



IAMA-IL commemorates 44th Anniversary

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AAPI initiates Stem Cell donation drive

▶ Details on page 21



Samantha's emotional post on Allu Arjun

▶ Details on page 24

INDIA POST SURVEY
survey@indiapost.com

This week's question
 Will Myanmar come out of its crisis?

Last week's result
 Will India take military action against Bangladesh?
YES 56% NO 44%

NDP LEADER ASKS TRUDEAU TO RESIGN

NDP leader Jagmeet Singh calls on Canadian PM Justin Trudeau "to resign"

OTTAWA: NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh has urged Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau "to resign." He stated that "all options" were on the table when asked whether he would back a non-confidence motion, Canada-based Global News reported.



Jagmeet Singh

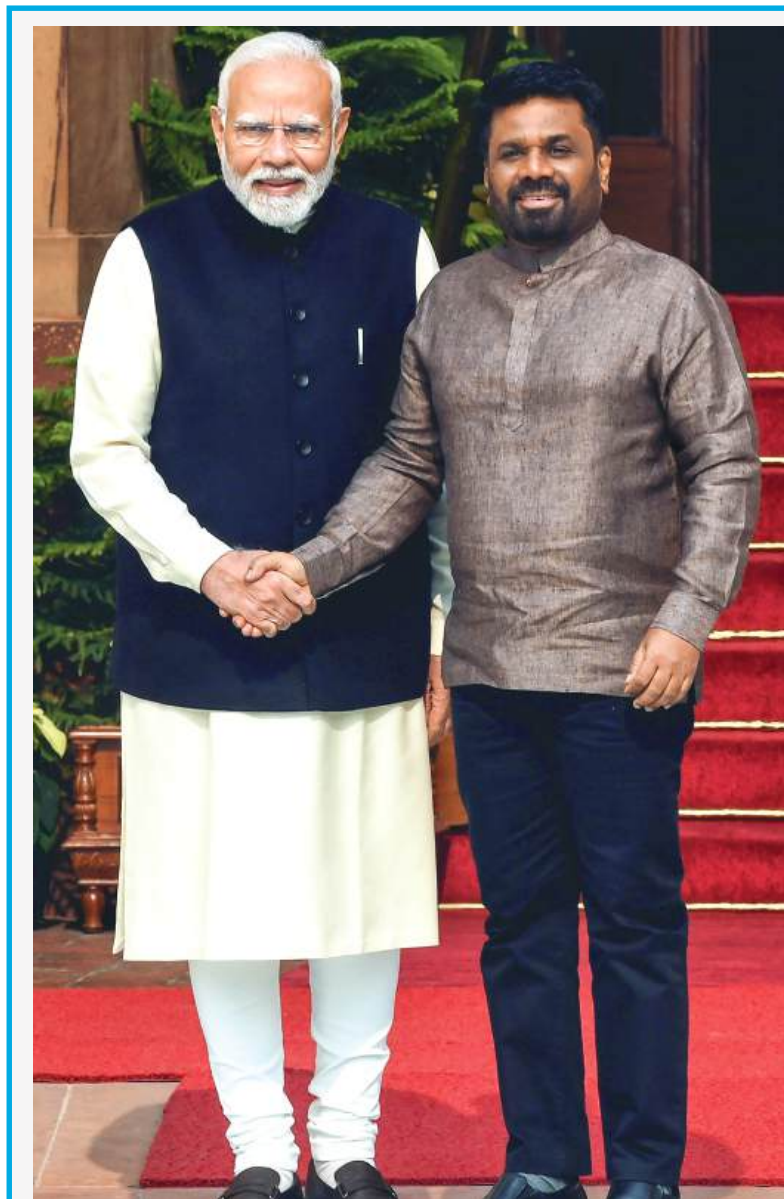
He made the remarks hours after Chrystia Freeland resigned as Canada's Finance Minister. Speaking to reporters in Ottawa, Singh said Canadians were facing various economic issues, ranging from expensive groceries to high home prices and the threat of tariffs as US President-elect Donald Trump will assume office next year.

Jagmeet Singh said, "Instead of focusing on these issues, Justin Trudeau and the Liberals are focused on themselves. They're fighting themselves instead of fighting for Canadians. And for that reason, today, I'm calling on Justin Trudeau to resign," Global News reported.

He said, "He has to go."

The NDP's support has helped minority Liberals to survive recent tests of confidence. Conservatives during the question period on 16 December, repeatedly called on the government to either test the confidence of the House of Commons.

Cont'd on page 5



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake meet at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on December 16.

(ANI Photo/Shrikant Singh)



Ustad Zakir Hussain

The rhythm of a global legend falls silent

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'World can expect another pandemic any day'

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Kabini: Home to Breathtaking Landscape

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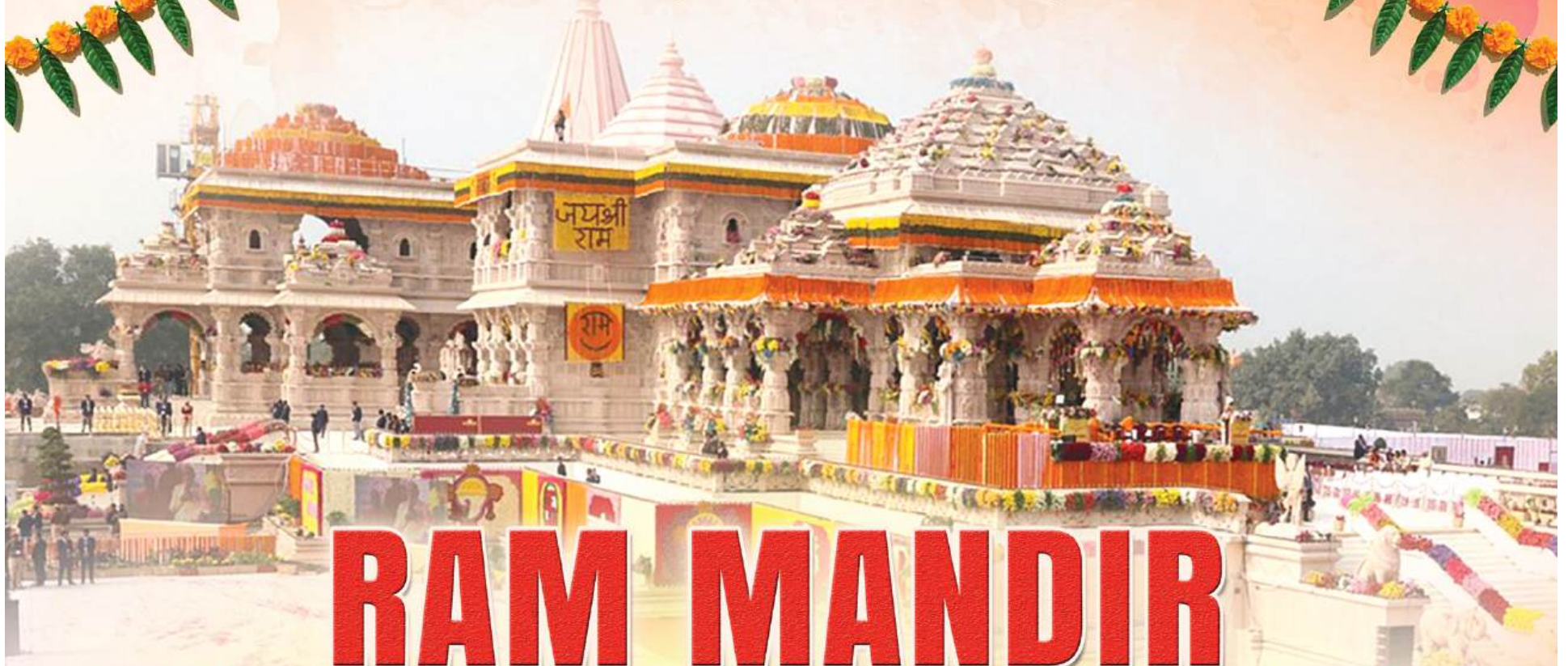
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HIGHLIGHTS

Bollywood:

Rewarding year-end with 'Fear'



Actress Vedhika Kumar, whose latest project 'Fear' released a few days ago, feels "ending the year with 'Fear' is incredibly rewarding."

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Lifestyle:

Ustad Zakir Hussain (1951-2024)



Regarded as one of the greatest percussionists of all time, Ustad Zakir Hussain was a master of his craft and a cultural bridge-builder

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TRUDEAU TO RESIGN



NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh urged Trudeau "to resign." Stating "all options" were on the table when asked if he would back a non-confidence motion

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Techbiz:

90-pc rise in smartphone exports



India has seen record smartphone exports in November this year, surpassing the Rs 20,000 crore mark for the first time in a month

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IAMA Commemorates 44th Anniv



The Indian American Medical Association, Illinois (IAMA-IL) marked 44 years with a fundraising gala on December 07 at the Matrix Club in Naperville

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Kabini



Located ~245 km from Bangalore, Kabini is primarily known for its handful of luxury resorts around the Kabini River and Nagarhole National Park

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3155 Kearney Street, Ste. 210, Fremont, CA 94538
 Tel: 510-396-9140 • Fax: 510-790-2806 • e-mail: info@indiapost.com

E-SUBSCRIPTION & EDITORIAL: Vidya Sethuraman: Tel: 510-491-4867 • e-mail: vidya@indiapost.com
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901, E. South St. Unit 256, Anaheim CA 92805
 Riyaz Khan: **562-881-5342**
 e-mail: riyaz@indiapost.com
 Shashi Trivedi: **562-441-5511**
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He made the remarks hours after Chrystia Freeland resigned as Canada's Finance Minister. Speaking to reporters in Ottawa, Singh said Canadians were facing various economic issues, ranging from expensive groceries to high home prices and the threat of tariffs as US President-elect Donald Trump will assume office next year.

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Jagmeet Singh

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He said, "He has to go."

The NDP's support has helped minority Liberals to survive recent tests of confidence. Conservatives during the question period on 16 December, repeatedly called on the government to either test the confidence of the House of Commons, or go to

"Instead of focusing on these issues, Justin Trudeau and the Liberals are focused on themselves. They're fighting themselves instead of fighting for Canadians. And for that reason, today, I'm calling on Justin Trudeau to resign,"

Rideau Hall and ask the governor general for a snap election.

In his remarks outside the House of Commons just before question period, Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre said, "Justin Trudeau has lost control and yet he clings to power."

He further said, "We cannot accept this kind of chaos, division, weakness while we're staring down the barrel of a 25 per-

cent tariff from our biggest trading partner and closest ally."

He stated that US President-elect Donald Trump "can spot weakness from a mile away." He stressed that Trudeau has been able to remain in office due to Jagmeet Singh's support.

Meanwhile, Leader of the government in the House of Commons, Karina Gould,

riod, according to Global News report.

Speaking to Global News, Ipsos Global Public Affairs CEO Darrel Bricker said, "What we're seeing here is that progressive voters are starting to make a decision to maybe reconsider the NDP. We do know that one of the largest voter blocs in the Canadian population these days continues to be Liberal-NDP switchers."



Justin Trudeau

Earlier in September, the federal New Democrats withdrew their support from the supply-and-confidence agreement with the Liberal government. The

move puts the Liberal minority government at risk of falling at any time in the coming weeks or months if it fails to obtain confidence votes, which could cause snap election as soon as this fall, the report said. A federal election must be held no later than October 2025 under fixed election laws. ANI

Trudeau's Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland resigns hours before statement on Canada's economy

OTTAWA: Hours before the statement on Canada's economy, Chrystia Freeland, Canada's Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister announced her resignation from the Cabinet.

Notably, Freeland was scheduled to present the 2024 Fall Economic Statement on 16 December.

Canada and Canadians. We have accomplished a lot together. On Friday (last week), you told me you no longer want me to serve as your Finance Minister and offered me another position in the Cabinet."

"Upon reflection, I have concluded that the only honest and viable path is for me to resign from the Cabinet. To be effective, a

"It has been the honor of my life to serve in government, working for Canada and Canadians. We have accomplished a lot together. On Friday (last week), you told me you no longer want me to serve as your Finance Minister and offered me another position in the Cabinet"

In a letter shared on her social media platform X, Freeland revealed that Canadian PM Justin Trudeau had offered her a different Cabinet position after deciding she would no longer serve as Finance Minister.

In the letter addressed to PM Trudeau, Freeland wrote, "It has been the honor of my life to serve in government, working for

Minister must speak on behalf of the Prime Minister and with his full confidence. In making your decision, you made clear that I no longer credibly enjoy that confidence and possess the authority that comes with it. For the past number of weeks, you and I have found ourselves at odds about the best path forward for Canada," the letter added.

She further said that Canada faces a "grave challenge" from the United States' "aggressive economic nationalism."

The letter said, "Our country today faces a grave challenge. The incoming administration in the United States is pursuing a policy of aggressive economic nationalism, including a threat of 25 percent tariffs. We need to take that threat extremely seriously. That means keeping our fiscal powder dry today, so we have the reserves we may need for a coming tariff war. That means eschewing costly political gimmicks, which we can ill afford and which make Canadians doubt that we recognize the gravity of the moment."

"That means pushing back against 'America First' economic nationalism with a determined effort to fight for capital and investment and the jobs they bring. That means working in good faith and humility with the Premiers of the provinces and territories of our great and diverse country and building a true

Team Canada response. I know Canadians would recognize and respect such an approach. They know when we are working for them, and they equally know when we are focused on ourselves. Inevitably,



Chrystia Freeland

our time in government will come to an end. But how we deal with the threat our country currently faces will define us for a generation, and perhaps longer. Canada will win if we are strong, smart, and united," the letter added. ANI

'Looking for Indian involvement in peace building process'

NEW DELHI: At the premiere of the documentary 'All I Want for Christmas', the Ambassador of Ukraine to India, Oleksandr Polishchuk highlighted that India can play a crucial role in the peace building process in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and expressed hopes from Prime Minister Modi's leadership.

Discussing about the film based on refugees from Ukraine taking refuge into Norway post the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Ukrainian Ambassador Polishchuk said, "It's very personal for me because I've been separated from my family for more than two years and I had a chance to see my son who was actually three years old only for a couple of hours... This story is absolutely a fairy tale story because it shows that the people who actually escaped from Ukraine have very great support from our partners".

He expressed thanks to countries like Norway and Finland who have given space to Ukrainian refugees.

Speaking to ANI, the Ambassador said, "I hope that India can play the leader role in this (peace building) process.

I hope that Narendra Modi ji with his leadership can give the chance to Ukrainians to live in a peaceful environment".

He said, "It is the ambition of India to be the great power and great leader in the world. We are looking to India great support for the peace building process in Ukraine. I couldn't encourage all of the Indian politicians to be in solidarity with Ukraine, but we have the great historical tie between two of our countries. So I hope that India can play the more crucial role in this process. So that is why we are looking for the Indian involvement in the peace building process in Ukraine".

The Ambassador added, "This film actually shows that everything is possible. It's not just a fairy tale."

In his concluding remarks Ambassador Polishchuk hoped to imple-

ment the political will which we have from the Indian side and from the Ukrainian side and have increased political interaction between two countries with the aim to increase the stability and the peace in the world. ANI



Ambassador of Ukraine to India, Oleksandr Polishchuk

Bangladesh plans national election by late 2025 or mid 2026

DHAKA: Bangladeshi interim government's Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus said it may be possible to hold the next national elections at the end of 2025 or the first half of 2026.

"The election can be scheduled between the end of 2025 and the first half of 2026," he said in a televised speech to the nation at 10 am local time on 16 December marking the country's Victory Day.

