



India to remain global growth driver: IMF

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Tesla announces to cut over 10pc of its workforce

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Kareena says she is Diljit's 'fan girl forever'

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HISTORIC RESOLUTION PASSED

Resolution in US Congress condemns Hinduphobia

India Post News Service

Indian-American Congressman Shri Thanedar has introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives condemning Hinduphobia, anti-Hindu bigotry, hate and intolerance. The resolution, which was introduced on 17 April and has been referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, reads that despite their positive contributions to the United States, Hindu Americans face stereo-



Congressman Shri Thanedar

types and disinformation about their heritage and symbols, and have been the targets of bullying in schools and on college campuses, as well as discrimination, hate speech, and bias-motivated crimes.

The resolution states that the House of Representatives:

Recognizes and celebrates the contributions of Hindus and Hinduism to the United States.

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FOG celebrates Colors of India, a uniting event

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Ex-leader Suu Kyi transferred due to heat wave

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Significant progress in Indian rural healthcare

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The forehead of Ram Lalla's idol is anointed with a ray of sunlight, known as 'Surya Tilak', on the occasion of Ram Navami, at Ram Janmabhoomi Temple, in Ayodhya on April 17. The Surya Tilak was done through an elaborate system connected with mirrors and lenses in the temple. (ANI Photo) **Details on page 6**

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leged campuses, as well as discrimination, hate speech, and bias-motivated crimes.

Recognizes and celebrates the contributions of Hindus and Hinduism to the United States.

Affirms the United States as a nation that embraces the diversity brought by Hindu Americans

Recognizing the significant contributions of Hindu Americans, who have im-

migrated to the United States from various corners of the globe since the 1900s, the resolution emphasizes their diverse racial, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds. The nation has greatly benefited from their contributions across all sectors of the economy and industries, it added.

Recognizing the significant contributions of Hindu Americans, who have im-

posed on 10th of April 2024. This is a second

milestone in American Hindus History by

Thanedar after establishing Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh and Jain American Congressional Caucus (HBSJ) in June 2023. We

also express gratitude towards all Hindu Activists for their passion and dedication to Sanatana Dharma. We're committed to engaging our communities Politically and

of Anti-Hindu Hate Resolution and calling for Action against Rising Anti-Hindu Hate, said prominent community leader Chandru Bhambhra, FIA and trustee, Vedic Dharma Samaj.

Hindu hate is on the rise across America and we need to raise awareness against Hinduphobia. We congratulate Shri Thanedar for bringing up this important community concern in Congress. We wish America to be a safe and welcoming place for all races and religions, said Ashish Khurana, CTO, Americans4Hindus.

On the background of local officials often failing to investigate the cases to find culprits, we thank the Indian-American House of Representatives for asking the FBI and DOJ to investigate. We hope that the FBI/DOJ will investigate to find any campaign or conspiracy that exists behind such attacks to assure peace-loving Indian diaspora / South Asians about their safety and freedom of religion, said Khanderao Kand, Chief of Policy and Strategy from the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies.

Shri Thanedar, 69, represents the 13th Congressional District of Michigan and is highly popular among Indian Americans across the country.



Congressman Shri Thanedar

empowering Democracy with Hindu Values. Please text HINDU to 888 444 8774 and join the Movement, said Romesh Japra M.D. Chairman Americans4Hindus

I am really very happy and proud to have Shri Thanedar as our Congressman who came out first to Discuss Introduction

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Americans4Hindus salutes Congressman Shri Thanedar for submitting the Hinduphobia Resolution in US Congress

2024 polls is about electing 'a global leader on Indian soil', says thinker S Gurumurthy

NEW DELHI: Noted thinker S. Gurumurthy has said that the ensuing 2024 elections hold significance for the world too as the growing hostilities and face-offs in Europe and Middle East

player who can probably avoid a cold war in the future.

"If you are electing a leader this time, you are electing a global leader on the Indian soil," he added.

"I worked underground during the Emergency in 1975-77. It was pitched dark everywhere. I worked as an underground activist during that period. I couldn't eat inside my house, also I couldn't attend my father's last rites,"

have pressed the need for a "player who could prevent the cold war situation in future".

Speaking exclusively to NDTV Editor-in-chief Sanjay Pugalia, Gurumurthy said that India has emerged as the only

He cited the example of the Russia-Ukraine war to buttress his claims on India's "peacenik" role and said that the Modi government's adept handling of the situation earned the country appreciation from all quarters.

He said that the Modi government's decision to buy Russian oil in rupee terms after the Russia-Ukraine armed conflict helped prevent the prices from snowballing to the tune of \$200 per barrel.

"This not only brought down the oil price threat, which in turn could have damaged Indian and global economy," he explained.

He also slammed the Opposition parties over claims of an 'Undeclared Emergency' under the Modi government and cited a personal example to counter it.

"I worked underground during the Emergency in 1975-77. It was pitched dark everywhere. I worked as an underground activist during that period. I



S. Gurumurthy

couldn't eat inside my house, also I couldn't attend my father's last rites," he told Sanjay Pugalia.

"Opposition's claims of undeclared Emergency shows their illiteracy and ignorance of facts," he said. IANS

'Call for action': US Congressman highlights law enforcement inaction in attacks on Hindu temples

REENA BHARDWAJ

WASHINGTON, DC: Indian-American Congressman Shri Thanedar interacted with members of the Hindu community on Monday and spoke about the issue of rising attacks on Hindu temples across America and the fear among the community, saying that "local law enforcement hasn't taken enough action" to investigate the recent attacks.

This comes as he introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives condemning Hinduphobia, anti-Hindu bigotry, hate, and intolerance on April 10. The resolution has been referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

"We've seen a lot of attacks happening on Hindu temples across the United States and we've seen a lot more in more recent times. And it's time for us to seek support. There's a fear. Many Hindu communities are under fear. And what we've seen is that local law enforcement hasn't taken enough action. We have not seen any suspects, any arrests, or any resolution to these issues," he said while citing it as a reason for introducing the resolution in US Congress.

"That (attack incident) has created a lot of fear among the Indian American community, among the Hindu community, and a lot of misinformation has been spread. And so the purpose of this resolution is to bring that to the attention of Congress and to the Biden

administration," he added.

Congressman Thanedar also said that he expects bipartisan support in Congress as it reflects American values, adding that he will continue to fight against racism.

"Well, I expect bipartisan support because American values--freedom, equality, and racial justice--are all American values. And I expect my congressional colleagues from across the aisle to co-sponsor this resolution and be part of it," he said.

"I'll continue to stand and fight for justice, just like I fight for justice for my community in Detroit, Michigan, and fighting against racism, fighting against systemic racism that my community in Detroit has experienced for decades," he added.

Another Indian-American, Vijay Sadhawal, who was present at the event, expressed his concern over the 'bias of the American media' towards American Hindus and said that the resolution is just the starting point to raising the voice of the Hindu community.

"We have enough Hindu Americans in the country that can actually be a steering rod, so to speak, for protecting our minority rights in this country. And yet we see that the instruments of democracy, like the media, civil society, and NGOs, seem to be biased against the Hindu population of the United States," he said. *ANI*

"We've seen a lot of attacks happening on Hindu temples across the United States and we've seen a lot more in more recent times. And it's time for us to seek support"

India to test 130 km strike range Astra Mark-2 missile this year

NEW DELHI: In a major capability boost for the Air Force's fighter fleet, India is planning to carry out the first test of the 120-130 km strike range Astra Mark 2 air-to-air missile in next few months.

The Astra Mark-1 air-to-air missile with strike range of around 90-100 kms is already in the Indian Air Force and is already integrated with the LCA Tejas and the Su-30 MKI fighter jets.

The work on developing the 120-130 km strike range Astra Mark-2 air-to-air missile is going on and we are looking to carry out the first test firing in the next few months, defense officials told ANI.

The Astra Mark 2 would give the Indian Air Force an edge over the adversaries in air-to-air combat and can also be offered as an export product to friendly foreign countries operating the Russian origin Sukhoi, they said.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation has been working towards developing the Astra Mark-1 and Astra Mark 2, along with a longer version, the Astra Mark-3, which would give it a capability similar to the Meteor missiles that have come to India along with the Rafale fighter jets.

The Pakistanis may have long-range Chinese PL-15 air-to-air missiles but there is no clarity about the claims made by them about its capabilities. *ANI*

Indian woman in Pakistan refuses to leave without her kids

ISLAMABAD: Farzana Begum, an Indian national hailing from Mumbai, is currently in Pakistan fighting for the custody of her children, has refused to return to her native country, stating that her children's lives are in danger.

Farzana Begum married a Pakistani citizen, Mirza Mubin Elahi, in Abu Dhabi in 2015.

Later, the couple came to Pakistan in 2018 and have two sons aged seven and six.

Farzana's case gained public limelight after she allegedly tortured her husband over a dispute regarding the custody of her sons and some properties in the name of her sons.

Farzana rejects her husband's claims that he had divorced her, stating: "If he has divorced me, then there must be a certificate."

"Me and my children's lives are in danger in Pakistan over a property dispute. I am confined to my house in Rehman Gardens, Lahore, and my children are enduring hunger," she said.

Farzana called on the government of Pakistan to provide her with protection until the case was resolved, refusing to leave to her native country without her sons.

"There are some properties in Lahore which are in the name of my sons. My husband has possession of mine and my children's passports," she added. *IANS*

Ayodhya: Lord Ram Lalla's forehead illuminates with 'Surya Tilak' on occasion of Ram Navami

AYODHYA: The Ram Temple in Ayodhya witnessed a unique event as the forehead of the Ram Lalla idol was anointed with a ray of sunlight, known as 'Surya Tilak' on the occasion of Ram Navami on Wednesday, 17 April.

The "Surya Tilak" of Ram Lalla was done at noon through an elaborate system connected with mirrors and lenses in the Ram Temple.

The temple trust had commissioned a team of scientists to make this occasion possible. Using scientific expertise, a beam of light illuminated Ram Lala's forehead. To achieve this phenomenon, sunlight was precisely directed onto the statue's forehead using a combination of mirrors and lenses. This was carried out precisely at 12 noon for about 3 minutes.

Even as Ram Lalla was to be anointed with the Surya Tilak, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a reference to the historic occasion in his election rally at Nalbari Assam. With a chant of Jai Siyaware Ram the PM said, "Today is the historic occasion of Ram Navami. After waiting for 500 years, Lord Ram has been seated in his grand temple. Now after a few minutes, by applying Surya Tilak to Lord Ram, his birth anniversary will be celebrated in the holy city of Ayodhya, in the Ram Temple."

The moment of the Surya Tilak had devotees in raptures as chants of Jai Shri Ram were heard across Ayodhya and even in temples across the country. Devotees broke out into song and dance outside the Ram Janambhoomi Mandir. This is the first Ram Navami after the Pran Pratishtha of the idol of Lord Ram by PM Modi on January 22 in Ayodhya.

Ram Navami is being celebrated with great pomp at Ram Janambhoomi Mandir with offerings of 56 types of bhog, prasad and panjiri.

Earlier, Acharya Satyendra Das, Chief Priest of Ram Janambhoomi Temple, informed that everything has been decorated and the idol of Lord Ram has been specially dressed for the day, "He is dressed in yellow clothes, and after this he is bathed with Pancharit. Four-five types of panjiris are made and along with that, 56 types of offerings are made to the Lord."

Large number of devotees thronged Ram Mandir on the Wednesday morning in a vibrant display of faith and celebration. Before visiting the temple, devotees took a dip in the holy waters of the Saryu River. *ANI*

The moment of the Surya Tilak had devotees in raptures as chants of Jai Shri Ram were heard across Ayodhya and even in temples across the country

India to remain global growth driver in foreseeable future: IMF Executive Director

WASHINGTON: Krishnamurthy V Subramaniam, the Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), said that India will continue to be a driver for global growth in the foreseeable future.

In an interview with ANI, he noted that India, ever since the COVID-19 pandemic, has witnessed consistent growth at 7 percent plus. He predicted that India will have 8 percent growth in the fourth quarter and called it "good" growth con-

of COVID with 7 percent plus growth. So I continue to maintain that assessment."

Subramaniam, India's former Chief Economic Adviser said that the IMF has revised its projection for growth for India in 2024 to 7.8 percent, which he emphasized, reflects overall growth.

On being asked about how India's economy is viewed in the IMF meetings being held in the US, he said, "So, if you look at the Indian economy now, ever

"Now, the fund itself has revised its projection for growth for India for this year to 7.8 percent, which is reflecting the overall growth. I do want to also mention, I think, if

which is actually what economists use across the world to understand the drivers of growth. In India, pre-2014 productivity growth annually was 1.3 percent; in contrast, the rate of productivity growth post-2014 has been 2.7 percent, which is more than double. And I think that is a very important driver for growth to continue to be high, and for it to be sustainable going forward," he added.

India's GDP grew at a massive 8.4 percent during the October-December quarter of the current financial year 2023-24, and the country continued to remain the fastest-growing major economy.

The Indian economy grew 7.8 percent and 7.6 percent during the preceding two quarters - April-June and July-September, according to data re-

leased by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation in February this year. ANI



Krishnamurthy V Subramaniam

So, if you look at the Indian economy now, ever since COVID, it has grown consistently at 7 percent plus, 9.7 percent the year after COVID, then 7 percent and then this year, 8.2 percent, 8.1 percent, and 8.4 percent growth in the first three quarters

sidering the current global economic situation.

Asked where India stands amid the current global economy, he responded, "I think India will continue to be the driver for global growth in the foreseeable future. The maximum sort of contributor to global growth. I expect growth in India to be consistently above 7 percent in this decade. You would recall back in September 2021, when I was with the government as well. I predicted that India will emerge out

since COVID, it has grown consistently at 7 percent plus, 9.7 percent the year after COVID, then 7 percent and then this year, 8.2 percent, 8.1 percent, and 8.4 percent growth in the first three quarters. So even with a much lower 7.3 percent growth, if it so happens, actually in the fourth quarter, India will have an average of 8 percent growth. And I think that is very good in the current global economic situation. As I said, 3.1 percent expectation for the global economy."

you look at productivity improvements, this is something that is really important. If you look at the Penn World Table's data,

Myanmar's jailed ex-leader Suu Kyi transferred due to heat wave

BANGKOK: Myanmar's ousted former leader Aung San Suu Kyi has been transferred from prison to another location.

Local media, citing military junta spokesman Zaw Min Tun, reported the reason for the move was concern for the 78-year-old's health in view of the high temperatures in the capital Naypyidaw, where Suu Kyi was being held.

It was not certain whether she had been taken to another prison or transferred to house arrest.

The junta had not informed Suu Kyi's lawyers of the plan or of her new location, a source close to the prison authorities told dpa news agency.

In addition to Suu Kyi, former President Win Myint, who had been detained in a prison about 100 km south of the capital, has also been transferred.

On April 17, more than 3,000 prisoners were also released on the occasion of the Thingyan New Year festival, the military junta announced.

The army ousted and arrested the democratically-elected de-facto head of government Suu Kyi following a coup in February 2021.

A court controlled by the junta later sentenced her to a total of 33 years in prison for numerous alleged crimes. Win Myint was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

In 2023, the military junta reduced Suu Kyi's sentence by six years and Win Myint's sentence by four years.

Myanmar plunged into chaos and violence following the army's takeover.

The junta is coming under increasing pressure politically and also militarily, with rebel groups involved in violent resistance against its rule. IANS/DPA

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This is how Tesla can produce a Rs 20 lakh 'Make in India' EV

NEW DELHI: Elon Musk is coming to India for the first time to spend at least 48 hours in the country later this month. As all eyes are on what the billionaire would announce during his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and industry leaders, Tesla lovers have only one question: When will they finally be able to drive a 'Make in India', affordable EV?

