



IACCGH celebrates Silver Jubilee

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Significance of Navaratri and Nava Durga Puja

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Saiyami resumes film's shoot with Sunny Deol

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900 INDIANS IN LEBANON

UN peacekeepers in Lebanon, including 900 Indians, staying in place: Spokesperson

UNITED NATIONS: The UN peacekeepers in Lebanon, including about 900 Indians, are remaining in place despite the "dangerous developments" following Israel's ground invasion of the country and the UN is in close contact with their countries with updates, according to the UN spokesperson.

The UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) officials "confirm that despite these dangerous developments, UN peacekeepers remain in position and are regularly adjusting their posture and activities in order to fulfil their mandate", Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' Spokes-

person Stephane Dujarric recently said.

"UNIFIL peacekeepers continue to man all the bases and observation posts along the Blue Line that separates Lebanon and Israel," he said.

But in the last few hours on Tuesday (01 Oct.) they have not been able to do vehicular patrols along the Line, he added

He said Guterres "remains grateful" to the troop-contributing countries (TCC) "for their continued commitment and support to UNIFIL" as well as the Lebanon mission's civilian and military personnel.

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Mithun to get Dadasaheb Phalke Award

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US adds 2.5 lakh new visa slots for Indians

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Putin signs decree on autumn military draft

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Indian pharma companies to expand revenues

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi with school students participates in **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan** on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, at Navyug School in New Delhi on October 2. (ANI Photo) **Details on page 6**

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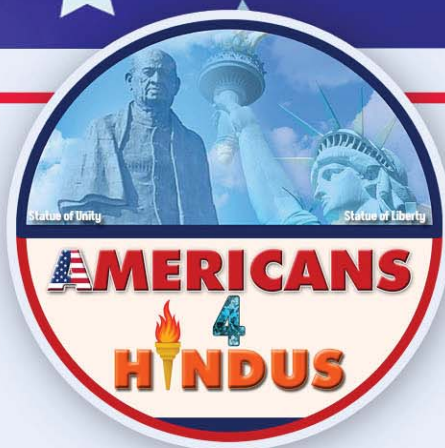
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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to India Post, 1860 Mowry Ave Ste 200, Fremont, CA 94538-1730.

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Saiyami resumes film's shoot



The yet-to-be-titled film sees Saiyami Kher opposite Sunny Deol. Saiyami is back on set in Hyderabad, balancing her passion for sports and her craft

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He said Guterres "remains grateful" to the troop-contributing countries (TCC) "for their continued commitment and support

bases fulfilling their mandate, but sometimes "if the fighting goes to a certain phase, they do have to go into shelter".



to UNIFIL" as well as the Lebanon mission's civilian and military personnel.

Amid the escalation of the conflict, Dujarric said, the peacekeepers are in their

"The Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and UNIFIL are closely engaged with troop-contributing countries to update them on developments and contingency

planning", he said.

If the situation worsens, Dujarric said, the peacekeeping operation has contingency plans.

"UNIFIL has been there for quite a long time. They've thought through different scenarios", he said.

Guterres condemned the escalation of the Middle East conflict, without naming Israel which began an invasion of Lebanon after aerial bombings, the Hezbollah that has attacked Israel, and Iran which launched a barrage of missiles against Israel.

"I condemn the broadening of the Middle East conflict, with escalation after escalation", he said. "This must stop. We absolutely need a ceasefire".

The Indian peacekeepers include 873 troops, 19 staff officers and 6 women.

The UNIFIL deputy force commander is Major General Chok Bahadur Dhakal of Nepal, which has deployed 858 troops. IANS

"Totally unacceptable," US State Secy condemns Iran's attack on Israel

WASHINGTON DC: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, in a meeting with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, condemned the Iranian attack on Israel, calling it "totally unacceptable."

Blinken stated that Iran had launched a direct attack on Israel, including 200 ballistic missiles.

"Before I speak to this meeting, let me say this: a few hours ago, Iran, for the second time in five months, launched a direct attack on Israel, involving some 200 ballistic missiles. This is totally unacceptable, and the entire world should condemn it," he said.

Blinken reaffirmed US support for Israel, stating that they would continue close communication with Israel moving forward.

"Initial reports suggest that Israel, with the active support of the United States and other partners, successfully repelled the attack. We have once again demonstrated our commitment to Israel's defense. We will remain in close contact with Israel and other regional partners in



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and United States Secretary of State Antony Blinken during the meeting, in Washington DC on Tuesday. (ANI Photo)

the coming hours and days," he said.

Referring to Secretary Blinken's remarks, Jaishankar said that the two leaders "address global issues."

"On the (India-US) bilateral front, we have achieved a lot since our last meeting, but there are also global issues to address, including some of the events you've

mentioned today. I look forward to a productive conversation," he said.

"It's a pleasure to have my friend and colleague, External Affairs Minister Jaishankar, here with us today. In recent weeks, we've seen the incredible vibrancy and strength of the partnership between the United States and India. We had Prime

Minister Modi here in Wilmington, Delaware, for the Quad meeting, as well as a bilateral meeting with President Biden," he said.

He noted that the warmth and ambition in the India-US relationship were at an unprecedented level.

"The warmth of that meeting and the ambition in the relationship are at an all-time high. This reflects the value that both countries place on this partnership--a partnership in many sectors, including strategic technology, space, semiconductors, and clean energy. Our countries are increasingly working together to create new opportunities, not just for people in India and the United States but also globally," Blinken said.

The Secretary of State emphasized India's critical role on the global stage in promoting peace.

"India plays a critical role on the global stage, working for peace and security. We are doing more together than ever before." ANI

"Selfless commitment of crores of Indians": PM Modi celebrates 10 yrs of Swachhata campaign

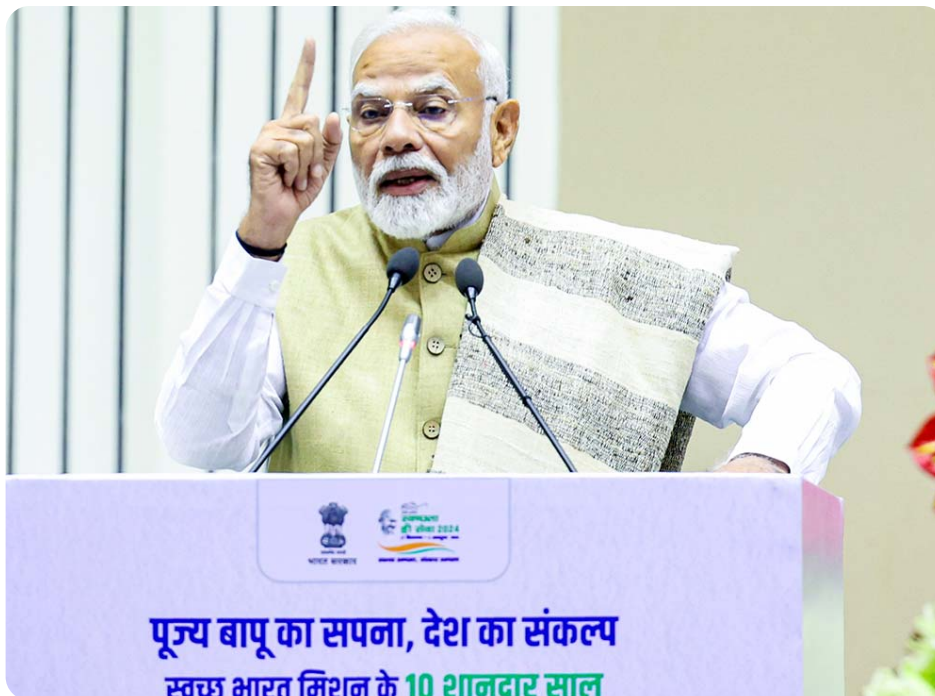
NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday 2nd October marked the 10 years of the "Swachhata Hi Seva" campaign and said that the 'Swachh Bharat Mission' is the world's biggest and most successful movement in this century, which will be remembered by the people even after many years.

The Prime Minister said that the Swachh Bharat Mission has reflected the energy of the people through the demonstration of public participation and public leadership.

"The Swachh Bharat Mission is a symbol of the selfless commitment of crores of Indians and in the last 10 years, crores of Indians have adopted this mission and made it a part of their lives," said PM Modi at the event.

PM Modi said that the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan will still be recognized even a thousand years into the future when historians examine India in the 21st century, adding that the more successful the Swachh Bharat Mission is in the country, the more our country will shine.

Addressing an event at the Vigyan Bhawan on 2nd October, PM Modi said, "1,000 years from now, when studies will be carried out about India of the 21st century, Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan will be remembered. In this century, Swachh Bharat is the world's biggest and most successful people's resolution led by people and joined in by people."



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the event marking 10 years of Swachh Bharat Mission, at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Oct 2. (ANI Photo)

Swachhta Abhiyan is a nationwide campaign in India to promote hygiene and cleanliness, and eliminate open defecation. The campaign was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 2, 2014.

"This mission has reflected on the powerful energies of the people as they have joined in the Swachh Bharat Mission. The more successful the Swachh Bharat Mission is in the country, the more our country will shine through. People from across the

country have participated in this. I received information that in the 15 days of Seva Pakhwada, more than 27 lakh events were held across the country with regard to the Swachh Bharat Mission, in which more than 28 crore people participated. With continuous efforts, we can strive to make our Bharat clean," said PM Modi.

The Prime Minister further extended gratitude to the citizens of the country for their participation and said, "On this important day, projects related to cleanliness

worth around Rs 10,000 crore have also been started. Under Mission Amrit, water and sewage treatment plants will be built in many cities of the country, be it work related to Namami Gange or the Govardhan plant producing biogas from waste. These works will take the Swachh Bharat mission to new heights."

"Today is the birth anniversary of Pujya 'Bapu' Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri. I pay my respectful obeisance to the sons of Mother India. Let us all together fulfil the dreams of India that Gandhiji and the great personalities of the country had seen. Today's day inspires us. Today, on October 2, I am filled with responsibility and emotion. Today the journey of the Swachh Bharat Mission has reached the milestone of 10 years," said Prime Minister Modi.

The Prime Minister said that the Swachh Bharat Mission is a symbol of the selfless commitment of crores of Indians and that in the last 10 years, crores of Indians have adopted this mission and made it a part of their lives.

PM Modi praised the countrymen for making the Swachh Bharat Mission a 'Jan Bhagidari Andolan' and said, "On the completion of my 10-year journey today, I praise every countryman, our sanitation workers, our religious gurus, our players, celebrities, NGOs, media persons, everyone. You all together have made the Swachh Bharat Mission a big 'people's movement'." ANI

Tibetans hold protest outside Chinese embassy in Delhi, call for holding China accountable for atrocities in Tibet

NEW DELHI: As China celebrates its national day today, Tibetans held a protest outside the Chinese Embassy in Delhi, demanding China be held accountable for committing atrocities in Tibet.

The protesters shouted slogans like "Make China accountable for committing atrocities in Tibet," "Free Tibet," "Stop genocide in Tibet," "China go away," "Free Tibet, stop genocide, Tibet is not part of China," and "Stop atrocities in Tibet."

The police detained protesters in front of the Chinese embassy as they were shouting slogans against China.

Recently, Tibetan Youth Congress organized a cycle rally to raise awareness about the cultural genocide in Tibet and demand that the Chinese government put an end to it.

Notably, the Tibetan Youth Congress organized a cycle rally from Dehradun via Chandigarh. The 50 cyclists covered more than 400 kilometers and reached Delhi.

Speaking with ANI, Tibetan Youth Congress President Gonpo Dhundup said,

The protesters shouted slogans like "Make China accountable for committing atrocities in Tibet," "Free Tibet," "Stop genocide in Tibet," "China go away," "Free Tibet, stop genocide, Tibet is not part of China," and "Stop atrocities in Tibet"

"The cycle rally organized by the Tibetan Youth Congress started this campaign on September 24 from Dehradun till today (September 30). It's our 7th day. Till now, we have covered more than 400 km

across four Indian states and two union territories."

He added, "We have 54 participants... The major demand of this campaign is to ask the Chinese government to stop the cultural genocide in Tibet... We want to

highlight the Tibetan issue through this cycle rally." He also called on the international community to stand in solidarity with Tibet.

Dhundup said, "Second, we want to

urge the international community to speak in support of Tibet... The third objective of this campaign is to seek the support of the Indian government for the Tibetan people's call for Tibet's independence... We got tremendous support from the local Indian community. It was a successful campaign."

Earlier on September 27, the representative of the European Union during the 57th general session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in a statement, reiterated its concerns about the continuous dire human rights situation in Tibet, highlighting the obligatory boarding schooling, mass DNA sampling and closure of Tibetan schools, The Central Tibetan Administration reported. ANI

Our relationship with neighbors much stronger since independence: EAM Jaishankar

WASHINGTON DC: Referring to the evolving situation in the neighborhood, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that India's relationship with its neighbors today is much stronger since independence.

Regarding the concerns of neighboring countries, the Foreign Minister affirmed confidence that India will be able to maintain its position in the region with patience and hard work.

Addressing the event, Jaishankar said, "Structurally, our relationship with our neighbors would be much stronger than it has been since independence. And the reason was very simple. If you look today at how much more regionalized we have become. If you look at the power grids, the fuel flows, the rail lines, the airways, the ferries, and the waterways, there's actually a tremendous change."

"If I were to look at it...15 years before, you can see an enormous shift in terms of how much more closely we deal with each other. And even in terms of the movement of people...we mentioned Bangladesh, I think, every year we issue about 1.5-1.6 million visas everywhere in Bangladesh. So we actually have much more trade, much more economic activity," he added.

This comes amid changing leadership in the Indian neighborhood. Bangladesh recently underwent an upsurge where student protests turned into an anti-govern-

ment movement forcing Sheikh Hasina -- a key India ally -- to flee.

Mohamed Muizzu's storming to power in Maldives also brought challenges in New Delhi-Male ties. However, the situa-



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar

tion has eased out lately, with more engagements between the two nations.

Similarly, power changes have also taken place in Nepal and Sri Lanka, two key neighbors of India.

He further emphasized that the neighboring countries also have their domestic politics and there will be ups and downs, adding that the best way to deal with the situation is to allow the stability factors to play out.

