation), has found that the incidence of myopericarditis was higher in males after the second dose, adding that however, the overall cases are very low.

The findings, published in *JAMA Pediatrics*, a journal of JAMA Network, suggest largely low incidence rates and favourable outcomes of Covid vaccine-associated myopericarditis in adolescents and young adults.

"This systematic review and meta-analysis found low incidence rate and largely favourable early outcomes of Covid-19 mRNA vaccine-associated myopericarditis in adolescents and young adults from a wide range of populations. These findings are reassuring but continued follow-up is warranted," the researchers noted.

Last month, a study in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* found that the incidence of myocarditis, pericarditis or myopericarditis is two- to threefold higher after a second dose of the Moderna Spikevax Covid-19 vaccine when compared to the Pfizer BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine.

However, "overall cases of heart inflammation with either vaccine are very rare", it said.

Since the emergency use was authorised, the association of the mRNA-based Covid-19 vaccine with myopericarditis, which is a rare but serious adverse event, has been reported worldwide, especially in adolescents and young adults.

The new JAMA study by Jun Yasuhara of Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, and Toshiki Kuno, of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in Bronx, New York, found that their findings are consistent with results from previous studies in adults, in which clinical course of Covid-19 vaccine-associated myopericarditis was typically mild, "with complete resolution of symptoms and LV systolic dysfunction at presentation normalised within a few days".

Source: IANS

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NASA's Orion capsule flies over Apollo landing sites before heading home

NASA's Orion capsule and its test dummies swooped one last time around the moon, flying over a couple Apollo landing sites before heading home.

Orion will aim for a Pacific splashdown on Sunday off San Diego, setting the stage for astronauts on the next flight in a couple years.

The capsule passed within 130 km of the far side of the moon, using the lunar gravity as a slingshot for the 3,80,000-km ride back to Earth. It spent a week in a wide, sweeping lunar orbit.

Once emerging from behind the moon and regaining communication with flight controllers in Houston, Orion beamed back photos of a close-up moon and a crescent Earth — Earthrise — in the distance. "Orion now has its sights set on home," said Mission Control commentator Sandra Jones.

The capsule also passed over the landing sites of Apollo 12 and 14. But at 1,900 km up, it was too high to make out the descent stages of the lunar landers or anything else left behind by astronauts more than a half-century ago. During a similar flyover two weeks ago, it was too dark for pictures. This time, it was daylight. Deputy chief flight director Zebulon Scoville said nearby craters and other geologic features would be visible in any pictures, but little else.

"It will be more of a tip of the hat and a historical nod to the past," Scoville told reporters last week.

The three-week test flight has exceeded expectations so far, according to officials. But the biggest challenge still lies ahead: hitting the atmosphere at more than 30 times the speed of sound and surviving the fiery reentry.

Orion blasted off on November 16 on the debut flight of NASA's most powerful rocket ever, the Space Launch System.

PSLV-XL rocket motor made by industry passes test: ISRO

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said the performance of the booster motor made by Economic Explosives Limited for its PSLV-XL rocket was satisfactory.

The Indian space agency tested the booster motor called PSOM-XL at its rocket port in Sriharikota on Wednesday, December 7.

According to the ISRO, with this test, the private industry's capability to produce the stage for PSLV has been established. This is the first step in the end-to-end production of PSLV through the industry.

The ISRO had transferred the technology to Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur, in 2019.

The commercial arm of Department of Space NewSpace India Limited has selected the HAL-L&T-led consortium to make five PSLV-XL rockets.

Apple iOS 16.2 beta is here: What's new and how to install?

Apple has released the much-awaited iOS 16.2 beta software update for supported iPhones. This update is only for beta developers and users who are on the public beta list. The update brings 5G support to the iPhone 12 series and above in India, but again your iPhone needs to be on the public beta to get this. However, 5G support is not the only new addition to the OS. Here are all the new features that come with iOS 16.2 beta.

Apple iOS 16.2: What's new?

The update brings a new Freeform app to iOS, which acts as a seamless flexible canvas for users to add images, files and stickers on. The Freeform app is also available on Mac and iPad, so users can also access and edit their files everywhere.

There's also Apple Music Sing, a new feature that lets users sing along to their favourite songs. The new mode on Apple Music lets users adjust vocals on songs so they can sing themselves, but there are also ways to duet with the original artist or mix things up. The feature will also use what Apple calls 'beat-by-beat' lyrics that will make Karaoke easier than ever with precisely timed lyrics.

Apple's Advanced-Data Protection for iCloud support expands the total number of iCloud data categories protected on iOS with end-to-end encryption to 23. The list now also includes iCloud backup, Notes, and Photos. Users can also now hide their wallpaper or notifications on the Lock Screen when Always-On Display is enabled on the iPhone 14 Pro variants. A new sleep widget also lets users track their sleep data, while a medications widget prompts users with timely reminders.

iOS 16.2 also brings SharePlay support to games via Game Center,



enabling users to now play supported multiplayer games with the people they are on a Facetime Video call with. An accompanying Activity widget also lets you see what games your friends are playing.

The Apple TV app now gets Live Activities as well, enabling users to follow live scores right from their Lock Screen or the Dynamic Island when their favourite matches are going on. The feature comes only to the iPhone 14 Pro and iPhone 14 Pro Max.

The update also brings improved communications between the other smart home accessories and Apple devices you own. Improved search in Messages allows users to search for photos by searching for the content in them — like a dog, car, person, or simply actual text in a picture. Users can now also use the Hide IP address setting while enabling 'iCloud Private Relay' users to temporarily disable the service for a specific site in Safari.

The Weather app now shows location-relevant news articles on the weather. Meanwhile, on the Notes app, users can now see live participant cursors that show them

where other users are on a shared note.

AirDrop now automatically reverts to 'Contacts Only' mode after 10 minutes, so unwanted content is not sent to users by strangers. More Crash Detection optimisations are also coming to the iPhone 14-series with the iOS 16.2 update. An issue with iCloud that prevented notes from syncing is also now fixed.

How to install iOS 16.2 beta?

If you're already on the iOS beta programme you should receive a notification for the new beta update. If not, stable channel users can first visit the iOS beta programme website to sign themselves up along with their Apple ID. This allows users to receive and install beta updates.

Once you are eligible for iOS beta update, go to your Settings app when connected to a WiFi network and navigate to Settings>General>Software Update. You should see the new update and the changelog show up here, along with a button to install the update. Click on Install Now to proceed.

Source: The Indian Express

Want to hide from security cameras? Chinese students have come up with an invisibility cloak

A group of graduate students in China have invented an ordinary-looking coat that can apparently "hide the human body" from security cameras monitored by AI (artificial intelligence). Referred to as 'InvisDefense', the so-called invisibility cloak can blind the camera during the day with patterns and send unusual heat signals at night to dodge the AI monitoring. The coat, if perfected, could be helpful in countries like China and some South East Asian countries where the government widely uses AI-powered surveillance cameras. There's also a possibility that governments may either ban the tech or improve their existing systems to

detect such 'invisibility cloaks'.