A cheaper Model 3, which is the entry-level Tesla, can only be possible with local manufacturing of battery components and a strong EV supply system, for which Musk will surely have a substantial announcement to make during his maiden visit to the country.

Currently, Tesla prices are almost the same worldwide. The base variant of the Model 3 is priced at over \$40,000 (nearly Rs 33.5 lakh).

According to senior analyst Soumen Mandal from market intelligence firm Counterpoint Research, the import duty will be eliminated by setting up local production by Tesla, thus paving the way for an affordable Tesla car.

Also, the cost reduction could be achieved if Tesla cars manufactured in the country come with fewer features compared to the ones available globally.

Mandal told IANS that certain hardware required for Full Self-Driving (FSD) mode could be eliminated and "Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS) Level 2 could be included".

Tesla can eventually produce 5 lakh electric vehicles annually that start from Rs 20 lakh in India.

To produce a Rs 20 lakh car, Tesla can also have a battery pack with a lower capacity than 50kW and the electric motors could be of lower power. The in-vehicle electronics could also be reduced with a smaller center display.

In the new EV policy, the Indian government has cut the customs duty to 15 percent (with certain riders) from the earlier 100 percent on imported cars. IANS

TCS announces new delivery center in Brazil, to create 1,600 new jobs

NEW DELHI: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) announced a new delivery center in Brazil that will create more than 1,600 new job opportunities over the next five years.

The center in Londrina, in the state of Parana, would contribute to the local economy and strengthen the TCS' presence in the region. IANS



Musk's Tesla announces to cut over 10 percent of its global workforce

SAN FRANCISCO: Elon Musk-run Tesla has announced to lay off more than 10 percent of its global workforce in an internal company-wide email, a recent media report said.

In the mail, which is seen by Electrek, Musk said that they decided to reduce its headcount globally as it "prepare the company for our next phase of growth".

As per the tech billionaire, Tesla's growth has led to "duplication of roles and job functions in certain areas".

"We have done a thorough review of the organization and made the difficult decision to reduce our headcount by more than 10 percent globally. There is nothing I hate more, but it must be done," Musk wrote in the email.

"This will enable us to be lean, innovative and hungry for the



next growth phase cycle," he added.

As per reports, the electric vehicle (EV) maker finished 2023 with more than 140,000 employees, meaning the job cut could impact over 14,000 work-

ers.

The job cuts come just two weeks after Tesla reported a drop in sales due to a wider cooling of EV sales.

Meanwhile, Musk has asked young talented people to join his

artificial intelligence (AI) venture called xAI across the verticals. Presently, the tech billionaire's xAI company is hiring engineers and designers, apart from people for product, data and infrastructure verticals. IANS

Philips expands footprint in India with new R&D center

NEW DELHI: Philips announced it expanded its footprint in India by announcing a new R&D center.

The company will open the new Healthcare Innovation Centre (HIC) in Pune, which will have an office space of about 300,000 square feet in the first phase and will house 1,900 employees.

"This new center will further strengthen our commitment to supporting the Indian healthcare ecosystem with innovative and sustainable solutions and leveraging the same for customers globally," Bert van Meurs, Executive VP and Chief Business Leader of Im-

age Guided Therapy, Precision Diagnosis (ad interim), and responsible for Diagnosis & Treatment, said in a statement.

The new center, to be operational in two years, will house

R&D teams from the company's Image Guided Therapy, Precision Diagnosis, Monitoring and Sleep & Respiratory businesses.

Working on innovative health

technologies, this center will contribute to Philips' global mission to improve the lives of 2.5 billion people a year by 2030.

"With the launch of this new center, we will be able to design more innovative end-to-end solutions and collaborate better with healthcare providers as we look to meet our common goal of attaining better health outcomes," said Peeyush Kaushik, VP and Head of Healthcare Innovation Centre, Pune.

In November last year, Philips India inaugurated its new innovation campus in Yelahanka, Bengaluru. IANS



'Above normal monsoon rainfall in 2024 bodes well for agricultural sector'

Pic Courtesy-The Pioneer



CHENNAI: The India Meteorological Department's (IMD) above-normal rainfall forecast for 2024 southwest monsoon (June-September) bodes well for the agriculture sector and will also keep a check on food prices, an economist with Bank of Baroda said.

IMD said the 2024 southwest monsoon seasonal (June to September) rainfall over the country, as a whole, is most likely to be above normal (greater than 104 percent of the Long Period Average - LPA).

"Quantitatively, the seasonal rainfall over the country, as a whole, is likely to be 106 percent of LPA with a model error of (plus/minus) 5 percent. The LPA of the season rainfall over the country as a whole for the period 1971-2020 is 87 cm," the IMD said.

According to IMD, moderate El Nino conditions are currently prevailing over the equatorial Pacific region. The latest Monsoon Mission Climate Forecast System (MMCFS) as well as other climate model forecasts indicate that the El Nino condition is likely to weaken further

to neutral El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions during the early part of the monsoon season and La Nina conditions are likely to develop during second half of monsoon season.

Reacting to the southwest monsoon forecast, BoB Economist Jahnvi Prabhakar said the prediction comes in the wake of the extreme heat wave conditions ongoing in the country.

"The water reservoir level has also been lower at 33 percent of their total capacity compared with 39 percent reservoir levels noted last year (as of April 12, 2024). However, the expectations of normal monsoon bodes well for the agriculture sector and will also keep a check on food prices," she said.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), while retaining its inflation and growth projections, in its recent monetary policy statement had assumed a normal monsoon which will also be positive for the kharif crops, Prabhakar added. IANS

US-based Lam Research pledges Rs 241 crore to prepare Indian chip workforce

NEW DELHI: US-based Lam Research Corporation, a global supplier of innovative wafer fabrication equipment, recently pledged nearly \$29 million (Rs 241 crore) in software licenses over the next two years to upskill 2,800 students, as it signed an MoU with the Indian Semiconductor Mission (ISM) and Indian Institute of Science to prepare future workforce for the chip industry.

Under the pact, ISM will support the establishment of infrastructure and operational costs. As part of a joint statement issued by the governments of the US and India at the White House in June 2023, the MoU signals the successful completion of the pilot in partnership with IISc and establishes a framework for expansion to multiple universities across the country.

IISc will "train-the-trainers" at selected universities, while Lam will deploy a dedicated team of employees to support the expansion across the country.

Under the pact, ISM will support the establishment of infrastructure and operational costs

"As India takes bold steps to establish a semiconductor industry, a virtual-physical fabrication world made possible with 'Semiverse Solutions' will be critical to rapidly scale a workforce to meet industry demand," said Rangesh Raghavan, Corporate Vice President and GM at Lam Research India.

'Semiverse Solutions' leverage the full strength of Lam's portfolio, including its capabilities in virtual technology, processing and simulations, to deliver a boundary-less virtual learning and collaboration platform that fosters creativity and drives innovation. IANS

Samsung set to expand chips supply chain after \$6.4 bn US grants

SEOUL: Samsung is set to accelerate the expansion of its global semiconductor supply chain in the era of artificial intelligence (AI), following a subsidy of \$6.4 billion from the US government and its extended investment plan.

Under the Biden Administration's announcement, the South Korean chipmaker will receive up to \$6.4 billion in grants under the 2022 CHIPS and Science Act, aimed at bolstering US semiconductor production to 20 percent of the world's leading-edge chips by the end of the decade.

The funding will support Samsung Electronics' chip production facilities in Taylor and Austin, Texas, alongside other research centers and packaging facilities, reports Yonhap news agency.

This positions Samsung Electronics as the third-largest beneficiary of the US CHIPS Act program, following Intel with up to \$8.5 billion in grants and \$11 billion in loans, and Taiwan's TSMC with up to \$6.6 billion in grants and about \$5 billion in loans.



At the same time, Samsung will increase its investment in its semiconductor plants in Texas to more than \$40 billion from \$17 billion.

The additional investment will include the construction of one more semiconductor production facility in addition to the existing plant in Taylor, as well as advanced packaging and research and development (R&D) facilities.

Experts pointed out Samsung's production capabilities as a world-leading semiconductor producer and commitment to the US investment have led to the third-biggest subsidy deal with Washington.

"Samsung Electronics seems to have been evaluated better than its competitors by the US government in terms of its future investment plans, scale and company value," Kim Yang-paeng, a researcher at the Korea Institute of Industrial Economics and Trade, said.

"The US grants will help the company reduce the amount of its own money used to invest directly in overseas expansion. It's good for Samsung Electronics," he added.

It will also be possible for the South Korean chipmaker to expand participation in the advanced semiconductor supply chain through local production in the United States, where global big tech companies are located. IANS

Delhi HC upholds privacy of travel information under RTI Act

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court has affirmed that travel information constitutes personal data and cannot be disclosed to third parties under the Right to Information Act, 2005 unless there is a compelling public interest.

Justice Subramonium Prasad reiterated this principle while dismissing a plea filed by Mumbai twin blast case death row convict Ehtesham Qutubuddin Siddiqui, who sought travel details of a witness.



Siddiqui's request for information on a witness's travel from Mumbai to Hong Kong, was denied by the Central Information Commission (CIC) and the Bureau of Immigration, citing exemptions under the RTI Act.

The CIC ruled that disclosing third-party information fell under Section 8(1)(j) of the Act, which protects personal privacy.

Justice Prasad upheld the CIC's decision, stating that it was not unreasonable to withhold third-party information. He said that Siddiqui is open to seek the information through appropriate legal channels, such as Section 391 of the CrPC if it was not part of the criminal court record. *IANS*

Chirag Antil, 24, was found dead inside a vehicle in the area, the Vancouver Police said in a statement

24-year-old Indian student shot dead in Canada

OTTAWA: A 24-year-old Indian student was shot dead in his car in Sunset neighborhood in Canada's Vancouver, police said on last week.

Chirag Antil, 24, was found dead inside a vehicle in the area, the Vancouver Police said in a statement.

After hearing the gunshots, residents in the neighborhood called emergency responders, CBC news reported quoting police spokesperson Tania Visintin.

"Officers were called to East 55th Avenue and Main Street around 11 p.m. on April 12 after residents heard the sound of gunshots. Chirag Antil, 24, was found deceased inside a vehicle in the area," Vancouver Police said.

No arrests have been made in the case and an investigation is on, the police said.

Taking to X, Congress NSUI chief Varun Choudhary, tagging the Ministry of External Affairs, requested for assistance to the student's family.

He posted: "Urgent attention regarding the murder of Chirag



Chirag Antil

Antil, an Indian student in Vancouver, Canada. We urge the Ministry of External Affairs to closely monitor the progress of the investigation and ensure that justice is swiftly served."

He also requested the ministry to extend all necessary support and assistance to the family of the deceased during this difficult time.

For the repatriation of Chirag's body, his family is raising money through the crowd-

funding platform GoFundMe, local media reported.

Chirag's brother Romit Antil, a resident of Haryana, told the local media that he used to talk with his sibling every day.

Romit said that he had also spoken to Chirag on the day when the accident happened.

Chirag, who moved to Vancouver in September 2022, had just finished his MBA at University Canada West, and got his work permit recently. *IANS*

USCIS announces Employment Authorization procedures for Palestinians covered by Deferred Enforced Departure

WASHINGTON: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services today posted a Federal Register notice establishing procedures for Palestinians covered by Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to apply for Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) that will be valid through Aug. 13, 2025.

President Biden issued a memorandum on DED for Palestinians on Feb. 14, 2024, deferring through Aug. 13, 2025, the removal of certain Palestinians present in the United States at the time of the announcement. Individuals who enter the United States after Feb. 14, 2024, are not eligible for DED. The memorandum directs the Department of Homeland Security to take appropriate measures to authorize employment for Palestinians eligible for DED and to consider suspending certain regulatory requirements for Palestinian F-1 nonimmigrant students.

The Federal Register notice describes eligible Palestinians and acceptable documentation such as a Palestinian Authority passport or identification card. Please see the Federal Register notice for additional information about DED for Palestinians and instructions on how to apply for a DED-based EAD. USCIS adjudicates each EAD application fairly, humanely, and

efficiently on a case-by-case basis to determine if they meet all standards and eligibility criteria. Over the past year, USCIS has reduced EAD processing times overall and streamlined adjudication processing. More information about fees for DED-based EADs is available on the USCIS website.

Accompanying this announcement is a Special Stu-

The Federal Register notice describes eligible Palestinians and acceptable documentation such as a Palestinian Authority passport or identification card

dent Relief notice for Palestinian F-1 nonimmigrant students so that eligible students may request employment authorization, work an increased number of hours while school is in session, and reduce their course load while continuing to maintain F-1 status through the DED period. ? There is no application for DED. Palestinians are covered under DED based on the terms described in the president's directive. Eligible Palestinians can apply for an EAD by filing Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization.

Individuals who wish to travel outside of the United States based on DED must file Form I-131, Application for Travel Document. *USCIS*

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Foreign journalists in China face surveillance harassment, and visa problems: Report

BEIJING: Foreign journalists reporting in China face obstacles, including visa problems, surveillance and harassment by police or other officials while on assignment, Voice of America (VOA) reported, citing the annual survey by the Foreign Correspondents' Club of China (FCCC).

However, reporting conditions in China have improved since the global pandemic, but the FCCC survey found that 81 percent of respondents said that reporting conditions have "somewhat" improved, but nearly all the journalists said the reporting environment does not meet international standards.



The key issues remain, including difficulty in obtaining long-term visas, leaving foreign news bureaus understaffed; reporters being obstructed by police or other officials while on assignment, and harassment when reporting in Xinjiang and border regions, VOA reported.

The FCCC surveys over 155 correspondents every year, covering, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America.

Its latest report is based on 101 responses to that survey, which looked at working conditions for foreign media.

According to the report, one of the main difficulties is securing visas. Around one-third of respondents said their bureaus remain understaffed because of difficulty in extending or successfully applying for new visas, reported VOA.

Moreover, Chinese authorities have mostly issued short-term visas.

Earlier in 2023, only one US outlet was able to get accreditation, according to the FCCC, adding that the Canadian media have had no resident reporters in China for four years.

Respondents said that as pandemic restrictions eased, they have returned to uncertainty over what stories will result in surveillance or trips being cut short.

Four out of five of those surveyed said that they experienced interference and harassment, and more than half reported being blocked from reporting or filming by police or other officials, according to VOA.

According to the FCCC report, nearly all those reported from Xinjiang or Tibet highlighted that they experienced increased harassment.

Additionally, journalists who reported or tried to travel to other border regions in the country also reported harassment.

After Xinjiang, the area with the most reported ob-

stacles was the border with Russia, with 79 percent of journalists trying to report from there experiencing difficulties.

One journalist at a European outlet described being followed by several vehicles during a reporting trip to a town, along the Russian border, the report stated.

"They did not interfere during any of our interviews, although they did reach out to at least one interviewee afterwards. When we checked into our hotel, the hotel staff referred to us as 'the journalists state security had warned them about' earlier," the reporter said.

Meanwhile, similar experiences were reported by journalists who traveled to Inner Mongolia, VOA reported.

The FCCC stated that three cases of plainclothes individuals warned people not to speak with journalists or to follow news crews.

"Foreign journalists are, according to China's own regulations, free to report on a wide range of topics and speak to whomever they want," the FCCC said in its report.

The survey showed an increase in journalists being "invited for tea," a tactic where Chinese officials invite foreign media to an informal meeting.