"Now we have to recognize; the world has to recognize that they also have their politics, there will be ups and downs there. As a bigger neighbor, sometimes we end up being part of the political debate. It's not unusual. So we have to fac-

tor it in. And my own sense is the best way of dealing with it is rather than getting overexcited by immediate events, you allow the stability factors to play out. You respond with a degree of sobriety and responsibility to anything that happens," he said.

Referring to China and the competition New Delhi faces from Beijing in the region, the Foreign Minister said that politics is competitive and one has to work hard to maintain and improve its position.

"Where China is concerned... with some countries, China is also a neighbor. In a few cases, China is a neighbor or near-neighbor. So politics is competitive... I tell my colleagues in the foreign ministry, to prepare to compete. I mean, this world is not going to give you anything on a platter. So, if you want to maintain your position, improve your position, do the hard work, and do the investment. And that's what we'll do and I'll tell ANI

Putin signs decree on autumn military draft

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree, calling up 133,000 citizens for military service in autumn, according to a document posted on the country's legal information portal.

According to the decree, a total of 133,000 people aged 18 to 30, will be drafted from October 1 to December 31, 2024, Xinhua news agency reported.

Conscripts will not be involved in tasks related to the special military operation in the new regions, and will serve at permanent deployment points of military units and formations on the territory of Russia, Deputy Head of the Russian General Staff's Main Organizational and Mobilization Department Vladimir Tsimlyansky said during a briefing.

In July 2023, Russia's lower house of parliament voted to raise the maximum age at which men can be conscripted to 30 from 27. The new legislation came into effect on January 1, 2024.

Russia conducts conscription twice a year, in spring and autumn respectively. The autumn 2023 draft saw the enlistment of 130,000 people. All men in Russia are required to do a year-long military service, or equivalent training during higher education, from the age of 18. IANS

"Ongoing projects, approved agreements definitely go on": Bangladesh Foreign Affairs advisor

DHAKA: As Bangladesh emerges from a period of political instability it looks to continue ongoing commercial activities and other projects with India. Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Advisor Mohammed Touhid Hossain says that these projects will remain unaffected.

Speaking to ANI, Touhid said, "Trade has been going on. After a short gap. Immediately after the fall of the government, trade again picked up...going on."

"The projects that are ongoing and approved agreements definitely go on," he underlined.

Amid the current slowdown in trade between both nations, the first consignment of renowned 'Padma Hilsa' fish from Bangladesh arrived in West Bengal on September 27, weighing around

45-50 tons ahead of Durga Puja.

Further, Touhid clarified that everything will go as usual despite the fact that the process of issuance of visas has not achieved normalcy.

"About the people-to-people contact, the Indian visa offices are not opened as yet fully. It is up to them when they will do it. This is the decision of the Indian government when that happened, people have the visas to go to India. Our offices in India are issuing visas to those who are coming for Bangladesh visas. I think even though there is some pause some times, it is pick up," Touhid added.

Touhid Hossain also added that the bilateral relations between Bangladesh and India "will continue normally." ANI

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16 companies pick candidates for over 1,000 jobs at Delhi job fair: IT Ministry

NEW DELHI: Sixteen companies shortlisted candidates against more than 1,000 job openings in their respective companies at a job fair organized by the National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) here, the IT Ministry informed on Sunday.

Dr Madan Mohan Tripathi, Director General, NIELIT, said that at least 6,000 offer letters have been given in the job fairs organized by NIELIT across the country last year and the number is set to increase this year.

"The job fairs empower our skilled students to secure fulfilling careers, contribute to the growth of organizations and fuel economic progress," said Tripathi. He hailed the efforts of team NIELIT Delhi for successfully organizing the job fair.

More than 1,300 candidates had registered for the job fair - 'Yuva Rojgar Mela' - that was organized in the national capital.

Leading companies like Tech Mahindra, Paytm, Frankfinn (Shavsi Global Services), Axis Bank, Hinduja Housing Finance, Access Health Care, Card Expertise India Pvt Ltd, Ebix Cash, I Process, PNB Metlife, Siddhi Infonet+Sony and others participated in the job fair, informed the ministry.

The job fair represents NIELIT's unwavering commitment to providing holistic support to its students, including but not limited to their capacity building, fostering skill development, and providing placement support. *IANS*

3 Adani Group firms join World Economic Forum's 'Industrial Clusters' initiative



AHMEDABAD: In yet another feat for the Adani Group, three portfolio companies -- Adani Enterprises (via its subsidiary Adani New Industries Ltd), Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), and Ambuja Cements -- have joined the World Economic Forum's (WEF) 'Transitioning Industrial Clusters' initiative, forming the Adani Mundra Cluster, it was recently announced. *IANS*

EAM Jaishankar meets US Commerce Secretary Raimondo, discusses Indo-Pacific Economic Framework

WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister (EAM), S. Jaishankar met with US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo in Washington D.C. and discussed Indo-Pacific Economic Framework alongside high technology cooperation between the two countries.

The talks between the two Ministers also covered resilient supply chains, Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, high technology cooperation, semiconductors and business promotion as EAM Jaishankar arrived in the US capital.

In a tweet, EAM Jaishankar wrote, "Great to see Commerce Secretary @SecRaimondo today in Washington DC. We discussed semiconductors, iCET, critical minerals, trusted partnerships and supply chain resiliency. Value the strides we are making in our tech collaboration and economic partnership."

This marks the first visit of EAM Jaishankar to the US capital since the Modi government was re-elected for a third consecutive term.

This meeting comes a day before EAM Jaishankar met his US counterpart Secretary Antony Blinken.

Both EAM Jaishankar and US Commerce Secretary Raimondo also discussed the US-India CEO Forum and US-India Commercial Dialogue, two Department of Commerce and Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry-led initiatives that aim to

now under the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) and reiterated their shared commitment to continuing to advance the work to operationalize the IPEF agreements, the statement added.

The External Affairs Minister

work. Since its launch in May 2022, IPEF countries have engaged in intensive discussions to scope out each pillar of the Framework.

The IPEF was launched jointly by the US and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific re-



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a meeting with United States Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo and discussed ways to strengthen bilateral trade and the two countries' investment relationship, in Washington DC (ANI Photo)

strengthen the US-India trade and investment relationship, said a press statement released by the US Department of Commerce.

Both the Ministers also commended the progress made till

concluded the high-level United Nations General Assembly debate in New York on Saturday (Sept. 28). EAM Jaishankar was in New York from September 18 to 24.

IPEF, a group of 13 countries, is a multilateral economic frame-

gion on May 23, 2022, in Tokyo.

During his stay, in addition to his meeting with Blinken, EAM Jaishankar will also engage with other high-ranking officials from the US administration, as well as members of the Cabinet. *IANS*

Piyush Goyal to interact with leading American and Indian CEOs in US

NEW DELHI: Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is set to interact with leading American and Indian CEOs during his visit to the US next week and discuss investment avenues.

Minister Goyal will co-chair the India-USA CEO Forum with US Secretary of Commerce, Gina Raimondo, in Washington DC, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a statement.

Both nations will discuss

ways to generate sustainable economic growth, improving the business and investment climate and to deepen ties between the Indian and the American business communities.

Minister Goyal will interact with leading American and Indian CEOs and industry leaders and to highlight the vast opportunities for investment in India.

His interactions with business and industry leaders in a roundtable, organized by US-India Strategic Partnership Fo-



Piyush Goyal

rum, will stress upon ways to further leverage the complementary strengths and synergies between the economies of India and US.

The minister will also chair a Young Business Leaders Roundtable and India-USA Gems and Jewelry Trade Roundtable.

Goyal and Secretary Raimondo will also discuss steps to Expand and Diversify Critical Minerals Supply Chains between India and the US. The

two sides are negotiating a MoU which intends to enhance bilateral collaboration to increase and diversify essential critical mineral supply chains and leverage their complementary strengths.

Minister Goyal will also meet the USTR Ambassador Katherine Tai in Washington DC, to discuss the ongoing collaboration under the Trade Policy Forum and ways to further add to two way trade between the two countries. *IANS*

Make in India for space, geospatial sector to fuel growth by 2047: Amitabh Kant

NEW DELHI: The Make in India initiative in sectors like space and geospatial will drive growth in the country by 2047, said G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant.

He was speaking at a high-level seminar on 'Make in India for Space and Geospatial Sector', organized by the Geospatial World Chamber of Commerce (GWCC) in the national capital.

He emphasized India's growing leadership in the space and geospatial sectors, underscoring the opportunities for both local and international stakeholders to contribute to this vital growth.

"India, currently the world's 5th largest economy, is set to become the 3rd largest by overtaking Japan and Germany in the next two and a half years," Kant stated.

"To achieve our goal of a \$30 trillion economy by 2047, significant breakthroughs in sectors like space and geospatial technology will be key drivers of growth," he added.

While acknowledging the challenges in opening up these sectors, Kant lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiative in



Amitabh Kant

overcoming bureaucratic resistance.

"India's share in the global space economy must grow from 2 percent to 10 percent. The private sector, especially startups, will play a pivotal role in driving this shift, with groundbreaking firms like Skyroot and Agnikul leading the way," said

the former NITI Aayog CEO.

The seminar explored how India's space and geospatial sectors are poised for tremendous growth, focusing on the 'Make in India' initiative. The event also highlighted the immense potential for foreign direct investment (FDI) in manufac-

turing software and hardware products.

Kant encouraged startups to utilize vast data resources for economic disruption and satellite communications, highlighting real-time data as a key factor in improving governance and addressing rural-urban disparities.

The seminar also featured discussions on urbanization and how geospatial technology can address future infrastructure needs. By 2050, 50 percent of India will require urban development, and Kant emphasized the need for digital twins and advanced forecasting tools for sustainable growth.

Sanjay Kumar, CEO of GWCC and Geospatial World highlighted that the global geospatial industry, including the two crucial pillars of space infrastructure -- earth observation and the global navigation satellite system -- now represents a \$500 billion industry.

"Its socio-economic impact and relevance to the digital economy are not only fundamental but a prerequisite for the future," Kumar said. /ANS

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In Brief
Norway tightens rules on collective protection for Ukrainian refugees

OSLO: Norway will grant collective protection to fewer Ukrainians arriving from six areas deemed safe by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration, the government said.

If no individual need for protection exists, applications from new asylum seekers from these areas will be rejected, it said.

For the past two and a half years, most Ukrainians fleeing to Norway have been given temporary protection without individual assessment, but now applications from safe regions of Ukraine will be evaluated under regular asylum regulations, Xinhua news agency reported.

"In the future, asylum seekers from Ukraine will therefore be treated on a more equal footing to other asylum seekers. The collective protection scheme will now be directed more precisely at those in need of protection," said Emilie Enger Mehl, minister of justice and public security.

Norway, which has taken in 85,000 Ukrainians in the past two and a half years, the most in Nordic countries, has seen a reduction in arrivals following earlier cuts to benefits and accommodation. However, recent months have witnessed an uptick in new arrivals.

"Norwegian municipalities are starting to reach capacity. Housing is in short supply and there is pressure on welfare services. We must maintain control over immigration to Norway," said Tonje Brenna, minister of labor and social inclusion. *IANS*

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Immigration

POST

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October 4, 2024

More than 1.2 million Indians have traveled to the United States year to date in 2024, a 35 percent increase over the same period in 2023

US opens additional 250,000 visa appointments for Indian travellers

NEW DELHI: The US Embassy in India on Monday (30 Sept.) announced it has opened an additional 250,000 visa appointments for Indian travellers, including tourists, skilled workers, and students.

"The recently released new slots will help hundreds of thousands of Indian applicants take timely interviews, facilitating the travel which is the backbone of the people-to-people ties that underpin the US-India relationship," stated the US Mission to India.

It also detailed that the Indian Mission has already surpassed one million nonimmigrant visa applications for the second consecutive year.

"During our student visa season this summer, we continued to process record numbers, and all first-time student applicants were able to obtain an appointment at one of our five consular sections around India. We are now focused on bringing families together, connecting businesses, and facilitating tourism," the statement added.

More than 1.2 million Indians have traveled to the United States year to date in 2024, a 35 percent increase



over the same period in 2023.

According to the US Mission, at least six million Indians already have a nonimmigrant visa to visit the United States, and each day, it issues thousands more.

The Embassy highlighted, the United States' "partnership with India is stronger, closer, and more dynamic than any time in history" with the US Senate designating September 30 as a 'US-India Partnership Day', recognizing the contribution of the two countries to one another and a relationship that continues to define the 21st century.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden set an ambitious goal to improve and expedite the visa process and I'm proud to say that we have delivered on that promise. Our consular teams at the embassy and four consulates work tirelessly to ensure that we meet the surging demand," US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti said recently.

Last week, during his visit to the United States, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced that the Indian government will

open two new consulates in Boston and Los Angeles.

"Last year, I announced the opening of a new Indian consulate in Seattle. I sought your suggestions for two additional Con-

sulates. India has now decided to open two new consulates in Boston and Los Angeles," remarked PM Modi while interacting with the Indian diaspora in New York's Nassau Coliseum. *IANS*

'Four in ten illegal foreigners entered South Korea without visas'

SEOUL: Four in 10 foreigners who illegally stayed in South Korea last year entered the country without visas and stayed beyond the visa-free period, data from the justice ministry showed.

The number of "illegal aliens" in South Korea came to 423,675 as of the end of last year, accounting for 16.9 percent of the total foreigners staying in the nation, according to the data cited by Rep. Song Seong-jun of the ruling People Power Party.

Of the illegal foreigners, the number of those who arrived in South Korea without visas reached 190,000, or 44.9 per-

cent. Foreigners are allowed to enter South Korea without visas in cases of visa exemption (B-1) and tourists in transit (B-2), Yonhap news agency reported.

The number of illegal aliens who entered South Korea with a visa waiver came to 169,000, the largest proportion for a single category at 40 percent, followed by those with a short-term stay visa at 87,000. Those with B-2 status reached 21,000, the data showed.

Such foreigners are believed to be illegally staying in South Korea to engage in economic activities without proper employment visas. *IANS*

Kamala Harris pledges to revive bipartisan border security bill blocked by Trump



WASHINGTON, DC: US Vice President Kamala Harris has reaffirmed her commitment to border security, emphasizing the need for stronger measures to combat illegal immigration and the fentanyl crisis. Harris criticized former President Donald Trump for blocking a comprehensive border security bill that had bipartisan support in Congress.