Yunus said he repeatedly appealed to all to arrange the elections after completing all the necessary major reforms.

But, due to political consensus, it may be possible to hold the elections by the end of 2025 after completing minor reforms based on the preparation of an accurate voter list, he said.

Yunus urged the Election Commission and all social institutions and political parties to take various creative programs to achieve this goal.

He suggested creating such a tradition that first-time voters in all elections, including local government polls, will ensure about 100 percent voting in all centers.

"If we can ensure this, no government in the future will dare to snatch the people's voting rights," the Bangladesh Chief Advisor added.

Bangladeshi economist Yunus took oath as the head of the country's interim government on August 8. IANS



Muhammad Yunus

Woman deceived by travel agent returns to India after 22 years in Pakistan

NEW DELHI: Hamida Bano, an Indian woman who was deceived into travelling to Pakistan over two decades ago by a travel agent, finally returned to her homeland after nearly 22 years in the neighboring country.

Arriving in India, Hamida, who was in a wheelchair, was handed over to officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

After completing the necessary paperwork, the Indian Immigration and Customs Department transferred her to the Tehsildar Attari of the District Administration. Hamida was then taken to Guru Nanak Dev Hospital in Amritsar for medical treatment.

Hamida Bano recounted her harrowing journey: "I was fraudulently brought to Pakistan by a travel agent. I never imagined I would return to India. But just a year ago, the Indian Embassy contacted me and informed me that I could return. I had lived in Mumbai before this ordeal. A travel agent had promised to take me to Dubai for a job, but instead, he brought me to Hyderabad in Pakistan's Sindh province. I was terrified."

She also described the hardships she endured in Pakistan: "My life there felt like being a 'Zinda Laash' (living corpse). IANS

Hamida Bano recounted her harrowing journey: "I was fraudulently brought to Pakistan by a travel agent. I never imagined I would return to India"

More than 880,000 people displaced in Syria: UN

UNITED NATIONS: More than 880,000 people have been displaced since the latest escalation of hostilities in Syria, UN humanitarian said.

UN partners estimated that around 6 percent of the displaced are living with at least one form of disability, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Return movements remain dynamic, with partners recording more than 220,000 returnees yesterday (15 Dec.)," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said. "Additionally, over 40,000 displaced people are staying in around 250 collective centers across northeast Syria."

The office said the United Nations and partners continue to support the response by supplying food, water, cash, tents, and blankets. The world body is also deploying medical teams and supplies.

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the International Committee of the Red Cross, in collaboration with the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), conducted a joint mission to the Tishreen Dam's Aleppo governorate last week for urgent and critical repairs.

UNICEF also secured fuel to power the backup generator, enabling the safe drainage of the dam and safeguarding water supplies. Hostilities near the dam last week led to an extended electricity outage and disrupted water and other key services, affecting millions of people in the area.

On 16 December, Tom Fletcher, UN under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, met Syrian transitional authorities in Damascus to discuss the relief response. "At a time of such rapid changes and long-standing needs in the region, Fletcher's trip will also include stopovers in Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan," OCHA said of his one-week Middle East visit.

Authorities also reported a complicated flow of displaced people across the Lebanon-Syria border.

OCHA said that since December 8, Lebanese authorities recorded less than 10,000 Syrian refugees returning from Lebanon to Syria.

Meanwhile, the UN Refugee Agency reported that Lebanese authorities estimated around 30,000 displaced people returned, as of last week Friday, from Syria to Lebanon, including mostly Syrians but also Lebanese nationals, since the November 27 cessation of hostilities announcement for Lebanon. IANS

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#Melodi not just slogan but common vision intensifying India-Italy partnership: Italian Ambassador Antonio Bartoli

ATEET SHARMA

NEW DELHI: As India and Italy continue to deepen cooperation in several spheres, including defense and security, science and technology, space, clean energy, migration and mobility linkages, Antonio Bartoli, the country's Ambassador to India, spoke with IANS exclusively on the road ahead and how the excellent relations enjoyed by the top leaders of two countries - Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian PM Giorgia Meloni - continue to transform bilateral ties.

Excerpts:

IANS: Earlier this week, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni was named as 'Europe's most powerful person', which is being seen as an acknowledgement and acceptance of her growing popularity in the region and beyond. How do you see this?

Antonio Bartoli: One of her (Meloni's) strong points is coherence and determination. Her government, the Italian government, is one of the most stable in Europe. I would say in the world, because in an era of liquid politics, where leaders change with certain rapidity, she has very solid bases, and the coalition has been there for 30 years - more or less, in the same parties. She has a strong leadership, and this is an element that she has in common with PM Modi. That is why there is this personal chemistry, which is very important in nowadays' politics, to also feed and develop relationships between states, and our bilateral relationship that is continuing to move forward at an unprecedented intensity.

IANS: These are also good times for the India-Italy relationship with so many high-level interactions taking place this year, including over the past few weeks...

Antonio Bartoli: PM Meloni and PM Modi met on November 18, on the margins of the G20 summit in Rio. They signed a joint action plan, which gives a concrete and determined plan to give contents and projects to the strategic partnership that they established between Italy and India. They have identified 10 areas of cooperation which are top on the agenda, starting from political dialogue. For instance, the Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar came to Italy for the G7 and for the MED Dialogues, and other visits. Soon after, our Minister of Industry came here and now our Deputy Prime Minister is scheduled to visit for a big business forum, followed by the Minister of Defense who is also expected to come soon. So, there is a structure and an intense political dialogue and

there are priority areas, including space and defense, connectivity, energy transition, security, mobility, people-to-people, science and technology. So a lot of things to do and realize and we are on the job!

IANS: The government led by PM Modi has specifically focused on connectivity over the last 10 years. Do you think that the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC), of which India and Italy are the founding members, could be a game-changer in future?



File photo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian PM Giorgia Meloni

Antonio Bartoli: It's a privilege to represent a vision for the future, that at the same time is deeply rooted in the past. Rome and India already traded millennia, centuries ago. Black pepper was one thing that the King of Visigoths asked Rome for as a ransom, because it was a precious and valuable good that we imported from India. So, this route has always been there. We are revitalizing that perspective. This will go across the Middle East, which is a tormented area now as we have seen

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what is happening in Syria. But, we always have a vision for the future and the perspective of common and shared prosperity can be a factor of stabilization and peace, also for that area. Italy is, has been, and will be the natural terminal of this corridor, especially with some ports like

Trieste, which represent the gateway to the whole Europe, especially Central and Eastern Europe. We are also working on a ports collaboration agreement with India that could also be game-changers in future.

IANS: Defense Minister Rajnath Singh visited Rome last year and had very constructive discussions with his Italian counterpart Guido Crosetto, exploring various avenues of enhanced partnerships as India focuses on 'Make in India, Make for World'. How have the

things moved forward since then?

Antonio Bartoli: Defense and space is top on the agenda of the India-Italy Joint Strategic Action Plan. It means that we are assuring an ever-increasing presence in the Indo-Pacific region. At the end of November, we had an amazing ship Amerigo Vespucci visiting Mumbai. The ship was open to the local public and was the third port call in India by an Italian Navy vessel in 18 months, reflecting the importance Italy gives to the Indo-Pacific region. In

October, a Joint Strike Carrier Group made of aircraft carrier Cavour, which is the main aircraft carrier of the Italian navy, and frigate Alpino, also visited India and held joint exercises. It is all about the presence in the Indo-Pacific region. The idea of 'Make in India' applies also to the de-

fense sector, so our defense industries are eager and ready to move some productions here and develop co-design and co-production projects with the industry of India. The next step is to identify this area and proceed.

IANS: PM Meloni-led Italian government believes that Italy and India are united by a sense of respect towards other countries. Is this shared approach binding the countries together more like ever before?

Antonio Bartoli: Respect is the right word, but not even enough, because there is a common idea of not patronizing anybody and there is the common idea, even in different situations. You preach your multi-alignment, in the sense that India says legitimately so, we have to have our free hands, and so decide our partnerships in a free way. We are free as well, but we belong to a clear family of alliances, we are founders of the European Union, and of NATO. However, notwithstanding this different political background, the common idea is that of pursuing the national interest and not remaining hostage to preconceived destinies or ideologies. This is the way Italy is pushing forward its own agenda in the European Union, and this is the way India is playing as a global actor. So, there is respect in the sense that there is also the respect, for example, that we are using towards Africa, in a peer-to-peer relationship. We have launched this ambitious program called 'Piano Mattei' plan because Mattei was a visionary entrepreneur in the oil and gas sector, was the head of ENI, which is the oil and gas giant of Italy. He was different from other companies in the oil and gas sector, insofar as he tried to establish a peer-to-peer relationship with great respect for their interlocutors in the producer countries in Africa. We are doing the same, developing investment projects, and I think that India could also partner in this. In general, we are never finger-pointing and never patronizing so there is respect, admiration, and the capacity to put ourselves in others' shoes, and to develop joint projects together. So, the hashtag Melodi is not just a slogan, it is a common vision, and is also witnessed by an intensity of relations, because when we talk about the signature of the joint action plan, that was the fifth time in two years that the two leaders met, so it is really a common vision.



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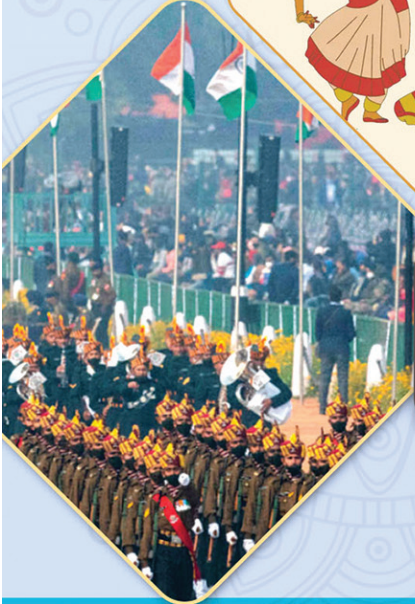


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US accounts for 18 percent of Indian exports in FY24

NEW DELHI: The US accounted for 18 percent of India's total exports in the financial year (FY) 24, as the country's exports to the world's largest economy continuously increased, a report said.

Bank of Baroda's report said that India's exports to the US are growing steadily. Its value was \$77.5 billion in FY24. India's exports to the US have been growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.3 percent over the last 30 years.

According to the report, the growth rate of exports to the US was higher than the growth rate of total exports till FY2000, but after the financial crisis of 2008, it slowed down till FY10. Since then, the growth rate of exports to the US has been higher than the growth rate of total exports, showing that the US is an important market for India.

According to the report, the US share in India's total exports was 18 percent in FY24 and 16.4 percent in FY92. However, it is still below the highest level of 22.8 percent in FY00.

The report also advised that India should reduce over-dependence on one country for exports and focus on diversification of exports.

The US remains an important market for many key Indian industries. The top five items exported to the US in FY24 were drugs and pharmaceuticals, pearls and precious stones, petrochemical products, telecom equipment and readymade garments, which accounted for 40 percent of the country's total exports.

Other major exports include yarn, marine products and electronic goods, with electronic goods exports facing competition from other Asian countries.

From 2000 to 2022, India's goods export increased from \$48.5 billion to \$467.5 billion while industrial exports grew from \$39.6 billion to \$317.4 billion. The government aims to reach \$2 trillion in exports of goods and services by 2030. *IANS*

Maruti Suzuki India achieves 2-million units in a calendar year for 1st time

NEW DELHI: Maruti Suzuki India announced a production milestone of 2 million vehicles in a calendar year for the first time in its history.

The automaker also became the first among Suzuki Motor Corporation's global automobile manufacturing facilities to reach this landmark.

Of the 2 million vehicles, almost 60 percent were manufactured in Haryana and 40 percent in Gujarat. *IANS*



India sees over 90 pc rise in smartphone exports in Nov, Apple leads

NEW DELHI: India has seen a record smartphone exports in November this year, surpassing the Rs 20,000 crore mark for the first time in a month, which was led by Apple.

According to industry data, smartphone exports crossed Rs 20,300 crore, a more than 90 percent rise from the same period last year. Apple led the exports last month, followed by Samsung.

In November last year, the smartphone exports from the country was over Rs 10,600 crore, as per the industry data.

The smartphone market in the country is expected to exit 2024 with a single-digit annual growth.

Meanwhile, riding on the government's production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, Apple's iPhone production in the country reached \$10 billion in the seven

months of this fiscal (FY25), with \$7 billion in exports alone which is a record.

The tech giant manufactured/assembled \$14 billion of iPhones

and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, this is yet another milestone for the smartphone PLI scheme in 7 months.

"\$10 billion iPhone production

on X last month.

India's smartphone market is estimated to grow 7-8 percent this year, driven by strong demand for premium, 5G and AI smartphones. The mobile handset market in India is expected to maintain steady growth.

According to industry experts, to achieve the goal of \$500 billion local electronics manufacturing by FY30, the industry must prioritize export growth to emerge as one of the top three global exporters in this domain by 2030, led by mobile manufacturing.

As per the India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA) data, mobile phone production surged from Rs 18,900 crore in 2014-15 to an estimated Rs 4.10 lakh crore in FY24, registering an increase of a massive 2,000 percent, driven by the PLI scheme. *IANS*



in India last fiscal (FY24), with exporting more than \$10 billion worth of iPhones.

According to Union Electron-

ics by Apple with \$7 billion exports. Total smartphone exports from Bharat crossed \$10.6 billion in 7 months," the minister had posted

Emerging Indian cities see impressive job growth in 2024, outlook optimistic for next year

NEW DELHI: Emerging cities like Indore, Udaipur, Bhubaneswar and Jaipur have seen impressive job growth this year, with Udaipur leading with 17 percent overall growth and Indore up by 14 percent, a report showed on 16 December.

Other emerging cities like Jaipur and Ahmedabad are also driving India's job market, with double-digit growth in sectors like IT, oil and gas and construction, according to the report by Naukri.com.

Jaipur emerged as one of the emerging tech hubs, registering 48 percent growth in IT sector hiring during Q3.

Ahmedabad also bounced

back during the latter half of the year, posting tremendous growth in sectors like oil and gas, construction/engineering and accounting/finance.



The hiring landscape began to stabilize in Q2 2024, as industries adjusted. By the third quarter, hiring showed a strong re-

bound, driven by a resurgent IT sector, emerging cities posting impressive growth, and fresher hiring stabilizing.

Metro cities like Chennai,

it recorded a 13 percent growth in hiring during Q3, the report mentioned.

"As we look ahead to 2025, the outlook is optimistic. Companies are expected to keep investing in AI/ML and digital transformation, while also focusing on experienced leadership," the report stressed.

In 2024, the AI/ML sectors shined, with growth rates ranging from 14-47 percent during the year, highlighting the ongoing surge in demand for tech-driven talent.

The FMCG sector followed suit, maintaining a positive growth rate through the different quarters. *IANS*

India's space economy to increase threefold in next 10 years: Minister

NEW DELHI: The country's space economy is set to increase threefold in the next 10 years, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh, said recently.

Addressing a media event in the national capital, the minister said that India's space, marine and Himalayan resources, which remained inadequately explored before Prime Minister Narendra Modi took over, will contribute substantially to India's future economic growth.

"India is on the path of raising its space sector to global standards. The country has made a quantum jump since 2014 in the space economy," he noted.

"Currently, India's space sector contributes eight to nine percent of the world space economy and this could increase threefold in the next 10 years. This could not have been possible without the active leadership of PM Modi," the minister emphasized.

Answering to a question on how India can unleash ben-

efits out of its natural resources in future in terms of creative growth, the minister said that PM Modi has opened the space sector for private players which offers an ample opportunity to harness benefits.