During the meetings, journalists are asked about their coverage and while the FCCC says the exchanges are usually "cordial," it notes they can be used as a form of intimidation.

Moreover, 'surveillance' is another concern, with respondents seeing more sources declining interviews or requesting anonymity.

Nearly all those surveyed said that they believe they are targeted with digital surveillance through communi-

According to the report, one of the main difficulties is securing visas. Around one-third of respondents said their bureaus remain understaffed because of difficulty in extending or successfully applying for new visas, reported VOA

cation apps or that their homes or offices are bugged.

Moreover, four of those surveyed said that officials referenced information that could have been known only if the authorities had access to private accounts or devices, reported VOA.

According to the FCCC, the restrictions and harassment have prevented the media from reporting a more balanced and nuanced picture of life in China.

"The result is coverage of China that cannot fully capture its massively complex dynamics," the FCCC said in its report. "Correspondents, restricted in where they can travel and with whom they can speak, no longer have the luxury of delving deeply into topics and painting a nuanced picture of the country. The result is coverage of China that is narrower in scope and less representative." ANI

Punjab Police arrest Germany-based terror operative in Delhi airport

NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH: A team of Punjab Police has busted a terrorist recruitment, funding, and aiding module, with the arrest of Germany-based operative Prabhpreet Singh Sidhu from the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi, Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said last week.

An input was received in 2020 at State Special Operation Cell (SSOC) Amritsar that Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF) terrorist Jagdish Singh Bhura was planning to hit some high-profile targets in Punjab and to accomplish this task, he had provided weapons and financial support to his India-based associates.

Punjab Police took swift action and busted the module by arresting four operatives of this organization and recovering arms and ammunition from their possession. In this regard, a case dated December 19, 2020, was registered under Sections 13, 17, 18, 18-B and 20 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and Section 25 of the Arms Act in Amritsar.

DGP Yadav said during the investigation, the arrested accused persons had disclosed that they were working on the directions of wanted terrorist Jagdish Singh Bhura and his close aide, Prabhpreet Singh.

The arrested persons had also revealed that they were planning to hit high-profile targets.

He said that since Prabhpreet was living in Germany, Punjab Police, after naming him in this case, issued a Lookout Circular against him through the Bureau of Immigration, Delhi.

"On Wednesday (10 Apr.), immigration authorities at the IGI Airport Delhi informed us about the detention of Prabhpreet Singh. Subsequently, a team of SSOC Amritsar rushed to Delhi and arrested the accused," said the DGP.

Sharing more details, AIG SSOC Amritsar Sukhminder Singh Mann said preliminary investigations have revealed that accused Prabhpreet went to Poland on a valid visa in 2017, and crossed to Germany by road in 2020.

To attain permanent residence in Germany, he applied for political asylum, he added.

While living in Germany, the accused came in touch with Belgium-based KZF terrorist Jagdish Singh Bhura and got involved in anti-national activities, he said, adding the accused arranged funding and weapons to his Indian associates to carry out targeted killings and other disruptive activities.

He said further investigations are being conducted to unearth the whole network of Prabhpreet and the module he is working for.

Meanwhile, police teams have procured a remand of accused Prabhpreet till April 15 after presenting him in a court. IANS

'Asian investors' share in Indian real estate on a surge'

NEW DELHI: The share of investment in the Indian real estate sector from Asian investors surged from 15 percent in 2019-2020 to 47 percent in 2021-2023, a signal that confidence in the Indian market is on the rise, according to a report by Savills India, which is into real estate consulting.

While the US and Canada origin funds were primary sources in the past, there is now increased interest from Asian investors, particularly from Singapore, Japan and Hong Kong, the report titled 'Rising Opportunities: Private Equity in Indian Real Estate' said.

The real estate sector, constituting about an estimated 7.3 percent of India's GDP, has undergone notable transformations, especially in its financing landscape post-pandemic, with renewed confidence from private equity funds.



Over the past decade, the Indian real estate sector has been bolstered by significant policy interventions resulting in improved regulation and structure, including the PMAY (Urban and Gramin) program, and the growing adoption of technology in the real estate sector over the last decade, RERA Act of 2016.

According to Savills, these interventions have facilitated foreign investments, initially concentrated in office and residential segments, now expanding into emerging asset classes.

Private equity investors have injected USD 10.7 billion (Rs 843 billion) into the sector across nearly 100 deals from 2021 to 2023, the report asserted. ANI

Real Estate POST

Gera Developments appoints Anand Basal as Head of Operations



PUNE: Gera Developments, pioneers of real estate business, and award-winning creators of premium residential and commercial projects in Pune, Goa, and Bengaluru, have announced the appointment of Anand Basal as the new Head of Operations. Basal's role will focus on leading operations, across liaison, design, planning, costing, procurement and execution functions. VMPL/ANI

Indian real estate to surge to USD 1.5 TN BY 2034: CII-Knight Frank report

NEW DELHI: The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Knight Frank India report, forecasts India's real estate sector, to reach a value of USD 1.5 trillion by 2034.

The report titled 'Indian Real Estate: A Decade from Now' says the growth trajectory is anticipated to bolster India's economic output, with the real estate sector poised to contribute 10.5 percent to the nation's GDP over next ten years.

Against the backdrop of India's growing urban population, which is projected to reach 1.55 billion by 2034, the demand for housing is expected to skyrocket to reach an estimated value of USD 906 billion by 2034.

Urban centers across the country will require 78 million new homes between 2024 and 2034.

Notably, this surge in demand is anticipated to span across various income brackets, from affordable housing to luxury segments, catering to the diverse needs of India's evolving demographic landscape.

Neel Raheja, Chairman of CII's National Committee on Real Estate and Housing, expressed unwavering optimism about the sector's prospects.

He emphasized that the real estate market stands poised to offer a plethora of opportunities for investors, propelling India's economy towards a trajectory of unprecedented growth.

Raheja says, "Ahead to 2034, the prospects for India's real estate sector appear highly reassuring, driven by a confluence of factors such as shifting demographics, rapid technological advancements,



and supportive policy measures. This confluence is expected to catalyze significant investments in the sector, buoyed by strategic foresight and innovative approaches. Going forward, the real estate market is poised to offer a myriad of opportunities for investors across its asset classes."

He said, "In the next decade, with a significant growth in the size of the economy, the real estate industry is poised for enormous opportunities in terms of shifts in consumption patterns as well as in revenue expansion. I look forward to this report de-

sector is also poised for an exponential ascent, with projections indicating a requirement of 2.7 billion square feet of office space by 2034.

The report underscores the pivotal role of Tier 2 and 3 cities in driving this growth, propelled by factors such as business expansion, infrastructure development, and the rise of IT and services industries.

Global Capability Centers (GCCs) is expected to be a key driver, with an estimated 2,880 GCCs anticipated to be operational in India by 2034.

Gulam Zia, Senior Executive

the real estate sector poised to be a cornerstone of this transformative journey. Fueled by burgeoning wealth, robust consumer spending, infrastructural advancements, entrepreneurial fervor, and strategic initiatives like 'Make in India', our nation stands on the brink of a profound economic evolution."

Zia added, "We anticipate the Indian real estate sector to grow to a USD 1.5 trillion powerhouse by 2034, constituting a remarkable 10.5 percent of the nation's economic output. This journey about sustainable progress, anchored in resilience and adaptability, paving the way for a brighter, more prosperous tomorrow."

In addition, the warehousing and manufacturing sectors are slated to witness substantial expansion, buoyed by India's robust economic growth trajectory.

With projections indicating a potential demand for 111 million square feet of warehousing space by 2034 and a surge in manufacturing activities, these segments are poised to emerge as significant contributors to the country's GDP. ANI

Raheja says, "Ahead to 2034, the prospects for India's real estate sector appear highly reassuring, driven by a confluence of factors such as shifting demographics, rapid technological advancements, and supportive policy measures"

fining the real estate growth story, in turn reflecting upon its role as a leading engine that will take the Indian economy to its path of success."

The commercial real estate

Director - Research, Advisory, Infrastructure, and Valuation, Knight Frank India, said "In the coming decade, India's economic ascent will be marked by an unprecedented surge, with

Semi-indoor houseplants to beautify your home

HARINI BALASUBRAMANIAN

What are semi-indoor plants? Semi-indoor plants can thrive in a combination of indoor and outdoor environmental conditions. These differ from indoor plants, as they need bright, indirect sunlight to grow well. Ideally, these plants can be placed near a window while they add greenery and a refreshing ambience to the interiors.

Ivy Golden Pothos, known by its scientific name *Epipremnum Aureum*, grows in medium to low indirect light. They require watering every 1 to 2 weeks. Use pot standers to give shape to these plants.

Snake Black Coral

Snake Black Coral, *Sansevieria Trifasciata*, is a variety of the Snake plant, which is an excellent option to elevate the décor of your living room. The plant has dark green leaves with wavy white-grey bands. They require watering every two to three weeks.



This plant is characterized by fine upright fronds resembling a rabbit's foot. Besides thriving in minimum light, it can also grow in highly humid conditions. So, it can be an excellent décor option for your bathroom interiors. Make sure to keep it near the windowsill, as it requires indirect sunlight.

Benjamin Ficus tree

Ficus trees, with their waxy green leaves, can create an appealing look for your home. They can grow up to 10 feet tall. A humid environment and watering twice or thrice a week is recommended for the plant's healthy growth. They can be used to beautify dull room corners. Make sure they get ample diffuse light.

ZZ plant

ZZ plants or *Zamioculcas Zamiifolia* can serve as an air purifier for your house. They thrive in minimum sunlight and can withstand drought conditions. Moreover, these plants can help create a peaceful ambience.

Sago Palm

Choose Sago Palm to bring tropical vibes to your home. Also known as *Cycas revoluta*, Sago Palms can be grown in at-



tractive containers to deck up your living space. They prefer moderate humidity and moisture and minimum watering.

Ponytail plant

These succulents are characterized by their ponytail-like, leathery leaves, and large stump that taper off into thinner stems. They need bright, indirect light. Overwatering must be avoided.

Snake Plant

Snake plants, identified by their needle-shaped leaves, can purify the indoor air. These plants grow in low light and require minimum watering. They can grow up to four feet in height and add a striking look to the interiors with their patterns.

Aloe Vera

Known for its extensive medicinal properties, Aloe Vera has thick, spiky leaves, and is available in different varieties. They need bright light and watering once in two weeks.

Burro's Tail

Burro's tail, *Sedum Morganianum*, is known for its jelly, and bean-shaped leaves. These low-maintenance plants need minimum watering. They can be placed in attractive containers or hanging



pots to enhance décor.

Peace Lily

Peace lily, as the name implies, can work in a positive way to elevate the décor and energies in the house. These low-maintenance plants help purify air and enhance the visual appeal. Moreover, Peace Lily has been associated with many health benefits. They help in enhancing mood and promoting sound sleep. www.housing.com

Builders expect sales to grow by 3-4 times during festive season

NEW DELHI: Real Estate developers are avoiding festival offers this season because of high demand and quick sale of projects. During COVID and the slowdown in the real estate period when there was an oversupply of inventories, builders used to give various incentives like free registration, TVs, ACs, cars and even foreign trips for booking/buying flats.

The situation has changed now, recently Godrej properties sold its Gurugram project "Gold Zenith" having 1050 flats worth Rs 3000 crore in just 3 days.

Similarly, In January 2014, DLF sold its 1,113 luxury apartments in Gurugram worth Rs 7200 crore within 3 days of its pre-launch offer.

In March last year, DLF sold its other project in Gurugram having 1,137 luxury apartments, priced at Rs 7 crore and above for over Rs 8,000 crore within three days.

Niranjan Hiranandani, Managing Director, Hiranandani group, said, "Housing demand has definitely picked up and during festival, sales grew by 3-4 times, "It is an auspicious time, and many sources get recorded, documented and closed during this time. People try and close the transaction during this time and sales are much higher during this period. The number of sales we close at these good times, at least 3 times or four times more is expected as compared to the rest of the year."

With the onset of the festive seasons in April, industry experts say with certitude that home buyers and property investors will be gearing up to invest in residential as well as commercial real estate purchases.

Elucidating his feelings, Amit Gupta, Director, of Orris Infrastructure, said, "Chaitra Navratri particularly serves as a powerful motivator for investors to consider allocating funds towards commercial real estate assets. We expect a 20 percent to 30 percent increase in sales during this festive time."

Dushyant Singh, Director, Orion One 32, added, "Investing in commercial properties during festive seasons can be a strategic and healthy decision for home buyers seeking to diversify their investment portfolios."ANI

IIT Madras launches India's 1st mobile medical devices calibration facility

CHENNAI: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras recently launched India's first medical devices calibration facility on wheels.

Calibration is key for life-saving medical devices as it will help check the accuracy of medical instruments for precise disease diagnosis, which will lead to improved treatments.

Irrespective of geographical locations across the country, the new mobile facility will ensure quality healthcare. This will also help test and maintain medical devices that are used in a wide range of hospitals including those in remote villages.

"Proper diagnosis and treatment are extremely important and for that, the medical devices need to be calibrated accurately and frequently," said Prof. V. Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras.

The initiative boosts the United National Sustainable Development Goal (SDG-3), which calls for health and well-being for all.

The infrastructure in the mobile unit includes state-of-the-art equipment that will test the safety of medical devices as per international standards. *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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www.indiapost.com

April 19, 2024

Indian rural healthcare witnessed significant progress in last decade

NEW DELHI: Rural healthcare in India has seen remarkable progress in the last decade, with people living in remote areas getting better access to quality health services.

The healthcare coverage, which can be credited to the expansion of telemedicine and adoption of digital health solutions such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML), together with the government's National Digital Health Mission has led to reductions in maternal and child mortality rates, polio eradication, and most recently eliminated visceral leishmaniasis or Kala-azar.

Yet, gaps remain with a significant lack of skilled healthcare professionals, and technological advancement comparatively slow in the hinterlands.

"Over the last decade, India



has made substantial progress in healthcare through technology and innovation. Telemedicine and digital health solutions have expanded access to remote areas. Innovations in medical devices and diagnostics have enhanced affordability and accuracy," Himanshu Sikka, project director, SAMRIDH, told IANS.

Himanshu noted that the integration of AI and ML, and the National Digital Health Mission "signify a transformative shift towards more accessible, efficient, and patient-centric healthcare."

"Despite notable strides, persistent challenges like workforce shortages and tech-

nological gaps linger. Sustained investment in training, technology, and community collaboration is imperative for achieving universal health coverage and bridging the urban-rural healthcare gap by 2030," Himanshu said.

One of the areas that SAMRIDH, a blended finance (BF) facility supported by USAID and implemented by IPE Global, works is for sickle cell screening. In remote areas of Odisha's Phulbani, Kandhamal, it used drones to conduct over 400 sickle cell tests. The drones help in collecting samples, testing, and providing diagnoses, among others.

Boosting healthcare in rural areas is not only critical for the health results of the nation but also for the economy. It plays a pivotal role in fostering rural economic development.

Priyadarshi Mohapatra, Founder, CureBay, told IANS that in the last 10 years, rural areas in the country have seen "advancements in medical technology, robust health education programs, and improved healthcare facilities." *IANS*

Researchers find how ketogenic diet improves severe mental illness

STANFORD: The common antipsychotic medication used for severe mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder might have unintended consequences. Although these medications aid in the regulation of brain chemistry, they frequently result in metabolic adverse effects, such as obesity and insulin resistance, which are so upsetting that, many patients cease taking them.

According to a recent pilot study conducted by doctors at Stanford Medicine, a ketoge-

nic diet helps these individuals' mental health in addition to restoring their metabolic health while they continue their drug regimen. The findings, which were released in Psychiatry Re-

search, indicate that nutritional interventions can be quite effective in addressing mental health conditions.