"Last December, I helped raise the rate of overtime pay for border agents," Harris stated. "I strongly supported the comprehensive border security bill, written last year by a bipartisan group of senators, including one of the most conservative members of the United States Congress."

The bill, which Harris described as "the strongest security bill we have seen in decades," aimed to address several critical issues at the US southern border. It would have hired 1,500 more border agents and officers, installed 100 inspection machines to detect fentanyl, and expanded the number of immigration judges and asylum officers. Harris explained, "It would have allowed us to more quickly and effectively remove those who come here illegally."

Despite being endorsed by the Border Patrol Union, the bill was ultimately derailed by Trump. "Donald Trump tanked it. He picked up the phone and called some friends in Congress and said stop the bill, because he prefers to run on a problem instead of fixing a problem," Harris charged.

As a result of Trump's interference, Harris contended that the border remains less secure today. "The American people deserve a President who cares more about border security than playing political games and their personal, political future."

Harris pledged that, if elected President, she would revive the bill and sign it into law. "Even though Donald Trump tried to sabotage the border security bill, it is my pledge to you, that as President of the United States, I will bring it back up and proudly sign it into law."

This comes amidst renewed debate on border security, as Trump's administration previously secured a victory when the US Supreme Court allowed the use of \$2.5

"Last December, I helped raise the rate of overtime pay for border agents," Harris stated. "I strongly supported the comprehensive border security bill, written last year by a bipartisan group of senators, including one of the most conservative members of the United States Congress"

billion from the Department of Defense to construct parts of a border wall. Despite Congress refusing to provide the requested funds, the Supreme Court's 5-4 ruling allowed Trump to move forward with the controversial wall, a decision that has continued to fuel division on how best to secure the border.

Many lawmakers opposed the move, warning that diverting funds from the Pentagon would harm national security priorities. ANI

India aims to become \$3 trillion tourism economy by 2047

NEW DELHI: As India aims to become a \$3 trillion tourism economy by 2047; it is fast becoming one of the world's most sought-after travel destinations with 14.3 million international tourists in 2022 and \$17.6 billion in revenue.

The country saw 9.2 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2023, signifying a positive post-pandemic revival. The tourism industry showed positive signs of revival post-pandemic with a year-on-year increase of 43.5 percent.

This year, foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) stood at nearly 47.8 lakh from January to June. In the month of June, foreign tourist arrivals stood at 7,06,045 compared to 6,48,008 in June 2023, registering a growth of 9 percent.

According to the government, despite facing certain challenges along the way, the sector continues to flourish, fueled by various strategic initiatives aimed at enhancing infrastructure, promoting sustainable practices, and enriching the overall visitor experience.

With a commitment to overcoming obstacles and leveraging opportunities, India is well on its way to becoming a leading global travel destination.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, as part of the 'Chalo India' campaign, the first 1,00,000 foreigners coming to India will get their visa on a gratis basis and the government will waive off the visa fee.

The ministry has also launched the Incredible India Content Hub on the revamped Incredible India digital portal, intended for the use of a diverse range of stakeholders, including tour operators, journalists, students, researchers, film makers, authors, influencers, content creators, government officials, and ambassadors.

In a bid to engage and involve citizens in tourism development and growth, the government is also introducing mechanisms at airports and railway stations across the country, for tourists to provide their feedback on their visits to tourist attractions and destinations in the country.

To support efforts of States/UTs in granting and implementing 'industry status' for the tourism and hospitality sector, the ministry has also launched a handbook which aims to serve as a guide to states and UTs. IANS

According to the Ministry of Tourism, as part of the 'Chalo India' campaign, the first 1,00,000 foreigners coming to India will get their visa on a gratis basis and the government will waive off the visa fee

Invest in your dream home this festive season

PUNE: As the festive season approaches, it brings with it an air of joy, celebration, and new beginnings. This period is traditionally considered an auspicious time to invest in big purchases, such as a new home. For many, owning a home is not just a financial decision but a dream that symbolizes stability and achievement. To help turn this dream into reality, a housing loan can offer the necessary financial backing. With Bajaj Housing Finance Home Loan, prospective homeowners can get closer to their dream home this festive season.

Why a housing loan is essential?

Very few people can buy a home using only their savings. A housing loan offers the financial support needed to purchase a property without depleting one's resources. By opting for a housing loan, buyers can make a down payment and then spread out the remaining cost in smaller monthly instalments over several years.

Why consider Bajaj Housing Finance Home Loan?

When selecting a lender, Bajaj Housing Finance Home Loan stands out due to its customer-centric approach. With competitive interest rates as low as 8.50%* p.a. and flexible repayment tenures of up to 40 years*, Bajaj Housing Finance makes repaying a home loan stress-free. Additionally, the quick loan approval process ensures that buyers can move forward with their home-buying plans without unnecessary delays.

Here's why Bajaj Housing Finance Home Loan is a popular choice among homebuyers:

1. Higher loan amounts: Bajaj Housing Finance offers home loans of up to Rs. 15 crore*.
2. Low EMIs: The competitive interest rates, starting at 8.50%* p.a., make monthly payments more affordable.
3. Quick approval: The loan sanction process is quick, with approval provided within 48 hours*.

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Real Estate POST

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October 4, 2024

Mumbai property sales registration crosses 1 lakh in Jan-Sep, fastest in a decade: Report

MUMBAI: Registration of property sales in Mumbai city surged past 100,000 landmark in September 2024, which is recorded to be the fastest in a decade, as per a report by Knight Frank India, a real estate consultancy firm.

In 2023, this mark was achieved in October.

As per the real estate consultancy firm, Mumbai city (area under BMC jurisdiction), recorded about 105,664 property registrations in the first nine months of 2024, contributing more than Rs 8,892 crore to the state exchequer. ANI

Maha Cabinet nod to seeking transfer of Centre's salt pan lands for Mumbai housing schemes



MUMBAI: In the run up to the Assembly elections the Maharashtra Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, took a record 38 decisions including seeking the transfer of the Centre's salt pan lands in Mumbai to the state government to accelerate housing schemes for the poor.

The state government has written to the Centre urging it to transfer 255.9 acres of salt pan lands through a lease agreement to Maharashtra to push housing schemes for the poor in Mumbai.

The state housing department will enter into a lease agreement with the Centre for this purpose.

Of the 255.9 acres of salt pan lands, 120.5 acre will be from Kanjur, 76.9 acres from Kanjur and Bhandup and 58.5 acre from Mulund.

The state government will collect the land amount from the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) company and give it to the Centre for acquisition.

The SPV will bear the cost of rehabilitation of the workers on the salt pan lands.

The salt pan lands will be used for rental housing, slum re-

habilitation projects, affordable housing and housing for Economically Weaker Sections and the government has fixed the responsibility on the developer of the Dharavi rehabilitation project.

Further, the Cabinet also cleared a discount on payment of land premium by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) to expedite the slum rehabilitation scheme of Ramabai Ambedkar Nagar and Kamrajnagar in north

of its payment at the beginning.

The Cabinet also gave approval for a subsidy scheme for rearing of indigenous cows citing that Goshalas have very low income and they could not afford to bear the expenses.

The government will provide a per day subsidy of Rs 50 per indigenous cow. This scheme will be implemented online by the Maharashtra Goseva Commission.

Each district will have a Dis-

pared to the 19th census.

The Cabinet also approved a 10 percent increase in the monthly salary of Rs 15,000 of Kotwals.

It was also decided to implement a compassionate policy for Kotwal cadre employees that will benefit 12,793 Kotwals.

In case of death while in service, or incapacitation due to serious illness, accident, their heirs will be eligible for compassionate appointment as per the policy of the government.

The Cabinet also took a decision to provide a monthly honorarium of Rs 8,000 to Gram Rozgar Sevaks. Those who have worked for more than 2,000 days will be given 1 percent incentive subsidy of the sanctioned expenditure.

Further, the government will pay a monthly transport allowance and data pack allowance of Rs 1,000 for those Gram Rozgar Sevaks who have worked for 2,000 days and those who have worked for more than 2,000 days will be entitled to Rs 2,000 per month.

Moreover, the Cabinet also cleared the development of the Multipurpose Port Project at Murbe in Palghar District by JSW Infrastructure Developers.

A detailed project report will be prepared on technical issues and also on rehabilitation of fishermen by roping in expert organizations such as the Central Water and Power Research Centre and Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute.

The proposed port will be all season and it will mainly handle captive and dry bulk cargo. The project entails an investment of Rs 4,259 crore and it will create 1,500 jobs. IANS

The state government has written to the Centre urging it to transfer 255.9 acres of salt pan lands through a lease agreement to Maharashtra to push housing schemes for the poor in Mumbai. The state housing department will enter into a lease agreement with the Centre for this purpose

east Mumbai.

MMRDA will have to pay a 25 percent premium for 14 hectares of land at Kurla as per the ready reckoner rates from sale proceeds after completion of the slum rehabilitation project instead

tribut Goshala Verification Committee. According to the 20th animal census in 2019, the number of indigenous cows has been found to be less than 46.13 lakh and it has decreased by 20.69 percent com-

ADVERTORIAL ▼

Here are 3 compelling reasons why now may be the ideal time to purchase a new home in Mountain House.

1. Let Interest Rate Incentives Work for You

While fixed-rate mortgages have been popular for years, now may be the time to consider variable rates, which can offer lower initial payments and the opportunity to refinance if fixed interest rates eventually drop.

Shea Mortgage™ has a 2-1 Buydown Program for a limited time to buy down the payment rate at Mountain House. This program can help ease your financial commitment in the first two years of homeownership.

Take advantage of the Buydown Program, available on Quick Move-In homes financed with Shea Mortgage that can close escrow by 12/31/2024. With this program, you can benefit from a temporary reduction in mortgage payments. Learn more at SheaHomes.com/MountainHouse.

2. Not Just Curb Appeal, Community Appeal

A neighborhood goes beyond the walls of your home; it encompasses a broad spectrum that includes your school district, community engagement, and recreational/social opportunities. At Mountain House, this broader perspective reveals how genuinely remarkable this neighborhood is.

Shea Homes Mountain House resident, Ameya P. explains "You're not just getting a house. The house comes with neighbors, a great community... great parks." Here, our pedestrian-friendly community thrives on its tight-knit, multi-generational dynamic."

Step outside, and you'll find yourself immersed in the neighborhood. With nearby hiking trails, bike paths, and parks, there's no shortage of recreational, social, and community opportunities to enjoy daily.

Embrace the tranquility of our neighborhood and relax in comfort. Beyond these immediate benefits, homes in such desirable locations hold broad appeal, from the curb to the community.

3. Why Buy New

The Shea Homes' Langston neighborhood includes contemporary appliance packages and many smart home features-amenities that are not available in most resale homes.

When there are fewer new construction homes on the market, those looking to upgrade to a larger space or downsize to a smaller one may face a slim supply of



3 reasons why now might be a great time to buy a new home



market availability. Demand in the Bay Area is expected to intensify, as has been true throughout the state of California.

Plus, when you choose to buy a new home, you won't have to worry about the cost of fixing up an older one. All new Shea

homes come with a warranty and a builder with a proven reputation of standing behind it.

'Prescribe painkillers when necessary to kids'

NEW DELHI: Pediatricians must prescribe opioids for pain to children when necessary, with recommended precautions to increase safety, according to a new clinical practice guideline released recently by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The first clinical practice guideline for opioid prescriptions in kids also includes explicit instructions on how and when to prescribe these medications for pain while reducing the long-term risk of addiction.

The guideline, published in the journal *Pediatrics* online, called on pediatricians to always start non-opioid medications and treatment, for a patient with mild to moderate pain. It also marked a shift in clinical practice by recommending a routine prescription for naloxone -- a medication used to reverse overdoses -- alongside every opioid prescription.

"There's been a big pendulum swing in the practice of medicine over the last two decades -- first with opioid-overprescribing, then with a huge cutback in opioid prescribing, likely leaving some children's pain undertreated," said Scott Hadland, lead author of the guideline. *IANS*

One can be said to be perfectly healthy in body and mind only if no part of the body or mind makes itself felt. A part makes itself felt only when there is something wrong with it. You know that you have a head only when it aches.
Sri Atmananda (1883 - 1959)

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October 4, 2024

Indian pharma companies to expand revenues by 9-11 pc in FY25

NEW DELHI: The Indian pharma companies are estimated to expand their revenues by a healthy 9-11 percent in the current fiscal (FY25), a recent report showed.

This will be driven by 9-11 percent revenue growth from the US market, 7-9 percent each from the European and domestic markets, and 11-13 percent from the emerging markets, according to credit rating ICRA.

The revenue growth from the domestic market is likely to improve by 7-9 percent in FY25 against 6.4 percent in FY24.

ICRA has maintained its stable outlook for the Indian pharmaceutical industry, led by steady demand in the export and domestic markets and the comfortable credit profile of key industry participants.

Kinjal Shah, SVP and Co-

Group Head-Corporate Ratings, ICRA, said they expect the operating margins of its sample set of companies to remain stable at 23-24 percent in FY2025, "sup-



ported by an increase in revenues, higher contribution of complex generics, specialty molecules and soft prices of raw materials."

In the US market, revenue growth is expected to moderate to 9-11 percent in FY25 due to the high base of the previous fiscal. However, it will still remain much

date) due to supply-side constraints in the market, providing volume growth and better pricing opportunities.

"However, the sustainability of the same remains to be seen in the current fiscal. Additionally, regulatory risks pertaining to this market remain a key monitor, given the heightened scrutiny by the USFDA", said Shah.

In the European market, the pharma companies are expected to witness revenue growth of 7-9 percent in FY25, moderating from the previous year, due to the base effect.

The research and development expenses are estimated to remain at 6.5-7 percent of their revenues as they optimize their spending, focusing more on complex molecules and specialty products, against generics, said the report. *IANS*

higher than the recent years.

Indian pharmaceutical companies also benefited from the easing of pricing pressure in the US in FY24 and FY25 (year to

Why gynecological cancers are rising among young Indian women

NEW DELHI: Obesity, diabetes, and Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) are the key reasons why India is seeing a rise in gynecological cancers like endometrial, ovarian, and uterus, said experts.