"Though ISRO was born later than NASA but today, it is no longer lagging behind any other organization in the world. Its capacity is going up day by day. So far, we have launched more than 432 satellites and out of which, 397 were launched after PM Modi took over in 2014," Dr Singh informed.

Dr Singh said, India will have its own space station by 2035.

"We need to explore unexplored areas. There is no dearth of resources, potential, commitment

and passion," he added.

The space sector that was kept under wraps for 60-70 years has now been opened to the public sector with the 2023 New Space policy, leading to a significant boom in the industry. *IANS*



Dr Jitendra Singh

Women's workforce in Indian tech sector to grow 5.5 pc annually in next three years: Report

NEW DELHI: The overall annual growth in the women's workforce in the tech sector is anticipated to be 5.5 percent over the next three years, according to a report.

The report by TeamLease Digital showed that the Women's Workforce Participation Rate (WPR) in the tech industry in India is projected to experience growth, rising from 10.8 percent in 2022 to an estimated 14.9 percent by 2027.

Companies are actively recruiting women to lead innovation and bring unique perspectives to high-demand tech roles. As more women join the workforce in India, they account for 1.92 mn of the total tech workforce in India.

The rise of women in tech to 35 percent by 2027 in Global Capability Centers (GCCs), highlighting in-demand roles and challenges faced.

Efforts are needed to bridge the gender gap and provide equal opportunities for women in tech. For women aspiring to make their mark in technology, the financial year 2024-25 presents significant opportunities in various emerging and critical domains, the report said.

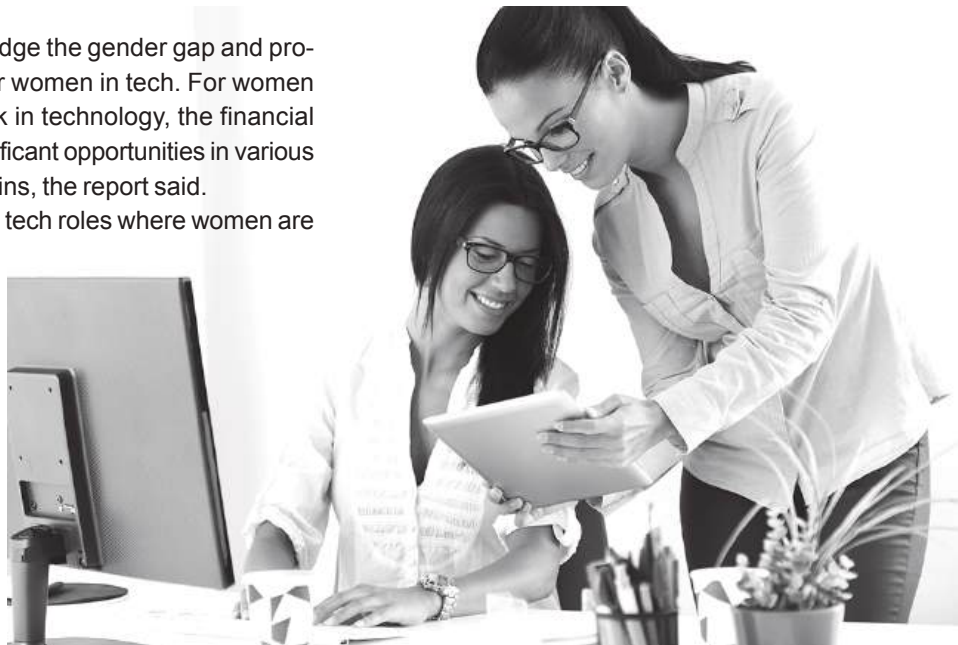
As per the report, the top tech roles where women are in high demand include data scientists and analytics professionals.

These are the experts who are skilled in analyzing vast datasets to uncover patterns, trends, and insights that can drive innovation and efficiency. Roles including data scientist, data analyst, and ML engineer are

the most sought-after roles for women in tech.

The field of cybersecurity also offers women a chance to safeguard digital assets and protect sensitive information. Roles including security analyst, security engineer, and ethical hacker are among the popular choices for women.

Cloud computing is another tech area where women are in high demand. The demand for cloud professionals is expected to reach 2 million by 2025, driven by the increasing need for businesses to migrate to the cloud, the report said. Due to the cloud adoption acceleration, roles like cloud architect, cloud engineer, and DevOps engineer are becoming the most sought-after roles. *IANS*



India's long-term growth story intact, equities to stay buoyant next year: Report

MUMBAI: The structural long-term growth story for India remains intact driven by favorable demographics and stable governance, and Indian equities are likely to stay buoyant next year, a report showed on 17 December.

Private banks, capital goods and digital commerce are projected to see strong earnings growth in 2025, according to a note by ITI Mutual Fund.

In 2024, bellwether indices - Nifty 50 and Sensex -- generated positive returns of 14.32 percent and 12.55 percent, respectively.

While indices related to different market capitalization - large, mid and small represented by Nifty 100, Nifty Mid Cap 150 and Nifty Small Cap 250 were up by 17.80 percent, 27.60 percent and 30.71 percent, respectively, on an absolute basis. (as on December 13).

"Indian equities are expected to perform strongly in the coming year. We believe that sectors like private banks, IT, digital commerce, capital goods and pharma, etc.

may have a clearer path to stronger earnings and are expected to perform well," said Rajesh Bhatia, Chief Investment Officer-ITI AMC.

The Indian economy has shown positive indicators, including an uptick in Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections and favorable Kharif crop sowing numbers.

Rural demand has strengthened, with the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) and exports showing positive momentum, the note stressed.

India is in the midst of an important, multi-year capital expenditure (capex) cycle, which is expected to provide a strong foundation for future economic growth.

Private sector investment is projected to hit a decadal high of Rs 55,122 billion, indicating a broad-based growth phase that could accelerate in the coming years, according to the note.

The financial services sector in India is showing promising resilience, with a narrowing gap between bank credit growth and deposit growth, which is expected to ease margin pressures.

The banking sector, in particular, has posted strong return ratios and improving capital adequacy levels, reducing the need for fresh capital infusion.

Valuations of private sector banks are reasonable compared to the broader market, suggesting stability and long-term potential, the note mentioned. *IANS*

"Indian equities are expected to perform strongly in the coming year. We believe that sectors like private banks, IT, digital commerce, capital goods and pharma, etc. may have a clearer path to stronger earnings and are expected to perform well,"

India sends 60 tons of medical aid to disaster-hit Jamaica

NEW DELHI: A fresh consignment of around 60 tons of emergency medical equipment, generators and other utilities, have been sent by India to Jamaica to support the country's healthcare needs and enhance their disaster preparedness.

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson, Randhir Jaiswal, shared the details of the humanitarian assistance last Saturday.

"India sends Humanitarian Assistance to Jamaica. A consignment of around 60 tons of emergency medical equipment, Generators & other utilities has departed for Jamaica. This assistance will support health care needs and rehabilitation of medical infrastructure as well as strengthen the disaster preparedness against Hurricanes," Jaiswal said in a post on X.

India and Jamaica share strong historical and cultural linkages, reflected in their shared colonial past, values of democracy and freedom, and passion for cricket.

Recently, at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Jamaican Prime Minister, Andrew Holness paid his first-ever visit to India from September 30-October 3. *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.

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12 India Post

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December 20, 2024

World can expect another zoonotic pandemic any day: Ex-WHO Director

NEW DELHI: The world can expect another pandemic any day, due to virus spillover from animals, said Mario C.B. Raviglione, former Director of the Global Tuberculosis (TB) Program at the World Health Organization (WHO).

Speaking exclusively to IANS,

"Everyone is expecting another pandemic. This may happen any day because we live in a very interconnected world," said Raviglione, Full Professor of Global Health at the University of Milan, Italy

Raviglione said that a highly interconnected world is the perfect way for the spread of another pandemic, like COVID-19.

"Everyone is expecting another pandemic. This may happen any day because we live in a

very interconnected world," said Raviglione, Full Professor of Global Health at the University of Milan, Italy.

"Italy was the first country that was hit in the Western world by Covid. And that is obviously linked to the rapid transportation means that we have nowadays.

So in an interconnected world, in a global village, apart from some countries, they are trying their best to rebuild barriers. We know that they exist, unfortunately.

The Professor noted that some countries are trying their

best to rebuild barriers by means of conflicts, but we all are "interconnected".

"It is such that, any, particularly respiratory type of disease, viruses, as we have seen, can spread very, very quickly," he said.

He explained that the majority of newly emerging diseases are viral, and they are emerging mostly from the animal world. That means they are zoonosis, like Covid.

In the recent past, the world has seen COVID-19, Ebola, chikungunya, West Nile fever, the most recent mPox, and H5N1 influenza -- all related to the animal kingdom in one way or another.

Despite the emerging threats, the preparedness by countries is extremely low, and this will have several implications, Raviglione lamented.

"You need to invest. And governments are not particularly keen to invest in something for preparation, for preparedness. They like to invest more because



Mario C.B. Raviglione

it's more visible. If I have a disease, then I'm going to massively mobilize resources to treat the disease. But it will then be too late to prevent it. So, the issue of preparedness is fundamental," the expert said.

He suggested preparedness hubs to counter and detect new threats in the early phase, citing the example of the Covid pandemic, where world countries were not prepared, and how vaccine inequality led to the loss of so many lives, particularly in the low-income countries.

"Preparedness implies that you need to have the support of laboratories, the support of pharma and biochemical, or the biochemical sector to rapidly develop the test, not just in Europe or in North America, but also in India, also in other countries," Raviglione said.

He urged that the BRICS countries should have this kind of mechanism in place in such a way that if there is a need for a vaccine, then certain conditions can be applied regardless of the patent. *IANS*

Integrate yoga in national diabetes prevention policies: Dr. Jitendra Singh

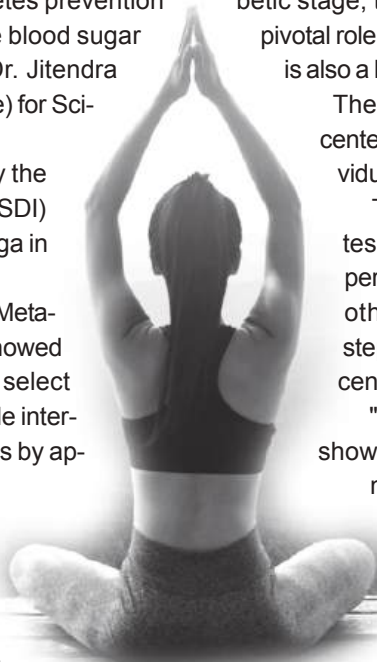
NEW DELHI: Integrating yoga in national diabetes prevention policies may be key to preventing the onset of the blood sugar condition among people with prediabetes, said Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology.

He said this recently while releasing a study, by the Research Society for Study of Diabetes in India (RSSDI) that underscored the transformative potential of yoga in the prevention of Type-2 diabetes.

The study, published in the journal *Diabetes and Metabolic Syndrome: Clinical Research and Reviews*, showed that a 40-minute daily yoga routine, incorporating select asanas and pranayama, along with standard lifestyle interventions, can reduce the risk of developing diabetes by approximately 40 percent.

"These results surpass the outcomes of existing diabetes prevention strategies in the country," said the researchers.

With over 101 million people currently living with diabetes and another 136 million in the predia-



betic stage, the study's evidence-based approach could play a pivotal role in addressing the growing epidemic, said Singh, who is also a Professor of Medicine, and a renowned Diabetologist.

The study was conducted over three years across five centers in India and involved nearly 1,000 prediabetic individuals.

The team evaluated the results of the Indian Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) which achieved a 28 percent risk reduction through lifestyle changes, and another trial that combined lifestyle measures with stepwise medication (metformin) that reported a 32 percent reduction.

"The efficacy of yoga in this study outperformed both, showcasing its superiority as a standalone preventive measure," said the researchers.

"The findings are a potential 'game changer' for India's healthcare system...and reaffirms the relevance of yoga, an ancient Indian practice, in tackling modern health challenges," Singh said. *IANS*

Narayana Murthy defends 70-hour workweek concept again, calls on youth to work hard

NEW DELHI: Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy has reiterated the call to work 70-hour a week, urging young people in India to work hard for the country's growth.

Murthy first suggested the idea of a 70-hour work week in 2023 to boost the country's growth. While he invited widespread criticism from people and doctors, the concept was hailed by many including Ola CEO Bhavish Aggarwal.

Murthy, during his recent visit to Kolkata said the younger generation has to realize they have to "work hard and work towards making India number one." He emphasized the need for Indians to strive for excellence.

"At Infosys, I said we will go to the best and compare ourselves with the best global companies. Once we compare ourselves with the best global companies, I can tell you we Indians have a lot to do" Murthy said, speaking at the Indian Chamber of Commerce's centenary launch alongside RPSG Group Chairman Sanjiv Goenka.

"We have to set our aspirations high because 800 million Indians get free ration. That means 800 million In-

dians are in poverty. If we are not in a position to work hard, then who will work hard?" he added.

Murthy said that he "realized the only way a country can fight poverty is by creating jobs that lead to disposable incomes. The government has absolutely no role in entrepreneurship".

He stressed that entrepreneurs play a crucial role in building nations by creating wealth and generating employment.

"Entrepreneurs build a nation as they create jobs, they create wealth for their investors and they pay taxes. Therefore, if a country embraces capitalism, it will create good roads, good trains, and good infrastructure," he said.

His comments come amid concerns of workplace stress

faced by young Indians, resulting in the loss of lives of many. Health experts have also warned of severe consequences of working long hours that may not only be detrimental to the physical and mental health of the employees but may also have serious effects on their personal and social relationships. *IANS*



Narayana Murthy

Swachh Bharat Mission drives toilet cleaner usage in India by 53pc in 2024

NEW DELHI: Swachh Bharat Abhiyan or Clean India Mission has driven toilet cleaner usage in Indian households by 53 percent in 2024, according to a report.

The report by Kantar, a market research firm, showed that the country has seen a dramatic rise in the use of toilet cleaners and floor cleaners. From 19 percent and 8 percent, respectively of households using these in 2014, it more than doubled to 53 percent using toilet cleaners and 22 percent buying floor cleaners in 2024.

Launched by the government on October 2, 2014, the Swachh Bharat Mission is a country-wide campaign initiated to eliminate open defecation and improve solid waste management and to create Open Defecation Free (ODF) villages.

The report attributed the growth of toilet cleaner usage in households to the mission's success, coupled with marketing efforts. It said the mission significantly improved hygiene awareness and product penetration, particularly in rural areas.

As per the report, over 128 million new households have been added in the toilet cleaners, and 52 million homes in the floor cleaners segment.

The report said the surface cleaner market is about Rs 4,200 crore, with toilet cleaners accounting for half the segment at Rs 2,000 crore. *IANS*

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In Brief

Kenya reiterates support for safe migration of skilled labor

NAIROBI: The Kenyan government will provide a safe corridor for the migration of skilled labor force to travel and settle abroad, generating revenue for the exchequer through remittances, senior officials said ahead of International Migrants Day, which is observed annually on December 18.

Julius Bitok, the principal secretary for immigration and citizen services, acknowledged the pivotal role of migrant workers in socioeconomic development, skills transfer, and cultural vitality, whose legal protection is critical, reports Xinhua news agency.

Bitok said the government is committed to a migration agenda that promotes the welfare of local citizens and those of neighboring countries to achieve growth and stability.