"It's very promising and very encouraging that you can take

back control of your illness in some way, aside from the usual standard of care," said Shebani Sethi, MD, associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences and the first author of the new paper.

The senior author of the paper is Laura Saslow, PhD, associate professor of health behavior and biological sciences at the University of Michigan.

Sethi, who is board certified in obesity and psychiatry, remembers when she first noticed the connection. *ANI*



Here is why some people with rheumatoid arthritis have pain without inflammation: Study

NEW YORK: In recent years, treatments for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) have advanced significantly. In many situations, a combination of drugs can now effectively suppress the inflammatory cells that

produce swelling and discomfort when they penetrate the tissues around the joints.



multiple rounds of even the strongest of these anti-inflammatory drugs. Surgical interventions intended to remove inflamed tissue have revealed why, "In some cases, their joints aren't actually

inflamed," says co-senior author Dana Orange, an associate professor of clinical investigation in Rockefeller's Laboratory of Molecular Neuro-oncology. "With these patients, if you press on the joint, it feels mushy and thick to the touch, but

it's not caused by the infiltrating immune cells. They have excessive tissue growth, but without inflammation. So why are they experiencing pain?"

produce swelling and discomfort when they penetrate the tissues around the joints. Yet for some reason, about 20 percent of patients with painful, visibly swollen joints consistently get no relief from mul-

it's not caused by the infiltrating immune cells. They have excessive tissue growth, but without inflammation. So why are they experiencing pain?"

In a new paper in Science Translational Medicine, Dana and her colleagues suggest an explanation. These patients have a suite of 815 genes that activate abnormal growth of sensory neurons in tissues that cushion the affected joints.

"These 815 genes are rewiring the sensory nerves, which explains why anti-inflammatory drugs don't work to alleviate pain for these patients," says Orange. The findings may lead to new treatments for these outliers.

A puzzling disconnection
Rheumatoid arthritis is a tricky chronic disease. Its symptoms--stiffness, tenderness, swelling, limited motion, and pain--slowly emerge in the hands, wrists, feet, and other joints. It occurs symmetrically (not just in one hand but in both, for instance) and sporadically, with irregular flare-ups. Extreme fatigue and depression are also common. ANI

47-year-old Iraqi man wins battle against stage-4 rectal cancer in India

NEW DELHI: A 47-year-old man from Iraq, suffering from stage-4 rectal cancer, has been given a new lease of life after a complex surgery by doctors in India.

The man was initially diagnosed with piles and was undergoing treatment for the same in his country. However, it was later discovered that he was suffering from rectal cancer that had been misdiagnosed earlier. The obese patient also underwent multiple chemotherapy and radiation sessions, before being referred to the Manipal Hospital in Dwarka.

"This was a challenging case as the patient had previously been misdiagnosed, and the fact that he weighed 122 kg added complexity to the treatment," Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, Consultant - Surgical Oncology, Manipal Hospital, Dwarka, told IANS.

After evaluation, the doctors also found peritoneal disease in addition to rectal cancer (stage IV). IANS



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Pop Artist Aditi Sri 2 new singles going to release soon!!

India Post News Service

Bollywood Pop Star Aditi Sri is coming out with two new songs "Dance to my heart beat" and "Simply in love". Both the songs are written, recorded, acted and directed by Aditi Sri. Both these songs showcase true passion and the purest form of love. "Dance to my heart beat" will give old Hollywood retro vibes and will undoubtedly get people dancing. This song is fun, playful and the lyrics are so cheerful. "Simply in love" gives subtle and sweet energy creating a beautiful romance shining through. This song is pleasant, refreshing, and the lyrics are deeply soulful.

Details on page 18

Transforming Medi-Cal Bringing Quality Care to Communities

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

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Spring in the air, Colors to Cheer at Bal Vihar St Louis

Details on page 19

COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

16 India Post

www.indiapost.com

April 19, 2024



FOG Celebrates Colors of India, a community uniting event in Fremont, California

RITU MAHESHWARI
India Post News Service

Festival of Globe (FOG), in association with Fremont Hindu Temple, brought scores of Bay Area community groups together to the vividly painted multiple colors of India on occasion of FOG Holi. Community partners spanning from East to West and South to North of India brought beautiful colors, dances and cultural performances to a gathering reveling in multitudes of Holi colors. The stage reverberated with the Holi music and dances from Rajasthan's Kalbeliya dance to Bengal's musical performance. Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Rungmunch, Telangana and Nepal, were all represented by energetic performances that has crowds sway and dance along to the music. Building on previous successes and huge response, this year the "Festival of Colors" was celebrated by thousands on Saturday, March 23rd, at Washington High School, Fremont, CA from 11 am to 6 pm.

Dr. Romesh Japra, Founder and Convener (FOG) said "FOG Holi has over the years played



an important role in keeping our culture alive and inculcating pious values in our youngsters. With new and convenient location, Holi is much more enjoyable experience for the families and friends. I thank everyone for participating in this festival with their friends and family"

Holi is a great festive occasion to celebrate and get inundated with a rainbow of colors. Everyone applies colors to each other and makes friends. People from all over California and beyond came to participate in the festival.

Many dignitaries and community leaders were there. The colors were biodegradable, skin-

friendly, and organic. Holi event had Flash mob, delicious food, and a dazzling cultural extravaganza. Everyone was dancing to

celebrated women's empowerment month by honoring and recognizing a few of women leaders from politics to medicine to entrepreneurship who have made a tremendous impact in community by helping those in need. More than 50 non-profit organizations participated in FOG Holi. 'Colors of India' segment where different states of India showcased their cultural performances with dancers and had the most beautiful dresses that added beauty to



the beats of Bollywood music all day long.

This year FOG Holi also cel-

the dances.

What a colorful, joyous, and energy filled event it was!!



Sindhi Associations welcomes New Year

PRACHI JAITLY

CHICAGO: The Sindhi Association of Metropolitan Chicago (SAMC) hosted a joyous celebration of Cheti Chand, the Sindhi New Year, at Ashyana Banquets in Downers Grove, a Chicago suburb. The event drew attendees of all ages featuring a delightful blend of cultural performances, prayers, and delectable Sindhi cuisine.

The Cheti Chand festival was graced by several dignitaries, including Mr. Somnath Ghosh, Consul General of India in Chicago, who served as the chief guest, along with prominent community figures such as Mayor of Oakbrook Larry Herman, Mayor of Schaumburg Tom Dailly, three-time Mayor of Oakbrook Dr. Gopal Lalmalani, and Aurora Alderwoman Shweta Baid, FIA Chairman Sunil Shah. All guests of honor were welcomed with Sindhi Topi, Scarf and Dhol, upon their arrival. Consul General Ghosh wished the entire Sindhi Community all over the world a happy and prosperous new year.

The festivities began with traditional Behrana and Prasad, followed by a lively Jalsa experience. Attendees participated in heartfelt prayers and paid homage to Jhulelal, the Sindhi deity, led by Dr. Gita Rupani, Manju Dadlani and Puja Jiandani.

The Cheti Chand festival was graced by several dignitaries, including Mr. Somnath Ghosh, Consul General of India in Chicago, who served as the chief guest

Henna Ballaney and Ria Matta took the stage, captivating the audience for the entire cultural program. Namish Nagdev, a talented 9-year-old, eloquently conveyed the importance of Cheti Chand, emphasizing acceptance, unity, and the story of Jhulelal God. Smt. Balaney sang a Special Cheti Chand Song. Multiple Dance Performances were performed by SAMC community kids and ladies.

Singer Paulami Majumdar and DJ Saif Ali spun Bollywood beats, getting everyone on their feet and dancing to the rhythm. The culinary spread featured an array of mouthwatering Sindhi delicacies.

The event was organized by the SAMC Committee, led by President Vinita Gulabani and Secretary Dr. Subhash Balaney. The current president Vinita Gulabani, besides being a successful en-

trepreneur, is a philanthropist and has been serving on the boards of many community organizations. Prachi Jaitly, expressed how integral Sindhi community is to India and its contribution worldwide with its hard work and values.

SAMC Committee dedication and

leadership ensured a memorable celebration for the Sindhi community. Several Community members came together to volunteer for decorations, making, packing, distributing Prasad, handing out raffles, and supporting the event. SAMC thanked all sponsors and supporters for

joining with the event. With over 250 attendees, the Cheti Chand festival at Ashyana Banquets exemplified the spirit of togetherness, cultural pride, and joy. Chicago's Sindhis welcomed the Sindhi New Year with open hearts and a promise to cherish their rich heritage.



APRIL 27, 2024

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Educational Services

Annually, we provide value-based education to over 22,500 students through 40 schools and permanent educational facilities.



Humanitarian Services

Provided disaster relief to thousands of individuals throughout North America during recent disasters such as Hurricanes Ian, Laura, and Harvey, and the wildfires in California.



Environmental Services

We have planted a total of 2 million trees around the world and have also supported the planting of an additional 361,000 trees.



Community Services

Organized 1,000+ walkathons for supporting local communities. Donated \$711K to over 77 community organizations and \$190K for healthcare support during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pop Artist Aditi Sri's 2 new singles going to release soon!!

India Post News Service

Hollywood Pop Star Aditi Sri is coming out with two new songs "Dance to my heart beat" and "Simply in love". Both the songs are written, recorded, acted and directed by Aditi Sri. Both these songs showcase true passion and the purest form of love. "Dance to my heart beat" will give old Hollywood retro vibes and will undoubtedly get people dancing. This song is fun, playful and the lyrics are so cheerful. "Simply in love" gives subtle and sweet energy creating a beautiful romance shining through. This song is pleasant, refreshing, and the lyrics are deeply soulful.

Aditi's writing process for both these songs has always been to make the audience feel surreal and sense what true love is like. She wanted to create something with a connecting storyline for her music videos "Dance to my heart beat" and "Simply in love". She came up with an epic plot for both her music videos that the audience will surely enjoy.

"Dance to my Heart" and "Simply in Love" are produced by USHMS Inc / East West Musical JAM with the support and blessings of Dr. Romesh Japra, Cardiologist (FOG Chairman), Honored by Mr. Roger Burnell (Stanford Chair) and Mrs. Joelle Burnell. Both of them were actors in the "Simply in Love" Music Video. Casting, Hair, and Makeup by Hollywood Celebrity Rose Hill.

The Cast: Aditi Sri as a Female Lead Singer/ Song Writer/ Actor/ Choreographer/ Dancer

I Horn Male Lead Actor / Dancer
Sapna DeeJay Female Second Lead Actor/ Dancer

Sapna DeeJay is a Software professional and she has a great passion for the entertainment industry. Sapna also acted in a Bollywood Movie as a Second Lead.

Eugene Male Actor and Dancer.
Victor Male Actor
Maryk Female Actor
Location Credit: Ohlone College Amphitheater; Mr and Mrs Burnell's home; An Atlas Music video Production
Aditi Sri Actor/Singer started singing

"You Do" was featured on MTV Series "Help I'm in a Secret Relationship" episode 222. She has also won many national and international awards.

Aditi Sri recently recorded and shot a music video "BULBUL" with Bollywood Playback singer Indeeep Bakshi. Now she recorded a



Rose Hill celebrity Make Up Artist. Rose is the lead cast for America Got Talent and many other.

Victoria Female Actor and Dancer. Victoria acted in many movies and Music Videos.

Toneli is a Male Actor and Dancer.

at the age of 4 and started performing from age 5. Aditi Sri is the first Indian American to tour Nationwide. She has performed over 175 concerts and has released five Hollywood singles: "On My Own", "Shine", "Like You Do", "Unbreakable", and "Seasonal Love". Aditi Sri's single "Like

song with Bollywood Legend SHAAN for a Bollywood movie "Sweatpants". The music director for "Sweatpants" is Monty Sharma, a National Award winner for many Bollywood Blockbusters. "Sweatpants" is Produced and Directed by a phenomenal person Dr. Ranu Sinha.

Transforming Medi-Cal Bringing Quality Care to Communities

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

California has embarked on a multi-year journey to transform Medi-Cal and provide members with more coordinated, person-centered, and equitable care. The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is transforming Medi-Cal so Californians can get the care they need to live healthier lives. Medi-Cal members now have access to new and improved benefits and services that go beyond the doctor's office or hospital and address their medical and health-related social needs. At the EMS briefing on April 11, 2024, DHCS leadership discussed the Medi-Cal transformation and the multi-year initiative to create a coordinated, enhanced and equitable system of care.

California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), is a long-term commitment to transform Medi-Cal, making the program more equitable, coordinated, and person-centered to help people maximize their health and life trajectory.

Sarah Brooks, Deputy Director for Health Care Programs, California Department of Health Care Services said that California is innovating the Medi-Cal program through the multi-year CalAIM. Currently, about one-third of California residents, or nearly 15 million people, have enrolled in Medi-Cal. The CalAIM program provides new and improved benefits that go beyond traditional health care to meet the medical, behavioral and social needs of Medi-Cal members. CalAIM's key new services include Enhanced Care Management (ECM),

which provides one-on-one care managers for Medi-Cal members with complex physical, mental and social needs; and the Community Support Program, which provides housing support, home modifications, Steps such as healthy meals and asthma relief help Medi-Cal members live independently. In addition, ECM is expanding behavioral health services and standardizing benefits for all Medi-Cal managed care plans across the state.

Rachelle Grant, Senior Clinical Director, Pacific Clinics pointed out that as one of the largest non-profit community organizations in California, Pacific Clinics caters to the needs of customers of different ages in more than 22 languages, with services ranging from early prevention to crisis management.

Agnes Hajek, Director of Health Equity Services, Somali Family Services of

San Diego said her organization is committed to providing support to refugees and immigrants who are linguistically and culturally isolated, especially those living in Immigrants and refugees from East Africa, the Middle East, North Africa, and other African and Asian regions in San Diego. She pointed out that during the COVID-19 epidemic, their community health workers have been on the frontline, helping community members whose native language is not English so that they can more effectively grasp important public health information. In addition, Hayek said they are working to secure funding from the CalAIM program to continue to support the work of community health workers, which are important to keeping community members healthy.

Spring in the air, Colors to Cheer at Bal Vihar St Louis

RAJIYER

ST LOUIS:Holi, also known as the Festival of Colors, is a joyous celebration that fills the air with vibrant colors, music, and laughter

This year, at Bal Vihar in St Louis, it was an unforgettable Holi experience. Bal Vihar students arrived in white clothes, ready to be covered in the colorful powders that represent the festival's spirit. Soon, they were playfully chased and showered with bright yellows, blues, greens, and pinks! The lively music added to the festive atmosphere, drawing everyone together in a joyous dance.

Children are the first ones to rush through their food and line up to get their hands on the colors. A safety session along with the instruction on enjoying festival of colors was held prior to the festival of color celebration. Samridhi Singh and Anika Keswani presented the significance of Holi festival. Those little minds were quietly planning how best they are going to use what will soon be in their hands. They start thinking about how they are going to throw colors at all their friends and other elders while trying to stay clean themselves.

Throwing color at each other is a well-accepted practice. Colors are thrown onto friends, family, and people whom you've just met! Most people wear white clothes, so that the colors appear to their fullest potential. Holi is a great time to get together with loved ones, and even make some new friends. It is a time to celebrate, have fun, and start fresh with others. Bal Vihar families used this opportunity to mingle with others to socialize and share the joy & spirit that the occasion offers. Being so far away from the origins of their culture and having grown up in a very different setup, Bal Vihar students continue to impress their immediate community as well as expanded world that they become part of. Bal Vihar students form part of the next generation that is keeping the culture and spirit alive while improvising it in their own way.