As reported by the Chinese publication, South China Morning Post, the InvisDefense coat won first prize in a creative competition on November 27, sponsored by Huawei Technologies Co as part of the China Postgraduate Innovation and Practice Competitions. The report explains that the InvisDefense coat can interfere with the recognition algorithm of machine vision with a camouflage pattern on its surface during the day. At night, the coat messes with the temperature-detecting module to confuse the infrared camera.

Speaking about the InvisDefense coat, Wei Hui, a PhD student

responsible for the core algorithm, told the publication that the trickiest part was the camouflage pattern. "Traditionally, researchers used bright images to interfere with machine vision and it did work. But it stands out to human eyes, making the user even more conspicuous," Wei said.

The team seemingly carried out hundreds of tests before coming up with the technology. One of the biggest advantages of the invisibility cloak is its price. The creators say printing a pattern on the surface is relatively cheap, and only four temperature control modules are needed to blind the infrared camera. Its initial cost is quoted at CNY 500 (roughly Rs 6,000).

Air India to spend over \$400 million on cabin upgrade of wide-body fleet

Air India on Thursday, December 8, announced plans to refurbish its entire legacy wide-body fleet, comprising 27 Boeing B787-8 and 13 B777 aircraft, committing over \$400 million for the project.

This refurbishment will see a complete overhaul of existing cabin interiors, including the addition of latest generation seats and best in-class inflight entertainment across all classes. In addition, the refurbishment will see the introduction of a Premium Economy cabin on both fleets. The First Class cabin will also be retained on the 777s. Air India has engaged leading London-based product design companies, JPA Design and Trendworks, to assist with the cabin interior design elements of this refurbishment programme.

The collaboration brings together two experts in the fields of aviation and interiors that have produced designs for major brands, including Taj Hotels, The Orient Express and Herman Miller International.

With this significant investment, Air India is committed to providing its passengers with a comfortable, modern, and technologically advanced cabin to facilitate travel experience that is comparable with the best airlines in the world.

Source: TNS

Asian shares higher as dollar retreats, risk events abound

SYDNEY (TIP)

Asian shares tracked Wall Street higher amid hopes that China's economy would pick up pace as COVID-19 curbs ease, although caution ahead of a week full of risk events, including the Federal Reserve's policy meeting, could cap sentiment.

MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan rose 0.9% in early trade, edging closer to a three-month high hit earlier in the week. For the week, it was also set to rise 0.9%.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index advanced 1.2%, with mainland developers up a whopping 4%. Chinese blue chips, however, saw more subdued gains.

China's Premier Li Keqiang, in comments carried by state media, said on Thursday, December 8, China's shift in COVID policy would allow the country's economy to pick up pace, a day after a top-level party meeting pledged to focus on stabilising growth while optimising the pandemic measures.

Apart from China optimism, investors are focused on U.S. producer price inflation figures later in the day for more signs about the health of the U.S. economy, after data overnight showed some loosening in the labour market, with weekly jobless claims rising moderately.



U.S. stocks snapped their recent losing streak to rebound. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.55%, the S&P 500 gained 0.75%, and the Nasdaq Composite added 1.13%.

U.S. monthly consumer inflation data is also due next week, with economists forecasting inflation likely slowed slightly to 8.0% in November from a year earlier, compared with 8.2% in October.

Futures have priced in a near-certain possibility that the Fed will slow down its rate hike to 50 basis points next week, but the target U.S. federal funds rate would have to peak around 4.9% by next May.

"This slowing is not a signal that the central bank's job is nearly done...the slower pace of hikes starts a new phase of the Fed's tightening cycle," said Brian Martin, head of G3 economics at ANZ.

"With inflation proving sticky and the labour market still buoyant, the risks to our 5.00% terminal view are to the upside."

Analysts at Barclays expect the key objective for the Fed at this meeting would be to execute a transition to slower hikes without easing broader financial conditions.

"With data on activity suggesting that the Fed's hikes, to date, have had limited traction on activity, we think the FOMC will accompany the move with hawkish dots to reiterate that the hiking cycle has a ways to go."

The Fed, the European Central Bank and the Bank of England are all set to announce interest rate decisions next week as policymakers continue to tap the brakes on economic growth through firmer rates to thwart stubbornly high inflation.

The U.S. dollar slid 0.2% against a basket of major currencies on Friday, on top of a drop of 0.4% overnight. The safe-haven greenback was set to finish the week flat.

Treasury yields rose overnight and remained largely steady, after falling to the lowest in three years earlier in the week on expectations of slower growth or that a recession will curb the rise in rates.

Source: Reuters

BharatPe files criminal suit against co-founder Ashneer Grover, family

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Fintech unicorn BharatPe has filed a criminal suit against its former MD and co-founder Ashneer Grover and his family, seeking up to Rs 88.67 crore in damages for alleged cheating and embezzlement of funds.

The suit, running into 2,800 pages, alleges that Grover, his wife Madhuri Jain and other family members created fake bills, enlisted fictitious vendors to provide services to the company, and overcharged the company for recruitment.

The civil suit and criminal complaint came up before the Delhi High Court, which issued notices to the Grover family and asked them to respond within two weeks. The next hearing date has been set for January 9.

It also issued summons to the other defendants, including Grover's brother-in-law, his father and his brother. If found guilty, they could face imprisonment for up to 10 years.

"Pass a decree of permanent injunction restraining the defendants (Grover and others) and/or anyone on their behalf in any manner whatsoever from making defamatory/derogatory statements concerning the plaintiff (BharatPe), its directors, employees and/or publicising, printing the same in any medium or form whatsoever," the suit said, while also seeking direction to the defendants to disclose their assets.

During the hearing, senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for BharatPe, contended that Grover, his wife and other relatives were carrying out a "vicious and vitriolic" campaign against the company which has a large number of foreign investors. The counsel for Grover and his wife said they were not served with a copy of the suit.

Source: PTI

Led by RIL, two Adani companies, top 100 firms create Rs 92.2 lakh crore wealth during FY17-22

MUMBAI (TIP)

Two Adani group companies -- Adani Enterprises and Adani Transmission -- have uprooted the traditional leader Reliance Industries in annual wealth creation in 2022 so far, while the top 100 of them created a massive Rs 92.2 lakh crore of wealth, according to a report.

However, Reliance Industries has smashed all records to emerge as the largest wealth creator during the five-year period ending March 2022, says the leading brokerage Motilal Oswal in its 27th annual wealth creation study.

The Gautam Adani group companies have been rallying to dizzying heights in the year as the group snapped up many assets and diversified into newer areas.