"Migration is critical to our nation's development agenda because it promotes talent, cultural diversity, skills and technology exchange. We will ensure there is safe and orderly migration," Bitok said.

Ahead of this year's International Migrants Day, Kenya and the United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM) held a two-km walk in Nairobi, the Kenyan capital, to raise awareness of migrants' rights and the benefits of regular migration pathways.

Bitok said Kenya has domesticated global instruments to provide a safe haven for migrants from the region escaping from climate emergencies, conflicts or economic uncertainties. *IANS*

Immigration

POST

14 India Post

www.indiapost.com

December 20, 2024

Ajay Bhutoria, an Indian-American businessman and politician, serves as the Deputy National Finance Chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC)

US: Homeland Security Department increases automatic extension period for immigrant workers

WASHINGTON, DC: In a major step, the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently increased the automatic extension period for Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) renewals from 180 days to 540 days.

"The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced a final rule that will support US employers, foster economic growth, and improve access to employment authorization documents (EAD) for eligible individuals by permanently increasing the automatic extension period of employment authorization and employment authorization documentation from up to 180 days to up to 540 days for eligible non-citizens who file a timely request to renew their work authorization. This announcement responds to feedback from the business community to create more certainty for employers," the US Department of Homeland Security said in a press release.

The move is expected to directly benefit hundreds of thousands of eligible workers across the United States.

Notably, the decision by the US Department followed recommendations by Ajay Bhutoria, the

Commissioner of the White House Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (WHIAANHPI) Commissioner, according to an official release.

Ajay Bhutoria, an Indian-

their families. Now, let's continue to work toward expanding EAD issuance for those with an approved I-140 and those stuck in the 5+ year backlog, he added.

<https://x.com/ajainb/status/1866591192387031292>



American businessman and politician, serves as the Deputy National Finance Chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC).

The new rule, which will be effective January 13, 2025, comes as a result of Bhutoria's tireless advocacy for more equitable immigration policies and was one of several key recommendations he presented to the White House Commission. As a prominent voice for the AANHPI community, Bhutoria's recommendations aim to ensure greater stability for immigrant workers, many of whom face significant delays in the processing of their EAD renewals.

"This is a huge win for the immigrant community, especially for millions of individuals from India, who have long been waiting for a streamlined process for work authorization," Bhutoria said in a statement on X.

"I'm glad to see one of my approved recommendations being implemented by DHS. The automatic extension for EADs is now up to 540 days, providing much-needed relief for workers who rely on timely renewals to support

ments will help eliminate red tape that burdens employers and ensure that eligible individuals can continue to contribute to our communities," said Secretary Mayorkas.

Ajay Bhutoria believes this new rule will provide critical support to both workers and employers alike, helping to stabilize the workforce and enhance economic growth. His work with the WHIAANHPI Commission has helped shine a light on the needs and concerns of AANHPI communities, particularly in relation to immigration and employment policies.

The expansion of the automatic extension period is expected to reduce processing delays that have plagued many immigrant workers, particularly those in high-demand sectors like technology, healthcare, and hospitality.

According to the statement, Bhutoria's leadership and commitment to ensuring that immigrant workers are treated fairly in the labor market has been widely celebrated within the community, with many expressing their excitement over the new rule.

"Ajay Bhutoria's leadership on this issue has been invaluable," said one community leader. "This rule change will benefit countless

The new rule, which will be effective January 13, 2025, comes as a result of Bhutoria's tireless advocacy for more equitable immigration policies and was one of several key recommendations he presented to the White House Commission

going commitment to fostering economic growth and supporting employers by addressing labor shortages.

"Increasing the automatic extension period for certain employment authorization docu-

workers who have been waiting for years to secure stable employment authorization. His continued efforts are a testament to the power of advocacy and the importance of representation in shaping policy." *ANI*

PRADEEP ROY-SINGH

B.A. LL.B. M.B.A. J.D.

Attorney-at-Law

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Bengal Police detect pattern for getting fake Indian documents for Bangladeshi infiltrators

KOLKATA: The rackets operating in West Bengal and engaged in arranging for fake passports for illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators are following the same pattern and modus operandi of carrying out their operations, an investigation by the state police has revealed.

Sources aware of the development said that the first common pattern is that the bases of such rackets are mainly villages adjacent to the international borders, both land and coastal, with Bangladesh.

The second common pattern, sources said, is in the step-by-step modus operandi in arranging for the fake passports. Whenever the information of any Bangladesh infiltrator entering India by illegally crossing the borders reached the kingpins of such rackets, their agents first contacted those infiltrators.

Those expressing willingness to pay substantial amounts for getting the fake passport were first arranged accommodation at any safe house in any of the bordering villages. Thereafter, first, the other Indian identity documents, starting with ration cards and followed by other documents like Aadhaar cards, EPIC cards and PAN cards followed.

The final step, sources said, was making arrange-

ments for fake passports. The entire process used to cost an amount of between Rs 2,00,000 and Rs 3,00,000.

Last Sunday cops of the coastal police division of West Bengal Police arrested two kingpins of such a racket namely Samaresh Biswas and Deepak Mondal, the latter being a contractual staff with the Indian Postal Department.

His son Ripon Mondal was also arrested earlier by the state police. A district court in West Bengal remanded Biswas and Mondal to police custody till December 20.

Sources said that their modus operandi of function was exactly identical to a similar racket operating from Indo-Bangladesh bordering Nadia district which arranged for the fake passport of former Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) activist Selim Matabbar, who was arrested from a hotel in Park Street area in central Kolkata recently.

These fake passport rackets operating in different parts of West Bengal, especially in the districts having borders with Bangladesh have become a major headache for the intelligence and security agencies with apprehensions of a rise in illegal immigration amid the ongoing crisis in Bangladesh. *IANS*

Last Sunday cops of the coastal police division of West Bengal Police arrested two kingpins of such a racket namely Samaresh Biswas and Deepak Mondal, the latter being a contractual staff with the Indian Postal Department

Thailand to implement e-Visa system for Indian Nationals from January 2025

NEW DELHI: The Royal Thai Embassy in New Delhi has officially announced the rollout of Thailand's Electronic Visa (e-Visa) system in India, effective January 1, 2025.

The system, aimed at streamlining the visa application process, will also include an offline payment option, offering added convenience to applicants.

In its announcement, the Embassy highlighted that the e-Visa system would cater to non-Thai nationals applying for all types of visas. Applicants are required to submit their visa applications exclusively via the official website, thaievisa.go.th.

"Each application can be applied by the applicants themselves, or by other representatives," the Embassy clarified. However, it warned that it "shall not bear responsibility if any application submitted by a representative is incomplete." Applicants can find a detailed guide on the application process on the same website.

To complete their applications, visa-seekers must pay the required visa fees, the details of which will be provided by the Embassy and respective Consulate-Generals. The Embassy underlined that "visa fees are non-refundable under all circumstances." Additionally, the processing time for e-Visas is expected to take approximately 14 working days from the issuance of the visa receipt.

The Embassy also provided a timeline for transitioning from the current visa application system to the e-Visa platform. For ordinary passport applications, submissions to designated visa processing companies will be accepted until December 16, 2024. For diplomatic and official passport applications, submissions will be accepted at the Embassy or Consulate-Generals until December 24, 2024.

The system, aimed at streamlining the visa application process, will also include an offline payment option, offering added convenience to applicants

For Indian travellers holding ordinary passports, the Embassy reassured that the existing 60-day visa exemption for tourism and short business trips would "remain effective until further announcement."

Further details regarding the e-Visa system and its operations across the Embassy and Consulate-Generals will be announced in due course.

India and Thailand, as neighboring nations in the extended region, share a maritime boundary in the Andaman Sea and a relationship steeped in history.

Their ties are strengthened by centuries of social and cultural exchanges, with deep people-to-people connections.

The shared Buddhist heritage is evident in the frequent pilgrimages made by Thai nationals to India's Buddhist sites, while Hindu influences are reflected in Thai art, architecture, dance, drama, and literature. The Thai language also incorporates elements of Pali and Sanskrit. *ANI*

China announces visa restrictions on US personnel over interference in Hong Kong affairs

BEIJING: China has decided to impose visa restrictions on US personnel over interference in Hong Kong affairs, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said last week.

Spokesperson Mao Ning made the announcement at a regular press briefing in response to the recent US announcement to impose visa restrictions on officials of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region government.

"We have already expressed our firm stance over US moves," said Mao, adding that by abusing visa restrictions on Chinese officials under the pretext of Hong Kong-related issues, the United States has grossly interfered in China's internal affairs and seriously violated the principles of international law and basic norms governing international relations.

In accordance with the relevant provisions of the Law on Foreign Relations of the People's Republic of China and the Law of the People's Republic of China on Countering Foreign Sanctions, China has decided to impose visa restrictions on US personnel who act maliciously in regard to Hong Kong-related issues, Mao said, Xinhua news agency reported.

The spokesperson emphasized that Hong Kong is part of China and Hong Kong affairs are purely China's internal affairs.

"We urge the United States to genuinely respect China's sovereignty, respect the rule of law in Hong Kong, and stop interfering in Hong Kong affairs in any manner," said Mao.

China is determined to safeguard national sovereignty, security, and development interests, committed to implementing the "one country, two systems" policy, and remains unwavering in opposing any external forces interfering in Hong Kong affairs, Mao noted. *IANS*

Mexican consulates to strengthen support for nationals in face of US deportation

MEXICO CITY: Mexican consulates in the United States will strengthen legal support for Mexican nationals to ensure that they are informed about their rights and the deportation procedures, Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said.

With reference to the President's statement that came last Friday, the measure came in response to repeated threats of mass deportations by US President-elect Donald Trump, who has criticized Mexico for not doing enough to prevent illegal immigration, Xinhua news agency reported.

"There are rules for deporting (nationals) back to Mexico. It's not like the police stop them and then send them to the border the same day. There are standards and rules that must be followed, and they can not be deported without reasons," Sheinbaum said during a daily press conference.

"We are strengthening the capability of our consulates in the United States and improving the level of legal support," she said. *IANS*

Rita Shah's concert raises funds for children in India

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: On an evening recently, the Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott in Schaumburg transformed into a hub of melody, rhythm, and heartfelt generosity.

The occasion was "Ek Shaam Apno Ke Naam", a concert headlined by the Rita Shah and orchestrated by SSS Entertainment to raise funds for underprivileged children in India.

The event kicked off with the charismatic MC Bhairavi Thakker, who set the tone with warmth the audience was treated to a soul-stirring prayer dance by the talented Jainish Balsara. The stage was perfectly set for the star of the night, Rita Shah, who entered to applause and took everyone on a musical journey they will never forget.

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AAPI initiates Stem Cell/Bone Marrow donation drive

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: "I am grateful to the dozens of local AAPI Chapter leaders, members and volunteers across the nation who have initiated and organized Bone Marrow and Stem Cell Registration across the nation, joining hands with the national AAPI in efforts creating awareness and enrolling more youth and adults to be part of this initiative," said Dr. Satheesh Kathula, the President of American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI)

Details on page 21

Know holistic ways to manage diabetes

DR. INDRAJEET TYAGI AND DR. IRANNA HIRAPUR

People with type 2 diabetes may inquire about current complementary and alternative therapies available for the treatment of their disease. Awareness of such modalities is necessary for effective patient counseling and care.

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COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

16 India Post

www.indiapost.com

December 20, 2024



Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi

Indian American Medical Association Commemorates 44th Anniversary



Honorees during the awards presentation included Ashok Fulambarker, MD, recipient of the Distinguished Physician Award; Samir Shah, MD, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award; and Archana Chatterjee, MD, honored with the Dr. Usha Rani Nimmagadda Woman Physician Leadership Award. Rajeev Kumar, MD, Terence Chiramel, MD, and Utpal Parekh, MD, were acknowledged for their contributions to IAMA-IL and our communities

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: The Indian American Medical Association, Illinois (IAMA-IL) marked 44 years with a fundraising gala that featured a cocktail reception, a vendor expo, an awards presentation, a dinner, and musical performances on December 07, 2024 at the Matrix Club in Naperville, a Chicago suburb. The event was a huge success.

IAMA-IL President Radhika Chimata, MD, organized this event that included speeches from Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, and Indian Consul General Somnath Ghosh. She also shared her vision for the upcoming year as the Board of Directors chair. Her objectives include continuing significant fundraising initiatives, establishing a comprehensive database of physician mentors for medical trainees, and boosting IAMA-IL membership among second- and third-generation Americans.

Honorees during the awards presentation included Ashok Fulambarker, MD, recipient of the

Distinguished Physician Award; Samir Shah, MD, who received the Lifetime Achievement Award; and Archana Chatterjee, MD, honored with the Dr. Usha Rani Nimmagadda Woman Physician Leadership Award. Rajeev Kumar, MD, Terence Chiramel, MD, and Utpal Parekh, MD, were acknowledged for their contributions to IAMA-IL and our communities.

Advocate Health CEO Dia Nichols gave the keynote speech and participated in a fireside discussion alongside President

Chimata, Sreenivas Reddy, MD, and Shruti Nathan from Advocate Health. The conversation addressed contemporary challenges faced by physicians, including reimbursement rates.

We express our gratitude to our Distinguished Guests, including Gerard Moorer Deputy Chief of Staff to Congressman Danny Davis, U.S. Representative from Illinois's 7th Congressional District, Tara Stamps, Cook County Board Commissioner for the 1st District, and

Harry Benton, Illinois House Representative for District 97.

The Ghungroo Bollywood dance troupe captivated the audience with their performances. We appreciate the talent of director Sridevi Pandalai. Biju Zacharia's artistic vision shone through the gorgeous audio-visual presentation, emceed by Shana Mohan perfectly.

Radhika delivered an unplugged performance, accompanied by guitarist Vikas Deo, and concluded the event with an electrifying concert supported by Orchestra Saregama.

Before the entertainment got everyone dancing the night away, IAMA welcomed their new President, Dr. Dilip Shah, and the 2025 executive committee as they assumed their roles

The Indian American Medical Association, Illinois (IAMA-IL) is a non-profit organization comprised of Illinois physicians, fellows, residents, and medical students of Indian origin who are committed to professional excellence and quality patients.



Indian CG Somnath Ghosh

Spreading Christmas Joy and Hope: International Assembly of God's Outreach in Michigan



India Post News Service

This holiday season, the International Assembly of God (IAG), Michigan, is bringing the joy and love of Christ's birth to the community in a meaningful way. A dedicated group of 75 church members will be visiting homes from December 6-8, 2024, to spread Christmas cheer through caroling and sharing the message of hope, love, and faith. They will be caroling in the surrounding areas of Warren, Troy, Farmington Hills, Canton,

and Ann Arbor, bringing festive joy to neighborhoods and homes.

In total, they will impact 93 families and one assisted living facility, offering not only carols and gifts but also the true message of Christmas—one of joy and peace. The group's outreach efforts are led by Evangelism Coordinator William Menezes, who is overseeing the visits and ensuring that each interaction leaves a lasting impression of Christ's love. "Our goal is to bring light to every

home we visit," Menezes shared. "Christmas is the perfect time to remind people of the true reason for the season."

Additionally, the church is inviting everyone to a special Christmas service on Saturday, December 21, at 6:00 PM. The service will be held at IAG's location at 3949 E 9 Mile Rd, Warren, MI 48091 and promises an evening filled with festive plays, skits, music, and a powerful message celebrating the birth of Christ.

"Christmas is a time for togetherness and faith," said Pr. Charles Chandy, senior pastor of IAG. "We invite everyone to join us for the Christmas service and celebrate the season with us."