The rise is particularly of concern among younger women, and calls for greater awareness and early screening.

There have been more incidences of endometrial cancer -- cancer that develops in the lining of the uterus -- among young women in their early 30s, a condition traditionally seen in post-menopausal women.

"As obesity rates climb and more women delay childbearing or remain childless, they

face prolonged exposure to estrogen, a known risk factor for endometrial cancer. Conversely, progesterone, produced during pregnancy, provides a protective effect against this cancer," Dr. Vandana Jain, Sr. Consultant and Chief of Gynae Oncology Services, Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCIRC), told *IANS*.

"Women with conditions like Polycystic Ovarian Disease (PCOD), who often do not ovulate regularly, also find

themselves at heightened risk," Jain added.

According to statistics 1 in 100 women are either diagnosed with



cancer of the uterus or cancer of the ovary. However, a steady rise

in the numbers of these two cancers has been observed of late.

"Obesity, diabetes, and PCOS have all been scientifically proven to be the reasons for the rise in the incidence of cancer of the uterus and ovary, albeit indirectly," Dr. Sai Lakshmi Daayana, Senior Consultant - Surgical Oncology, Apollo Cancer Centre, Hyderabad, told *IANS*.

Ovarian cancer is the third most common type of cancer among women in India. According to the Indian Council of Medical Re-

search (ICMR), the age-adjusted incidence rate of ovarian cancer in India is estimated to be around 6.8 per 1,00,000 women.

Daayana said in the majority of cancers of the ovary, no particular cause is identifiable. The majority of these patients are above 50 years of age.

"However, it has been established that women who seek fertility treatment are at an increased risk of developing cancers of the ovary many years down the line. Previously infertility was seen in about 1:10 couples. This number has now risen to 1:3 capsules. PCOS also contributes to a majority of female infertility," the expert said. *IANS*

Swachh Bharat Mission

Success story of Urban Health Centre in Kalaburagi, bags Kayakalp Award 6 times

NEW DELHI: As the nation celebrates the fortnight-long Swachhata Hi Seva 2024, starting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 74th birthday on September 17, many success stories of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) are coming to the fore.

SBM, also known as Clean India Mission, started off on October 2, 2014, and in the past ten years, it has brought transformational changes in the lives of people and society. Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC) of Shivaji Nagar in Karnataka's Kalaburagi district is one such medical facility which has bagged the Kayakalp Award for the sixth consecutive term.

This year also, it has been selected for the top honors and is looking forward to an award under the Swachh Bharat Mission's 'Best Urban Health Centre' category.

It is the only center selected in Kalyan for the Kayakalp award, in recognition of its high-quality service in promoting hospital cleanliness, hygiene and infection control.

The hospital staff and health professionals are confi-

dent of getting the Kayakalp award this time too.

Speaking to IANS, Dr. Sandhya Rani Pauranik of Urban Primary Health Centre in Kalaburgi district explained the concept of the Kayakalp Award and also took pride in getting the honors, every year since 2017.

"We got awarded for the sixth consecutive time since 2017 in the Gulbarga division. The Kayakalp Award is a recognition which envisages hospitals to stay clean and tidy all the time," she said.

'No patient should carry disease outside' remains one of the major focuses of Kayakalp's mission, she explained.

She further said that the award recipient gets a sum of Rs 2 lakh yearly and the hospital premises are also inspected

by a team of doctors on a yearly basis.

Mehmood Sen, who works as health inspector at the UPHC said that the facilities are better and easily reachable, to people.

"A clean and tidy atmosphere at the hospital is an added benefit for patients," he said. IANS



South Korea, Japan, China aim to complete global plastic reduction pact

SEOUL: South Korea, China and Japan have agreed to work more closely to complete negotiations for an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, Seoul's environment ministry said.

The commitment was made last week after the ministers of the three nations held a two-day ministerial meeting on South Korea's southern resort island of Jeju to discuss ways of enhancing trilateral cooperation on various environmental challenges, including plastic pollution, climate change and yellow dust, according to the ministry.

"The three nations agreed to actively take part in the upcoming negotiations on plastic pollution reduction set to take place in November in Busan to make tangible progress," Minister Kim Wan-sup told a press briefing, reports Yonhap news agency.

The fifth and final round of meetings of the United Nations' Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) on plastic pollution is scheduled to be held in the southern port city of Busan in November, which aims to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution.

The three nations also agreed to boost cooperation to mitigate yellow dust levels, particularly in partnership with Mongolia. IANS



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Covid-19 cases rise, as vaccination rates remain low

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

A new hybrid Covid variant, XEC, has emerged in 25 states in the US, and experts predict it will cause a surge of Covid-19 cases this fall. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines XEC as recombinant or hybrid of the strains KS.1.1 and KP.3.3 both from the Omicron family that became the predominant strain in the U.S. late December 2022. Speakers at this weekly briefing discussed the new variant, the updated vaccines, vaccination hesitancy and weariness, and explained low vaccination rates in Latino and Black communities.

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UIANE mela and Senior awareness program

India Post news Service

United India Association of New England (UIANE) organized Senior Awareness and Fun Mela at Shivalaya Temple of Greater Boston, Medford, MA, on Sunday September 22, 2024. A large crowd of senior citizens attended the event with much eagerness,

The program started at noon-time with an introduction about the program and welcoming the audiences to the informative session.

Details on page 20

Significance of Navaratri and Nava Durga Puja

GEETHA PATIL & MADHUMATI PATIL

Navaratri (or nine nights) is a Sanatana holiday that honors Shakti or the Divine Feminine/Mother and devotees worship her for spiritual cleansing, guidance, and enlightenment. Navaratri festival lasts for nine nights and ten days. It is a time of deep rest and rejuvenation and engage in prayer, fasting, and meditation to purify one's mind and body.

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COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

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October 4, 2024



IACCGH celebrates 25 years of excellence at Silver Jubilee Gala



India Post News Service

Houston, TX: The Indo-American Chamber of Commerce of Greater Houston (IACCGH) celebrated a significant milestone on Saturday, honoring 25 years of fostering business growth, enhancing trade with India, and creating local jobs at its Silver Jubilee Gala held at the Hilton Americas.

Over 700 business leaders, elected officials, and distinguished guests gathered to commemorate the Chamber's impactful legacy within the Indo-American business community.

The evening, they commenced with a VIP Reception in the Grand Ballroom, where elected officials and key community figures engaged in exclusive networking. Congressman AL Green and Harris County Commissioner Rodney Ellis helped the Chamber recognize Gala's significant supporters, Mr. Nick Dhanani and Wallis Bank, along-

side other Chamber contributors. IACC India Secretary General Kamal Vora, visiting from India, was recognized as a long-term friend and partner in India.

Guests then moved to the General Reception for additional networking before the formal program began at 7:00 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom. The program featured keynote addresses from John Whitmire, Mayor of Houston, and D.C. Manjunath, Consul

General of India, Houston.

Jagdeep Ahluwalia, Executive Director of IACCGH, opened the event with heartfelt remarks, followed by a welcome address from Rajiv Bhavsar, President of IACCGH who highlighted the Chamber's initiatives supporting small businesses and trade relationships. This anniversary marks resilience and adaptability, emphasizing the importance of unity in achieving meaningful

progress, he said.

"25 in 25- A Legacy in Progress,"

A special panel moderated by Chamber Past President and former METRO HOUSTON Chairman Sanjay Ramabhadran, titled "25 in 25- A Legacy in Progress," highlighted the Chamber's key accomplishments.

Cont'd on page 22



50th anniversary celebrations of BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, New York



India Post News Service

NEW YORK: In 1974, the first mandir of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, in North America, was inaugurated by His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj in Flushing, New York. This year, BAPS commemorated 50 years of spiritual upliftment, community service and, cultural preservation through a grand celebration held in the same city where it all began.

The celebrations spanned two weekends and attracted thousands of visitors from across the country. The event highlighted BAPS's remarkable journey, which began with a few devotees and has since grown into a prominent Hindu organization in the United States, with over 115 mandirs across North America. An interactive exhibition showcased BAPS's history and contributions over the past five decades.

Honoring this milestone, Congressman Tom Suozzi (NY-3) shared his admiration, saying, "The journey of BAPS is remarkable." Congressman Suozzi presented the organization with a U.S. Capitol flag flown in honor of BAPS's 50 years of service and dedication.

The roots of BAPS in North America trace back to His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj (1921-2016), whose life motto, "In the Joy of Others, Lies Our

Own," continues to inspire millions. This sentiment was echoed by Pujya Chaitanyanand Swami from the International Society of Krishna Consciousness, who remarked, "BAPS is an example of how society can live together and serve together in a loving, friendly way."

The message of compassion, integrity and devotion, is carried forward by the cur-

"When we started with a single mandir in a basement back in 1974, we never imagined that BAPS would grow to over 115 mandirs worldwide, including the largest mandir in the Western Hemisphere, BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham. I am overjoyed to be here, participating in this event. It's incredible how many lives have been transformed by this initiative of

"We had an amazing experience walking down memory lane during this celebration. These 50 years have transformed society, thanks to Pramukh Swami Maharaj for providing a foundation of culture and respect, where my children have benefited immensely," shared Tushar Patel from Orlando, FL.

"Whether it's Ukraine or Kutch, I've



rent spiritual leader His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, whose blessings for the event came from India. Inspired by his leadership, 12,500 volunteers worked tirelessly to construct BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham in New Jersey, a monumental symbol of devotion and unity.

Attendees shared personal reflections on the significance of the celebrations:

Pramukh Swami Maharaj and Mahant Swami Maharaj," said Kishore Mehta from Houston, who was the lead volunteer for BAPS activities in 1974.

"The NY50 celebrations help us realize that the seed sown 50 years ago has blossomed into a beautiful tree, gifting society Akshardham in Robbinsville," shared Smruti Brahmbhatt from Robbinsville, NJ.

seen BAPS be the first to serve the impacted people, pouring out their hearts. I am glad to be here at the 50-year celebration. The concept to creation and the narration of BAPS NY50 was absolutely phenomenal, showcasing the same spirit of service and dedication," remarked Dr. Parag Mehta, NY.

Cont'd on page 22



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Indian American-Led Calibike, Revolutionary Electric Bike, launched by Mayor of Corona

CORONA, CALIFORNIA: Calibike, a pioneering electric bike company dedicated to promoting sustainable transportation, officially launched its product on September 14th, 2024, at the Corona City Council Hall. This momentous event underscored Calibike's commitment to eco-friendly commuting, while aligning with California's progressive environmental and electric vehicle (EV) policies.

The event featured Mayor of Corona, Tom Richins, as the Chief Guest. His presence highlighted the growing importance of sustainable mobility solutions and community-driven efforts to reduce carbon footprints. Mayor Richins praised Calibike's vision, stating, "Calibike represents the kind of innovative, forward-thinking solution we need to reduce our environmental impact. I'm proud that Corona can be a part of this movement towards a cleaner, greener future."

Calibike is led by Indian American Rafe Husain, the only Indian American involved in the electric bike (EV bike) industry. His leadership and vision have positioned Calibike at the forefront of sustainable transportation solutions, reflecting both innovation and a commitment to environmental stewardship. Husain's pioneering efforts make him a trailblazer in the EV industry, particularly for the Indian American community, inspiring future generations to contribute to green technology.

Brightline West: A Game-Changer in Public Transport

The launch of Calibike aligned with the development of Brightline West, America's first true high-speed passenger rail system. Spanning 218 miles, this eco-friendly rail service will connect Las Vegas and Southern California. With 96% of its route within the I-15 highway median, Brightline West is set to transform public transportation between these two iconic destinations.

Calibike: A Connector for Public Transport

Calibike was uniquely positioned to complement the Brightline West rail system, offering a last-mile solution for commuters transitioning from public transport hubs to their final destinations. With its lightweight and eco-friendly design, Calibike seamlessly bridged the gap between rail stations and local communities, reducing traffic congestion and environmental impact.

"Calibike is more than just an electric bike-it's a critical part of the broader shift toward sustainable, integrated transporta-

- Calibike is Led by Rafe Husain, the Only Indian American Innovator in the Electric Bike Industry
- Calibike's Role as a Connector for Public Transport
- Calibike Aligned with California's Zero-Emission Goals for a Sustainable Future
- Donation of Electric Bikes to the City of Corona Demonstrated Commitment to Sustainability
- Calibike is the #1 seller of E-Bike Batteries in the USA and are similar kind of batteries used in Tesla Cars.



Calibike Founder with Mayor of Corona with Park Rangers



Founder with Mayor of Corona

tion solutions," said Rafe Husain, Founder of Calibike.

"By connecting with public transport systems like Brightline West, we're offering commuters a greener, healthier, and more efficient way to travel that aligns with California's forward-thinking policies."

Supporting California's EV Policy and Tax Incentives

Calibike's launch came at a time when California was leading the nation in its commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through electric vehicle policies. By 2035, California planned to transition to 100% zero-emission vehicle sales, and Calibike was poised to play a crucial role in this initiative.

California's EV tax rebate programs, under the California Clean Vehicle Rebate Project (CVRP), made electric vehicles more accessible and affordable for residents. Individuals purchasing electric vehicles could be eligible for financial rebates, providing consumers with an incentive to switch to greener transportation options. This aligned perfectly with the state's goal of fostering a cleaner, more sustainable transportation infrastructure.

Bike Donation to the City of Corona

In line with its sustainability goals, Calibike donated electric bikes to the City of Corona to further support the city's initiatives in reducing emissions and promoting healthier lifestyles. These bikes were provided to the city's Park Rangers to enhance their mobility while patrolling local parks and protecting natural resources. Mayor Richins commented, "The donation of these electric bikes to our Park Rangers is a testament to Calibike's commitment to environmental stewardship. These bikes will not only help reduce emissions but also allow our rangers to cover more ground efficiently, all while preserving the beauty of our parks."