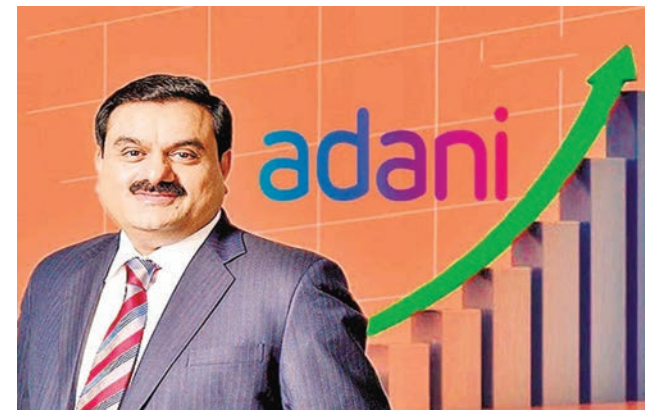
The rally was so high that Adani on September 16 became the second richest person in the world with USD 155.7 billion, only second to Elon Musk who had USD 253.5 billion of net worth, according to the Forbes real-time billionaires list. The spike was following the stocks of Adani Enterprises, Adani Ports and Adani Transmission hitting record highs on that day.

Adani, who owns 75 per cent each in these three companies, has added more than USD 70 billion to his fortune in 2022 in mid-September.

In February, he overtook Mukesh Ambani as the richest Asian, became a centi-billionaire in April and left behind Microsoft's Bill Gates as the world's fourth-richest person last month. He also owns 37 per cent of Adani Total Gas, 65 per cent of Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone, and 61 per cent of Adani Green Energy.

As against this, Ambani was pushed to the distant eighth slot with a net worth of USD 92.3 billion.

Reliance Industries, Adani Transmission and



Adani Enterprises are the biggest, fastest and the most consistent wealth creators, respectively between 2017 and 2022. Adani Enterprises and Adani Transmission are also the top all-round wealth creators, said the report.

Technology sector has been the largest wealth creating sector between 2017 and 2022, followed by the financial sector, which coming out of despair should continue to dominate wealth creation in the foreseeable future, the report added.

The study is based on the analyses of the top 100 wealth creating companies during the 2017-22 and the wealth created is calculated as change in the market capitalisation of these companies between 2017 and 2022, duly adjusted for corporate events such as mergers, de-mergers, fresh issuance of capital, buyback, etc.

These companies created Rs 92.2 lakh crore of wealth during this period, which is the highest ever so far, the report said, adding Reliance has smashed all records to emerge as the largest wealth creator during the five-year period.

Source: PTI

Shree Ganeshaya Namah



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

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The Indian Panorama brings you Weekly and Birthday Horoscope by Nastur Bejan Daruwalla

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - DECEMBER 12 TO DECEMBER 18



ARIES : Ganesha says, Dear Aries, this week will be filled with multiple joyous occasions. Practically speaking, you will succeed in everything you start this week. You won't be able to do the chores necessary by your occupation if you are overloaded. If you operate in the manufacturing industry, you will need to make extra efforts to get your agendas finished. In the latter half of the week, will be the best time to deal in intraday investment latter This week, your love life will get richer once more. Your dating life will get a boost. Your partner would experience at home in your household if you recently got engaged. This week, mindfulness will help you remain calm. This week, be sure to follow a minimal regimen.



TAURUS : Ganesha says, this week you will be able to make quite the right decisions in terms of your career and personal life. Administrators will get additional assistance for their undertaking this week. The moment to make the changes you've been wanting to for a while is this week. Reorganization proposals will be made to employees in the financial sector this week. This week, all within your relationship will feel completely new. Your secret admirer will confess their love for you, reigniting your relationship with them. The youth of this week must put their wellness first. Adults have the perfect week to start a new workout regimen.



GEMINI : Ganesha says, this week you will be full of enthusiasm and energy. You will certainly look out for good things you postponed earlier. You'll depend more on the knowledge and abilities of others working in the professional realm this week. This week will witness a significant improvement in the financial situation for family business employees. This week, as your relationship deepens, your strength will rise. Your love life will be infiltrated with delight this week. This week, digestive discomfort will lead to certain medical issues, so take care.



CANCER : Ganesha says, this week, professional trips will be more beneficial. Don't be reluctant to express opinions on matters that have been given permission. Developing multiple business plans will be advantageous to you. This week, when your partner expresses their concerns about things that have been upsetting them, your connection will get better. This week, you should be a little worried about your spouse's health. You'll probably Be fine, but your companion needs your attention.



LEO : Ganesha says, you'll get a lot of positive things from this week. Their children's endeavors will provide economic support for their parents. Your ability to persist will determine how successful you are this week. When excellent wedding proposals are bought by anyone you know completely, those who are experiencing trouble choosing the right partner for a wedding will see their lives take a fresh direction. Athletics or meditation are both recommended for this week. Avoid eating any fatty or expired meals this week.



VIRGO : Ganesha says, Individuals waiting for alternative jobs or internships may find it hard to put their search on hold this week as your week will bring lot of good things. You will not get your income back this week if you borrow it, so be careful. This week, old disputes and tensions will be settled, allowing you to restart your positive phase. It is possible to unwind by hearing to calming tunes. It's obvious that you've been under pressure this week.



LIBRA : Ganesha says, Dear Libra, this week will bring you new ideas and confidence within yourself. The advice this week will direct your business decisions in the proper direction. You will also get a better-paying employment contract this week, but you won't learn anything that will assist you in progressing in your career. This week, you'll be worried about finding affection. If you don't allow the stress in your life to impact your romantic relationships, everything will be OK. This week, you'll need to pay close attention to your diet. You must completely abstain from processed food and only eat fresh nourishment.



SCORPIO : Ganesha says, Dear Scorpio, this week will be filled with new learnings and fresh perspectives. Negative events nowadays are having an impact on your company's operations but, this week you will be able to control the losses. It will be challenging for individuals to balance their time while pursuing university schooling and operating a business at the same time. Partnership amongst colleagues will assist those in vocations. The couples will actually get to understand one another and adjust to married life this week. Solitary individuals will keep looking for somebody with comparable hobbies. This week will be a bit stressful for you, so give yourself some additional time to unwind.



SAGITTARIUS : Ganesha says, Dear Sagittarius, your kind nature will bring you closer to the best aspects of your destiny. This week, you need to concentrate on discussions happening around you since being an excellent communicator would offer you additional numerous opportunities. The right financiers will find your firm idea this week. This week, you'll plan a rendezvous with your partner. It's possible that your partner will ask for approval for marriage or engagement. You would be able to give your health some thought this week. You'll need to focus more on the wellness of your kids.



CAPRICORN : Ganesha says, this week, if you behave politely, you will succeed in all your trials. When choosing your firm this week, you should take all relevant considerations into account. It would be wise to distribute funds or execute contracts this week. This week, you'll experience pleasant and desirable since your mate will be in the condition to complement you on especially the smallest aspects. You run the danger of getting hurt this week. Ensure you commute securely this week. Overall, this week will be all well and settled and way better than you anticipate it to be.