For more information or to get involved in the church's outreach efforts, you can contact the International Assembly of God at word.internationalag.org or call +1 586-755-0500. Let's come together this Christmas to spread the love of Christ throughout the community.

BJUS hosts Diwali Mela

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: The Bihar and Jharkhand Association of Midwest (BJUS), a nonprofit organization celebrating the culture and heritage of Bihar and Jharkhand, hosted its spectacular annual Diwali event - DEEPOTSAV 2024 - on November 16, 2024, at Hinsdale Community House, Hinsdale, a Chicago suburb.

The evening came alive with inspiring speeches, captivating cultural performances, lively quizzes, soul-stirring songs, and a powerful sense of commu-

presence and valuable insights. A key highlight was Ghosh's keynote address, where he urged attendees to embrace cultural promotion and encouraged participation in the Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz, a Government of India initiative designed for NRIs and OCIs. (<https://www.bkjqquiz.com>)

Mrs Shikha Kumari also introduced her core team members Rahul Kumar, Mantosh Kumar, Yogesh Panwar, Dolly Kumari, Sweta Shiwam, Anita Pandey, Bal Krishna Deo, Roma Ranjan, Prabin Gupta,



gized the crowd with Bollywood-Bhojpuri fusion dances and the Diya Dance to the Diwali-themed song "Ram Aayenge." From start to finish, the evening brimmed with entertainment, welcome goodies, Bihari bhunja, authentic Indian cuisine, a lively DJ party, and endless opportunities to connect with others.

Shikha Kumari underscored BJUS's pivotal role in preserving and promoting the rich culture of Bihar and Jharkhand in Chicagoland. She extended heartfelt thanks to sponsors along with other community supporters. With her visionary leadership,

BJUS hosts a variety of engaging events throughout the year, including Holi celebrations, summer picnics, sports events, and charitable initiatives. DEEPOTSAV 2024 was yet another testament to its vibrant mission of fostering community, culture, and joy.



nity, all aimed at passing on the region's rich heritage to the next generation.

The event began as Mrs. Shikha Kumari, BJUS President, and Somnath Ghosh, Consul General of India in Chicago, lit the ceremonial diyas to inaugurate the celebration.

Mrs. Shikha Kumar welcomed attendees, expressing gratitude to Ghosh for his

Archana Kumari and Deepak Jha.

BJUS DEEPOTSAV 2024 showcased a dazzling array of performances spanning all age groups. The ONE MIND group set a patriotic tone with an instrumental rendition of the Indian National Anthem and "Vande Mataram."

A charming group of toddlers sang "Achyutam Keshavam," while adults ener-

Gita wisdom along with Bible in Texas schools sought

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: Indians feel that it is fine to incorporate Bible teachings in Texas elementary public schools as long as wisdom from ancient Sanskrit scripture Bhagavad-Gita is included.

Rajan Zed, who has read invocations in Fort Worth City Council and US Senate and US House of Representatives, said that Bhagavad-Gita is a historically significant document, recognized throughout the world, and was a treasure that should be taught in

elementary public school classrooms in Texas. This sacred text was plainly the word of God spoken by Lord Krishna himself.

Various well-known Americans; including essayist-philosopher Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), theoretical physicist credited with being the "father of the atomic bomb" J. Robert Oppenheimer (1904-1967), novelist-philosopher Aldous Huxley (1894-1963), essayist-poet Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), theoretical physicist Albert Einstein (1879-1955), etc.; were influenced by Bhagavad-Gita.



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Center for Indian Cultural Education - Bal Vihar of St. Louis celebrates Diwali with high attendance, festivity and community spirit



India Post News Service

ST. LOUIS, MO: The Center for Indian Cultural Education - Bal Vihar of St. Louis brought the vibrant spirit of Diwali to life at its annual celebration on Sunday, November 10, 2024. Over 400 students and family members gathered to partake in the cherished event, eagerly anticipated each year by the Bal Vihar community. This year, favorable weather allowed attendees to fully enjoy the outdoor festivities in a comfortable and lively atmosphere.

The evening began with a sacred Laxmi Puja, led by Bal Vihar students at the

Hindu temple. Children proudly displayed their handmade clay diyas, crafted in previous Bal Vihar classes, adding a heartfelt and colorful glow to the ceremony. The puja was followed by a communal dinner, where families enjoyed a warm meal together, preparing for the highly anticipated grand finale: a fireworks celebration. Each child received a small bag of fireworks, lighting up the evening and sharing moments of joy and laughter with friends and family.

In addition to the festivities, Diwali is a time for dana (giving) and sewa (service).

This year, Bal Vihar continued its "Donate a Diya" project, raising \$1500 through community contributions. This amount will be donated to Sankara Nethralaya (www.sankaranethralaya.org) and Asha for Education (<https://ashanet.org/>), supporting education and healthcare initiatives.

The success of the event would not have been possible without the commitment of Bal Vihar's dedicated teachers, volunteers, parents, and the Events/Logistics team. Their hard work and dedication ensure the continuity of cultural celebra-

tions and uphold the values of community support and shared heritage.

About Bal Vihar of St. Louis

Center for Indian Cultural Education - Bal Vihar of St. Louis is a cultural school designed to promote, instill, and foster Indian culture in children ages 5 to 18. Bal Vihar encourages the youth group (ages 13 and above) to participate in activities that promote respect and understanding of different cultures and religions. Bal Vihar has been in existence since 1992 and its current enrollment is over 350 students. Our website is www.balvihar-stlouis.com

Rita Shah's concert raises funds for children in India

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: On an evening recently, the Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott in Schaumburg transformed into a hub of melody, rhythm, and heartfelt generosity.

The occasion was "Ek Shaam Apno Ke Naam", a concert headlined by the Rita Shah and orchestrated by SSS Entertainment to raise funds for underprivileged children in India.

The event kicked off with the charismatic MC Bhairavi Thakker, who set the tone with warmth the audience was treated to a soul-stirring prayer dance by the talented Jainish Balsara. The stage was perfectly set for the star of the night, Rita Shah, who entered to applause and took everyone on a musical journey they will never forget.

Rita Shah opened her set with the iconic "Mausam Hai Aashikana", her voice capturing every nuance of the song's romantic nostalgia. Transitioning seamlessly, she brought a wave of emotion with "Rahe Na Rahe Hum" and "Betaab Dil Ki Tamanna", showcasing her versatility and command over different genres.

In a special duet with Sunil Shah and Rita Shah delivered renditions of "Mera Pyar Bhi Tu Hai" and the hauntingly beautiful "Ander Se Koi Bahar Se Koi". The



Sunil Shah & Rita Shah

chemistry between the two singers was palpable, leaving the audience mesmerized.

Between performances, Rita shared a deeply moving speech about the power of music and community to bring change. "Every note sung tonight carries the hopes of countless children," she said, her words met with a standing ovation. The surprise cake-cutting ceremony, of Sunil Shah's birthday accompanied by Jay Chavda's lively "Bar Bar Din Ye Aaye", was a joyful

interlude.

As the evening progressed, other stellar artists took the stage. Pratibha Jairath, Jitu Balsara, Jay Chavda, and Swapnil Shahu gave memorable performances, including timeless classics like "Ehsan Tera Hoga Mujh Par" and "Zindagi Ek Safar Hai Suhana". Rita Shah returned with her signature elegance, delivering crowd favorites like "Milo Na Tum To" and "Dil Hai Ke Manta Nahin".

The dynamic disco medley, featuring

"Aap Jaisa Koi", "Laila Main Laila", and "Piya Tu" brought everyone to their feet, turning the hall into a celebration of life and music. As Anu Malhotra, President Elect of Federation Indian Associations aptly put it, "Rita Shah's voice has the power to heal, and tonight, it healed hearts from Chicago to India, Rita Shah's Music Bridges Hearts."

Dr. Bharat Barai, a distinguished guest, described the concert as a "musical masterpiece," adding, "Rita Shah's voice is like a river-flowing effortlessly yet powerful enough to stir the soul. Tonight, she didn't just sing; she inspired."

The evening concluded with a slow medley, leaving the audience in a state of blissful reverie. The evening's musical brilliance was elevated to new heights by the exceptional Sa Re Ga Ma Orchestra, under the masterful leadership of Hitesh Master. The orchestra provided a live music experience.

"Ek Shaam Apno Ke Naam" was not just a concert; it was a celebration of humanity, a tribute to the power of art, and a reminder of the incredible things we can achieve together. Rita Shah and the team at SSS Entertainment delivered not only a phenomenal performance but also a powerful message of hope and unity.

Tulsi Gabbard: The Director of National Intelligence America needs

RISHI KUMAR

In a time of global uncertainty and evolving threats, America requires a Director of National Intelligence (DNI) with a unique blend of experience, integrity, and vision. Tulsi Gabbard embodies these qualities and is the ideal candidate to lead charge.

Gabbard's commitment to the United States is unquestionable. As a combat veteran and lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, she has demonstrated her willingness to put her life on the line for her country. Her military experience, coupled with her tenure in Congress serving on key committees such as Armed Services, Homeland Security, and Foreign Affairs, provides her with a comprehensive understanding of national security challenges. Senator Bernie Sanders has emphasized Gabbard's patriotism and sacrifice: "Tulsi has put her life on the line to defend this country. It is outrageous to suggest that Tulsi is a foreign asset."

Tulsi Gabbard's commitment to principle and integrity was exemplified in 2016 when she made the bold decision to resign as Vice Chair of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) to support Senator Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign. At the time, Gabbard publicly criticized the DNC's lack of neutrality during the primary process, calling out what she viewed as unfair



Tulsi Gabbard

practices favoring Hillary Clinton. Her decision to step down from a prominent leadership position within the party underscored her dedication to fairness and transparency in the democratic process, even at great personal and political risk.

By aligning herself with Sanders, Gabbard demonstrated her belief in his progressive platform, which prioritized issues such as income inequality, ending endless wars, and reforming the political system. Her resignation also highlighted

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her willingness to challenge the establishment in pursuit of what she believed was right, further solidifying her reputation as a courageous, independent thinker.

Gabbard's decision resonated with voters who valued integrity and underscored her commitment to prioritizing the interests of the American people over party loyalty.

Gabbard's upbringing and extensive travels have given her a nuanced understanding of diverse cultures

and geopolitical landscapes. This global perspective is crucial for a DNI tasked with analyzing complex international situations. Her ability to engage with world leaders and understand their motivations will be invaluable in providing accurate intelligence assessments to the President and national security apparatus.

In an age of partisan rancor, Gabbard has shown a willingness to reach across the aisle and challenge orthodoxies within her own party. Her independent thinking

and commitment to putting country above party politics are precisely what we need in a DNI.

Tulsi Gabbard has consistently stood out as a steadfast proponent of peace, advocating for an end to the United States' involvement in endless wars and a shift toward diplomacy and reconciliation. As a combat veteran who served in Iraq, she witnessed firsthand the devastating human cost of war, an experience that deeply shaped her commitment to pursuing non-violent solutions to global conflicts. Throughout her political career, Gabbard has called for de-escalation with adversaries, opposed regime-change wars, and championed policies aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict rather than perpetuating cycles of violence.

Allegations of Foreign Ties

Critics have questioned Gabbard's interactions with foreign leaders, particularly her meetings with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. However, these engagements demonstrate her commitment

to understanding complex geopolitical situations firsthand. As DNI, this willingness to gather information directly will be an asset, not a liability.

Political Shifts

Some have labeled Gabbard an opportunist for her recent party switch. However, her political journey reflects a thoughtful evolution of her views and a commitment to principles over party loyalty. This independence of thought is crucial for a DNI who must provide unvarnished intelligence assessments regardless of political pressures.

Religious Background

Concerns about Gabbard's Hindu faith and alleged ties to certain organizations are unfounded and border on religious bigotry. Her diverse religious background and understanding of various faith traditions will be an asset in analyzing global conflicts with religious dimensions.

Tulsi Gabbard's unique combination of military service, congressional experience, global perspective, and independent thinking make her an ideal candidate for Director of National Intelligence. In a world of complex threats and rapid change, Gabbard's leadership will ensure that America's intelligence community remains at the forefront of protecting our national security.

As we face the challenges of the 21st century, we need a DNI who can navigate the complexities of global politics, understand emerging threats, and provide clear, unbiased intelligence to our nation's leaders. Tulsi Gabbard is that leader, and her appointment would be a significant step forward for America's national security.

(Author: Rishi Kumar is a Silicon Valley tech executive, author of Winning the AI Arms Race, a former elected official, congressional candidate and, executive board member of the California Democratic Party)

International University of Vedic Wellness appeals to President Elect Trump to end Hindu Genocide in Bangladesh

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: Dr. Santosh Kumar, Founder and Chancellor of the International University of Vedic Wellness (IUVW), has Made a call to Hindus worldwide to unite in defense of peace and justice.

In a statement, Dr. Kumar said, "The Hindu community is the most tolerant community in the world. However, the atrocities occurring in Bangladesh are unacceptable, and we must take a stand to stop this genocide against Hindus. It is time for people to truly understand Hinduism."

This is not the first time Hindus have faced genocide; they have endured such atrocities for decades. The ongoing persecution of Hindus in Bangladesh has raised international alarm. Dr. Kumar emphasized the urgent need for collective

action to safeguard human rights and uphold justice.

To honor the victims and demonstrate solidarity, the International University of Vedic Wellness (IUVW) announced December 12th at 11:00 AM to 12 Noon as the Global Hour of Peace and Prayer To Halt Hindu Genocide In Bangladesh.

We appeal to President Elect Trump to make it their Number One - Numero Uno Priority, to end this genocide immediately, appealed Dr Santosh Kumar. This observance will provide an opportunity to reflect on the importance of global unity and compassion while urging the international community to address the crisis at hand.

Dr. Kumar extends a heartfelt invitation to individuals of all faiths to join this solemn moment and support the cause of justice and harmony.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

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Former Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard's inspirational visit to BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham

India Post News Service

ROBBINSVILLE, NEW JERSEY: On Sunday, December 15, 2024, BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham had the honor of hosting former Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu elected to the U.S. Congress in 2013. In addition to her distinguished political career, Gabbard serves as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, a rank she has held since 2021.

Her visit coincided with the 103rd birth anniversary celebrations of the late Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the revered spiritual leader who profoundly impacted millions through his teachings of selfless service, humility, and devotion. The event brought together women of all ages to commemorate Pramukh Swami Maharaj's legacy. The celebration featured inspiring speeches and heartfelt vignettes, highlighting his timeless teachings and the significance of faith and service in everyday life.

Envisioned by the late Pramukh Swami Maharaj, Akshardham stands as a beacon of spirituality, tradition, and culture. Its rich heritage has drawn visitors from diverse backgrounds, making it a revered landmark. During her visit, former Congresswoman Gabbard, renowned for her advocacy and dedication to issues affecting all Americans, embarked on a campus tour where she explored the universal values expressed through Akshardham's art, architecture, and cultural exhibits.

As a practicing Hindu for many years, Gabbard admired the spiritual atmosphere of Akshardham. She offered flowers and



prayers to the sacred images enshrined in the temple.

During her address at the cultural program, Ms. Gabbard expressed her gratitude and inspiration: "I'm grateful to be



here with all of you, and my heart is warmed by this incredible welcome and celebration. To be able to hear about the

many thousands of hands and hearts that went into building this iconic temple, and to walk through and see the meaning behind every single one of those sculptures—both the magnificent and the small etchings of some of the

most famous stories about Krishna and Arjuna from the Bhagavad Gita—was truly inspiring. This place is special because of all of you, your hearts, and your prayers that bring us all together."