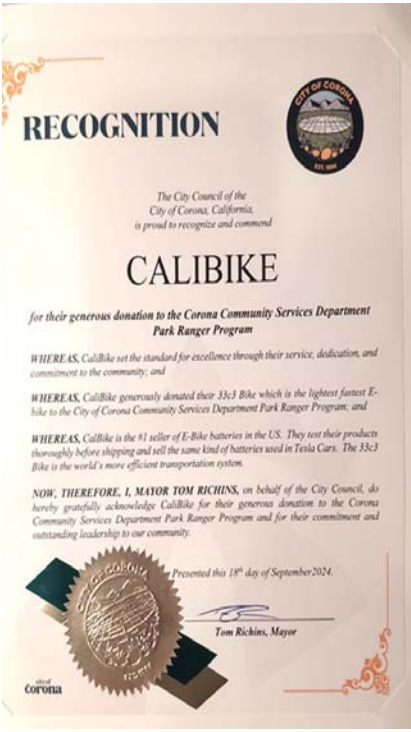
About Calibike:

Calibike is the 31-seller of E-Bike Batteries in the USA and are similar kind of batteries used in Tesla Cars. Calibike is dedicated to revolutionizing urban commuting with a focus on sustainability, innovation, and convenience. As a pioneer in electric bikes, Calibike's products are designed to offer a green, efficient, and enjoyable transportation alternative for both short and long

commutes. The company's mission is to empower individuals and communities to reduce their carbon footprint while embracing healthier lifestyles. Calibike is committed to transforming urban mobility by offering eco-friendly, innovative electric bikes that meet the demands of modern commuters. With a focus on sustainability, convenience, and design, Calibike aims to support the broader efforts of California's and Federal Government electric vehicle policies while creating a positive environmental impact through clean transportation options.

About Rafe Husain

Rafe Husain, an accomplished inventor and entrepreneur, holds multiple patents, including a removable eyeglass-mounted ptosis crutch for Blepharospasm patients, a high-speed parallel Golay encoder for Xilinx FPGA, and an ice thickness sensing device that earned him the New Inventions Award from the University of Michigan. He co-founded Sabtech Industries, growing it to \$5 million in sales within four years by developing innovative products and entering new markets. A partner of Xilinx and a member of their FPGA Xperts program, Rafe studied Mathematics and Engineering at the University of Michigan and pursued a Ph.D. in Computer Engineering at the University of Southern California before leaving to focus on entrepreneurial ventures. Born in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He was born and studied till grade 7 at St. Francis School Lucknow India, he later moved to the USA to further his education and career.



Fremont Police Department Reaffirms Commitment to 30x30 Diversity Hiring Initiative

India Post News Service

FREMONT, CALIF: The City of Fremont continues to take proactive steps toward increased gender diversity within the police department, with the ultimate goal of 30% female police officers by 2030. This includes evaluating hiring practices to reach more women as well as examining relevant policies and department culture to actively foster the career success of well-qualified women in law enforcement.

Since the 30x30 pledge was signed by Fremont Police Chief Sean Washington in November 2021, the number of women police officers employed by the City of Fremont has increased by three total officers (19 women Police Officers in 2021 vs. 22 as of August 11, 2024). Currently, women make up only 12% of sworn Officers and 3% of police leadership in the U.S. Today, women make up 14% of filled sworn officer positions at Fremont PD and 9% of sergeant positions and above.

Chief Sean Washington has been invited to participate in a panel discussion on the topic of women in law enforcement. The Women's Law Enforcement Symposium & Career Fair is scheduled to take place on September 18, 2024, in Oakland.

"Since January 2024, we have hired six female police officers but acknowledge that there is much more progress to be made to meet our ultimate goal, and attract what I know to be a candidate pool of well-qualified, competent, and capable women in our communities," Chief Washington said. "Our dedication to continuing our tradition of excellence means that we are never happy with the status quo and continue to push ourselves to find ways to hire more women to Fremont PD, better support our female staff, and foster a culture where all women

"Since January 2024, we have hired six female police officers but acknowledge that there is much more progress to be made to meet our ultimate goal, and attract what I know to be a candidate pool of well-qualified, competent, and capable women in our communities"

feel valued, respected, and equal. I look forward to participating in this meaningful dialogue and hope to bring back more information to help FPD with our efforts."

Fremont PD recently conducted an internal survey and is assessing several recommendations and suggestions, including but not limited to:

Review Lactation Room and Break

Policy: Form a small working group to ensure compliance with applicable laws and evaluate functionality and comfortability for mothers.

Research Work/Life Balance Options: Consider additional flexibility and accommodations for expecting mothers and mothers returning from maternity leave, including limited telework options, temporary light-duty work, childcare programs, and more.

Assess Recruiting Efforts: Update recruiting strategies to include attending women-specific job fairs, engaging with

suggestions and assess how recent efforts align with 30x30 core principles.

Police Officer recruitment is a top priority for Fremont's City Council. The City is committed to recruiting well-qualified candidates to protect and serve the growing and diversifying Fremont community. The City offers a well-appointed benefits package including a 4-day-on 4-day-off work schedule, an on-duty workout program, a hiring bonus, and wellness program. Fremont police officers have received a 28.5% salary increase over the last five years and are in the final months of their most recent contract. Becoming truly representative of the jurisdiction Fremont PD serves can enhance public safety objectives and produce better outcomes.

The City of Fremont invites women, along with those of any gender identity in our community committed to serving with honor, respect, and professionalism, to apply for open FPD positions. The City currently has vacancies for the positions of Police Officer, Police Dispatcher, Police Records Supervisor, and Senior Accounting Specialist. Learn more about life at FPD, including benefits and the expected recruitment process timeline.

women's college athletic programs, advertising at women's leadership conferences, etc.

Increase Regular Engagement with Female Police Officers: Establish a Women Perspective Committee, identify a third-party/outside leader to collect feedback, and distribute an anonymous survey to women police officers to gather additional

Covid-19 cases rise, as vaccination rates remain low

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

A new hybrid Covid variant, XEC, has emerged in 25 states in the US, and experts predict it will cause a surge of Covid-19 cases this fall. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines XEC as recombinant or hybrid of the strains KS.1.1 and KP.3.3 both from the Omicron family that became the predominant strain in the U.S. late December 2022. Speakers at this weekly briefing discussed the new variant, the updated vaccines, vaccination hesitancy and weariness, and explained low vaccination rates in Latino and Black communities.

The hybrid strain was first reported in Berlin late June but has spread across Europe, North America and Asia with the countries Germany, France, the Netherlands and Denmark leading cases. While there's no indication the XEC strain will increase the severity of the virus, it could potentially become a dominant strain as Omicron variants are more contagious. However, currently available COVID-19

vaccines and booster shots are particularly protective against XEC as it is a hybrid of two Omicron strains.

Dr. Peter Chin-Hong, an infectious disease expert at the University of California, San Francisco, said that "XEC" is the same as the strains that appeared in previous years. It is a member of the "Omicron" family, and is also a member of "KP.3" and "KS. 1.1" A mixture of viruses. In Europe, especially Germany, about 13% of cases are caused by this new variant;

The hybrid strain was first reported in Berlin late June but has spread across Europe, North America and Asia with the countries Germany, France, the Netherlands and Denmark leading cases.

While there's no indication the XEC strain will increase the severity of the virus, it could potentially become a dominant strain as Omicron variants are more contagious

in the UK, it accounts for about 7%; and in the United States, it accounts for about 1%, but the number continues to rise. He added that "XEC" is more contagious and is expected to become the dominant strain this autumn. It is a recombinant variant and

it is unclear whether it will cause more severe symptoms. However, vaccination may still provide some protection as general immunity in the community increases. So far, the new virus has not caused more severe illness, and no new strange symptoms have been discovered. The COVID-19 symptoms that are of concern this year come from the gastrointestinal tract, such as diarrhea, vomiting, etc. In addition, the common symptoms are still sore throat, nasal congestion, headache, and muscle pain.

Benjamin Neuman, Professor at Texas A&M University, pointed out that from a scientific perspective, the vaccine is usually effective for about 4 to 6 months, and then the virus will begin to mutate. If we only consider it from a scientific perspec-

tive without considering practical factors such as cost, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) should update vaccines twice a year instead of once a year. Although the effectiveness of the vaccine may not be ideal from a scientific perspective, this is a problem due to the rapid mutation of the virus; considering many practical limitations, annual vaccination is still the best prevention strategy.

The updated version of the vaccine and the Novavax vaccine are more related to the new strain and are more protective. For many people, the last vaccination may have been a year or more ago, and because it is uncertain how long the immune response from white blood cells or T cells lasts, some people may need to get a new vaccine to gain new immunity.

The CDC currently recommends that everyone aged 6 months and up get the updated COVID-19 vaccine to protect against serious illness and complications from the virus. Wearing a mask (like a KN95 or N95) in crowded indoor situations and when traveling can help to lower your risk of getting infected.

UIANE mela and Senior awareness program

India Post news Service

United India Association of New England (UIANE) organized Senior Awareness and Fun Mela at Shivalaya Temple of Greater Boston, Medford, MA, on Sunday September 22, 2024. A large crowd of senior citizens attended the event with much eagerness,

The program started at noontime with an introduction about the program and welcoming the audiences to the informative session. The organizer of the event thanked the audiences for attending the event with great enthusiasm and different participating agencies for setting up their tables and ready to share their information with the senior citizens.

Agencies specialized in protection from scams, Medicare insurance, estate and legacy planning, caring support in time of crisis, dental, eyes, blood pressure/blood sugar tests, and podiatry provided necessary information in various Indian languages along with flyers and contact information for further discussion to the interested senior citizens. The representatives of various agencies were very professional in their approach and customer friendly. This senior awareness mela was a positive and beneficial experience for everyone.



ience for everyone.

In this 4-hour long program, UIANE organized chair yoga, dance exercise, karaoke, Vaastu, games, and personal photo shoot for the senior citizens.

Free admission was provided to all the participants. Everyone was served with delicious lunch and delightful snacks with hot Gud/sugar tea. Everyone enjoyed the event while listening to old melodious Bollywood songs.

A senior citizen said, 'We learned much from these agencies about various services that are available for senior citizens. Senior Awareness Mela like this reminds

us that our society has not forgotten our yesteryear contributions in building the

modern day society and made life easier and healthier for all.'

In this 4-hour long program, UIANE organized chair yoga, dance exercise, karaoke, Vaastu, games, and personal photo shoot for the senior citizens



Fremont City Council appoints Kathy Kimberlin to District-3-Seat as New Councilmember *Kimberlin to assume role for next 2 years*

India Post News Service

FREMONT, CA: At the September 10 City Council meeting, the Fremont City Council appointed Kathy Kimberlin as Fremont's new councilmember to fill the vacancy in Council District 3 created by the resignation of Jenny Kassan. Ms. Kimberlin was officially sworn in to office by the City Clerk during the Council meeting. She will serve as councilmember for approximately two years until the results of the November 2026 General Municipal Election are certified.

On September 3, 2024, after reviewing several options to fill the seat, the City Council determined that it would interview the candidate that received the second

highest number of votes in District 3 during the 2022 General Municipal Election. The candidate that received the second highest votes was Kathy Kimberlin. Ms. Kimberlin was invited to interview during the September 10, 2024, City Council meeting. After the interview concluded, Council voted to appoint Ms. Kimberlin to the vacant District 3 Council seat.

Ms. Kimberlin has served the Fremont community in a volunteer capacity for many years. She currently holds leadership roles with the Tri-City Nonprofit Coalition, Rotary Club of Fremont, Citizens for Better Community, Fremont 4th of July Parade Committee, and the Fremont Education Foundation.

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Significance of Navaratri and Nava Durga Puja

GEETHA PATIL AND MADHUMATI PATIL

Navaratri (or nine nights) is a Sanatana holiday that honors Shakti or the Divine Feminine/Mother and devotees worship her for spiritual cleansing, guidance, and enlightenment. Navaratri festival lasts for nine nights and ten days. It is a time of deep rest and rejuvenation and engage in prayer, fasting, and meditation to purify one's mind and body. Each day is dedicated to one of the nine forms of the Mother Divine. The final day that is the 10th day is called Vijayadashami, the day popularly celebrated as the day of the victory of 'Good over Evil on the universal level' and the victory of sattva Guna winning over the other Gunas on an individual level.

We all possess three Gunas namely Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. The first three days of the Navaratri are dedicated to win over Tamo Guna or inertia, the second three days to conquest Rajo Guna or restlessness and activity, and the last three days to instill Sattva Guna or purity and high Prana into our lives. It is believed that observing these practices with sincerity can lead us to attain spiritual enlightenment and divine blessings. The final day of Navaratri named Vijayadashami/Victory Day is observed as a victory day over all the Gunas/evils and celebrated human life with harmony and peace. Shardiya Navratri is a sacred period that commemorates the intense nine-day battle between Goddess Durga and the demon Mahishasura. The festival is concluded with Mahishasura's defeat on the tenth day, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil.

The ancient people knew the cordial connection between the macrocosm and the microcosm, and the parts of our body. The cosmos, the planets, the cosmic rays, and the vibration are all connected and Navaratri is the time to explore this deep connection. This entire cosmos is made up of that one energy called Devi and the whole universe comprises of vibrating and scintillating consciousness, and encourages us to take an inward and upward spiritual journey and do not get distracted from our goals in life.

Significance of Nava Durga (Nine Forms of Durga)

For Sanatanis, the mother Goddess Durga is a very special deity, and appears in nine different forms, each of which is endowed with unique powers and traits. Together, these nine manifestations are called Nava Durga. Each night of Navaratri honors one of the mother god-

dess' manifestations. Sanatanis believe that worshipping Durga with much religious fervor will lift the divine spirit and fill them with renewed happiness.

Day 1 - Shailaputri: means "daughter of the mountains." She is the daughter of Hemavana, the king of the Himalayas. She is considered as the purest embodiment of Durga and the Mother Nature. In iconography, she is depicted riding a bull and holding a trident and a lotus blossom. The lotus represents purity and devotion,

hands, and has 3 eyes. She is seeing all, ever vigilant, and ready to battle evil from whatever direction.

Day 4- Kushmanda: means "a ball of energy/Prana or a creator of the universe," who brought light to the dark cosmos. The glitter in her hand represents the sparkling light that she brings to the world. Kushmanda rides a lion, symbolizing strength and courage in the face of adversity.

Day 5 - Skandamata: is the mother of

ing a weapon. Born with a divine rage and anger. She emits a radiant light from her body to take away the darkness and evil forces. Despite her angry appearance, she can bestow a sense of calmness and inner peace upon all those who worship her.