The sense of community was heart-warming. Even after the celebrations, everyone pitched in to clean up, demonstrating respect for the space. This experience not only allowed students to appreciate the true meaning of Holi but also fostered a sense of belonging within the community.

Center for Indian Cultural Education - Bal Vihar of St. Louis, a non-profit organization, since its inception in 1992 has been serving the Metro St. Louis Indian community. The primary focus of this organization is to provide Indian cultural education to students age 5-18, its application and integration with the global multicultural and multifaceted society. One can find more detail about the school at www.Balvihar-stlouis.com



"Bed Bath & Beyond" pitched to withdraw Lord Ganesh pillows

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: Indian Americans here urged Utah headquartered retailer "Bed Bath & Beyond" for immediate withdrawal of pillows carrying images of Hindu deity Lord Ganesh; calling it highly inappropriate.

Rajan Zed President of Universal Society of Hinduism, said that Lord Ganesh is highly revered in Hinduism and was meant to be worshipped in temples or home shrines and not to be used for sitting on, sleeping on, pillow fighting, throwing around loosely, enhancing sexual in-



tercourse, making "a stylish statement" etc. Inappropriate usage of sacred Hindu deities or concepts or symbols or icons for commercial or other agenda was not okay as it hurt the devotees.

Hinduism is among the oldest and third largest religions of the world with about 1.2 billion adherents and a rich philosophical thought and it should not be taken frivolously. Symbols of any faith, larger or smaller, should not be mis-handled, Rajan Zed noted.

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West can learn about women empowerment from Hindu philosophy

PURNIMA NATH

Women's rights, women's equality and women empowerment are hot topics. Western corporate sector, government, NGOs and business schools, promote massive agendas, courses, policies, and curriculums around these subjects. Practically speaking, every company tries to appoint a woman CXO or division head, disguised as promotion of "equity", "diversity", "inclusion", "empowerment" for DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) initiative. Once then-nominee American Supreme Court associate justice Ketanji Brown Jackson uttered that "she" or "he" did not know what a woman is [as she was not a biologist], with a straight face, I became explicitly interested in this particular topic more than ever. Honestly, I still do not know what the American Supreme Court associate justice KBJ is? However, irony is, at times though, the political left attempts to promote this "creation" as a "woman" (sarcasm). Frankly, in my observation, America is going through a massive identity crisis. Political left is hell bent on pushing their peculiar policies under the garb of so-called "progressiveness" while creating a mentally ill unstable destructive society, deliberately.

Impact of Eastern Spirituality and Philosophy of Women

India, the ancient land of spirituality, religion, divinity, more specifically the divine feminine, elected a female Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, 58 years ago. Sri Lanka was the first country in the world to have elected a female Prime minister in 1960. A billion people never squinted their eyes for a bit when a woman leader was chosen because of her gender to rule the nation when many western countries could not elect a woman president, purely based on merit and capability over gender and identity politics. I am of the opinion that Indic eastern civilizational values have a vast array of subjects, which the west could learn. On that note, I wish one-day America would "elect" (not select) a female President based on merit and capability rather than mere gender, sex, skin color and shallow identity politics. In the Islamic states of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, women, children, and minorities are subject to inhuman brutality. Current illegal immigration with open borders and unabated infiltration are endangering countries across the western and European hemisphere that resulted in immediate dramatic increase of rape,

physical abuse, human trafficking, and sexual assault in recent years. Is it a coincidence? However, western politicians and entities are deeply engaged in a par-

Did Not Exist Nor Had a Key Role In The Society?

In a world that is 4.543 billion years old, which has seen 6 millions of years of hu-

son" that "identifies" as a female, as by birth, residence, membership, or occupation. The meaning of Female is of, relating to, or being the sex that typically has the capacity to bear young or produce eggs, as per the Oxford dictionary.

Essentially, Female is the one who has the ability to receive the seed, who can bear a child, and recreate the next generation. Females/women are the ones who kept the civilization alive! Females are the instruments of continuity.

My honest question is: If we did not have females or women how did we (humans) recreate for the last 200,000 years? How did we arrive here today without "women"? No single four-legged animals, two-legged birds, insects, serpents, have ever worried about defining male/female sex or gender. They exist and recreate naturally. Only "modern", "advanced", "accomplished", "western", "educated", "intellectuals" humans seem to have this massive confusion and dilemma (power of "modernity"). Sometimes I wonder if intellectual bankruptcy is fashionable and award-worthy these days? Have we lost all common sense? I wonder what the top universities and ivy leagues are really doing? Instead of solving problems and making lives advanced they seem to be creating more primitive problems for society.

New-Age International Women's Day

A fairly new-age western phenomenon that started a trend over a 100 years ago when Socialist Party of America pushed the March 8th 1909 movement as the celebration of International Women's Day. Mind you, women did not have voting rights in America until 1920. And I am sure you have witnessed a tremendous amount of award ceremonies and celebrations during this time around. 100 years of western agenda, we are still looking for solution for women empowerment. Women empowerment concept is a western concept. It never was an issue in the eastern culture.

Why are we still talking about #WomenEmpowerment?

Historicity of Hindu Civilization & Divine Femininity

Oldest scripture of the world is Rig Veda (survived). Oldest religion of the world Hindutva(ism). Oldest language is Sanskrit. In fact, people in few villages of India still speak #Sanskrit.

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Picture captured at the Hindu Women's Network event March 2024 speech

ticular kind of religious appeasement, which will only topple the society. #DejaVu. This is proving to be detrimental to the safety of our girls, women, and ultimately our society. Media outlets remain silent on the root cause. Academia and NGOs are equally complicit. Western countries must spend time understanding and taking action on the root causes of

man ancestry, where modern form of human evolved 200,000 years ago, west told us our civilization only occurred 6000 years ago, biblically, and modernity and advancement only came with industrialization of around 1800 CE - essentially just 200 years ago?

In today's socio-political landscape we are at a point where we have advanced

India, the ancient land of spirituality, religion, divinity, more specifically the divine feminine, elected a female Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, 58 years ago. Sri Lanka was the first country in the world to have elected a female Prime minister in 1960

these massive issues affecting our communities, before it is too late. Our children, girls, and women will pay a heavy price for this massive silence.

How Did We Arrive Here If Women

so much that we must define what a woman is? Woman is "an adult female human being" according to the Oxford English Dictionary or Cambridge dictionary. Some go to the point to say, a "per-

Surya Tilak on Ram Lalla's forehead on Ram Navami *A Rare Phenomenon to Take Place at Ayodhya*

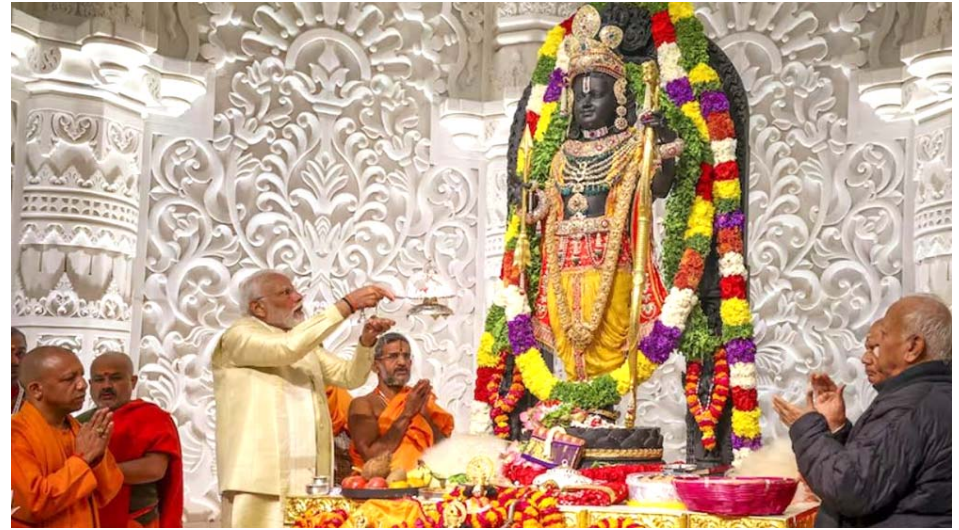
GEETHA PATIL

Thousands of devotees who flocked at the Ram Mandir, Ayodhya on Ram Navami celebration on April 17, 2014 witnessed the 'Surya Tilak' phenomenon; a rare and awe-inspiring spectacle where sunlight will gracefully adorned the forehead of the new Ram Lalla idol, created a divine opportunity. The phenomenon lasted for about six minutes on Ram Navami, celebrated on the ninth day of the first month of the Hindu calendar, to mark the birth of Lord Ram.

The Surya Tilak event is a meticulously designed fusion of science, engineering, and spirituality. Engineers and scientists have designed a sophisticated mechanism involving lenses and mirrors to orchestrate this celestial display, exclusively tailored for Ram Navami. According to chief scientist R Dharamraju from Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), in this mechanism, sunlight was guided through a series of lenses and mirrors arranged strategically to align with the idol's forehead. This alignment, synchronized with the sun's trajectory on Ram Navami to create the mesmerizing Surya Tilak effect, lasting for a captivating four to six minutes starting at noon. It is further said



that the collaboration between experts from CSIR-Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Optica, Bangalore, and other institutions highlighted the fusion of ancient adoration with modern scientific competence. The temple management aimed at having a flawless Surya Tilak formation, facilitated by a precisely calibrated system of 19 gears, ensuring the collaboration between tradition and innovation, offering devotees and enthusiasts a rare glimpse into the harmonious convergence



of spirituality and scientific marvels.

The newly inaugurated state-of-the-art Ram Mandir in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya is a blend of traditional architecture and modern technology in terms of its construction. The Mandir is built to last 1,000 years and constructed in the traditional 'Nagara' style; the temple also has a unique feature - the Surya Tilak mechanism that is designed in a manner that the

Sunrays will fall on Lord Ram's forehead every year at noon on Ram Navami.

It is said that the entire mechanism operates without batteries or iron components, highlighting a blend of natural and technical finesse. Ram Mandir hosted this celestial showcase; the world experienced this extraordinary union on the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami.

"Bed Bath & Beyond" pitched to withdraw Lord Ganesh pillows

Cont'd from page 19

Zed said that such trivialization of Hindu deities was disturbing to the Hindus world over. Hindus were for free artistic expression and speech as much as anybody else if not more. But faith was something sacred and attempts at trivializing it was painful for the followers, Zed added.

In Hinduism, Lord Ganesh is worshipped as god of wisdom and remover of obstacles and is invoked before the

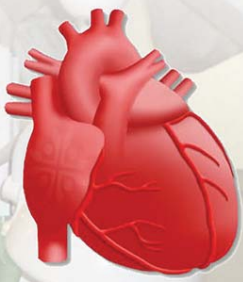
beginning of any major undertaking. There are about three million Hindus in USA.

Shri Ganesh Pillow, which "depicts the image of the Hindu deity" Ganesh, comes in various colors and priced from \$24.99 to \$30.99.


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Know the Significance of Ram Navami

SUNIL KUMAR D. AND INDRAJEET TYAGI

Rama Navami, the spring festival carries special importance for all Sanatanis as it signifies the birth of Ram, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu, in Ayodhya. The day is celebrated with joy and fervor across India, and the globe. Along with Ram, devotees also commemorate Sita, Lakshman and Hanuman, for the place they held in Lord Ram's life. According to Sanatana calendar, Ram Navami falls on the ninth day of the bright half that is the Shukla Paksha, in the month of Chaitra, and is a part of the Chaitra Navratri. According to the Gregorian calendar, the festival comes in March or April every year.

In 2024, Ram Navami is on 17 April. Rama Navami Madhyahna Muhurat - 11:22 AM to 01:54 PM. Navami Tithi Begins - 01:23 PM on 16 April 2024.

Lord Rama was born during Madhyahna period, which is the middle of the day. The mid-point of Madhyahna marks the moment when Shri Rama was born and temples symbolize this moment as birth moment of Lord Rama. The chanting of Shri Rama and celebration reach their peak during this time. The exact time to celebrate birthday of Lord

Rama falls between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. for most Indian cities.

How is Ram Navami celebrated in general

On the auspicious day of Ram Navami, devotees immerse themselves in prayers, stories, and recitals from the epic of Ramayana and hold special Abhishekam, Pujas and Aartis of miniature idols of Ram, deck them up with new clothes and ornaments, and place them in a cradle. On the birthday of Lord Rama, Bhajans, chanting of appropriate mantras all day long and, Kirtan programs are held in temples and homes where artists perform songs and plays dedicated to Lord Ram. They will also offer Lord Rama flowers and fruits. Religious institutions organize special discourses and reading sessions of Ramayana and Shri Ram Charita Manas followed by community meals and charitable events. Additionally, there will be processions of and rocking of smaller versions of Lord Ram statue in a cradle, drinking of a sweet, peppered Jaggery beverage, fasting until evening, and feasting during the evening.

Disciples observe fasting for the day in the honor of their god. While some

choose to abstain from food and water in totality, some limit their meals to Fruits and milk. Eight Prahar fasting is suggested during Rama Navami. Which means devotees should observe the fast from sunrise to sunrise. Rama Navami Vrat can be observed in three different

ways, casual which can be observed without any cause, continual which can be observed throughout life without any desire and desirable - which can be observed to fulfill any desire

How is Ram Navami Is celebrated in Ayodhya?

Ayodhya is birthplace of Lord Ram and Ram Navami celebrations in Ayodhya are remarkable. Devotees come to Ayodhya from far-flung places. After taking holy dip into river Sarayu, devotees visit Rama temple to participate in birthday celebrations. The festival is most zealously celebrated at his birthplace, Ayodhya, where chariot processions, called Rathayatras or Shobha Yatras are taken out. Apart from Ayodhya, Ram Navami celebrations in Sita Samahit Sthal (Uttar Pradesh), Sitamarhi (Bihar), Rameshwaram and Ramanathaswamy Temple (Tamil Nadu), and, Bhadrachalam (Telangana) are also worth experiencing.

What is the History of Ram Navami?

Ram Navami is celebrated to commemorate the birth of Lord Rama to the king of Ayodhya, King Dasharatha, who had three queens, Kaushalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi. The three queens were unable to give birth to a child for a very long time.

King Dashratha performed a sacred ritual known as "Putrakameshti Yagna," which was suggested by a sage, Vasishtha. In the ritual, the king served 'Payasam' to all his wives to fulfill his wish of having a child. As a result, the king was blessed with a baby boy on the ninth day of the Sanatana month, Chitra. Queen Kaushalya gave birth to Lord Rama, whereas the other queens gave birth to Lakshmana and Bharata.

Although this day is declared as a holiday in many Indian states, it is celebrated on different days. People celebrate this day by going to temples, observing fasting and seeking Lord Rama's blessings. This spring festival clearly promotes the idea of the victory of good over evil.



How to observe Ram Navami

GEETHA PATIL

1. Worship miniatures of Lord Ram Moorti

On this Hindu festival, perform Puja of miniatures of Lord Rama and you can even dress up as Lord Rama to show your love for this festival.

2. Give food to the needy

You can celebrate this day by giving food to the needy inside or outside the temples.

3. Perform a ritual called 'Kanya Puja'

This day is also celebrated by performing the 'Kanya Puja' ritual. In this ritual, 'Prasad' is distributed amongst girls in the form of Halwa and Puri.

4. Rama is known as the epitome of perfection

Rama is also known as Ramachandra and he is seen as the epitome of perfection, who fulfills all his responsibilities towards his family.

5. Rama was born at noon

According to legend, it is known that Rama was born at noon in Ayodhya.