She also reflected on the temple's spiritual essence during an interview, saying: "Words are not sufficient to describe the incredible product of the work of so many

hands that came together in a spirit of love, kindness, and unity. That welcoming spirit is something I feel here, as I know millions of others do when they visit Akshardham. This is a timeless offering that will bring peace and joy to all who come."

"Former Congresswoman Gabbard's visit to Akshardham is a powerful reminder of the enduring legacy of Pramukh Swami Maharaj and his emphasis on bringing people together through shared values of faith, service, and community. Akshardham is a place of inspiration, and it was delightful to have such an inspirational figure grace its hallowed grounds," said Puja Patel, a volunteer at BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham.

Her visit underscores the commitment of BAPS and its current spiritual leader, His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, to inspire selfless service and promote shared values among communities across the United States.

What's next for education

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

The American education system is poised to become a battleground for significant changes under the new President and his allies. There is a campaign promise to cut the Department of Education which may or may not be politically viable but other plans may include targeting federal funding for schools if they use inclusive instructional materials and pushing "choice" or vouchers to benefit private institutions.

Experts at the EMS briefing Dec 13 believed that the power of the federal purse and the accreditation system may be used to push higher education institu-

tions to dismantle diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, and the DOE's office of Civil Rights will be used to preserve the rights of white students. Colleges and universities might also suffer a possible exodus of students due to restrictive new immigration policies, causing further financial challenges.

Pedro Noguera, Dean, USC Rossier School of Education said that no one knows what we can expect from the Trump administration in terms of education, but the truth is that there will be a lot of resistance and conflict if they try to move forward with their plans to dismantle the Department of Education. He said the U.S. Department of Education plays a

critical role in providing resources to schools, particularly through Title One, which provides supplemental resources to schools serving poor children; and Pell Grants, which support low-income students to attend college. Both are very popular and essential programs, and while the administration has not said it wants to dismantle or destroy them, those who divest from the Department of Education could put them in jeopardy. Higher education is too expensive in this country and right now we are facing a situation where there will be a decrease in enrollment, which will affect universities across the country and also public schools, and that will produce many changes that they will

lead many institutions to close basically because they do not have the necessary students to sustain themselves.

Thomas Toch, Director, FutureEd, Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy said that federal funding for higher education for disadvantaged families in local areas is very important. He believes that federal funding for local education for disadvantaged groups will be limited. The college loan forgiveness program introduced by the Biden administration would also be halted. Due to the restrictions on illegal and legal immigration during the Trump administration, international students will be hit hard.

AAPI initiates Stem Cell/Bone Marrow donation drive

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: "I am grateful to the dozens of local AAPI Chapter leaders, members and volunteers across the nation who have initiated and organized Bone Marrow and Stem Cell Registration across the nation, joining hands with the national AAPI in efforts creating awareness and enrolling more youth and adults to be part of this initiative," said Dr. Satheesh Kathula, the President of American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI)

The Stem Cell/Bone Marrow initiative has been a major focus under the leadership of Dr. Kathula-led AAPI's Executive Committee. AAPI has partnered with National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP) to increase the Indian donor pool.

One can join the NMDP Registry between the ages of 18-40, a resident of the United States, and don't have major medical illnesses.

Giving the background and the urgent need to this new initiative, Dr. Sashi Kuppala, Chairman of the AAPI Stem Cell Drive, said, "Thousands of patients with blood cancers like leukemia or lymphoma need blood stem cell transplant to survive. Matching the stem cell or bone marrow donors to patients is based on Human leukocyte antigen (HLA) typing. HLA are Proteins or markers found on most cells in our

DONATE STEM CELLS/BONE MARROW
SAVE A LIFE
HIGH NEED - SIMPLE PROCESS

ELIGIBILITY TO REGISTER
 Age: 18-40 years
 Health: Generally healthy with no chronic illnesses

Scan the QR code to join the NMDP Registry today
 or text: AAPI to 61474

SATHEESH KATHULA, MD
 President, AAPI

SASHI KUPPALA, MD
 Chair, AAPI Bone Marrow Drive

Contact: Dr. Sashi Kuppala
 Email: sashikuppala@yahoo.com | Cell: 502-475-1371

please think seriously about your commitment before joining the registry. And, be aware that there are absolutely no complications to the donor from this donation procedure."

According to Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, President-Elect of AAPI, "In general, 70%

samples for further testing. Blood work is typically done locally. Travel will likely be required for donation. It costs you nothing to donate. NMDP pays for all donation-related expenses. The donation process takes an average of 20-30 hours spread over 4-6 weeks."

"It is very difficult to find a matched stem cell donor for South Asians should they need a bone marrow or stem cell transplant and this drive will help increase the number of potential donors." Dr. Shirish Patel, Treasurer of AAPI said, "Bone Marrow donation helps save lives."

Dr. Sashi Kuppala said, he and the AAPI leadership will be happy to educate about the donation process and answer any questions. "We strongly believe that it's a very a noble and much needed initiative by AAPI to help save lives. While we thank those who are leading the efforts in your own state/towns, I urge others to take the lead in your towns and

help AAPI in our efforts to save lives. Thank you and truly appreciate your support in helping the patients who are in need of Bone Marrow."

The growing influence of physicians of Indian heritage is evident, as increasingly physicians of Indian origin hold critical positions in healthcare, academic, research, and administrative positions across the nation. We the physicians of Indian origin are proud of our great achievements and contributions to our motherland, India, our adopted land, the US, and in a very significant way to the transformation of Indo-US relations.

Serving 1 in every 7 patients in the US, AAPI members care for millions of patients every day, while several of them have risen to hold high-flying jobs, shaping the policies and programs, and inventions that shape the landscape of healthcare in the US and around the world.

Since its inception in 1982, AAPI has been at the forefront, representing a conglomeration of more than 125,000 practicing physicians in the United States, seeking to be the united voice for physicians of Indian origin.

For more details about organizing a Bone Marrow Donation Drive in your city/town/region, please contact: Sashikuppala@yahoo.com. For more details on AAPI, please visit: www.aapiusa

Stressing the importance of registering for the Bone Marro donation, Dr. Suni Kaza, Chair of AAPI BOT said, "You could be a patient's only match-their only hope for a cure. When you register, you're committing to donating to any patient in the world

body and they are inherited from our biological parents and are largely depend on ethnicity."

Stressing the importance of registering for the Bone Marro donation, Dr. Suni Kaza, Chair of AAPI BOT said, "You could be a patient's only match-their only hope for a cure. When you register, you're committing to donating to any patient in the world. But because a decision not to donate can be life-threatening to the patient,

of parents needing a stem cell transplant don't have a fully matched donor in their family and approximately 12,000 patients per year depend on transplant from an unrelated donor to survive. These numbers are even dire for cancer patients of Indian ethnicity as the donor pool of Indian ethnicity is very limited."

Dr. Raj Bhayani, Secretary of AAPI said, "If you're a match to a patient, who needs stem cells, you'll be asked to provide blood

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Kraft Heinz complained against for non-disclosure of beef in its various food products

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: Seeking an apology from Chicago and Pittsburgh co-headquartered Kraft Heinz for non-disclosure of beef in its various food products; and their immediate recall.

Rajan axed observed that it was shocking for Hindus to learn that many popular

of gelatin was not mentioned under the "Ingredients" on packages/boxes

When Zed contacted the company, Kraft Heinz Consumer Relations responded: "All gelatin is made from collagen, a protein that comes from animal hides. The gelatin used by Kraft Heinz comes from both beef and pork sources."

powerhouse" which claims to "feed the world in healthy, responsible ways", did not mention explicitly under the ingredients on the packages/boxes the source of gelatin used in its products.

Now was the time for Kraft Heinz to admit their error of not being transparent enough to mention in clear and simple terms what was inside the package/box so that an ordinary consumer could make right and appropriate choices, Zed indicated. Moreover, in future,

Kraft Heinz should explicitly list beef in the ingredients on the package/box when beef was present in the product; Zed added.

Hinduism is the oldest and third largest religion of the world with about 1.2 billion adherents and a rich philosophical thought, and it should not be taken frivolously. No faith, larger or smaller, should be mishandled; Rajan Zed remarked.

Zed also urged Kraft Heinz CEO Carlos Abrams-Rivera and its Board Chair

Miguelis Patricio; to recall all packages/boxes of products containing gelatin where source of gelatin was not clearly mentioned; and later replace these with packages/boxes that markedly declared source of gelatin under the ingredients label.

Zed, President of Universal Society of Hinduism, stated that many Kraft Heinz products contained gelatin, but the source of gelatin was not mentioned under the "Ingredients" on packages/boxes

Kraft Heinz products like JELL-O, which they had been eating for years, contained beef; while beef was not explicitly mentioned under the ingredients listed on the packages/boxes.

Zed, President of Universal Society of Hinduism, stated that many Kraft Heinz products contained gelatin, but the source

Consumption of beef is highly conflicting to Hindu beliefs. Cow, the seat of many deities, is sacred and has long been venerated in Hinduism; Rajan Zed points out.

It was a very serious issue for the devotees

Rajan Zed further said that it was hard to comprehend why Kraft Heinz, "a global



One of the largest food and beverage companies in the world, in over 40 countries; with 2023 net sales of about \$27 billion; Kraft Heinz claims to be a globally trusted producer of delicious foods.

Simple Diet and Lifestyle Tips for Your Healthy Life

Know holistic ways to manage diabetes

DR. INDRAJEET TYAGI AND DR. IRANNA HIRAPUR

People with type 2 diabetes may inquire about current complementary and alternative therapies available for the treatment of their disease. Awareness of such modalities is necessary for effective patient counseling and care. The benefits of offering a wide array of treatment options include possible reduction of HbA1c and of comorbidities with adjunct use of supplements and mind-body practices.

Eating foods that are light, dry, and warm and avoiding foods that are oily, cold, and heavy.

It is better to avoid or reduce Milk products. Low-fat milk products can be consumed. Ghee can be used in moderation as it helps to strengthen the digestive fire.

Use more beans and legumes. Moong beans, in particular, are very helpful for diabetes patients.

inflammation.

Dietary control of blood sugar requires consuming warm food. And drinking warm water.

Foods that are a bitter such as Bitter melon, Methi help in managing diabetes. Turmeric is another important spice that should be included in the diet.

Foods to be avoided are fried foods, tuber vegetables, soft drinks, fruits like mango, custard apple, dates, and bananas should be avoided. Cakes, sugarcane products, and wine must be avoided.

What are the herbs recommended for diabetes?

Several herbs may help with treatment for diabetes. Efficient management of diabetes is crucial for ensuring a healthy life.

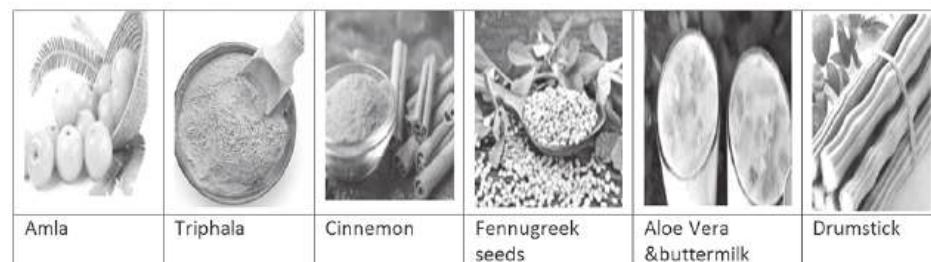
Amla - Also known as Indian gooseberry is a potent herb which is rich in vitamin C and antioxidants; this makes it perfect for treating and keeping diabetes under control. Amla is also rich in chromium mineral that enables proper carbohydrate metabolism and allows your body to respond to insulin, keeping the blood sugar

under control. Other minerals present in Amla - calcium, phosphorus, and iron help the body absorb insulin and regulate blood sugar levels.

Triphala - Triphala is a powdered formula that comprises Haritaki, Amla, and Bibhitaki. Using Triphala provides relief from constipation and improves gut health; it also acts as an medicine for attaining the

What are the other useful tips for managing diabetes?

Include	Avoid
1. Follow timely meal schedule. Have freshly prepared warm food.	1. Refrigerated, deep oily fried, salty, spicy, and canned food items.
2. Churned buttermilk and boiled-cooled water to drink.	2. Curd, paneer, cheese, sweets, and sour foods.
3. Cooked vegetables.	3. Reduce excess usage of potato, cauliflower, green peas, rajma (kidney bean), channa (chickpea), peanut, and Maida (white flour) products.
4. Broken wheat (Daliya), millets, and Jawar should be included in the diet.	4. Daytime sleeping.
5. Moderate levels of exercise daily.	5. Exposure to cold water and cold weather.



Diabetes management with a holistic approach entails a prescription of personalized diet, lifestyle, predominantly use of herbs and herbal medicines, and systemic cleansing therapies.

Follow a holistic approach to help manage diabetes and most health concerns. Monitor your diet to pacify Kapha/phlegm/mucus/sputum needed to help manage Diabetes type 2.

What are the dietary tips to manage diabetes?

Fruits such as apples, pomegranates, and berries can be eaten.

Rice and wheat are heavy and difficult to break down. Light grains like millet and corn can be eaten.

Spices should be used while cooking, as they are good for Kapha Dosha. Pepper, mustard, garlic, and ginger must be included in the diet. Ginger tea is beneficial for digestion. Salt, should be avoided or taken in moderation.

Avoid meats as they may increase in-

right blood sugar balance. As it is rich in antioxidants, it can help reduce the oxidative stress of the body. You can also find Triphala Tablets.

Fennugreek Seeds - Soak two tablespoons fennugreek seeds in water at night, and drinking water and eating the seeds in the morning can help lower blood sugar levels.

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com

Simple Diet and Lifestyle Tips for Your Healthy Life

Know Diabetes: Types, Symptoms, and Management

DR. INDRAJEET TYAGI AND DR. IRANNA HIRAPUR

Diabetes is one of the most common yet challenging health concerns that many people face.

Studies report that nearly 11% of the world population is dealing with diabetes. Diabetes is increasing at an alarming rate in the United States. According to the latest data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 16% of

age but not impossible to cure it.

Diabetes is a condition where the body either does not produce enough insulin (Type 1 diabetes) or cannot use insulin effectively (Type 2 diabetes). According to Ayurveda, there are twenty types of Prameha - four types can crop up because of vata, six occur because of pitta and 10 occur because of kapha. Madhumeha (lit-

erally meaning sweet urine)/diabetes, a subtype of Prameha is characterized by urine that is sweet and is correlated with symptoms is key to managing diabetes effectively through appropriate and timely intervention. Diabetes can often mask the symptoms of other diseases, such as those relating to the heart or kidney. There are many cases of people suffering a mild heart attack and not knowing about it because of high diabetes.

What are the causes of Type 1 diabetes?

The primary cause of type 1 diabetes is not known. However, in this condition, the immune system can start attacking the insulin-producing cells present in the pancreas. As a result, the insulin levels in the body drops dramatically and increases the blood sugar level in your bloodstream. Apart from lack of insulin production, a mix

What are the other tips for diabetes management?

The Role of Self-Management - Diabetes self-management is allowing seniors to understand how to monitor blood sugar levels, recognizing symptoms that require medical attention, and making daily lifestyle choices that contribute to stable blood sugar levels.

Managing Diabetes Effectively - Effective management of diabetes involves a holistic approach such as regular medical check-ups by healthcare professionals and obtain tailored diabetes guidelines. Lifestyle modifications include changing eating habits and diet, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep, and staying hydrated. Proper management of chronic pain can indirectly aid in diabetes management.