AQUARIUS : Ganesha says, Dear Aquarius, this week will bring surety and assurance in your decisions. This week, those who are unsure about their career options will have the opportunity to choose the right skills for their future. This week, you have an excellent possibility of making it big on the financial markets. Your popularity will improve this week as well. This week, your boyfriend could offer you a gift. If you are married, you won't feel pressured to put a lot of effort into making your partnership better. Keep the loosened strands out of the way. This week, your relatives will be checking on your well-being. You'll be protected this week thanks to their medical advice.



PISCES : Ganesha says, Dear Pisces, this week is of self-reliance. By asking the incorrect individual for assistance this week, you will set yourself up for problems. This week, you'll be able to approach your work with passion, which unquestionably yields fruitful results. Attend the events and celebrations this week; there's now a strong chance you'll run across somebody important. Look for solid qualifications at the conferences you participate in this week. You must consume a lot of lukewarm water this week to safeguard yourself from respiratory infections. A bad weekend to go outdoors is also this one.

**BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : DECEMBER 12 TO DECEMBER 18
BY ASTRO FRIEND CHIRAG - SON OF ASTROLOGER BEJAN DARUWALLA**

DECEMBER 12 : Ganesha says your efficiency and tenacity enable you to surpass expectations and maintain an advantage over others, but you must restrain your occasional tendency to act stubborn and jealously. Nowadays, your capacity to manage significant duties would determine your ability to progress professionally. Be extremely cautious when lending money and take additional care with your jewels and other valuable possessions. A tremendous asset for you would be your significant other. This person would add comfort and enjoyment to your daily existence.

DECEMBER 13 : Ganesha says people respect you for your ability to make snap judgments, but you need to rein in your occasionally moody and careless behavior. Your boss would think highly of you because of your commitment to your work. Later in the year, some people might take trips abroad. All year long, your partner will cooperate and show you love and affection. Although you might not have received the financial rewards you had hoped for for your efforts, seniority and respect are definitely yours.

DECEMBER 14 : Ganesha says even though you have a genuine heart for your friends, you need to learn to curb your occasionally moody, domineering,

and jealous behavior. You would relish making new friends today and exploring new locations. You would have the energy and creativity to tackle any issue head-on with conviction and dedication. To make your relationship stronger, engage in activities you both find enjoyable. Your family will support you and show you love and affection. Your main inspiration would come from your beloved.

DECEMBER 15 : Ganesha says you put a lot of effort into your work, are dedicated, and have excellent control over it. Try to avoid entering into any new joint ventures or business partnerships today. Although they will be very alluring, partnerships are not advised for the first six months. Through social interactions, a new romance will emerge. It is possible that your parents' health will cause you some stress and worry. Prior to entering into any financial agreements or signing any new contracts, you must exercise extreme caution.

DECEMBER 16 : Ganesha says you are incredibly gifted, and even at such a young age, you manage a lot of responsibilities. Along with being brave, you are also bold. A brand-new stage of your career would begin for you, one that might not be particularly creative but is expected to yield good financial benefits. Despite your inconsistent behavior at times,

your spouse will be very accommodating and show you her complete love and affection. By attending social events and travelling, long-lasting connections would be made.

DECEMBER 17 : Ganesha says although you have a pleasant personality, you need to curb your occasionally aggressive, irritable, and extravagant behavior. You might witness new endeavors and plans coming to fruition to your advantage today. You would start new partnerships, and you would earn money from various sources. Your confidence and morale would both be boosted by the support of your partners and coworkers. A significant source of emotional support would be your spouse in particular.

DECEMBER 18 : Ganesha says you have a great appreciation for art and literature; you need to rein in your occasionally careless, envious, and stubborn behavior. The extra work you do in your spare time would be the main reason for your income to increase. In the final quarter of the year, some people would hear wedding bells, while others would find romance to keep them in the right frame of mind and in a good mood. There would be calmness at home, and family members would offer their full assistance and cooperation.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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contd from page 1

'Diwali- Power of One' awards conferred on 5 Diplomats at the UN

Canada Kaha Imnadze, and former Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations Keisha McGuire were among those who were honored on Monday.

The other three awarded were former Interim Defense Minister and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the UN and current Ambassador to the US Georgi Velikov Panayotov, former Permanent Representative of Benin to the UN and now Ambassador to the US Jean-Claude do Rego and former Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives Eliot Lance Engel.

Engel was conferred the 2022 Lifetime Achievement Award at a ceremony held in the UN Headquarters with the 'Diwali Stamp Power of One Awards', instituted in 2017 by the Diwali Foundation, USA.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN and President of the Security Council for the month of December, Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj said, "It is a time to not just celebrate but to also pause and reflect...Above all, a celebration of the eternal values that are so relevant to what we do here at the United Nations - goodness, caring and

compassion."

President of the 77th session of the General Assembly Csaba Korosi said Diwali marks the victory of good over evil, light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, "much like we intend to achieve here at the United Nations."

He noted that today's world is in crises and in need of transformation.

"We must - and I strongly believe we can - reinvigorate multilateralism and progress on our shared goals. I am sure that we too possess the power to create light and spread it across the world," he said. (Source: PTI)

Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the spirit of Ukraine are 'Time' magazine's 2022 Person of the Year

"Whether one looks at this story of Ukraine with a sense of hope or a sense of fear, and the story is, of course, not fully written yet ... Zelenskyy has really galvanized the world in a way we haven't seen in decades," Editor-in-Chief Edward Felsenthal said when revealing the news on the TODAY show.

The cover features a profile of Zelenskyy in his classic army-green sweater, surrounded by individual figures and crowds of protesters. They are interspersed with bright yellow sunflowers and blue-and-yellow

Ukrainian flags.

The publication refers to Zelenskyy's pointed refusal to evacuate abroad when Russia first invaded in February, as well as his risky visits to frontline regions in the months since, as examples of his fortitude that have inspired other Ukrainians in their fight for freedom.

And it highlights his strategic efforts to keep Ukraine top-of-mind for supporters around the world.

"If we fall out of focus, we are in danger," Andriy Yermak, his chief of staff, said.

In his army-green tees and quarter-zips, Zelenskyy cuts a recognizable figure in his many virtual appearances at global conferences, speeches to educational institutions and visits with foreign leaders and Hollywood celebrities alike.

Time (like many others) notes that the 44-year-old former actor and comedian, who was elected president in 2019 after playing one on a TV show, relies on a unique background and set of skills to meet the current moment.

"[Zelenskyy] was adaptable, trained not to lose his nerve under pressure," writes Time reporter Simon Shuster. "He knew how to read a crowd and react to its moods and expectations. Now his audience was the world. He was determined not to let them down."

But the war has changed Zelenskyy too - and not just because of the physical toll it has taken. One military adviser, Oleksiy Arestovych, told Time that the president has ditched quick movements, jokes and chattiness for a more aggressive posture.