6. Siblings of Rama

Rama had three siblings, Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna.

7. Rama married Sita

Rama married Sita who was the daughter of the King of Videha.

8. The story of Rama is written in the Ramayana

The whole story of Rama is written in the Ramayana, an ancient Sanatana Sanskrit text, which is a part of the Hindu scripture.

9. The victory of good over evil

The importance of this festival clearly states the triumph of good over evil.

10. It glorifies the power of Dharma

Since the birth of Rama had the purpose of defeating the evil spirit of Ravana, the festival of Ram Navami glorifies the power of Dharma and faith.

11. It signifies the removal of negativity

Since Rama defeated Ravana and removed evil through good, this celebration also signifies how evil and negativity were removed from the world.

"India Beyond the Pandemic: A Sustainable Path Towards Global Quality Healthcare"

Book Launch Planned in New Delhi

It brings me great joy to announce the launch book, co-authored with Ambassador Pradeep K. Kapur and Professor M.D. Nalapat, titled "India Beyond the Pandemic: A Sustainable Path Towards Global Quality Healthcare," published by Konark Publishers," said Dr. Joseph M. Chalil, a co-author of the book and the co-publisher of the Universal News Network.

"This work is our collective endeavor to illuminate the pathways towards a healthcare system that is equitable, innovative, and sustainable. Join us in a crucial dialogue on shaping a future where quality healthcare is a global reality."

Co-authored by Dr. Joseph M Chalil, Ambassador Pradeep Kapur, and Prof. MD Nalapat, the book will be released at the prestigious India International Centre, New Delhi in the presence of Shri Amitabh Kant, IAS, and Prof. Dr. Randeep Guleria on April 30, 2024.

Described as an essential addition to the canon of healthcare literature, offering a thoughtful analysis and actionable intelligence for navigating post-pandemic realities, the new volume is a testament to the resolve and ingenuity that defines our in-

dustry, and it is an invaluable guide for those committed to the noble cause of global health.

Hardeep Singh Puri, India's Federal Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas described the book as "a useful guide for those who seek to understand how the pandemic has transformed our world and the road ahead for India and the global community. At the same time, it is an incipient contribution to the body of literature

Hardeep Singh Puri, India's Federal Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas described the book as "a useful guide for those who seek to understand how the pandemic has transformed our world and the road ahead for India and the global community

that is documenting India's ascendancy in the global hierarchy. I commend Dr Chalil, Ambassador Kapur, and Professor Nalapat for their work in compiling this book."

Amitabh Kant, IAS, India's G20 Sherpa, and former CEO, NITI Aayog called the book "a testament to the journey

India undertook during those tumultuous times. This book serves as a crucial resource for policymakers, healthcare professionals, academics, and citizens alike."

Prof. Dr. Randeep Guleria, Chairman, Institute of Internal Medicine & Respiratory and Sleep Medicine; Director, Medanta Medical School & former Director, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi called the book "A must-read for anyone interested in understanding how the Covid-19 pandemic has both challenged

and changed the Indian healthcare system, and the valuable lessons learned as we moved forward into a post-pandemic era."

Dr. Zachariah P. Zachariah, Medical Director, UHealth Cardiology Fort Lauderdale, said, "India Beyond the Pandemic" serves not only as a reflection on recent history but also as a forward thinking guide

that underscores the importance of resilience, adaptability, and foresight in healthcare policy. It is an essential read for those committed to understanding and shaping the future of global health."

Dr. Stephen Shaya, Executive Servant Leader, J&B Medical, and Managing Director, Akkad Holdings said, "The book is not just a recount of the crisis but an inspiring narrative encouraging a reimagined approach to healthcare, emphasizing resilience, foresight, and the collective effort to forge a path to quality healthcare for all. It is a testament to the indomitable human spirit and the relentless pursuit of innovation in adversity."

Dr. Satheesh Kathula, President-Elect, AAPI and Clinical Professor of Medicine, Wright State University, Global Healthcare Leaders Program (Harvard University commended the authors of the book "for its clarity, depth, and foresight, while presenting an illuminating analysis of the healthcare challenges and innovations that have emerged from the COVID-19 crisis, with a distinct emphasis on India's strategic response.

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com

West can learn about women empowerment from Hindu philosophy

Cont'd from page 20

Out of four oldest civilizations, (1) Mesopotamia civilization, current day Iraq and northeast Syria, has been WIPE OUT, the region has been converted to complete Islamic countries, (2) Egyptian civilization became completely Islamic, (3) Chinese civilization became a strange combination of authoritarian, totalitarian, atheist, communist and capitalistic society and (4) whereas Indus Valley Civilization (IVC)'s ancient Hindu religion, culture, heritage and history survived as the continuous Hindu civilization despite the barbaric invasion and cruel infiltration. The civilization that was formed by "Sindhu" river became known as "Hindu" by foreigners who could not pronounce the word "Sindhu". Over time "Hindu" became "Indu"... "Indo"... "Indus"... "Indic"...thus, "Indus Valley Civilization" [IVC]...hence the name "India".

Hindutva (AKA Hindu'ism'), the final living ancient civilization that survived brutal attacks, plunder, loot, slaughter, and conversion agenda of the invaders for over a millennium.

With the continuous "KHOJ" [search] for answers, as excavation and explorations continues, advancement of science and technology occur, and as further discoveries are made, today we know Indic civilization's historicity is at least 14,000 years old. Carbon dating of the submerged archaeological site of the City of Dwaraka proved it.

In the east, however, both divine masculinity and divine femininity "energy" are worshipped equally for eons. Many in the east are familiar with scriptural legends of God Shiva, Ardhanarishwara, which is an aspect of ultimate fusion of masculinity (Shiva) and femininity (Shakti) within, a perfect union for procreation. Not to be confused with the recent western phenomenon of 'gender dysphoria' with a notion that somehow one is born in the wrong body or one can decide their gender in kindergarten or go through sex-changing surgeries without parental permissions or one can identify as an animal or there are millions of genders. I bring attention to the matter that, both genders and energies are compulsory for the cycle of creation. Neither is superior, nor inferior, each has its own share of strengths and

weaknesses. Source of all creation without nature and nurture is incomplete. Women don't have to become men in order to achieve what she wants, or be the best she can be or do not have to propagate a man-bashing agenda in order to succeed. On top of it, toxic western feminism is destroying the balance of divine feminine energy and divine masculine energy. Political left is hell bent on erasing the men. Masculine energy is the giver and the provider and the feminine is the receiver and the protector. Balance between male and female energy is crucially important for civilizational continuity. Both energies are necessary for creation, sustenance and dissolution, not one without the other.

There is no known religion, ideology, philosophy and civilization known to me that reveres women like Hindutva(ism). Not just respect for women, but reverence for women. We worship women, the divine feminine energy. We worship divine mother goddesses as equals, at times much more powerful. Various manifestations of mother Goddess are Maa Durga, Maa Tara, Maa Kali, Maa Laksmi and so

on. Divine feminine energy, i.e., "SHAKTI" - the prime energy for creation, sustenance and dissolution. Women are the primal energy of evolution and continuity. Without women, nothing manifests.

Women Rights/Empowerment was NEVER an issue in eastern Hindu society. Even our revered God/Goddesses were referred with their mother. For instance Anjani putra Hanuman or Devaki nandan Krishna. Similarly, women rights/empowerment is not an issue in Hindu society even today. Our Hindu women are in NASA. Our women are engineers, doctors, lawyers. Our women are CEOs. Our women are in every industry and field possible including military and aviation.

(Author, Entrepreneur, Nonprofit founder Purnima Nath writes on global & local issues encompassing geopolitics, national security, foreign affairs, immigration, religion, philosophy. Strategy & management consultant, Engineer. MBA (Northwestern University, Kellogg Alumna). NathPurnima.com)

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com

Fremont Hindu Temple celebrates Mata ka Vishal Jagran with Los Angeles fame Amit Anand



Fremont Hindu Temple celebrates Mata ka Vishal Jagran with Los Angeles fame Amit Anand



HUMA QURESHI BEGINS SHOOT FOR 'GULABI'

Actor Huma Qureshi has started shooting for 'Gulabi' in Ahmedabad. As per a statement, the film promises to be a groundbreaking tale that celebrates the resilience and strength of women everywhere. "Set against the backdrop of a stirring true story", it unveils the courage of an auto rickshaw driver who became the beacon of change, inspiring women to reclaim their destinies.

'Gulabi' is directed by Vipul Mehta and produced by Jyoti Deshpande and Vishal Rana.

Sharing more details about the project, producer Vishal Rana said, "We are thrilled to start shoot for Gulabi in Ahmedabad today. Through this film, our aim is to deliver a great content-driven film for the audience they can resonate with. Huma who has delivered some great performances in her career, once again is all set to create some magic on screen."

He also posted a picture from the sets. The picture shows Huma posing with the film's director and producer. She could be seen dressed up as a Gujarati woman.

Besides acting, Huma recently launched her debut novel 'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero'. The book is set in a fantasyland with its own geo- and socio-political spin.

On turning author, Huma earlier said, "I've learned that accepting who you are, with all your quirks and uniqueness, is the most empowering journey one can embark on. ANI



YAMI GAUTAM GREETES FANS ON HIMACHAL DAY

Yami Gautam, who is basking in the success of her latest release 'Article 370', extended greetings to fans on the occasion of Himachal Day.

Himachal Day is celebrated on April 15 every year, marking the day when the region was established as a province of India.

Hailing from Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh, Yami also owns a farm in the Kohar Khas village, Kangra, where she practices organic farming. She frequently shares glimpses of the farm produce, such as lemons, plums, etc., on Instagram.

Yami took to Instagram Stories to share a postcard featuring a captivating view of the snow-covered landscape of the state, accompanied by the caption: "Happy Himachal Day".

Meanwhile, in the political action thriller 'Article 370', Yami plays the spirited intelligence officer Zooni Haksar. The movie is set against the backdrop of the abrogation by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi government of the constitutional provision that assured a special status to Jammu and Kashmir. IANS



TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Rang Ishq Ka: *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan*
- 2 Tum Se: *Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya*
- 3 Pehle Bhi Main: *ANIMAL*
- 4 Satranga: *ANIMAL*
- 5 Chaleya : *Jawan*
- 6 Apna Bana Le: *Bhediya*
- 7 Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya: *Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya*
- 8 Saware: *Phantom*
- 9 Heeriye: *Heeriye*
- 10 O Maahi: *Dunki*



Kareena Kapoor Khan, who is currently basking in the success of her recent hit 'Crew', is a 'forever fan girl' of Punjabi superstar Diljit Dosanjh.

Diljit recently performed at the Mahalakshmi Race Course in Mumbai, sending concertgoers into frenzy.

The event took place at the MMRDA R2 Ground in Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) area.

Kareena, who has earlier worked with Diljit in 'Udta Punjab' and 'Good Newwz', took to the Stories section of her Instagram and uploaded a video from the gig.

She wrote on the video, "Fan girl forever".

In the video, Diljit can be heard saying, "Hoyegi Beyonce, hoyegi Rihanna, saddi taan ae hi hai Kareena". IANS

KAREENA SAYS SHE IS DILJIT'S 'FANGIRL FOREVER'

MOTHER OF MARTYRED SOLDIER IGNORED

Flt Lt Maheesh Trikha Foundation pending funds still not released by the Ministry

CAPT KRISHAN SHARMA & DERRIC MICHAEL
India Post News Service

For the last 40 years Indian Army has been controlling the world's highest battlefield Siachen Glacier. The Indian Army has shown not only their valour but also sheer determination to fight the enemy across the borders of Pakistan and China. Helicopters are the sole link to this most treacherous terrain. There, Flt Lt Maheesh Trikha was martyred in a helicopter crash on August 16th 2002 in an operation named 'Megdoot'. His mother Mrs Swdesh and father Col Jagat Trikha, rather instead of mourning their son's death, founded the Flt Lt Maheesh Trikha foundation to help skill unemployed youth throughout the country.

The foundation was also approved by the Ministry of Defence and later approved by the Ministry of Minority Affairs and Tourism. The foundation was further empanelled in "Seekho aur Kamao" project of the Ministries. In 2014-15, the foundation trained 416 unemployed youth in Delhi, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. They further trained 1350 youth in Delhi, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh. The foundation complied with all required formalities like uploading datas,etc., over the years, as per guidelines under 'Seekho aur Kamao'.

The problem started soon after the Secretary at the Ministry was transferred. The 2nd instalment for the courses at TV Malai, Tamil Nadu, for 100 minority youth was not released. The reason given by the Ministry was the external agency hadn't inspected the centre. Even though the foundation regularly uploaded the data of the progress report, they did not receive funds intended for the work already done by them. Was this reason enough or, was it some other reason?

Rather than release funds timely, the Ministry sent them a show-cause notice and black listed them for 5 years in January 2023. Later without any intimation or enquiry, 3 months later, the Ministry withdrew the black-list notice, bringing relief to Mrs Trikha and Col Jagat Trikha.

However, the harassed parents have been running from pillar to post, for the funds to the tune of 30 lakhs approximately, released for the work already done by the foundation.

Despite their relentless efforts, the foundation remains overlooked by the concerned government ministries and agencies, responsible for supporting such initiatives.



Col Jagat Trikha & Mrs Trikha along with Gen. Bipin Rawat



Martyr Flt Lt Maheesh Trikha

Notably, the Ministry of Minority Affairs have failed to provide requisite support and recognition, hampering the foundation's ability to maximize its impact.

The plight of Maheesh Trikha Foundation underscores broader systemic issues surrounding the support and

recognition of initiatives honoring martyrs' legacies. Government authorities must acknowledge the invaluable contributions of such foundations and furnish them with necessary resources and support, in a timely manner. Urgent action is imperative.

In conclusion, the Maheesh Trikha Foundation symbolizes hope and resilience, dedicated to empower youth and serve society in honor of its namesake. Despite facing significant obstacles, it remains steadfast in its mission, fueled by the spirit of service and sacrifice as embodied by Flight Lieutenant Maheesh Trikha. As a community, it is incumbent upon citizens to rally behind initiatives like the Maheesh Trikha Foundation, to ensure that legacies of our martyrs endure, inspiring generations to come.

Only recently, Prime Minister Modi, in his recent address in the rural belt in Barmer, Rajasthan; promised to take up issues facing soldiers in the border areas. Hope he will set an example by sorting out Flt Lt Maheesh Trikha Foundation's matter and thus help the deprived youth of the country.