(Authors: Dr. Indrajeet Tyagi, M. R. Medical College, Kalaburagi, Karnataka and Dr Iranna S. Hirapur, MD, DM (Cardiology) Interventional Cardiologist at Heart Foundation, Kalaburagi, Karnataka)

According to Ayurveda, the following are the primary causes of diabetes:

Being physically inactive	Excessive sleep, including sleeping during the daytime
Eating too much sweet food	Eating too many foods that cause an increase in Kapha
Excessive use of curds	

American adults -- that is close to 1 in 6 -- now have diabetes. Increasing age and excessive weight greatly increase the odds for the disease, which happens when the body does not use insulin properly, resulting in high blood sugar levels.

The vast majority (95%) of diabetes cases are type 2 diabetes, which occurs when the body's cells no longer respond to insulin, as they should. Insulin is a hormone essential for regulating blood sugar levels. If left unchecked, diabetes can be debilitating and even life threatening. Nevertheless, Diabetes is challenging to man-

erally meaning sweet urine)/diabetes, a subtype of Prameha is characterized by urine that is sweet and is correlated with

Allopathic ways to manage diabetes	Ayurvedic ways to manage diabetes
Regular blood sugar monitoring	Remedies using Ayurvedic herbs.
Medication adherence/management	Various therapies help aid the detox procedure that rejuvenates the body. This helps in severe cases of diabetes.
Dietary modifications	Dietary changes help manage diabetes. Cleansing your body by adding bitter fruits to your diet. For example, bitter melon, bitter melon, and other astringent fruits and vegetables can help manage diabetes levels.
Regular physical activity and lifestyle adjustments to lose extra weight	Lifestyle changes can help manage diabetes. Regular Yoga/ workout.

diabetes. Understanding the types of diabetes is crucial for effective management.

In Ayurveda, primarily we have two types of Prameha.

Dhaatukshaya refers to the depletion of tissues in the body. This can cause juvenile diabetes.

Avarana occurs because of a blockage in the paths of channels due to aggravated Kapha.

Type 1 diabetes is less common and typically diagnosed in children and young adults.

Type 2 diabetes is more prevalent in seniors and is often related to lifestyle factors.

What are the Signs and Symptoms?

Early detection/understanding of these

of susceptibility and various environmental factors can trigger this condition.

What are the causes of Type 2 diabetes?

Prediabetes can lead to type 2 diabetes. However, in this condition, your cells can become resistant to insulin and its actions. In addition, as the pancreas cannot create insulin, your body may find it challenging to overcome this resistance.

While the actual cause of type 2 diabetes is uncertain, it is believed that the condition crops up because of genetic and environmental reasons. Unlike type 1 diabetes, being overweight is a primary reason behind type 2 diabetes. However, not everyone who has type 2 diabetes is overweight.

What are the diabetes management guidelines?

While genetics play a role, lifestyle factors greatly influence the development and management of diabetes. Understanding what causes diabetes is essential in formulating prevention strategies.

Type 1 diabetes symptoms	Type 2 diabetes symptoms
Extreme thirst	Extreme thirst
Excessive hunger	Unusually frequent urination
Dry mouth	Excessive hunger
Upset stomach	Unintended weight loss
Urge to vomit	Fatigue
Sudden weight loss	Slow-healing wounds
Constant fatigue	Frequent urination
Blurry vision	

Veggie Light Diet

INDRAJEET

Rise up bright and early

To start your day right

Just come to the kitchen and see

As your breakfast is the main meal

Decide to start the day off

With a nice plate of food

Something steaming and hot

So many options for making

Your wise and clever choice

And none of those options get old

There are soft Idlis and crispy Dosas

and hot magic Ghee Masala Upma

Buttered toasts and Cereals

You can pile any one up and in

For your lunches or brunches

A mountain of goodness

All leafy and green veggies

Full of fiber minerals and iron

Vitamins A B C D K and then E

They are perfect for salads

And also for spicy dinner soups

Today's first class kale

Spinach broccoli Zucchini

Beet potato and cauliflower

Tomatoes and cucumber

Quash plantain and papaya

To be boiled, baked or roasted

and then gobbled right down.

Gita wisdom along with Bible in Texas schools sought

Cont'd from page 17

It had inspired, fascinated, touched and impacted millions of readers worldwide over the centuries;

Zed, who is President of Universal Society of Hinduism, noted.

This philosophical and intensely spiritual poem Bhagavad-Gita considers the nature of action, the religious and social duty, the human relationship to God, the means of liberation, the nature of sacrifice, Rajan Zed observed

Awareness about other religions created by such instruction from Bhagavad-Gita in now religiously diverse Texas public school classrooms would make students of the state well-nurtured, well-balanced, and enlightened citizens of this country

Hinduism is the oldest and third largest religion of the world with about 1.2 billion adherents and moksh (liberation) is its ultimate goal. There are about three million Hindus in the USA. There are large Hindu populations in Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, Midland-Odessa, and other areas of Texas.

There is reportedly a proposal to use Bible teachings in Texas elementary public schools as an option.

Vedhika Kumar:

It's incredibly rewarding to end the year with 'Fear'

Actress Vedhika Kumar, whose latest project 'Fear' got released just a few days ago, feels that "ending the year with 'Fear' is incredibly rewarding."

In an exclusive quote to IANS Vedhika Kumar opened about her latest release 'Fear' and her other five releases in 2024.

Vedika stated, "When God's grace meets hard work, magic happens. That's been my journey since 2023, and I'm filled with gratitude for my fans, the universe, and my well-wishers. Having five releases in a year is truly special, especially when each project challenges me in different ways and allows me to showcase my versatility."

Adding to it Vedhika said "Starting the year strong and now ending it with 'Fear' feels incredibly rewarding. I'm thankful for the appreciation, and I hope this momentum drives me to achieve even greater heights in 2025."

The trailer of 'Fear' was released by R. Madhvan. Vedhika shares warm camaraderie with him.

Looking ahead, Vedhika is rumored to have another Tamil release by the year's end, along with several other exciting projects in the pipeline.

Vedhika Kumar primarily works in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam films. At the start of her showbiz career she mostly appeared in modeling assignments. She was approached by Arjun to play the lead role in 'Madrasi'.

Vedhika continued acting in South Indian films like 'Muni', 'Vijaydashmi', 'Shivakashi', 'Kaalai'. *IANS*



Mallika reveals the secret to her 'million bucks' look

Bollywood actress Mallika Sherawat's secret to looking youthful is leading a "satvik disciplined life" devoid of late night parties, alcohol and cigarettes.

Mallika replied to a fan on X, formerly known as Twitter, who asked: "I dont care of any plastic surgeons/botox/diet except for that is treating #mallikasherawat!! I want that fitness/ cosmetic/ diet/ yoga trainer."

To which, the actress shared: "My secret is leading a satvik disciplined life devoid of late night parties, alcohol and cigarettes."

She revealed that she tries to sleep early, which helps her look like a "million bucks."

"Try to sleep by 9pm and you will look like a million bucks," she wrote.

The actress has often shared videos and pictures of herself working out in the gym and the rigorous routine she follows to stay fit.

On the work front, Mallika was last seen on screen in "Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video" starring Rajkumar Rao, Vijay Raaz and Triptii Dimri. The film follows the story of a couple who decide to film their first night as a souvenir. It all seems fine until the CD in which they stored their video gets stolen along with the CD player.

Mallika first stepped into the limelight in 2002 with the film "Jeena Sirf Merre Liye", where she was credited as Reema Lamba. *IANS*

TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Aaj Ki Raat : **Stree 2**
- 2 Tauba Tauba: **Bad Newz**
- 3 Zaroorat Se Zyada: **Vedaa**
- 4 Tainu Khabar Nahi : **Munjya**
- 5 Sajni: **Laapataa Ladies**
- 6 Soulmate: **Ek Tha Raja**
- 7 Khoobsurat: **Stree 2**
- 8 Ishq: **Ishq**
- 9 Mere Mehboob Mere Sanam: **Bad Newz**
- 10 Taras: **Munjya**

Somy Ali: I don't believe in resolutions

Former actress Somy Ali shared that she doesn't believe in resolutions and instead follows being a disciplinary.

As the New year approaches, asked what her new year resolutions are, Somy said: "I don't believe in resolutions. I believe in being disciplinary and action oriented. My first love will always be to work hands-on with the law enforcement all over the U.S. and The National Human Trafficking Hotline, plus the FBI."

She said that she wants to be there to comfort the victims, primarily children.

"Because as much as I love them I couldn't have any of my own. The children I rescue mean the world to me and they are my children. I can relate to their pain and sorrow and my training has taught me to compartmentalize being a victim advocate separate from being me as a person. It's not easy, but after 17 years I have learned to do it." *IANS*



Tiger Shroff tells why he doesn't 'really like to fight'

Bollywood actor Tiger Shroff, who is known for adrenaline-rushing action sequences, has revealed that he does not like to fight.

Tiger took to Instagram, where he shared a behind-the-scenes of a film. The actor revealed it was a rehearsal, but did not share what film it was from. For the background score, Tiger chose Sabrina Carpenter's "Espresso" for the video.

"Dont really like to fight...especially when its someone as fast or faster, so i try to visualize a song and make the choreo easy and fun to rem #bts #rehearsal (sic)," he wrote as the caption.

Tiger's mother Ayesha Shroff turned cheerleader for the actor hero in the comment section and wrote: "No one can do what you do!!! And that's a fact."

Tiger will next be seen in the fourth installment of the "Baaghi" franchise. The film also stars Sonam Bajwa and Harnaaz Sandhu, the winner of the Miss Universe 2021 beauty pageant, who is all set to make her debut in Hindi cinema. *IANS*



Samantha Ruth Prabhu's EMOTIONAL POST ON ALLU ARJUN

Allu Arjun's reunion with his family after his release from Chanchalguda Jail has left his fans and members of the film industry extremely emotional.

Several pictures and videos from Allu Arjun's residence surfaced online in which the actor can be seen receiving an emotional welcome from his family. The actor hugged his children, Ayaan and Arha, before sharing an emotional and extended hug with his wife, Sneha Reddy. Actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu shared one of the clips on her Instagram that highlighted this particular moment.

"I am not crying, okay!" Samantha wrote with teary-eyed emojis and tagged Arjun and Sneha.

Filmmaker Vignesh Shivan also reacted to the particular moment.

"Waited to only see this! (heart emoji)" He added, "With heartfelt condolences to the family. Very very unfortunate to go through this @alluarjunonline sir, but the way he handled this was very mature and dignified. *ANI*



Nushratt hilariously panics with 'bestie' Ishita Raj

Actress Nushratt Bharuccha was hilariously a nervous wreck after her best friend and actress Ishita Raj took over the steering wheel of her new luxurious car.

Nushratt took to her Instagram stories, where she shared a video of the two going out for a night out.

In the funny video, Nushratt is heard telling her "Pyaar Ka PUNCHAMA" co-star: "Araam se Ishita! Pehele udhar dekho, traffic dekho, fir right jao. (Be careful Ishita, First see here and then see the traffic)."

To which, Ishita said that she has seen and she then questions Nushratt if she is teaching her on how to drive a car.

Nushratt replies: "I am teaching you how to drive my car."

Pat comes the reply from Ishita, who says that Nushratt needs to learn how to drive her own car. A nervous Nushratt adds that she doesn't know what will happen to her car.

For the caption, she wrote: "When your bestie takes over your new wheels."

The two actresses-turned-best friends first worked together in the 2011 film "Pyaar Ka PUNCHAMA", a romantic comedy directed by Luv Ranjan. The film

stars Kartik Aaryan, Divyendu Sharma, Raayo S. Bakhirta, Nushrat Bharucha, Sonalli Seygall and Ishita Raj Sharma and follows the story of three working bachelors who find girls whom they fall in love with and the twists and turns of the newly developing love stories.

They were next seen in the second installment of the franchise in 2015 and also "Sonu Ki Titu Ki Sweety" which released in 2018.

On the work front, Nushratt will next be seen in "Chhorii 2," a sequel to the 2021 film, directed by Vishal Furia and produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Vikram Malhotra, Jack Davis, Shikhaa Sharma, and Shiv Chanana, earned praise from audiences for its gripping storytelling and eerie atmosphere. *IANS*



Ustad Zakir Hussain (1951-2024)

The rhythm of a global legend falls silent

NEW DELHI: The music world mourns the loss of Ustad Zakir Hussain, the legendary tabla virtuoso, who passed away on Sunday, December 15, 2024, in San Francisco, USA. He was 73.

Widely regarded as one of the greatest percussionists of all time, Ustad Zakir Hussain was not only a master of his craft but also a cultural bridge-builder who elevated Indian classical music to international acclaim.

His contributions to both traditional and contemporary music have left an indelible mark on the global music landscape.

Born on March 9, 1951, in Mumbai, Zakir Hussain inherited his talent and passion for tabla from his father, the iconic Ustad Alla Rakha.

Demonstrating exceptional promise from a young age, Zakir Hussain began performing by the time he was a teenager. His unmatched skill and

innate rhythm soon catapulted him to prominence in the Indian classical music world.

Zakir Hussain redefined the role of the tabla, transforming it from a mere supporting instrument to a central figure in performances.

His mastery of intricate rhythms and his ability to convey

musicians such as John McLaughlin in 'Shakti' and Mickey Hart in 'Planet Drum' pushed boundaries.

The 'Planet Drum' album earned him a Grammy Award and showcased his extraordinary ability to merge cultural rhythms into a harmonious global sound.

Over a career spanning al-

BORN ON MARCH 9, 1951, IN MUMBAI, ZAKIR HUSSAIN INHERITED HIS TALENT AND PASSION FOR TABLA FROM HIS FATHER, THE ICONIC USTAD ALLA RAKHA

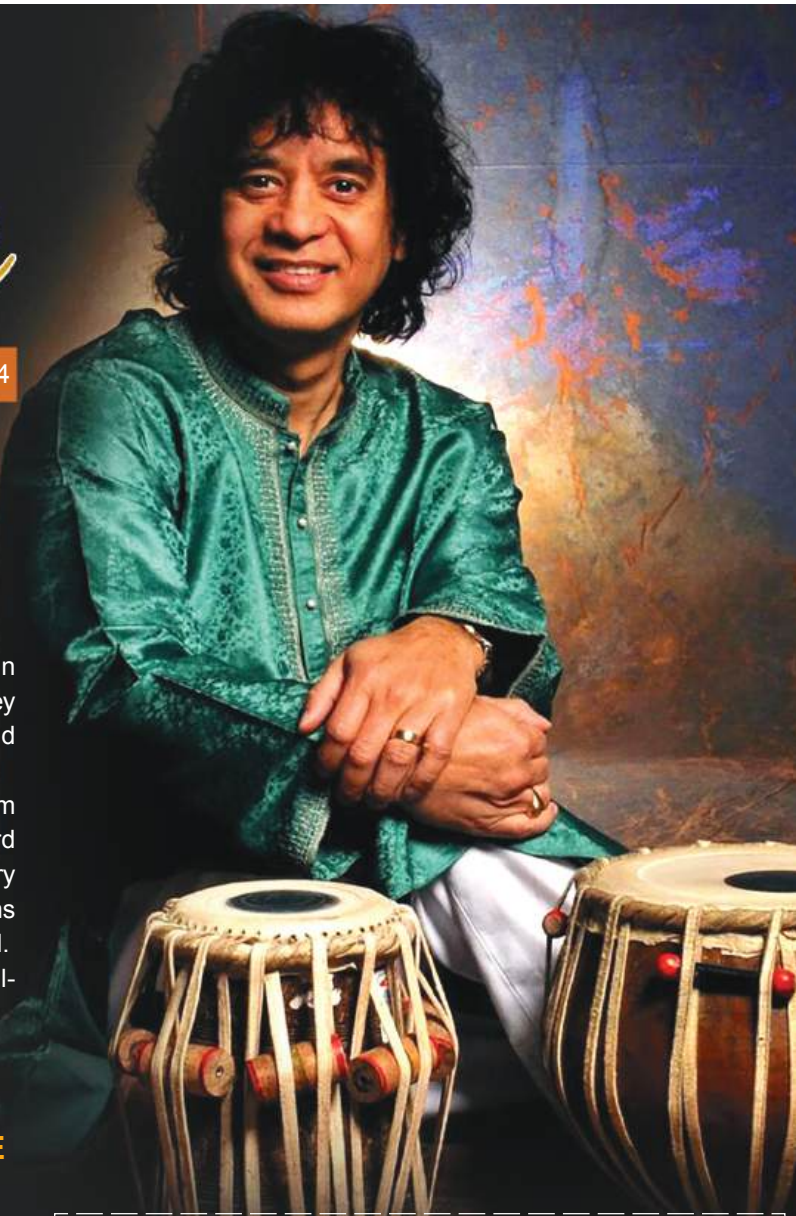
profound emotion through his music made him an iconic figure in the world of classical music.