"He's lost that actorly quality, and he's turned into a boss," he said.

Time isn't only praising the president; it's also honoring "the spirit of Ukraine" as its person of the year.

In a separate article, it credits some of the individuals who have contributed to Ukraine's resilience and recovery, ranging from medical providers and humanitarian leaders to volunteers and journalists. While some of that support came from outside the country, the publication also honors Ukrainians themselves.

"If the choices their President articulated gave moral clarity to an era we'd mostly been scrolling through, it was people who gave it meaning, by acting," it reads.

The publication also honored the women of Iran as 2022's Heroes of the Year; in addition to Blackpink as Entertainer of the Year and Aaron Judge as Athlete of the Year.

Time picked Zelenskyy from a shortlist of 10 people that included Chinese President Xi Jinping, U.S. Rep. Liz Cheney, gun safety advocates and U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen. Its announcement comes two days after British business publication Financial Times named Zelenskyy its person of the year.

In that interview, he told the newspaper that he doesn't consider himself courageous.

"I am more responsible than I am brave," he said. "I just hate to let people down." (With inputs from NPR/ WNYC)

Padma awardee Indian-American Doctor offers 5-point 'Panchamrit' solution to cancer crisis in India

"We should get accurate cancer incidence and prevalence data, like in the US. Cancer should be considered a notifiable disease. This will help to identify high-density areas and how to allot resources," Dr Dattatreya Nori told PTI in an interview.

Recipient of the 2015 Padma Shri awardee for his contributions to the field of medicine, Dr Nori noted that since the establishment of the National Cancer Institute of India in 2018, significant progress has been made. But this is not enough, he asserted.

Compared to the US, we have a late start in creating NCI hence the important programs have to be put on a fast track and accelerated path. Worried about the status of cancer disease in India, Dr Nori said he has shared his solution mechanism to decision-makers in India.

Observing that the Central Government and most of the State governments have subsidized cancer care for cancer treatment, he said these programs should also include subsidized cancer screening. This will incentivize people to go for free cancer screenings.

Recommending the establishment of a cancer command and control (CCC) center in India, Dr Nori said that this should be the apex body of all the issues related to the fight against cancer in India. The cancer command and control center should collect five-year data from the Medicare database from each state and central programme and develop cancer geographical distribution.

"Using this data, a CANCER ATLAS should be developed which should show cancer info for every district, State. This should update every five years. This should be a major source of information for all central, state and local authorities to develop their programs and prioritize their resources," Dr Nori said.

Finally, he said that it is important to involve non-resident Indians and organizations like the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) in the fight against cancer in India.

In the last seven years, he said he has provided scientific and technical help to most of the non-profit cancer centers in India, provided education and training fellowships to oncologists to receive advanced training in the US and worked with State governments in South India and received legislative approval for cancer to be considered as a notifiable disease.

Using patient data from State Medicare payments, he said he has helped develop a comprehensive database for all cancers and for all districts in Andhra Pradesh. This is helping to develop cancer Atlas, he said.

Dr Nori said he has conducted hundreds of cancer screening programs in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and developed a model cancer screening programme which can be used in all states. (Source: PTI)

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Lord Shiva and his avatars

Lord Shiva is one of the towering deities of the Hindu trinity. He is hailed as the "destroyer" while Brahma is the "creator" and Vishnu is the "protector". Nonetheless, the "destruction" referred to here is not the dogmatic destruction of creation but the intrinsic negative human traits, imperfections and illusions. And this "destruction" paves the way for creation all over again. Therefore, Lord Shiva could be best described as a "constructive destroyer." This Hindu deity, in a human form, is seen sitting in a meditative posture. It is Lord Shiva who is also worshipped in the form of a Linga. It is said that the Linga form of Lord Shiva came into being on the Chaturdashi Tithi, Krishna Paksha in Phalgun month (as per the Purnimant calendar). This auspicious day is also believed to be when Lord Shiva (Purusha) united with Parvati (Shakti). Therefore, the day, popular as Maha Shivratri, commemorates the Lord and his consort's marriage. Hailed as Bholenath, Mahadev, Shankar and various other names, Lord Shiva has incarnated several times to serve multiple purposes.

Piplaad Avatar

This avatar of Lord Shiva was born to Sage Dadhichi and his wife, Swarcha. However, he lost his parent's son after his birth. He was raised by his aunt Dadhimati. As he grew up and learnt about the cause of his father's death, Piplaad cursed Shani Dev (Saturn). He wanted to avenge Shani Dev for causing troubling his father during his lifetime. As a result, Shani Dev fell from the galaxy. However, after the Devas intervened, Piplaad agreed to forgive Shani by saying that none below sixteen would get affected by his adverse effects. Therefore, those who have Shani Dosha worship Lord Shiva.

Nandi Avatar

This form of Lord Shiva was born to Sage Shilada. The sage performed intense penance to seek Lord Shiva's blessings and asked for a child who would remain immortal. Therefore, pleased by Sage's devotion, Lord Shiva took birth as Nandi, who then became the gatekeeper of Kailasha (Lord Shiva's heavenly abode) and the mount of the Lord.

Veerabhadra Avatar

The Veerabhadra avatar of Lord Shiva is one of his fiercest forms. Lord Shiva incarnated as Veerabhadra after his wife Sati's death. The Veerabhadra form of Lord Shiva destroyed King Daksha's Yagya and beheaded him for being responsible for Sati's death.

Bhairava Avatar

The Bhairava Avatar also is one of the fiercest avatars of Lord Shiva. Referred to as Dandapani, the Bhairava Avatar punishes those who are greedy, lustful and arrogant. These negative traits often lead to one's downfall, and hence the purpose of the Bhairava avatar.

Ashwatthama Avatar

Guru Dronacharya had performed intense penance to please Lord Shiva. He wanted the Lord to be born as his son. Therefore, pleased by Guru Dronacharya's devotion, Lord Shiva took birth as Ashwatthama, an able warrior who played a pivotal role in the Mahabharata.

Sharabha avatar

This form of Lord Shiva appeared to calm Lord Narasimha after the latter killed demon Hiranyakashipu. The Sharabha avatar is one of its kind. The Lord appeared as a being that partly looked like a lion and bird. In some texts, the Sharabha avatar is said to have eight legs.

Grihapati avatar

The Grihapati avatar of Lord Shiva was born to a sage named Vishwanar and his wife, who lived on the Narmada banks. The sage's consort wanted Lord Shiva to be born as her son. Therefore, the sage performed intense penance in Kashi. A few days later, pleased by Vishwanar's devotion, Lord Shiva was born as Grihapati to the sage and his wife.

Durvasa avatar

This avatar of Lord Shiva was born to Sage Atri and his wife, Anasuya. He was known for being short-tempered



and commanded respect both from the humans as well as the Devas.