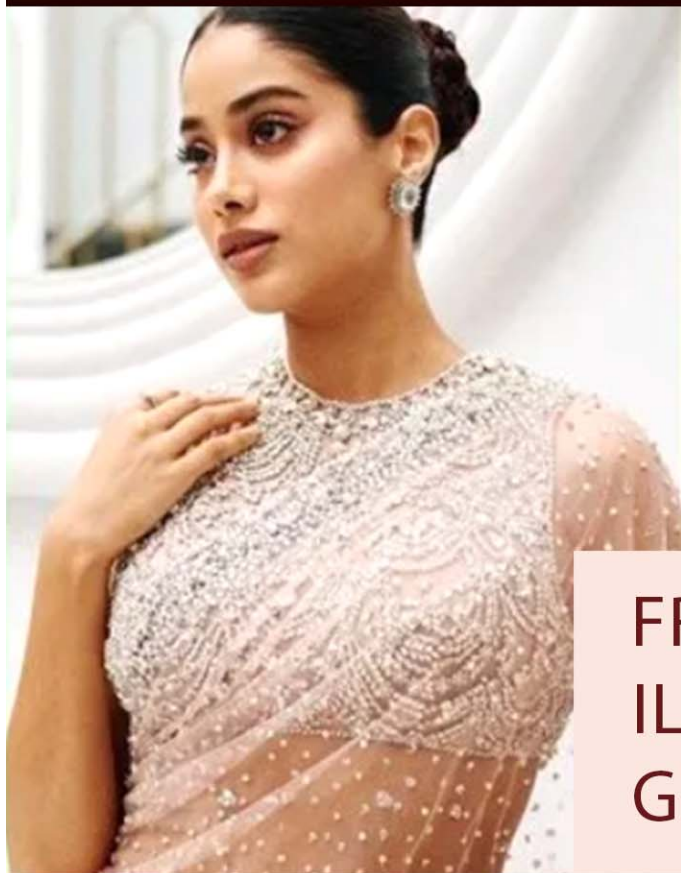
Rather than release funds timely, the Ministry sent them a show-cause notice and black listed them for 5 years in January 2023. Later without any intimation or enquiry, 3 months later, the Ministry withdrew the blacklist notice, bringing relief to Mrs Trikha and Col Jagat Trikha



Skill centre for women



Training of security guards



FROM OVER-ACCESSORIZING TO ILL-FITTED ENSEMBLES: HOW PEOPLE GET STYLING INDIAN WEAR WRONG

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DURGA CHAKRAVARTY

NEW DELHI: Wearing an Indian ensemble is not just about donning clothes; it's about honoring the rich heritage of the country. Many go wrong when styling it up with over-accessorizing or sporting mismatched colors, say designers, who have given out pointers on how to ace the traditional look.

Shivani Awasty of the label Shivani Awasty told IANS: "Wearing Indian attire is not just about donning clothes; it's about honoring our rich heritage while expressing our unique selves. Each garment tells a story of tradition, elegance, and personal style."

Talking about where people go wrong when styling their In-

dian wear, she said: "Over-accessorizing".

"Avoid cluttering the look with too many accessories. Then there are "mismatched colors and ill-fitting garments".

"Ensure harmony in color coordination for a polished appearance. Opt for well-fitted attire to enhance the elegance of Indian wear."

"Blindly following trends" can lead to a fashion faux pas. "Instead of blindly following trends, focus on personal style and cultural authenticity," she added.

For what to keep in mind Awasty says, "respect tradition", "express individuality"; "experiment with style" and "cultural sensitivity".

Sagrika Rai, founder of the label Warp 'n Weft, told IANS that when styling Indian wear, strike a balance between tradition and personal flair.

"Opt for well-fitted garments that compliment your body shape. Avoid overwhelming accessories; instead, choose statement pieces thoughtfully. Experiment with mixing traditional and contemporary elements for a unique look. Finally, embrace confidence as your best accessory to elevate any outfit."

Rai agrees with Awasty that "over-accessorizing" and "incorrect fit" is something where people go wrong when styling their Indian wear.

"Avoid cluttering your Indian wear with too many accessories, as it can overwhelm the outfit and detract from its elegance. Ensure your Indian attire fits well and flatters your body shape, as ill-fitting garments can appear sloppy and detract from your overall look." IANS

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Philosophy

VIMALA THAKAR

All of you must be knowing the life of Swami Vivekananda. Before he took the name of Vivekananda, he was wandering through the Himalayas, before 1892, before he left India for the World Religious Conference at Chicago.

He was climbing towards Kedarnath and there were many pilgrims going that way, among whom was an elderly person who was blind.

Vivekananda must have been 26-27, a fiery young man, vital, vigorous, intoxicated with God consciousness. He was climbing and he looked at this gentleman. Again he walked and he looked at him for the third time.

He approached the elderly person and said, "Where are you going, Sir? Why are you climbing? This is rather stiff, a steep mountain. Where are you going?" and he said, "Kedarnath, to see the Lord".

And the young man as he was, he said, "But don't you realize that you are blind?" And the gentleman smiled and

out a short-cut, getting it done through some trick of tantra, mantra and so on.

If one does not fall a prey or a victim to such temptations, escapes, dodging the issue, one says, 'Well, supposing this conscious effort of observation by the I consciousness, by the centre, the me, supposing that effort discontinues, will there be observation?'

Self-knowledge, knowledge about the self is possible through books, through discourses of people, through discussions and through the activity of the conditioned mind of 'observation' in quotes. It is not yet the pure observation.

It is not yet that observation without the observer which is nothing but subject-free, object-free attentivity.

A scientific approach and the scientific way applied to spiritual enquiry is something new which the human psyche is not used to. It has not been talked about. The psyche has heard about Bhakti, devotion, has read and heard about Tantra, Mantra, where the I con-



Vimala Thakar

Learning gets arrested when things are taught
A scientific approach and the scientific way applied to spiritual enquiry is something new

said, "My son, I may be blind, but Kedarnath is not blind. He will see me. He will see that I have climbed these steep mountains to be with Him".

For that elderly gentleman, 100 years ago, it was Kedarnath. Do we realise that the Intelligence of Life sees us, feels our presence, it is our companion in our ingoing and out-going breath?

Thus we will see that the conditioned nature of the enquirer is not a bondage, it is neither a blessing nor a bondage.

Observation is a very scientific term. If we proceed with our enquiry by believing that observation is just to look, to perceive, we might be misled. Because to observe non-subjectively, to observe without any evaluatory comparisons or judgements creeping in, that act of observation, is not easy.

This activity of dividing oneself into the observer and the observed has a very limited value. Now what is to be done?

It is something beautiful when someone learns by oneself.

One falters. One stumbles. One gets up. One takes a few steps. One feels impatient with oneself. One would like to find

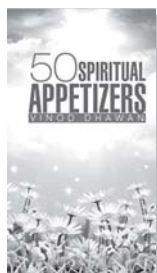
consciousness has to be refined. It has to be sharpened. It has to be enriched with a new code of conduct. That is what we have been hearing for centuries.

We have read about it and perhaps that is the content of our thought and memory. So this is breaking away from the past. The very action of observation, the very movement of reaction-free perception, unpolluted perception, that is the very first step, that breaking away from the traditional path of Sadhana, of enquiry.

Excerpted from 'Pilgrimage Within.' The 103rd birth anniversary of Vimala Thakar was observed on April 15

50 SPIRITUAL APPETIZERS

Vinod Dhawan



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Jac O'Keeffe
 Spirituality teacher based in USA.

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A security crisis looms in Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts: Need for coordinated regional action

LT COL BIJOY DEBASHISH NARAYON PAUL (RETD)

The recent spurt in militant activities of the Kuki-Chin ethnic groups in Bangladesh has once more drawn attention to the longstanding conflict in its Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT). This region has been a hotbed of insurgency and terrorist activities since the nation's inception. The late 1970s and 1980s saw terrorist activities orchestrated by groups like the Pahari Chatra Jono Somoti Sangha (PCJSS), followed by destabilization efforts by the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) after the 1997 peace accord. More recently, the emergence of the Kuki-Chin group has added another layer of complexity to the conflict landscape in the CHT.

The Bangladesh Army has historically demonstrated its commitment and profes-

sionalism in countering threats posed by groups like PCJSS and UPDF. However, the current global context presents a starkly different scenario

Historical context of problem

In the context of the evolving dynamics in the region, understanding the historical context and inherent aspirations of ethnic groups like the Kuki-Chin populace is paramount. Their quest for autonomy and recognition of their unique cultural identity dates back to historical treaties and agreements. For example, the Chin Hills Regulation of 1896 in Burma attempted to define the Chin people, including various ethnic subgroups like the Kukis, laying the foundation for their distinct recognition within the region. However, challenges to

their autonomy persisted, leading to the emergence of insurgent movements advocating for Kuki-Chin self-governance. Despite efforts such as the Panglong Conference Agreement of 1947 in Burma and agreements like

The Bangladesh Army has historically demonstrated its commitment and professionalism in countering threats posed by groups like PCJSS and UPDF. However, the current global context presents a starkly different scenario

the Mizoram Peace Accord of 1986 in India, substantive autonomy for the Kuki-Chin community remained largely unmet. The ZO Reunification Organization (ZORO), advocating for the reunification of Chin, Kuki, and Mizo tribes, highlights the challenges faced by displaced Kuki-Chin individuals residing in India, Myanmar, and Bangladesh.

Beyond the CHT, significant segments of the Kuki-Chin ethnicity reside in India and Myanmar, where the KNF draws support and weaponry, contributing to unrest and clashes. Founded by members of the Bawm ethnic community and allegedly led by Nathan Bawm, the KNF claims representation of six ethnic groups. It is purported to have undergone combat training in Myanmar's Kachin province and demands autonomy for a substantial portion (nine upazila or sub-district) of Rangamati and Bandarban in Bangladesh.

Recent attacks on government installations in Bangladesh, including joint check posts of the army and police in Bandarban's Thanchi-Alikadam border, have intensified concerns regarding the KNF's activities. As tensions escalate and armed confrontations intensify, it is essen-

(The author is a Bangladesh Army veteran) South Asia Monitor

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

Your Weekly Future

by **VANEET SHARMA** ● APR 19TH to APR 25TH 2024



ARIES

MAR 21 to APRIL 20

The planetary transit indicates that you shall enjoy excellent conjugal bliss, good harmony with spouse and understanding with your colleagues and seniors. Love life shall be perfect. Your pleasure seeking activities shall get multiplied. You shall be participating in the activities related to the creation of strategies for enhancing your income and increasing your influence. You shall be travelling extensively and your social influence is likely to increase.



CANCER

JUN 21 to JULY 22

This week shall prove to be excellent for all areas of life. You shall be enjoying continuous favor of destiny, betterment in professional life as per expectations especially in the mid of the week which shall bring in some immediate gains. The support of spouse, children, father and partners shall be available especially at the time of financial burden. You are advised to be cautious on last two days of the week.



LIBRA

SEP 23 to OCT 22

This week shall prove to be excellent for all areas of life but you shall be facing some mental tensions. Avoid getting into argument with people otherwise the domestic atmosphere might get affected. The confidence and courage shall remain intact. The favor of destiny shall be available especially in the last days of the week. Marital happiness shall be at its peak. The day of 19th & 20th April are not good for decision making.



CAPRICORN

DEC 22 to JAN 19

The planetary transit in the beginning of the week is indicating restoration of peace and confidence but you need to control your aggression. On 17th & 18th you can expect to earn more gains with the support of family members. The first half of the week is best for finance, family and social activities whereas the second half shall be good for domestic happiness & recreational activities.



TAURUS

APRIL 21 to MAY 20

The beginning of the week is giving big indication of drainage of energies. Anger issues shall be troubling and expenses would go out of control. You might have to travel extensively. There are indications of troubled relations, arguments, injury, surgery and financial losses in this week. The biggest problem in this week shall be the total reduction in patience, courage and energies. Avoid getting into arguments with people.



LEO

JULY 23 to AUG 22

Planetary transit indicates that you shall be getting complete favor of destiny. You shall be rising at your native place. People shall support you for your good actions and intentions. The remaining part of the week indicates good luck and recognition in work area with tremendous public support. You shall do very well in competitive examinations. Admission in a reputed institute of higher education is possible. Avoid getting into arguments with your children and elder siblings.



SCORPIO

OCT 23 to NOV 22

This week shall be full of luxuries, pleasure, travelling, conjugal bliss, domestic happiness and excellent love life. You would remain busy in settling some domestic issues and children related matters in the beginning of the week and if pursuing studies then this week shall be better as compared to the previous one. You are advised to avoid getting into arguments with family members. The health of mother shall improve.



ACQUARIUS

JAN 20 to FEB 19

The planetary transit in this week is excellent for your happiness and you shall engage yourself in several pleasure seeking activities. In the beginning of the week most of your time shall get spent with friends and social activities and everything in this week is positive for you. The planetary transit is excellent for your children. The last two days of the week are excellent for travelling, merry making etc and your expenses shall remain controlled throughout the week.



GEMINI

MAY 21 to JUN 20

The circumstances and situations in the beginning of the week shall help you to restore your drained energies and you are going to attain more recognition in the area of work. This week is good for earning more gains and strengthen the income source. The day of 19th & 20th March are indicating more travel. The last two days of the week are excellent for enjoying more luxury and happiness. The only problem in this week can be that of some arguments with spouse.



VIRGO

AUG 23 to SEP 22

You are advised to be cautious about your health in this week. You shall concentrate more on the practice of occult, Yoga and meditation etc. Hidden financial gains are probable. You can get into deliberations regarding the settlement of paternal property. You might earn from speculation and lottery etc. too. Although you shall be facing obstacles in accomplishing your tasks however with the help of friends and partners.



SAGITTARIUS

NOV 23 to DEC 21

You shall be successful in all types of competitions and educational activities. You shall be getting excellent favor of destiny. The beginning of the week shall be excellent for your happiness from children. You shall be engaged in entertainment related activities. Love life shall get improved. Your consultation work shall win outstanding appreciation for you. The last two days of the week are inauspicious for decision making and starting any new task.



PISCES

FEB 20 to MAR 20

The beginning of the week shall be good to earn sudden financial gains but the expenses and you can expect restoration of peace in the latter part of the week. In the mid of the week you shall be attaining great success in activating your hidden potential and resources. Occult powers shall increase which would eventually help to bring stability in professional life. You are advised to take interest in research work.

Kindly read the predictions from your ascendant sign. If you do not know your ascendant sign then read the same from Moon sign. If Moon sign is also not known then read it from the Zodiac sign. The ascendant sign which is calculated from the birth details viz. date, month, year, time & place of birth gives 85 % accurate predictions. The accuracy of predictions from Moon sign get limited to only 50 %. The predictions from Zodiac sign are only 25 % accurate. In nutshell the predictions from ascendant sign are most accurate. In getting personality analysis the traits given by ascendant sign are 100 % accurate and that is the essence of Vedic Astrology.

VANEET SHARMA
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National security strategy need not be made public in its entirety

D.C. PATHAK

The demand for a declared National Security Strategy (NSS) is rightly a matter of public debate and open analysis by strategic experts.

It has to be realized, however, that not all aspects of the strategy of handling national security could be openly announced for the very reason of confidentiality of the information on the country's threat scenario, which is at the base of responses required to be put in place under that strategy at any given point of time.

The security scenario has a large variable component in today's world and it is accepted that the life of long-range security assessments itself had generally been shortened.

There is open agreement on a number of initiatives that are to be taken to serve the cause of national security such as promotion of public education that is designed to spread an awareness among the citizens that they all have a contribution to make for safeguarding national security in a democratic dispensation where the state considered itself responsible for the security of people as well.

The validity of many publicly known concepts like 'national security being inseparable from economic security', the threat to cyber security and cyber data running through the lifelines of the country and open warfare giving way to 'proxy wars' in this new era where the instrumentality of 'terrorism' was in full use in the latter, is now well established and this had created new paradigms for framing the national security strategy.

Many components of this strategy -- both in terms of the inputs on which it was formulated and the appropriate responses it deemed necessary -- would have to be treated as 'protected information' to be kept from the prying eyes of the adversary.

An evaluation of who the 'friends and enemies' are in the present and for the future, would itself be an assessment that the government would like to keep to itself notwithstanding the stand that might be taken by it in public -- for reasons of being politically correct.

National security is rooted in a combination of defense capabilities, a strong security set up anchored on competent national Intelligence agencies and the total 'national power' attributable to a developed economy providing for a strong national infrastructure, utilization of demographic dividend and free trade agreements with other major countries.

In the sphere of defense, de-

Two-third of India's population is below 35 years and this gives this country a strategic advantage over China that has an aging population. The NSS may declare plans of how the country would rally the youth for serving the cause of national security.