Day 7 - Kalaratri: Kalaratri/Shubhamkari means "One Who Does Good." She has dark complexion, disheveled hair, four arms, and three eyes. The lightning coming out of her necklace and the flames shooting from her mouth, like Kali, the goddess destroys evil forces. Kaal Ratri has black skin. She provides protection from darkness and allaying all fears.

Day 8 - Maha Gauri: She is worshipped on the eighth day of Navaratri and her name means "extremely white," and luminous beauty radiates from her body. Sanatanis believe that by paying homage to Maha Gauri, all the past, present, and future sins will go away imparting a deep sense of inner peace. She wears white clothes, has four arms, and rides on a bull, one of the most sacred animals in Sanatana Dharma. Her right hand is in the pose of allaying fear, and her right lower hand holds a trident. The left upper hand holds a Damaru (a small tambourine or drum) while the lower one is thought to grant blessings to her devotees. Maha Gauri is so beautiful and she gives momentum, ultimate freedom in life that leads to liberation.

Day 9 - Siddhidhaatri: is the final form of Durga, celebrated on the final night of Navaratri. Her name means "giver of supernatural power" to achieve perfection in life and acquire siddhis. What we think is impossible; she makes it possible. She grants wisdom and insight to those who appeal to her, and she can do the same for deities who worship her as well. She rides a lion, has four limbs and carries a trident, a spinning disc called a Sudarshana Chakra, a conch shell, and a lotus. The conch, called a Shankha that represents longevity, while the spinning disc symbolizes the soul or timelessness.



while the prongs on the trident represent the past, present, and future.

Day 2 - Brahmacharini: means "one who practices sincere austerity." In this form, she shows us the magnificent embodiment of Durga with great powers and divine grace. Brahmacharini holds a rosary in her right hand, representing the special Vedic prayers recited in her honor, and a water utensil in her left hand, symbolizing marital bliss. She bestows happiness, peace, prosperity, and grace upon all the devotees who worship her. She is the way to emancipation, called Moksha.

Another meaning is the virgin aspect of Mother Divine. Her energy is like the sunrays, fresh and new. The newness is depicted in the second form of Durga.

Day 3 - Chandraghanta: this third manifestation of Durga represents peace, tranquility, and prosperity in life. She wears Chandra (half-moon) in her forehead in the shape of a ghanta (bell), which is charming, has a golden bright complexion, and rides a lion. Like Durga, and holds different weapons in her 10

Skanda or Lord Kartikeya, who was chosen by gods as their commander-in-chief in the war against the demons. She is worshipped on the fifth day, emphasizing her pure and divine nature. Skanda Mata is seated on a lotus. She has four arms and three eyes. She holds the infant Skanda in her right upper arm and a lotus in her right hand, which is slightly raised upward. With her left arm, she grants blessings to the devotees and she holds a second lotus in her left hand.

Day 6 - Katyayani: is worshipped on the sixth day. She has a fearsome sight, with wild hair and 18 arms, each clutch-

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VIJAYA DASAMI - Significance of Shamee Vriksha

SUNIL KUMAR D.

The Shamee Vriksha/Banni Mara/tree (*Prosopis cineraria*) is found in dry and arid regions at low altitudes. This tree is widely grown in North West and Central Bharat including Afghanistan, Iran, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. It is also the United Arab Emirates' national tree. This tree is a medium-sized (12 mts) ever green tree which can grow in harsh climatic conditions, and in any type of soil. In Tamil, it is called Vanni, in Telugu Jammi, in Sanskrit Shamee, Saikanta in Bengali, Gonharea in Oriya, Loong

Shamee Vriksha, which is revered as a sacred and divine plant and its leaves and flowers are used for worshipping Lord Shiva and Lord Ganesh in the 21 Patra Puja. It is also a tree of Lord Shani Mahadeva and lowers the Shani Dosha if worshipped daily. As per Bhavishyottara Purana Lord Venkateswara (Srinivasa) had worshiped Shamee tree as His Kula Devata before proceeding to marry Goddess Padmavathi Devi. The twigs of the Shamee tree are used for the sacrificial fire/Homam as an effective remedy for Saturn's malefic effect. Another legend in

Mahabharata mentions that the god of fire- Agni hid in the heart of the Shamee tree to escape from the wrath of Brighu Maharishi.

This Shamee tree becomes a significant part of our Dasara festival as Sanatani warriors before going for a war used to offer prayers to Banni tree since they believe that they will certainly emerge victorious in the war. The legend behind this tradition is found in the great epic Mahabharata, when the Pandavas had to spend one-year incognito, as part of their 14 years of exile, they hid their weapons in the Shamee tree. After one year, when they came back to the tree, they found their weapons intact. The

Pandavas took the weapons from the tree and worshipped it, seeking power and victory in the ensuing battle with the Kauravas. In the battle, Pandavas emerged victorious. In the Ramayana, when Lord Rama was going to Lanka, the Shami tree told him that He would be victorious. Thus it is believed that Shamee tree also represents goddess Durga and those who worship the Shamee tree are blessed with victory and prosperity. Banni Mara/Shamee Vriksha is considered a symbol of courage, peace, and prosperity.

For detailed story visit
www.indiapost.com



Tree in Rajasthan, Jand in Punjabi and in Hindi Khejri. It belongs to the pea family, Fabaceae, which is considered as the Kalpa Taru of the Thar Desert. Its leaves are small and delicate and are arranged next to one another (bipinnate) with 7-14 leaflets on each of the pinnate. The decomposed leaves add nutrients (nitrogen) to the soil, thereby enhancing the growth and productivity of the crop.

Epic and Puranic references:

In Sanatana religion, lot of prominence is given to

IACCGH celebrates 25 years of excellence at Silver Jubilee Gala



Cont'd from page 16

Panelists included IACCGH Advisors Dr. Durga Agrawal, Founding President; Paul Hamilton, former President of Shell USA; and Dr. Renu Khator, Chancellor of the University of Houston System, and special invitees and, long term Chamber supporters Adrian Garcia, Commissioner Harris County, Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher, Jeff Moseley, former President GHP, Ed Emmett, former Harris County Judge, Asif Dakri, CEO Wallis Bank, Carlicia Wright, Chief Equity Officer Port Houston, and Malisha Patel IACCGH President-Elect.

A memorable moment of the evening was the Silver Jubilee Cake Cutting Ceremony, which featured former

Houston mayor Sylvester Turner, former Lyondell Basell CEO IACCGH Advisor Bob Patel, and other dignitaries celebrating the Chamber's quarter-century of success.

The evening, continued with dinner and live entertainment, allowing guests to celebrate and reflect on the Chamber's substantial impact over the years. The vibrant atmosphere underscored IACCGH's vital role in driving economic growth and fostering collaboration within the Indo-American business community.

In his closing remarks, Jagdip Ahluwalia expressed deep gratitude to sponsors, community partners, and members for their steadfast support, which has been crucial to the Chamber's success. He also looked ahead to a promising future as IACCGH embarks on its next 25 years of excellence.

50th anniversary celebrations of BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, New York

Cont'd from page 17

A distinguished lineup of dignitaries and community leaders graced the event. Among the notable attendees were Binaya Shrikanta Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York, Dr. Varun Jeph, Deputy Consul General, Congressman Tom Suozzi, New York State Assemblymen Edward Braunstein and Ron Kim, State Senator John Liu, and Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. Religious and community leaders, including Mr. Jagannath Rao from ISKCON Temple Brooklyn, Sister BK Tina from the Brahma Kumaris, and Shiva Acharya,

Earlier this year, the New York State Senate and Assembly passed resolutions commemorating the 50th anniversary of BAPS's first mandir in North America. The resolutions sponsored by Senator John Liu and Assemblymember Nily Rozic celebrated BAPS's spiritual, social, and community contributions.

Senator John Liu reflected on the significance of this moment, stating, "This year marks the 50th anniversary of the BAPS mandir in Flushing, a historic milestone for the mandir and our community. The BAPS mandir has been a cornerstone of the Hindu community, serving the spiritual, social, and community needs of so many, and we are proud to commemorate their tremendous commitments to serving the needs of others."

Assemblymember Rozic added, "It's an honor to recognize the BAPS Mandir on their 50th anniversary. For 50 years, the Mandir has been a center for worship, cultural heritage, and community service. Its contributions to the lives of its members and the community have been profound and far-reaching. I am grateful to celebrate their dedication to promoting unity, service, and spirituality with my fellow leaders in government."

The 50th anniversary celebrations in Flushing, NY mark the beginning of similar events across the U.S. and Canada, continuing to showcase BAPS's dedication to fostering community, spirituality, and service.

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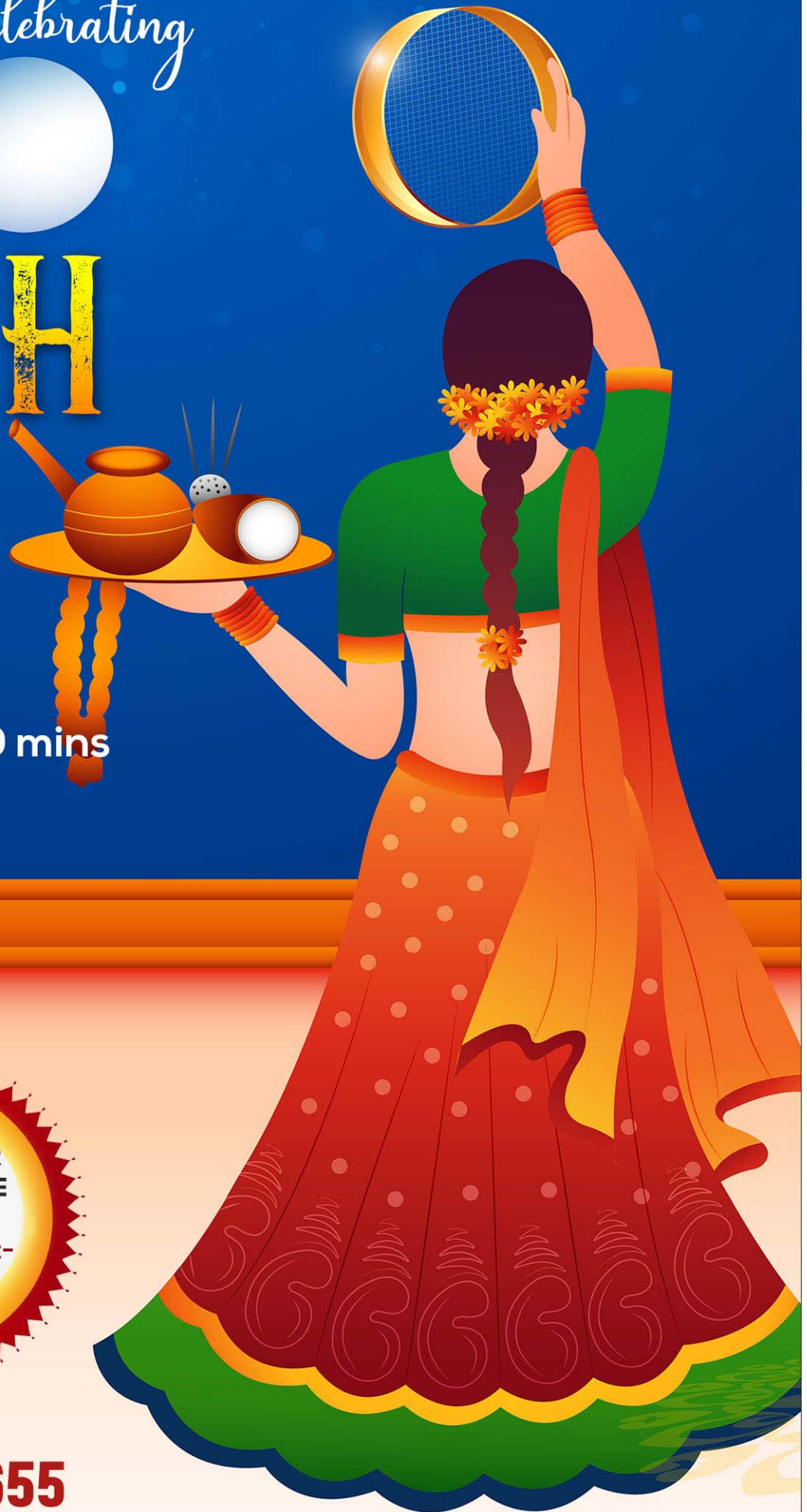
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"WE FEEL SO PROUD...": YO YO HONEY SINGH ON DILJIT DOSANJH'S GLOBAL SUCCESS



Yo Honey Singh

ABU DHABI: Singer Yo Yo Honey Singh expressed his love for Diljit Dosanjh and said it is a proud moment to see him creating waves on the global stage.

While speaking to the media on the green carpet at the IIFA Awards 2024, he said, "What Diljit did is like tremendous and especially being as a guy from a Sikh family, we feel so proud that he made it to an international level and as far as I know Diljit, I know him since 2009, we worked together on an album called 'The Next Level'. I composed that whole album, I lived with him for one year...he can do anything."

Diljit has been nomi-

nated at IIFA 2024 in the Best Playback Singer category for the film Dunki. While talking about the changes Yo Yo Honey Singh noticed in him as an artist, he shared, "He's similar. Because he was just like this. In earlier times also, he was hardworking, honest, and introvert. Never used to laugh too much. Never used to talk too much. He is the same now."

On talking about the documentary which will give the account of his life, he shared, "I think you should watch the documentary, coming this year on Netflix. It's a world release... They're going to release it in 200 countries. So the editing is going on. I don't know when they're going to

announce the date.....So it's about who's really me? You're going to see that in my documentary."

At the IIFA Awards 2024, King Khan enthralled the audience with his hosting. Superstar Shah Rukh Khan, who never misses the chance to steal hearts with his charm and presence, made sure to make his co-hosts Vicky Kaushal and Karan Johar shake their legs to his hit song 'Jhoom Jo Pathaan'.

The trio surely added "triple the charm, triple the fun" on the stage at the IIFA Awards 2024 in Abu Dhabi.

The three-day celebration kicked off on September 27 with IIFA Utsavam, an event dedicated to the southern film industries--Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada.