Rishabha Avatar

As per a legend associated with this avatar, Lord Shiva appeared as a bull to kill the sons born to Lord Vishnu and the Patala Loka women. Lord Vishnu's sons caused destruction, and hence at Lord Brahma's behest, Lord Shiva appeared as Rishabha to save creation.

Yatinath Avatar

The Yatinath avatar of Lord Shiva appeared to test a tribal couple, who were known for their hospitality. The tribal man named Aahuk lost his life while safeguarding his guest, Yatinath. Instead of mourning, his wife took pride in him for giving away his life for the sake of a guest. Pleased by the couple's devotion, Lord Shiva blessed them by saying that they would be born as Nala and Damayanti in their next birth.

Hanuman

Lord Hanuman is said to be the eleventh avatar of Lord Shiva. He was born to Mata Anjani and Kesari.

Krishna Darshan Avatar

This avatar of Lord Shiva appeared to emphasise the importance of Yagya and the importance of remaining detached. This legend is associated with a king named Nabhag, his father Shradhadeva and Sage Angiras.

Bhikshuvarya Avatar

As the name suggests, Lord Shiva appeared as a beggar to save the child of a King named Sathyaratha. Since the child had lost his parents, he was brought up by a poor woman with Lord Shiva's blessings.

Sureshwar Avatar

This avatar of Lord Shiva appeared in Indra Dev's disguise to test the devotion of a young boy named Upamanyu. The young boy passed the litmus test and succeeded in making Lord Shiva reveal himself.

Keerat Avatar

This avatar of Lord Shiva appeared to test the bravery of Arjuna. When the Pandavas were in exile, Arjuna meditated to seek Lord Shiva's Pashupat. As he was meditating, a demon named Mooka transformed into a boar to kill Arjuna. Lord Shiva's Keerat Avatar and Arjuna both killed the boar with their respective arrows. Initially, Arjun couldn't recognise Lord Shiva, but eventually, he realised that only the Lord could be a better archer than him.

Sunatnartak avatar

The Sunatnartak avatar of Lord Shiva appeared in the Himalayan King's court and danced with his damru. In the end, he put forward a marriage proposal and expressed his desire to marry Parvati.

Brahmachari avatar

When Sati took birth as Parvati and performed intense penance to please Lord Shiva, the latter appeared before her as a Brahmachari. He hurled abuses at Shiva to test Parvati's devotion. And Parvati, who loved Lord Shiva more than anyone else, gave a fitting reply to the Brahmachari. Eventually, Lord Shiva revealed himself and blessed Parvati.

Yaksheshwar Avatar

The Yaksheshwar avatar of Lord Shiva appeared to crush the pride/complacency of the Devas after they consumed Amrit, the divine nectar. He asked them to cut a blade of grass, and they failed to destroy it even with their combined powers. Subsequently, they apologised to Lord Shiva.

Avadhut Avatar

Lord Shiva appeared as Avadhoot to crush the ego of Indra Dev. *Source: Timesnownews*

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Buddha, Mahabodhi Tree and the land of Nirvana

Bodh Gaya is a Buddhist pilgrimage site in Gaya District of Bihar. Famous for the Mahabodhi Temple, It was here under the Bodhi tree that Gautama Buddha attained enlightenment.

It is now one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and a lot of foreign countries, including Japan and China, have helped the Indian government in building facilities for the Buddhist pilgrims. The place is bustling with pilgrims all through the year from India and abroad who come to pay their homage in monasteries, temples and remnants of Bodhi Tree.

Located near the river Neranjana, Bodh Gaya was earlier known as Uruwela. It was also known as Sambodhi, Vajrasana or Mahabodhi until the 18th century CE. It is one of the four important Buddhist sites that include: Kushinagar, Lumbini and Sarnath.

Mahabodhi Temple

The Mahabodhi temple, also called the "Great Awakening Temple", is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Bodhgaya, Bihar. It is a Buddhist temple that marks the location where the Lord Buddha is said to have attained enlightenment. Lord Buddha holds a very significant place in the religious history of India as he is believed to be the 9th and the most recent incarnation of Lord Vishnu to have walked the earth. The temple spreads over an area of a whopping 4.8 hectares and is 55 meters tall. The Bodhi Tree is situated to the left of the temple and is believed to be the direct descendant of the actual tree under which Lord Gautam Buddha meditated and attained enlightenment and laid down his philosophy for life. The original temple was built by Emperor Ashoka after he turned to Buddhism in order to seek peace and solitude from war and conquests.

The great Emperor Ashoka visited Bodh Gaya in around 260 BC. During his visit, he constructed a small temple by a tree, which was the Bodhi tree- the tree under which Gautam Buddha was sitting when he attained enlightenment. An inscription dated back to between 1st century and 2nd century read that the temple built by Emperor Ashoka was replaced by a new one.

Many monks and devotees can be seen performing countless prostrations to the tree. It's a purificatory ritual, and some monks are known to do up to 1,00,000 prostrations at one time. The architecture of the temple and its overall silence and peace will surely enchant you as you visit it.

Great Buddha Statue

This statue of Lord Buddha is the tallest in India and was instated by the XIV Dalai Lama in 1989. It is a meditating Buddha resting on a giant lotus, constructed using intricately carved sandstone and red granite.

Bodhi Tree



The Bodhi Tree, located 100 kilometres to the south of Patna in the north Indian state of Bihar, is perhaps the most prominent and respected sacred places in Buddhism because of the rich historical significance attached to it. It is under this tree that Prince Siddhartha Gautama, the spiritual teacher who later became to be known as the Buddha, attained enlightenment. It is believed that Prince Siddhartha had to sit and meditate under this tree for seven days. Later on, a shrine known as Animisalocana Cetiya was erected on the spot where he had sat down. A small temple was also built near the Bodhi tree in the 7th century.

The Bodhi tree is a frequently visited destination spot by tourists and is one of the four main Buddhist pilgrimage sites. In fact, the Anandabodhi tree in Sravasti and the Bodhi tree in Anuradhapura, both of which are again significant places that find mention in the history of Buddhism, are believed to have been propagated from this tree here at Bodh Gaya. The aura of the Bodhi tree and the temple complex in which this tree is located have attracted sages, meditators and yogis to it ever since the time of the Buddha. Great and renowned spiritual figures like Buddhajnana, Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, Nagarjuna and Atisha, have lived and meditated underneath the historically and religiously significant Bodhi Tree. Bodh Gaya is also popular for its UNESCO World Heritage Site- the Mahabodhi Temple Complex, which is just beside the tree. Religious people, as well as lovers of history, find this place especially fascinating.

Thai Monastery

Well known for its curved roof covered with exquisite tiles of gold, the Thai



Monastery houses a bronze statue of Buddha and another recently erected 25m high statue in the garden.