Finally, since economic security would be strengthened by the success achieved by diplomacy in working out trade pacts with other friendly and economically strong countries, the crucial role of diplomatic power in enhancing national security on that count alone, should find a prominent mention in the NSS.

The macro aspects of national security are by and large in the public domain and these

The security scenario has a large variable component in today's world and it is accepted that the life of long-range security assessments itself had generally been shortened

tails of import of military equipment preferably with a provision for its manufacture in India on suitable terms and conditions, may become known but the pattern of its deployment will remain a confidential part of whatever would be made public in the name of India's national security strategy.

Defense plans are conditioned by military intelligence, including signal intelligence that was by its very nature a secret. The critical national infrastructure is run on cyber systems, which involve creating a robust and confidential cyber security framework.

Demographic situation is relevant to the broader issue of national security in the sense that it determines the potential strength of the country for the future.

all would figure in a declared NSS for giving a suitable message to the international community about India's political will to safeguard its national interests and also for instilling confidence among the people of India that the regime was well attuned to handling any threats to national security.

Today's national security set up evolved over a period -- particularly since the 'Kargil war' that had resulted from Pakistan's attempt to surreptitiously infiltrate army personnel with Islamic militants on the high mountains of Ladakh and occupy a couple of peaks in Drass sector in May 1999 -- ought to be defined in the NSS document.

(The writer is a former Director of the Intelligence Bureau) IANS

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www.indiapost.com



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INDIAN SAILORS IN CONFLICT ZONES

There are 17 Indian-sailors among the 25-member crew of cargo ship 'MSC Aries', which was seized by Iran's Revolutionary guards in the Strait of Hormuz last week, according to sources. It appears the Indian government has been in touch with the Iranian authorities through diplomatic channels, both in Tehran and in Delhi, to ensure the security, welfare and, early release of the Indian nationals.

The Indian Navy has been regularly carrying massive operations to rescue commercial ships from pirates off Somalia's coast. India has developed Special Forces with capabilities on par with some of the world's best. Not too long ago, the navy rescued 17 crewmembers of the vessel MV Ruen during an anti-piracy operation lasting nearly two days, with no casualties reported. Around 35 pirates surrendered and were taken into custody. The operation involved a navy destroyer, a patrol ship, an Indian Air Force C-17 transporter that flew more than 1,500 miles to airdrop marine commandos; a naval drone, a reconnaissance drone and a P-8 surveillance jet, the Indian Navy release said. What marks this operation as impressive is how risk was minimized by using a coordinated force that includes the use of a warship, drones, fixed and rotary-wing aircraft and, marine commandos.

Experts are concerned that the volatile security situation in the Red Sea, due to attacks by Yemen-based Houthi rebels on commercial shipping may tie up international forces and provide a window for Somali pirates in the nearby Horn of Africa - presenting a multi-billion-dollar threat to the global economy.

Somali pirates' capture of the MV Ruen, in December last year, marked the first successful hijacking of a vessel off the country's coast since 2017. Another case involving 21 Indian-crew on MV Dali, which crashed into Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge late March, have been stuck on board for almost three weeks, but there are hundreds of other Indian sailors stranded on ships across the world whose stories haven't been told. It might surprise you that most abandoned sailors are Indians. A report by International Transport Federation (ITF) released in January says, 400 Indian-crew were abandoned on ships last year. Some haven't received salaries for months, others have been conned into joining 'arrested' ships that cannot leave the ports where they are berthed (a ship is arrested when it has unpaid dues at the port or, has been caught in some illegal act)

In yet another case, 12 Indian-sailors are stuck on Fatma Eylul, an arrested ship berthed at Jetty Ambarli Port in Istanbul, Turkey. They were offered jobs on it last Dec. An agent received them, took them on board and vanished the next day. Crew is often hired without contracts or, the contracts aren't honored. "It is a traumatic experience for seafarers," said Capt Manoj Joy of Sailors Welfare Association, India. According to marine experts 80% of all commercial ships in the world have some Indian sailors.

With several such incidents of malpractice and ill treatment of Indian sailors, the Indian government should take serious steps to regulate and monitor their safety and welfare.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

{MAKE THIS A ONE PAGE DOCUMENT.}

{INSERT AGENDA/ADVERTISEMENT DATE IN NEXT PARAGRAPH.}

On March 26, 2024, the Board of Supervisors for the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District approved the following project for advertisement and hereby invites all qualified contractors to submit bid proposals for all labor, material, equipment, mechanical workmanship, transportation, and services required for the work to be performed on:

J-2 and J-3 Pump Stations Flap Gate, Discharge Piping, and Concrete Rehabilitation in Union City, Alameda County, California, Zone No. 5 Project.

{INSERT PROJECT TITLE. JOB TITLE SHOULD BE IDENTICAL TO TITLE ON SPECIFICATION COVER, TITLE SHEET OF PLANS, BID PROPOSAL, BOARD LETTER, BOARD RESOLUTION AND SECTION 13.1.}

{INSERT DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR WORK ITEMS. EDIT CONTRACTOR LICENSE TYPE AT END OF PARAGRAPH.}

GENERAL WORK DESCRIPTION: The project, in general, consists of preparing and implementing Job site management; designing, installing, maintaining and removing temporary de-watering system; removing and replacing flap gates; rehabilitation/recoating of existing flap gates and discharge piping; lining the gravity bypass pipe; concrete repairs; furnishing and installing new anode assembly; and all miscellaneous work necessary to complete said project. This project is subject to all Local, State, and Federal laws, rules and guidelines contained in the plans and specifications, including but not limited to payment of prevailing wages. These wage rates are available at the Alameda County Public Works Agency's office at 951 Turner Court, Room 300, Hayward, Alameda County. No contractor or subcontractor may be listed on a bid proposal for a public works project unless registered with the Department of Industrial Relations pursuant to Labor Code section 1725.5, with limited exceptions from this requirement for bid purposes only under Labor Code section 1771.1(a). The contractor for this project must possess a Class A license at the time this contract is

awarded and throughout the construction contract duration. Contractor must also be properly licensed at the time the bid is submitted, except as provided for in Section 7029.1 of the Business and Profession Code for joint ventures or by Section 20103.5 of the Public Contract Code for federally-funded projects.

{INSERT BID OPENING DATE IN NEXT PARAGRAPH.}

BID OPENING: Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 2:00 p.m., Public Works Agency, 951 Turner Court, Room 300, Hayward, CA 94545.

{INSERT DATE (a minimum of ten (10) calendar days prior to Bid Opening Date), TIME AND ROOM NUMBER BELOW. RESERVE ROOM AT TURNER COURT, SET TIME WITH COP STAFF.}

A mandatory pre-bid networking/contractor conference will be held virtually for all prime contractors. Interested sub-contractors are invited and encouraged to attend the pre-bid meeting. The virtual pre-bid networking/contractor conference has been scheduled for April 9, 2024 at 11:00 AM. The Microsoft Teams link for the mandatory pre-bid meeting is <https://bit.ly/ac-floodcontrol>, to participate via telephone call locally +1 415-915-3950 or (888) 715-8170 (Toll-free). Phone Conference ID: 653 944 644#. Bid Proposals from prime contractors that fail to attend this mandatory pre-bid networking/contractor conference will be rejected. The project sites will be opened to prospective bidders to examine the project sites on Thursday, April 11, 2024. The J-2 Pump Station will be opened from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and the J-3 Pump Station will be opened from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Viewing of the project site is not mandatory; however prospective bidders are encouraged to attend to familiarize themselves with the existing site conditions.

The Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) strongly encourages the participation of disadvantaged/minority/women-owned business enterprises in all District capital improvement construction projects. The District also strongly encourages the hiring of apprentices who reside within the County of Alameda. For more information about the Alameda County Contractor Technical Assistance Program (CTAP), please contact Johanna Le-Penn, Business Development Manager, at (415) 217-6567 or via email

at johanna@imwis.com or CTAP@imwis.com.

All bidders must comply with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) In-Use Off-Road Diesel-Fueled Fleets Regulation and must submit valid Certificates of Reported Compliance for a covered fleet and listed sub-contractors, if applicable, no later than 2:00 p.m. on the second business day following bid opening. Bidders shall submit both hard copies and digital PDF copies (on thumb drive) of valid Certificates of Reported Compliance to 951 Turner Court, Room 300, Hayward, CA.

{MODIFY MBE AND WBE PERCENTAGE IN NEXT PARAGRAPH AS NECESSARY; CONSULT CONTRACT COMPLIANCE OFFICIER.}

{INSERT VOLUME 2 PRICE AS FOLLOWS:

- \$5.00 FOR PROJECTS \$0 THRU \$75,000**
- \$15.00 FOR PROJECTS \$75,001 THRU \$750,000**
- \$25.00 FOR PROJECTS \$750,001 THRU \$2,500,000**
- \$50.00 FOR PROJECTS OVER \$2,500,001}**

Plans and specifications may be viewed and purchased by any prospective bidder online at www.ipdservices.com/clients/eastbay?ALCO or by contacting Central Blue Print at 17132 E. 14th Street, Hayward, CA 94541 (510-276-3375), East Bay Blue Print and Supply at 1745 14th Avenue, Oakland, CA 94606 (510-261-2990), or Custom Blue Print, 1944 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Walnut Creek, CA 94596 (925-932-3113). All questions should be directed to the Contract Administration Office at (510) 670-5450.

The Board of Supervisors reserves the right to reject any or all bids and any or all items of such bids.

{INSERT AGENDA/ADVERTISEMENT DATE IN NEXT PARAGRAPH. }

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, ALAMEDA COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, STATE OF CALIFORNIA ON TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2024

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of Alameda, State of California
END OF NOTICE TO BIDDERS
4/12, 4/19/24

CNS-3798403#

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UDUPI PALACE

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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.

*NBCTeacher
Chicago, IL*

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ARC-IATAN APPROVED

Tirthan Valley in Kullu District of Himachal Pradesh is perched at an altitude of 1600 meters above sea level. Deriving its name from Tirthan River flowing through it, Tirthan Valley lies around 3 km from the entrance of Great Himalayan National Park. This place is abundant in adventurous activities and a paradise for nature lovers.

The magnificent Himalayas with snow-covered tops looking over the Tirthan River, this valley is best known for its trout fishing, trekking, and adventure activities and beautiful guesthouses set in nature.

PLACES TO VISIT IN TIRTHAN VALLEY

River Crossing: River crossing in the Tirthan Valley is an adventure sport for people who are looking for some adrenaline rush in the quiet valley. A person is tied to a safety harness and slides from one point to the other, with the turbulent Tirthan river gushing underneath. The icy cold spray of the river while taking on the sport sure is a motivating factor for enthusiasts.

Serloskar Lake: Serloskar Lake, another major attraction of the village, is located about 5 km from Jalori Pass. The walk to the lake is equally enchanting from Jalori pass, with a thick cover of oak trees. The lake is located at an altitude of about 3,100 meters and is believed to have medicinal properties.

Tirthan Valley

mountainside. The pass opens in the second week of March and shuts down in December due to snowfall.

Great Himalayan National Park: Great Himalayan National Park located Kullu region of Himachal Pradesh, is home to more than 375 species of fauna, 31 species of mammals and 181 species of birds. The Great Himalayan National Park received the status of a national park in 1999. This beautiful location of the national park becomes all the more attractive due to the Deodar and Oak trees.

Trout Fishing: There couldn't be a more ideal place for fishing than the crystal clear Tirthan River, a tributary of Beas. Filled with brown and rainbow trout, this river has over the year become a favorite place among the tourists as an angler spot.

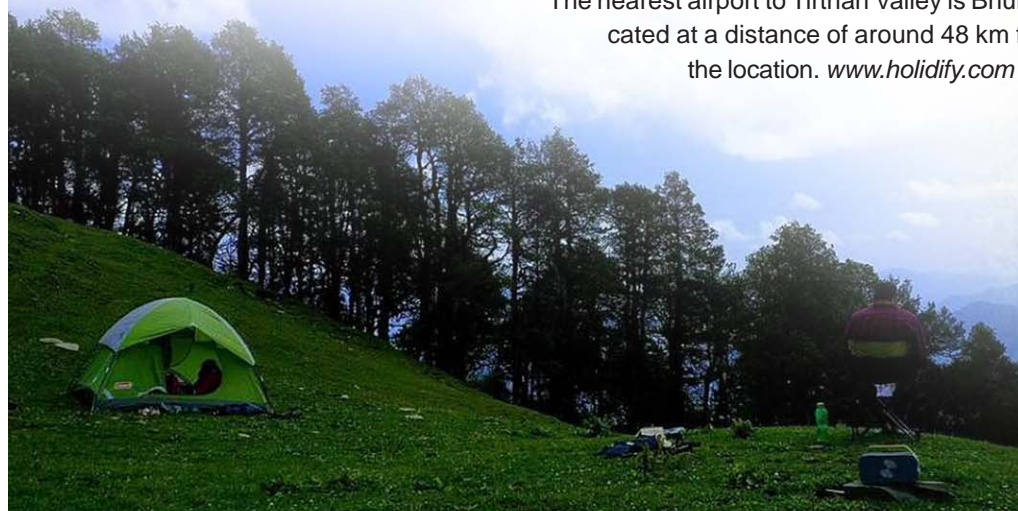
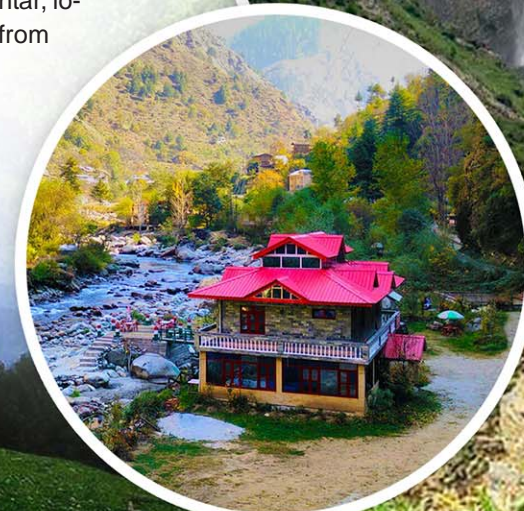
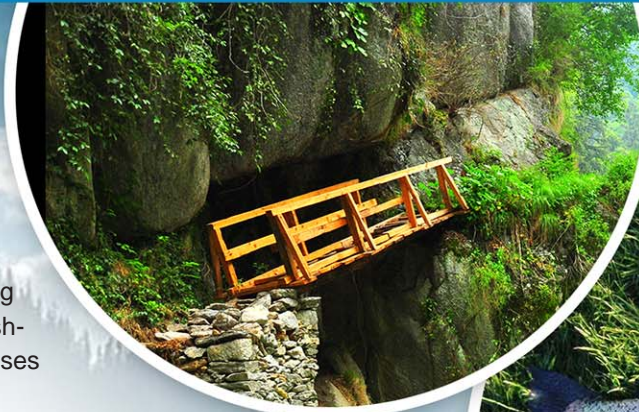
Rock Climbing: Rock climbing is another adventure sport that is undertaken by a lot of travelers while visiting the valley. Many operators have specialized staff who train and assist adventure enthusiasts who are interested in partaking of the sport.

BEST TIME TO VISIT TIRTHAN VALLEY

The best time to visit the mesmerizing valley of Tirthan is between March and June, which is the spring/summer season. The weather stays pleasantly cool and is apt for exploring flora and fauna, especially the lush green meadows and the apple orchards.

HOW TO REACH TIRTHAN VALLEY

The nearest airport to Tirthan Valley is Bhuntar, located at a distance of around 48 km from the location. www.holidify.com





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