IIFA 2024 will be concluded on September 29 with the exclusive, invitation-only IIFA Rocks. Artists such as Honey Singh, Shilpa Rao, and Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy will perform live for the audience. **ANI**



**DILJIT HAS BEEN
NOMINATED AT IIFA
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MITHUN CHAKRABORTY ON DADASAHEB PHALKE AWARD: 'MY LIFE HAS NEVER BEEN VERY SMOOTH'

KOLKATA: Renowned Bollywood actor Mithun Chakraborty has reacted by conferring the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award for his contribution to the cinema.

Talking to the media persons, the 'Disco Dancer' fame actor said, "Once I was in Bombay. In Bombay, I didn't have food, I slept in the car and I was so scared after that, such a big honor, I have no one, I have no one and only I can say, I dedicate this award to my family and to the fans all over the world who bring a job in our country."

"Almost, you can say that, 76 Many films I have done then second and third and, you know, my life has never been very smooth. I have to fight for everything, Everything. But, sometimes the result comes like this. Then you forget all this pain, you will, God has given life." Mithun concluded.

"ALMOST, YOU CAN SAY THAT, 76 MANY FILMS I HAVE DONE THEN SECOND AND THIRD AND, YOU KNOW, MY LIFE HAS NEVER BEEN VERY SMOOTH. I HAVE TO FIGHT FOR EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING. BUT, SOMETIMES THE RESULT COMES LIKE THIS. THEN YOU FORGET ALL THIS PAIN, YOU WILL, GOD HAS GIVEN LIFE."

Veteran actress Jayaprada who has featured in many films with the 'Gunda' fame actor, expressed her joy. She said, "It's a moment of pride for all of us in the film fraternity because Mithun da is a 'mahanayak'. He has worked in many films across several languages."

"For me, it's extremely special that he is getting this honor because we are working together on two upcoming movies. We have completed 'Rivaaz' and the other film 'Fauji' as well in which I'm sharing the screen with Dada and Prabhas". She concluded.

Mithun Chakraborty is set to receive the Dadasaheb Phalke Award as its 54th honoree. This prestigious award was established in 1969 to honor the legacy of Dadasaheb Phalke, widely regarded as the father of Indian cinema. Notable previous recipients include legendary actors and actresses like Prithviraj Kapoor, Vinod Khanna, Raj Kapoor, Shashi Kapoor, Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, BR Chopra, and Yash Chopra. Waheeda Rehman became the recipient of the prestigious award in 2021.

On the work front, Mithun Chakraborty will next feature in Prabhas starrer- 'Fauji' helmed by 'Sita Ramam' fame director Hanu Raghavapudi. IANS



Philosophy

MAHATMA GANDHI

Machinery has its place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace the necessary human labour. An improved plough is a good thing. But if by some chance, one man could plough up by some mechanical invention of his, the whole of the land of India, and control all the agricultural produce and if the millions had no other occupation, they would starve, and being idle, they would become dunces, as many have already become.

There is hourly danger of many more being reduced to that unenviable state. I would welcome every improvement in the cottage machine, but I know that it is criminal to displace the hand-labour by the introduction of power-driven spindles unless one is at the same time ready to give millions of farmers some other occupation in their homes.

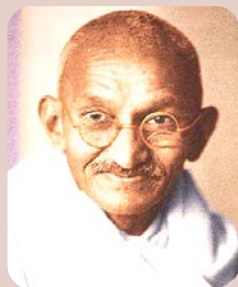
Some westerners call the method of machinery enlightened and that of the

must vary with varying conditions. The machinery method is no doubt easy. But it is not necessarily a blessing on that account. The descent to a certain place is easy but dangerous. The method of the hand is a blessing, in the present case at any rate, because it is hard.

If the craze for the machinery method continues, it is highly likely that a time will come when we shall be so incapacitated and weak that we shall begin to curse ourselves for having forgotten the use of the living machines given to us by God.

Millions cannot keep themselves fit by games and athletics. And why should they exchange the useful, productive, hardy occupations for the useless, unproductive and expensive games and exercises?

They are all right today for a change and recreation. They will jar upon us when they become a necessary occupation in order that we may have the appetite for eating the food in the produc-



Mahatma Gandhi

Criminal to displace human labour by machines

Millions cannot keep themselves fit by games and athletics

hand ignorant. It has still to be proved that displacement of the hand by the machine is a blessing in every case.

Nor is it true that which is easy is better than that which is hard. It is still less proved that every change is a blessing or that everything old is fit only to be discarded. I hold that the machinery method is harmful when the same thing can be done easily by millions of hands not otherwise occupied.

It is any day better and safer for the millions spread in the seven hundred thousand villages of India scattered over an area nineteen hundred miles long and fifteen hundred broad that they manufacture their clothing in their own villages even as they prepare their own food.

These villages cannot retain the freedom they have enjoyed from time immemorial, if they do not control the production of prime necessities of life. Western observers hastily argue from Western conditions that what may be true of them must be true of India where conditions are different in so many material respects.

Applications of the laws of economics

tion of which we had no hand or part.

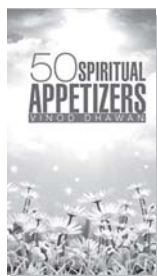
Lastly, I do not subscribe to the belief that everything old is bad. Truth is old and difficult.

Good old brown bread is any day superior to the pasty white bread which has lost much of its nutritive value in going through the various processes of refinement. The list of old and yet good things can be endlessly multiplied. The spinning-wheel is one such thing, at any rate, for India.

Excerpted from 'Young India'. The 155th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi was observed on October 2

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Knowledge diplomacy: India's missing soft power tool

DR. DHEERAJ PARAMESHA CHAYA AND PM HEBLIKAR

National Security and International Relations in India are no longer understood in narrow military terms. They have many more stakeholders now than ever before. Areas such as human rights, climate, water and environment security, education, medical and healthcare, pharmaceutical industry, cybersecurity, maritime security, low intensity conflicts, diaspora and soft power have moved to the centre stage and assumed importance in matters of national security governance. Education is a critical aspect of this national security related conversation. The need for knowledge diplomacy in enhancing India's national security and foreign policy goals and provoking a public discussion in this regard is the need of the hour.

Historically, education, especially higher education, has served nation-states as a potent tool of soft power. The USC Center

tudes, and country image of international visitors towards Kosovo, including those from countries that have not yet recognised Kosovo, or categorically refuse to do so."

With such evidence before us about the importance of education diplomacy for national security and international relations, India's superpower ambitions require a comprehensive strategy to use the Indian education sector, both private and government, towards advancing India's strategic aims and objectives. A starting point to experiment such knowledge/education diplomacy lies in its neighbourhood. In the ancient days, India was one of the key destinations for knowledge accumulation, even when many of today's high ranking European nations were experiencing the dark ages. Today, as India aspires to reclaim its civilisational

glory, it is time and opportune for the government and the private sector to empower Indian universities to strengthen India's strategic footprints in its neighbourhood and its immediate concentric.

Education is a critical aspect of this national security related conversation. The need for knowledge diplomacy in enhancing India's national security and foreign policy goals and provoking a public discussion in this regard is the need of the hour

on Public Diplomacy produces a Soft Power Index ranking countries on various criteria, in which education is an important one. Most countries on its top 30 list (India not included) have some form of strategies to internationalise their higher education. For instance, the US has within its State Department, a Bureau of Cultural and Educational Affairs, which builds and sustains strategies to improve US public diplomacy through educational exchanges and partnerships with academic institutions.

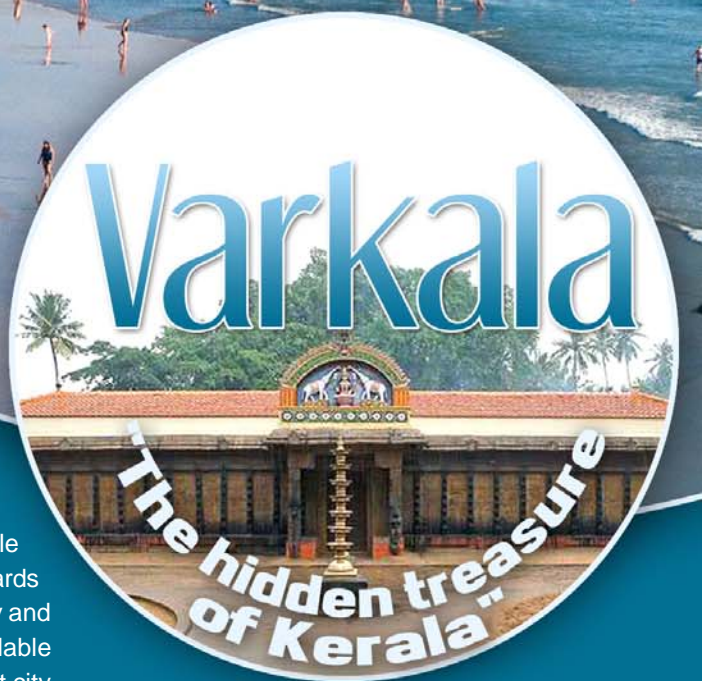
Even countries that do not have world-class higher education facilities have sought to positively employ education diplomacy to supplement weaknesses in other aspects of national power. Case in point is the Kosovo International Summer Academy (KSA) that runs a summer program aimed specifically at spreading a positive image of the country amongst foreigners. A study conducted for the Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Communication argued that KSA has "the potential to influence the perceptions, atti-

Higher education institutions such as IITs, IIMs, Business Schools and Institutions of National Importance such as the Rastriya Raksha University (RRU) must take the lead in this direction. The practice of operating in silos has to be avoided and collaborative platforms should be created for this purpose. The initiative should emanate from the private sector whilst the government has to play a meaningful role through the involvement of the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Home Affairs, Commerce Ministry and the Ministry of Education. The role of state governments and Union Territories must also be another consideration.

(Dr. Dheeraj Paramesha Chaya is lecturer in intelligence and international security at the University of Hull, U.K. P.M. Heblikar is a member, council, Centre for National Security Studies (CNSS), Ramaiah University of Applied Sciences (RUAS), Bangalore) South Asia Monitor

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Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author



Varkala is a coastal town in the southern part of Kerala known for the unique 15m high 'Northern Cliff' adjacent to the Arabian Sea. Located approximately 50 kilometers north of Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), the capital city of Kerala, Varkala offers a perfect blend of natural beauty, spirituality, and cultural charm. It is popular for its hippie culture, shacks on the cliff serving great seafood and playing global music and the samadhi of Kerala's saint Sree Narayana Guru. Varkala is also known for Janardana Swami Temple, also known as Dakshin Kashi.

Varkala is renowned for its stunning cliffside views overlooking the Arabian Sea, creating a breathtaking backdrop for relaxation and exploration. The town's iconic cliff, known as the Varkala Cliff, is a geological wonder that attracts visitors from far and wide. Perched atop the cliffs are numerous cafes, shops, and guesthouses offering panoramic vistas of the sea, mak-

ing it an ideal spot for leisurely strolls and sunset watching.

Varkala has some of the best pristine beaches, hills, lakes, forts, lighthouses, natural fisheries and springs - all of this together makes this town a little paradise. You will also find a lot of shops with signboards in Hebrew selling Yoga mats, oxidized silver jewelry and harem pants made of cotton. Ayurvedic spas, affordable resorts, hostels, clean beaches make it a must-visit city of Kerala.

One of the highlights of Varkala is its vibrant yoga and Ayurveda scene, drawing wellness enthusiasts and spiritual seekers alike. The town is home to numerous yoga centers, retreats, and Ayurvedic spas, offering a range of holistic wellness experiences. Visitors can indulge in rejuvenating yoga sessions, meditation practices, and Ayurvedic treatments amidst the serene surroundings of Varkala's coastal landscape.

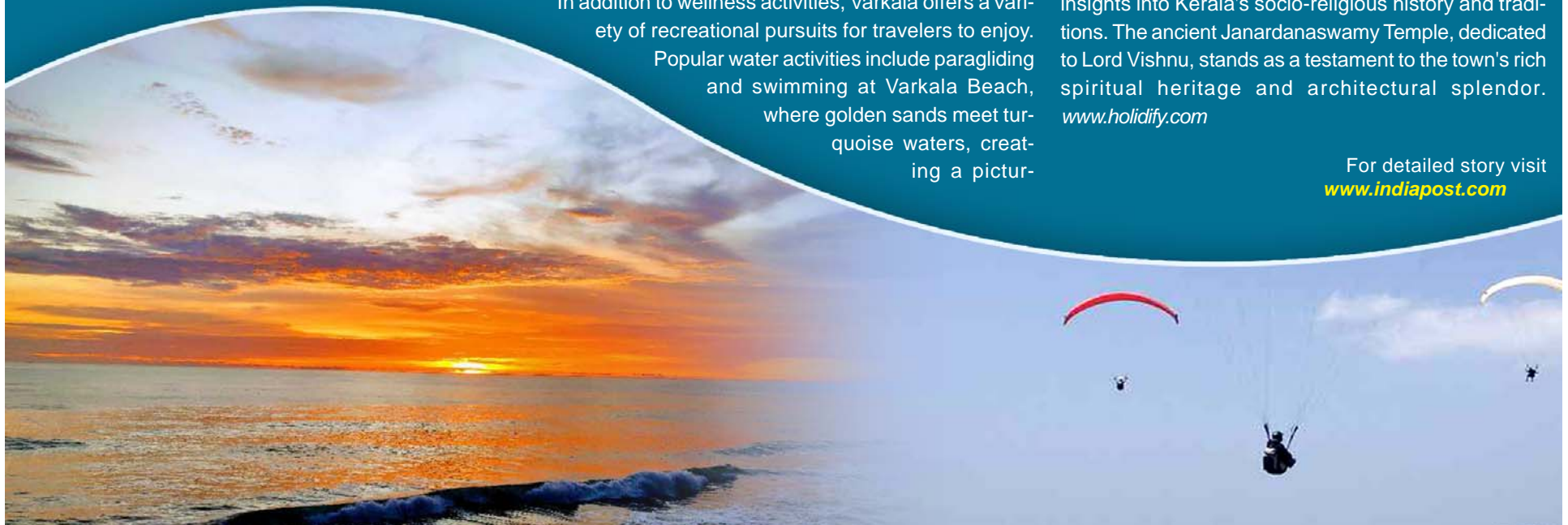
In addition to wellness activities, Varkala offers a variety of recreational pursuits for travelers to enjoy.