Mahabodhi Temple

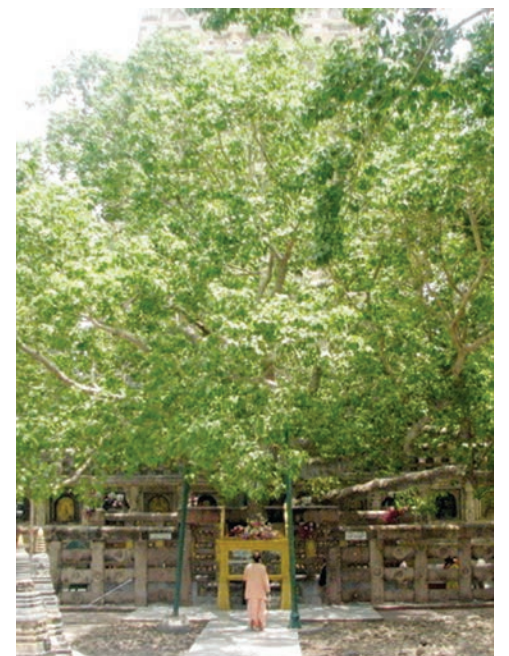
This book store offers a wide range of collection of Buddhist books, books on Buddhist culture and history of Mahabodhi Temple.

Royal Bhutan Monastery

The Royal Bhutan Monastery has been named so, as it was built by the King of Bhutan as a dedication to Lord Buddha. Clay carvings are seen on the interior walls of the monastery that depict different aspects of the Buddhist culture.

Cankamana

Situated along the Bodhi Temple, Cankamana is a holy shrine featuring a carving of Lord Buddha's feet into the black stone lotuses. *Source: Holidayfy*



History This Week

DECEMBER 09 TO DECEMBER 15

December 9

December 9, 1948 - The United Nations General Assembly unanimously approved the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It took effect on January 12, 1951, following ratification by 20 member nations.



Robert H.W. Welch

December 9, 1958 - The John Birch Society was founded in the U.S. by Robert H.W. Welch as an anti-Communist political organization named for Capt. John Birch, a U.S. Army officer killed in 1945 by Chinese Communists.

December 9, 1990 - Lech Walesa won a landslide victory in the Polish presidential election.

December 9, 1992 - Buckingham Palace announced the separation of Prince Charles and Princess of Wales, Dianna.

December 9, 1993 - A five-day repair job in space on the \$3 billion Hubble Space Telescope was finished by U.S. astronauts.

December 9, 1994 - Sinn Fein, the Irish Republican Army's political wing, held its first formal talks with Britain in over 70 years.

December 9, 1998 - Swiss politicians elected Interior Minister Ruth Dreifuss as president, making her the first woman to lead the Swiss government.

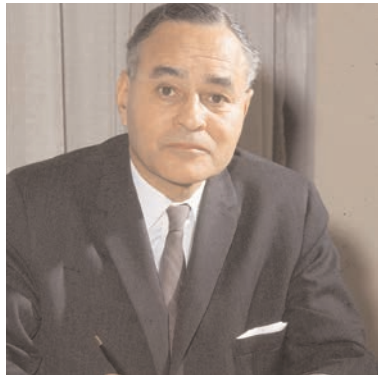
Birthdays - British poet John Milton (1608-1674) was born in London. Considered second only to Shakespeare in importance, his works include; Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained, Samson Agonistes, the pamphlets Of Reformation Touching Church Discipline.

Birthdays - American industrialist Clarence Birdseye (1886-1956) was born in Brooklyn, New York. He developed a method of deep-freezing foods and was one of the founders of General Foods Corp.

December 10

December 10, 1941 - During World War II, British Battleships Repulse and Prince of Wales were sunk by Japanese warplanes in the South China Sea, killing nearly 800 crewmen.

December 10, 1948 - The General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Dr. Ralph Bunche

December 10, 1950 - Dr. Ralph Bunche became the first African American man awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, for his efforts in mediation between Israel and nearby Arab states the previous year.

December 10, 1989 - The first non-Communist government since 1948 assumed power in Czechoslovakia.

Birthdays - Educator Thomas Gallaudet (1787-1851) was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He co-founded the American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1817.

Birthdays - American librarian Melvil Dewey (1851-1931) was born in Adams Center, New York. He invented the Dewey decimal book classification system, advocated spelling reform, and urged use of the metric system.

December 11



Guglielmo Marconi

December 11, 1901 - The first transatlantic radio signal was transmitted by Guglielmo Marconi from Cornwall, England, to St. John's, Newfoundland.

December 11, 1936 - King Edward VIII abdicated the

throne of England to marry "the woman I love," a twice-divorced American named Wallis Warfield Simpson. They were married in France on June 3, 1937, and then lived in Paris.

December 11, 1941 - A major turning point in World War II occurred as Japan's Axis partners, Italy and Germany, both declared war on the United States. The U.S. Congress immediately declared war on them. President Roosevelt then made the defeat of Hitler the top priority, devoting nearly 90 percent of U.S. military resources to the war in Europe.

December 11, 1994 - Russia sent tanks and troops into Chechnya to end the rebel territory's three-year drive for independence.

December 11, 1998 - The House Judiciary Committee approved three articles of impeachment charging President Bill Clinton with perjury and obstruction of justice.

Birthdays - New York Mayor Fiorello H. LaGuardia (1882-1947) was born in New York City. A beloved, gregarious politician, "The Little Flower" (the meaning of Fiorello) served as a U.S. Congressman and was then elected three times as mayor of New York City beginning in 1933. He was a liberal Republican who supported organized labor, women's rights and child labor laws. As mayor of New York, he reformed the city government and battled corruption, but kept his sense of humor: "When I make a mistake it's a beaut!" he once joked.

December 12

December 12, 1998 - The House Judiciary Committee approved a fourth and final article of impeachment against President Bill Clinton, charging him with making false statements in his answers to written questions from Congress.



John Jay

Birthdays - American statesman John Jay (1745-1829) was born in New York City. He was a diplomat and the first

Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. He co-wrote (with Alexander Hamilton and James Madison) the Federalist Papers.

Birthdays - French author Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880) was born in Rouen. Best known for the novel Madame Bovary, a tale of a woman's revolt against middle class society.

December 13

December 13, 1937 - The beginning of one of the worst atrocities of World War II as the Chinese city of Nanking (Nanjing) was captured by the Japanese. Over the next six weeks, the Rape of Nanking occurred in which Japanese soldiers randomly attacked, raped and indiscriminately killed an estimated 200,000 Chinese persons.

December 13, 1981 - In its struggle to maintain Communism, the Polish government imposed martial law and took steps to stifle the growing power of the pro-democratic trade union Solidarity.

December 13, 1991 - North and South Korea signed a treaty of reconciliation and nonaggression which also formally ended the Korean War, although actual fighting had ceased in 1953.



Heinrich Heine

Birthdays - German writer Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) was born in Dusseldorf. Best known for his statement made a hundred years before the advent of book-burning Nazis in Germany - "Where books are burned, human beings are destined to be burned too."

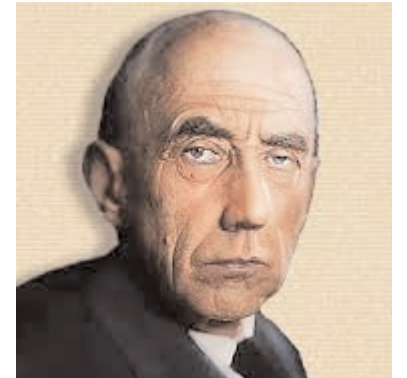
Birthdays - Mary Todd (1818-1882) was born in Lexington, Kentucky. She became the wife of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th U.S. President.

December 14

December 14, 1799 - George Washington died at Mount Vernon.

December 14, 1861 - In Britain, Prince Albert died of typhoid at Windsor Castle. He was the

consort and husband of Queen Victoria of England. Following his death, the Queen went into an extended period of mourning.



Roald Amundsen

December 14, 1911 - Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen became the first person to reach the South Pole.

December 14, 1935 - Thomas Masaryk, founder and first president of the Czechoslovak Republic, resigned and was succeeded by Edvard Benes.

December 14, 1962 - The Mariner II space probe sent back information from the planet Venus, the first information ever received from another planet.

December 14, 1995 - A Bosnian peace treaty was signed in Paris by leaders from the former Yugoslavia. The treaty ended Europe's worst conflict since World War II.

December 15

December 15, 1791 - The Bill of Rights (first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution) became effective following ratification by Virginia.



Napoleon

December 15, 1840 - Napoleon was buried in Les Invalides in Paris. He had died in exile on the island of Saint Helena after his fall from power.

December 15, 1890 - Sioux leader Sitting Bull (native name Tatanka-yatanka) was killed in a skirmish with U.S. soldiers along the Grand River in South Dakota as his warriors tried to prevent his arrest.

(Read more on www.theindianpanorama.news)



Luis Enrique out as Spain coach after World Cup elimination

The Spanish soccer federation said on Thursday that Luis Enrique will not continue as coach of the men's national team following its elimination in the round of 16 of the World Cup.

The announcement comes two days after Spain lost to Morocco 3-0 in a penalty shootout after a scoreless draw in regular and extra time.

The federation thanked Luis Enrique but said it was time to "start a new project" to keep the growth achieved by the coach in recent years.

Spain got off to a good start in Qatar, routing Costa Rica 7-0, but La Roja couldn't win again in its last three matches. It drew Germany 1-1 and lost 2-1 to Japan before being held by Morocco.

Luis Enrique took over the national team in 2018 to start revamping the squad after its elimination in the round of 16 of the World Cup in Russia. He temporarily left because of the illness and eventual death of his young daughter, but returned in 2019.

He helped Spain reach the last four of the Nations League twice, including this season and last year, when it lost the final to France. He also led Spain to the semifinals of the European Championship in 2020, losing to Italy in a penalty shootout. *Source: AP*



QATAR (TIP)

Brazil seek to become the first team through to the World Cup semi-finals on Friday, while Argentina could set up a blockbuster all-South American clash if they get past the Netherlands.

After three weeks of pulsating action, just eight teams are left standing as the 32-nation tournament heads into the final rounds of the knockout competition after a two-day break.

Five-time champions Brazil kick off the quarter-finals against surprise 2018 runners-up Croatia, with Neymar fit and firing again after an ankle injury he suffered in the opening game.

"I'll be doing everything that I can to win with the Brazilian national team. That's our mission and our dream," said Neymar.

"We're getting ever closer, we've got another step to go now."

Croatia are a much-changed team from the one that reached the final four years ago, but 37-year-old Luka Modric remains the player that makes them tick.

"I agree that we did a great thing by getting to the quarter-finals but



In this collage Photo, Neymar is seen celebrating after qualifying to the next round after defeating South Korea on December 5, 2022 and Lionel Messi celebrates after he scored his team's first goal during the Qatar 2022 World Cup football match on December 3, 2022 — AFP Photo

regardless of that we would like to do more," said Modric, who will come up against his Real Madrid teammates Vinicius Junior, Rodrygo and Eder Militao in the match at Education City Stadium.

"We know that the greatest match is ahead of us. Brazil are always favourites. We have to be ourselves."

Seven-time Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi is hoping to finally end his wait for a World Cup title with Argentina, after losing the final to Germany in extra time eight years ago.

The Copa America holders go up against the Netherlands in Friday's second quarter-final at Lusail Stadium, the venue for the December 18 final.

The two countries have met five previous times at the World Cup, including in the 1978 final, which Argentina won 3-1 after extra time. Argentina have never beaten the Dutch in 90 minutes.

It is a repeat of their 2014 semi-final clash in Brazil, where the South Americans won on penalties following a 0-0 draw after 120 minutes.

"In 2014 I was there and things ended slightly differently (to how we wanted) but I'd like to change that now," Dutch forward Memphis Depay said at a pre-match press conference.

After Argentina's shock loss to Saudi Arabia in their first match, Messi has dazzled in Qatar and the Dutch will have to nullify his effect on the game.

"We're not going to reveal our tactics to you (about stopping Messi). It would be pretty stupid to reveal your own tactics," coach Louis van Gaal told reporters.

"Messi is the most dangerous creative player, he is able to create a lot and to score goals himself. But when they lose the ball he doesn't participate much, this gives us chances," he said.

Source: AFP

Ronaldo breaks silence with explosive tweet after reported walk-out threat before Portugal's clash with Morocco at WC

DOHA (TIP)

Portugal are scheduled to lock horns with Morocco in the quarterfinal of the FIFA World Cup 2022 on Saturday, December 10. The 2016 UEFA Euro winners are embroiled in a controversy surrounding their star striker - Ronaldo. According to multiple reports, Ronaldo threatened to leave the Portugal squad after being dropped from the starting eleven against Switzerland in the Round of 16 phase of the Qatar World Cup.

A report from Portuguese newspaper Record claimed that Ronaldo had considered walking out on the team following a tense conversation with Portugal head coach Fernando Santos. However, the Portugal forward has apparently refuted the claims by sharing a noteworthy post on social media.



"A group too close to be broken by outside forces. A nation too brave to let itself be frightened by any adversary. A team in the truest sense of the word, which will fight for the dream until the end! Believe

with us! Strength, Portugal!," tweeted Ronaldo.

Ronaldo's sensational response has come after the Portuguese FA released a statement denying the claims made by the newspaper. The FA has clarified that at no time did Ronaldo issue such threats as mentioned in the reports.

"News released this Thursday reports that Cristiano Ronaldo threatened to leave the national team during a conversation with Fernando Santos, national coach. The FPF clarifies that at no time did the captain of the National Team, Cristiano Ronaldo, threaten to leave the national team in Qatar. Cristiano Ronaldo builds up a unique track record every day at the service of the national team and the country, which must be respected and which attests to the unquestionable degree of commitment to the national team," the Portuguese FA said in a statement. *Source: HT*



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