Popular water activities include paragliding and swimming at Varkala Beach, where golden sands meet turquoise waters, creating a pictur-

esque setting for beachgoers. Adventurous souls can also explore the nearby backwaters, take surfing lessons, or embark on boat rides along the tranquil waterways.

For those interested in cultural exploration, Varkala boasts several notable attractions and places of interest. The Sivagiri Mutt, a pilgrimage center founded by the revered social reformer Sree Narayana Guru, offers insights into Kerala's socio-religious history and traditions. The ancient Janardanaswamy Temple, dedicated to Lord Vishnu, stands as a testament to the town's rich spiritual heritage and architectural splendor. www.holidify.com

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Udupi Palace is a South Indian vegetarian BYOB restaurant. My friend and I had dinner there shortly after I returned from south India. We were greeted warmly and the ambiance is pleasant. The menu is so enticing that we ordered too much food but it was almost as good the next day.

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Can Pakistan and Bangladesh overcome historical grievances to redefine relations?

WALEED SAMI

Sheikh Hasina's exit from Bangladesh's political scene, following 15 years of tense ties with Pakistan, is a watershed moment for South Asia. For more than a decade and a half, Pakistan-Bangladesh relations were strained by distrust, historical grievances, and India's rising influence in Dhaka during Hasina's Awami League administration. With a new interim government in place, led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, Islamabad sees a chance to restore relations with Dhaka. However, as this new chapter progresses, the complexity of the past, regional geopolitics, and Bangladesh's internal political dynamics will all influence the future of this partnership.

A Tumultuous History: The Shadow of 1971

To appreciate the tense ties between Pakistan and Bangladesh during Sheikh Hasina's reign, one needs to review the 1971 events. The conflict that resulted in Bangladesh's independence remains a source of deep historical pain. Sheikh Hasina, the daughter of Bangladesh's founding father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, incorporated the scars of the violent battle into her political agenda. Her term in power, from 1996 to 2001 and again from 2009 to 2024, was distinguished by an unwavering attitude against Pakistan, which she considered accountable for the 1971 crimes.

From Pakistan's perspective, the events of 1971 are a terrible part of its history that it recognises but does not believe should define future ties. Islamabad has frequently emphasised the need to move beyond the animosity of the war, emphasising that both countries suffered during the fight. Nonetheless, Hasina's government's political murders of Pakistani elites throughout the conflict further widened the split. Under her

leadership, Dhaka remained strongly allied with New Delhi, stifling any substantial development in bilateral relations with Pakistan.

Hasina's Departure: A Window for Reconciliation?

The political turmoil that resulted in Sheikh Hasina's fall in August 2024, following huge student-led demonstrations, provides Pakistan with an opportunity to reset its ties with Bangladesh. With Muhammad Yunus at the helm of the interim administration, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif lost no time in reaching out for collaboration. In a phone conversation with Yunus, Sharif stressed Pakistan's intention to increase commerce, cultural exchanges, and people-to-people interaction between the two countries.

For Pakistan, this change in leadership might signal the start of a thaw in long-frozen ties. The absence of Hasina, widely seen

tion. India had an important part in Bangladesh's independence and continues to have a considerable impact on Dhaka's domestic and foreign affairs.

In the post-Hasina period, anti-India sentiment has grown in Bangladesh, as seen by the student demonstrations that helped overthrow her administration. Many Bangladeshis, notably followers of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami have long criticised Hasina for being too close to New Delhi and allowing India undue influence over the country's politics and economy. While its primary goal is to restore order and resolve internal concerns, the new temporary administration must tread gingerly.

For Pakistan, prevailing anti-India sentiment provides a potential chance to re-establish relations with Bangladesh. However, Islamabad must exercise caution in not focusing

To appreciate the tense ties between Pakistan and Bangladesh during Sheikh Hasina's reign, one needs to review the 1971 events. The conflict that resulted in Bangladesh's independence remains a source of deep historical pain

in Pakistan as a staunch supporter of India, provides an opportunity for Islamabad to engage Dhaka without the historical baggage that has weighed down previous diplomatic efforts. While the change in leadership may provide a chance for reconciliation, the path to normalising relations will be riddled with difficulties.

The India Factor: A Delicate Balancing Act

India's influence is one of the major hurdles to improving Pakistan-Bangladesh ties. Under Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh's foreign policy was closely linked with that of New Delhi, reflecting a shared history and strategic coopera-

its diplomatic efforts primarily on its competition with India. While shared cultural, religious, and historical links between Pakistan and Bangladesh provide a solid framework for better relations, any overt anti-India stance might backfire, especially given India's strategic importance to Bangladesh.

(The author is a postgraduate student of Strategic Studies at the Centre for International Peace and Stability (CIPS), a school of the National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Islamabad). South Asia Monitor

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INDIA INITIATES PEACE FOR MYANMAR

Just over a week ago, India's federal home minister Amit Shah announced a plan to fence the open border with neighboring Myanmar. He said, India would secure the rugged 1,643km (1,020-mile) boundary the same way as "we have fenced the country's border with Bangladesh", which is more than twice as long.

Mr. Shah said the government would also consider scrapping a six-year-old free movement agreement that allows border residents from India and Myanmar to travel 16km into each other's territory, without a visa. He gave few details of how the fence would be built, or over what timeframe. Lately, India has witnessed major issues at the northeastern borders with ethnic groups crossing the border.

The Myanmar junta has been in war with the ethnic minorities as well as the democratic forces since 2021. Since India is greatly affected by these developments at its border, India has invited political and military opponents of Myanmar's ruling junta to attend a seminar in New Delhi, according to sources as told to Reuters. This is surely a significant move by the South Asian power that has maintained ties with the top generals shunned by Western nations in the past few years.

A civil war in Myanmar, since its military unseated an elected civilian government in a February 2021 coup, now risks destabilizing India's 1,650-km border with Myanmar, and some of its key infrastructure projects there. A leader of an armed group and two sources with direct knowledge of the issue said the parallel National Unity Government and ethnic minority rebels from the states of Chin, Rakhine and Kachin, bordering India are invited to a seminar in mid-November. The event would be hosted by the government-funded Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), whose council includes External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, said two other sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity as the matter was confidential.

However, there were no confirmed reports from either the Junta or the organizers. Although the junta has been condemned by western powers, with most having imposed sanctions, India has kept up engagement with the generals through visits to the capital, Naypyitaw, by its government and defense officials. India has been reluctant to openly criticize the junta, which could push the generals closer to rival China. New Delhi has had no formal engagement with the junta's opponents.

In June, Foreign Minister Jaishankar voiced concern about border instability and the security risks to India's projects in Myanmar. India was "open to engaging all stakeholders in addressing this situation," he told his Myanmar counterpart. India is involved in developing the \$400-million Kaladan port and highway project in Myanmar's west, as well as providing about \$250 million for another road project to link its landlocked northeastern states with Thailand, via Myanmar.

The seminar plan comes amidst a peace effort by the ASEAN grouping of Southeast Asian nations that has made scant progress since it's unveiling in April 2021, as some ASEAN nations have been vexed by the junta's refusal of talks. The November meeting would represent New Delhi's effort to reconcile the junta with the ethnic population.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

Saiyami resumes film's shoot with Sunny Deol

Actress Saiyami Kher, who recently completed the Ironman triathlon in Germany, has returned to her professional commitments. The actress spared no time, and has resumed the shoot of her upcoming movie in Hyderabad.

The yet-to-be-titled film sees her opposite Sunny Deol. Saiyami is back on set, balancing her passion for sports with her commitment to her craft.

Speaking about her return to work, Saiyami said, "Finishing the Ironman 70.3 has been a long standing dream".

She further mentioned, "The race has put me in a very positive frame of mind and I feel rejuvenated. I have really pushed my limits, and I'm bringing that same energy back to the set. Working with Sunny sir is a privilege, and I'm excited to continue this journey with the team in Hyderabad".

The Ironman Triathlon is one of a series of long-distance triathlon races in the world. It is organized by the World Triathlon Corporation (WTC), and consists of a 2.4-mile swim; a 112-mile bicycle ride and a marathon 26.22-mile run completed in that order, a total of 140.6 miles. It is widely considered one of the most difficult one-day sporting events in the world.

The Ironman World Championship has become known for its grueling length, harsh race conditions, and television coverage.

Meanwhile, Saiyami was recently seen in the streaming movie 'Sharmajee Ki Beti' in which she shared the screen with Sakshi Tanwar, Divya Dutta, Parvin Dabas and Sharib Hashmi. The film was released on Prime Video on June 28, 2024.

Saiyami's remarkable achievement coupled with her professionalism continues to set a powerful example for her fans, reinforcing the message that determination and passion can help one excel in any field. *IANS*

Kareena Kapoor called out Bollywood for male dominance

Actress Kareena Kapoor, best known for her outstanding performances in 'Chameli' and 'Refugee', once called out the Bollywood industry for its male dominance.

In a throwback video, when asked about her ideal role in the film, Bebo said, "Ideal role? Ideal role, actually I don't have an ideal role. As long as the role is good, it's okay, because this is a male-dominated industry like I did in my first film, it was a very good role, I'd like to get meaty roles like that I'd like to get meaty roles like that."

Kareena made her power-packed debut in 2000 with Abhishek Bachchan, who also debuted in the same film alongside Jackie Shroff and Suniel Shetty. Later, Kareena was praised for her breathtaking role in the action drama film that made her earn her Filmfare For Best Actor Female Debut. *IANS*

TOP TEN

HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Aaj Ki Raat : **Stree 2**
- 2 Tauba Tauba: **Bad Newz**
- 3 Sajni: **Laapataa Ladies**
- 4 Tainu Khabar Nahi: **Munjya**
- 5 Angaaron : **Pushpa 2 The Rule**
- 6 Akhiyaan Gulaab: **Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya**
- 7 Agar Ho Tum: **Mr. And Mrs. Mahi**
- 8 Satranga: **Animal**
- 9 Chaleya: **Jawan**
- 10 Aayi Nai: **Stree 2**

Srishti Jain: Glad to use my fashion design skills

Actress Srishti Jain, who is seen as 'Monisha' in the show 'Kumkum Bhagya', is a passionate fashion enthusiast who takes an active role in selecting her character's outfits. By curating Monisha's wardrobe, Srishti ensures that it not only complements her role but also reflects her personal style.

Srishti studied fashion designing in Mumbai, nurturing a deep love for the industry that eventually led her to embark on a captivating journey into acting. Even with this shift in her career, her passion for fashion has remained a vital part of her life.

For Srishti, fashion is not just about clothing; it's a realm where she feels genuinely connected to her creativity, allowing her to express herself both on and off the screen. *IANS*





SONAKSHI SINHA'S ACTING MANTRA

Actress Sonakshi Sinha recently opened up about her unique approach to character preparation, revealing that she doesn't adhere to a strict method. Instead, she embraces spontaneity, stating she simply "arrives on set, faces the camera, and allows the character to come alive in the moment."

Speaking about her preparation for her characters in the web series 'Dahaad' and 'Heeramandi', the 37-year-old actress said: "Honestly, my method is that I don't have a set method, be it 'Dahaad' or my other project. I arrive on set, face the camera, and that's when the character comes alive for me. It's hard to explain, but having a strong imagination really helps."

"Being observant-- taking note of what you see and hear, picking up on certain nuances, and applying them when needed--that's how I approach it. I observe people and learn from them. Of course, directors are a huge help when preparing for a character, especially one you're unfamiliar with. Speaking specifically about Fareedan in 'Heeramandi', I would give credit to filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali sir," she said.

Sonakshi further discussed the differences and similarities between working on an OTT project and a film.

IANS



When Janhvi Kapoor wrote a 'jealousy' plot

The latest promo from 'The Great Indian Kapil Show: Season 2' has been released in which actress Janhvi Kapoor is seen sharing a story about her best friend who had a breakup and how she decided to help her to make her ex feel jealous.

The makers took to their Instagram account and shared the new clip from the show as Kapil hosted team 'Devara: Part 1', including Jr NTR, Janhvi Kapoor and Saif Ali Khan.

The makers captioned the post, "Where do you get friends like these? Asking for myself. Watch @jrnt, @janhvikapoor, and Saif Ali Khan on #TheGreatIndianKapilShow only on Netflix!"

The video starts with Janhvi describing an incident related to her friend which goes like this, "So, basically I had a friend who had a breakup, and she was trying to make her ex-boyfriend jealous."

"So, as a true friend and a sister, I thought I'd wear a sweatshirt so she could click a backshot of me and post it on Instagram, then her ex-boyfriend could be curious to find out about who the guy is that she's holidaying with, in the Swiss Alps just one week after the breakup. Unfortunately, her ex-boyfriend didn't care, and he didn't even send a message after she posted the photograph." Janhvi concluded. IANS

shamita shetty takes fans through Goan flavors

Actress Shamita Shetty recently shared a mouthwatering glimpse of her culinary adventure, indulging in local Goan cuisines. Her post showcases a delightful array of dishes that perfectly capture the rich flavors of Goa, inviting her followers to join her in this foodgasmic experience.

Taking to Instagram, Shamita, who has 4.8 million followers, shared an engaging Reel video showcasing her culinary experience in Goa. Dressed in a stylish brown kaftan, she enthusiastically highlights the delicious Goan meal before her.

In the clip, Shamita expresses her passion for trying local cuisines while traveling for work, saying, "Today I am in Goa, and this is some of the local Goan delicacies: rawa fried prawn, kismoor, poee bread, red rice, and fish curry... Food today is a total hit."

The video is captioned, "What can I say... this was just plain yum! #goanfood #goa #foodie," perfectly capturing her delight in the vibrant flavors of the region.

Shamita, who is the younger sister of actress Shilpa Shetty, made her acting debut in 2000 with the romantic drama 'Mohabbatein'. Written and directed by Aditya Chopra and produced by Yash Chopra under his banner Yash Raj Films, the film starred Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan and Aishwarya Rai, and newcomers Uday Chopra, Jugad Hansraj, Kim Sharma, Jimmy Sheirgill, and Preeti Jhangiani. IANS



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