Zakir Hussain was a trailblazer in blending Indian classical music with global genres, creating groundbreaking collaborations that expanded the reach of his art.

He partnered with legends like Pandit Ravi Shankar and Ustad Vilayat Khan in traditional settings, while his groundbreaking collaborations with international

most six decades, Zakir Hussain received numerous prestigious awards, including:

Padma Shri (1988) and Padma Bhushan (2002) from the Indian government, 4 Grammy Awards for his contribution to world music, the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, recognizing his excellence in Indian classical music, the National Heritage Fellowship, the highest award for traditional artists in the US. ANI



US Embassy in India pays tribute to Ustad Zakir Hussain following his passing

WASHINGTON: The world of music has lost one of its most transcendent figures with the passing of Ustad Zakir Hussain, the legendary tabla virtuoso, at the age of 73.

The news was confirmed by Jon Bleicher of Prospect PR, representing the Hussain family.

Zakir Hussain, who had been battling idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, passed away in San Francisco, leaving behind a legacy that has profoundly influenced music across the globe.

A global icon of Indian classical music, Hussain was renowned not just for his unparalleled skill on the tabla but also for his groundbreaking contri-

butions to fusion music.

His collaborations with international artists, including John McLaughlin, Mickey Hart, and Ravi Shankar, helped bring Indian music to the world stage and created a lasting impact on the global music landscape.

Fans and celebrities across the world have flooded social media with tributes, remembering the maestro's immense influence on music and culture. The official US Embassy in India X account also paid tribute to the late musician, sharing a poignant throwback video that featured Hussain performing. ANI

"I got bullied for being white": Supermodel Alicia Kaur recalls facing racism during early years of her career

MUMBAI: Alicia Kaur, a Mumbai-based supermodel with Australian roots, has emerged as a prominent figure in the Indian fashion industry. Known for her captivating runway presence, including appearances at prestigious events like Lakme Fashion Week, the supermodel recently shared her approach to dealing with skin color diversity trolls in the modeling world.

The modeling and fashion industries have made significant progress in embracing diversity, welcoming models of various skin tones and body

types. However, this inclusivity wasn't always the norm. In a



Alicia Kaur

conversation with ANI, Alicia Kaur reflected on the discrimination

she faced in both Australia and India during the early years of her career.

"When I started modeling, one of the biggest things I was bullied for online was being white. I got remarks like, 'Get this white girl out of the country.' And I thought, in my own country, I'm not considered a white girl. I grew up being called a 'wog,' which is a highly derogatory term for someone of Greek or Italian heritage. My mum is Anglo-Chinese, and my dad is Greek. I grew up feeling like I didn't belong in my own country," Alicia shared. ANI

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Mortgage finance AUM in India projected to grow 16-17 pc in FY25

NEW DELHI: The assets under management (AUM) of mortgage finance loans in the country is expected to grow at a healthy 16-17 percent this fiscal and the next (FY25 and FY26), a report of 16 December said.

Trends in the sub-segments like home loans, loans against property (LAP), and wholesale loans will vary. Over the current and next fiscals, home loans should grow at a reasonable pace of 13-14 percent, according to the Crisil Ratings report.

Home loan growth is supported by structural factors such as rising urbanization, better affordability on account of limited housing price increases in recent years, and expected cuts in interest rates.

LAP growth is expected to normalize to 23-24 percent from the fiscal 2024 high of 37 percent. Wholesale loans, which were declining over the last 5 years, will see a moderate expansion of 6-7 percent over the current and next fiscals, the report added.

In terms of the AUM mix, home loans continue to form the majority of the AUM at 60 percent, LAP forms 30 percent, and wholesale loans the remaining 10 percent. *IANS*

Real Estate POST

December 20, 2024

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India Post 27

India to see mega residential launches in Q1 2025, focus to shift to mid-income housing: HSBC

NEW DELHI: India is set to witness mega residential project launches in the first quarter of 2025 after a strong 'upgrade' demand in the premium segment, and developers will need to pivot towards more mid-income housing as luxury housing hits a high base, a report of last week by HSBC Global Research showed.

The past four years have been dominated by "upgrade" demand, serving developers well to achieve better pricing. *IANS*

\$60 billion investment flowed into India's Data Center market in last 6 years: Report

NEW DELHI: India's burgeoning Data Center market has attracted USD 60 billion from both domestic and international investors between 2019-2024 and given the current growth curve is expected to surpass USD 100 billion in cumulative investment commitments by the end of 2027, according to the latest report by real estate consultant CBRE South Asia.

Mumbai continues to dominate data center stock, followed by Chennai, Delhi-NCR and Bengaluru, accounting for 90 percent of the country's total data center stock as of September. Currently, India's total DC stock stands at around 19 Mn. Sq. ft. (land area), which is expected to reach 31 Mn. Sq. ft. by the end of 2025, the report states.

The sector is poised for significant growth in 2025, with nearly

475 MW of capacity under construction across major cities like Mumbai, Chennai, and Delhi-NCR. Key demand drivers for the year ahead include BFSI and Technology companies, it observes.



Tier-II cities like Ahmedabad, Kochi, Visakhapatnam, and Lucknow are gaining traction as key locations for data centers, driven by regional data consumption growth and cost-efficiency advantages, the report points out.

State-wise Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal emerged as the leading states in terms of cumulative investment commitments.

India's current data center capacity stands at around 1,255 MW, and it is projected to further expand to 1,600 MW by the end of 2024. The country's acceler-

ated technology proliferation, digital transformation, increased Internet penetration, policy enablers, and growth in AI-generated data workload will pivot this growth, the report observes.

As sustainability becomes a critical priority, there is a growing focus on integrating renewable energy solutions and advanced cooling technologies, which are helping enhance energy efficiency and reduce the carbon footprint of India's data centers, the report points out.

Additionally, with AI workloads expected to surpass traditional cloud computing demands, data center operators are making significant upgrades to their infrastructure to accommodate the evolving needs of AI-driven applications, ensuring they can support the next generation of digital transformation, the report adds. *IANS*

2025 to see new growth opportunities in Tier-2 & 3 cities for Indian real estate sector

NEW DELHI: After witnessing a bumper growth in 2024 across residential, office and industrial domains, 2025 is likely to be a year of consolidation and continued innovation for the Indian real estate sector, a report showed on Monday.

While residential and office markets can potentially stabilize after consecutive peaks, industrial and warehousing demand can witness heightened traction, fuelled by rising manufacturing output and a thriving logistics industry, according to a Colliers India report.

In 2025, rapid urbanization, key infrastructure project completion and industrial corri-

dor development will create new growth opportunities, particularly in tier 2 and 3 cities.

In 2024, annual gross leasing



across the top six cities reached 47 million square feet by the third quarter of the ongoing year, reflecting a 23 percent year-on-year increase.

On the residential front, supported by stable interest rates, launches and sales across major cities of the coun-

try are likely to end on a strong note this year. Average housing prices across the top eight cities have already surged 11 percent annually in 2024. *IANS*

Assam aims to complete nearly 2 lakh Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin houses by 2026

GUWAHATI: The Assam government has set a target to complete the construction works of nearly 2 lakh houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) in the state by 2026.

Assam Panchayat & Rural Development Minister Ranjeet Kumar Dass told ANI reporter, "Earlier our target was 20 lakh houses. Out of which we have already constructed 19.52 lakh houses. Now Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given us 1.72 lakh additional houses, and we have already completed the construction works of 10,000 houses.

"We hope that every eligible household in the state will get PMAY houses soon. Our Chief

Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma also told us that, if it is necessary, the Mukhya Mantri Awas Scheme will also be implemented," Dass said.

Earlier, with a focus on inclu-



sive development and fulfilling the dream of "Housing for All" in the state, the Assam Budget 2024 earmarked a staggering Rs 600 crore under the Mukhya Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin to ensure shelter for every citizen. *ANI*

Philosophy

WOLTER KEERS

The idea of being a someone who does all kinds of things, is nothing other than a projection. In fact such a 'someone', such an active person does not exist. The person is only imagination.

You may assume that you have done all kinds of things in your life, but you have never done anything. After the finish of an action or a thought, a feeling or a sensory perception, an 'I' projects itself at the end, as a sort of tail.

During listening there was no I. But, at the end of the story an I who heard the story, is manufactured. How can an I, that isn't there at all, hear a story? The 'I' is nothing but an invention. There is no such I and you have never done anything in your life.

Things do themselves. You are the witness of the movements of the body, also of the movement of what you call 'your will' and that possibly precedes an action. You are, whether you want to or not, and without any effort, witness of fleeting thoughts and feelings.

'he' is not someone who is active; the idea never occurs to him that he could be an active someone. Even if he says: 'Now I'm going to polish my shoes' there is no idea or feeling at all in him that he is someone who is going to do something.

The difficulty remains that one meeting someone, always sees the other at his own level. I remember very well that it was a puzzle to me to see Ramana Maharshi eating. I was convinced that he was enlightened, but how was it possible that he also ate, and slept, and walked, I could not understand.

That was because at that time I identified myself with a body and action. In my case there was an I-feeling after polishing shoes or before, and after eating and other activities. Therefore I saw the projection of things on 'my' body also projected on 'his' actions and so forth.

People think that being happy means always having a sunny disposition. But in fact, that has nothing to



Wolter Keers

*Real happiness is invisible,
it is freedom itself*

*There is no person that exists
and you haven't done anything
in your life*

And you are - and that is the most important thing to see - also always witness of such an I-thought that you tack on like a tail behind a thought, a feeling, a perception or an action. The I-thought is just a thought, similar to the thought about a nephew or niece, or about the Eiffel tower.

It is one pan in the row of pans on a kitchen shelf. You are no more the one 'I-pan' than you are the other big and small pans. Thus, there is no way to act in daily life. The only thing that needs to be done is to see exactly that.

There is no one who behaves this way or that way. You have never done anything and the only thing that needs to happen to consciously be the freedom that you've always been, is to pull the I-projection out of activities, body, senses, thinking and feeling.

For what you call 'an enlightened one' it is completely self-evident that

do with happiness. Real happiness is invisible. It is freedom itself and that means that happiness is not determined by the feelings that happen, but by standing apart from the feelings.

Wolter Keers (1923-1985) was Dutch mystic, Jean Kleine's friend, disciple of Ramana Maharishi and Atmananda Krishna Menon, and translator of 'I Am That' of Nisargadatta Maharaj.

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Jac O'Keeffe

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Will Bangladesh transition from Bengali identity to Islamic nationalism?

APURBA SEN

Bangladesh was known once as a nation for its Bengali identity and Bengali nationalism, which dreamt of a secular republic. Brave Bangladeshis made sacrifices to defend the Bengali language against the forced imposition of Urdu by Pakistan. As a result, with the intervention of the Indian government, it liberated itself from the atrocities of Pakistan (West) to protect its Bengali language, culture and ethnicity in 1971.

In the early period of its freedom as an independent nation, Bangladesh subscribed to Bengali nationalism to build a secular and inclusive republic. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding father of Bangladesh, decided that secularism would be one of the fundamental pillars of the nation-state. This decision was made in light of the Pakistani experience and the horrors of the genocide. Thus, secularism became enshrined in the constitution in 1972, and Islam-based theocratic parties were banned due to their pro-Pakistan leanings.

In the early period of its freedom as an independent nation, Bangladesh subscribed to Bengali nationalism to build a secular and inclusive republic. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding father of Bangladesh, decided that secularism would be one of the fundamental pillars of the nation-state

Paradoxical nature of secularism

This secular character of Bangladesh lasted just for a few years, because after the assassination of Sheikh Mujib in 1975 and the subsequent military coup, secularism took a major hit in Bangladesh. The military dictatorship of Ziaur Rahman in 1977 removed secularism from the Constitution and replaced it with 'Absolute Trust and Faith in the Almighty Allah,' along with revoking the ban on religious parties. However, in 2009, the Awami League under Sheikh Hasina came to power, with one of its electoral campaign promises being the restoration of the secularism provision in the Constitution. Two years later in 2011, secularism was back in the Constitution, but Islam continued to remain the state religion of Bangladesh.

At present the constitutional position of Bangladesh is secular with Islam as the state religion. Article 2A of the Constitution of Bangladesh says that Islam is the state

religion of the country, while Article 12 of the same Constitution declares that Bangladesh is a secular nation, ensuring equal status and equal rights in the practice of other religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity and the Constitution counts secularism as among the Fundamental Principles of State Policy. Because of this paradoxical nature of secularism in Bangladesh, many believe that it has been impacting the rights of religious minorities.

Descent into Islamic nationalism

Today Bangladesh, a nation founded on secular principles and Bengali Identity, faces challenges. The recent political trends and developments in the country suggest that the state is secular in theory, but in practice Islamist fundamental and extremist forces like Jamaat-e-Islam and Hefazat-e-Islam are working to establish an Islamic state. On August 5, after the fall of the not-so-democratic Hasina regime followed by strong student protests, many

ugly events turned out in Bangladesh such as the vandalizing and beheading of many statues including of Sheikh Mujib, persecution of religious minorities, and political killings.

On social media

platforms like Facebook and X (Twitter), many celebrated the destruction, arguing that significant progress had been made towards cleansing Bangladesh of statues as idolatry was un-Islamic.

Statues and sculptures have faced the ire of Muslim fundamentalists for a long time. The extreme religious organizations in Bangladesh do not approve of the country's close relationship with India. As a result, post-Hasina Bangladesh witnessed assertive anti-India sentiments like boycotting Indian products and burning of the Indian flag by extremist forces. All these events highlight how the extremist forces are gaining ground in Bangladesh amid the political unrest and raise questions of the authenticity of the student-led protests and the newly formed interim government.

(The writer is PhD Research Scholar, University of North Bengal, India) South Asia Monitor

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

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

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The Third Eye: Syria confirms the rise of radicalism in West Asia

DC PATHAK

The capture of Damascus by the radical Islamic forces resulting in the flight of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad to Moscow for political asylum on December 8 was seemingly a sudden development but it marked the culmination of what had been happening in Syria and Iraq for years signifying impact of religion on the old superpower rivalry in the region that was somewhere also changing the geopolitics at the global level.

It may be recalled that way back in 1928, a Muslim thinker Hasan Al Banna had founded Ikhwanul Musalmeen or Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Syria to oppose the regimes of Gamal Abdul Nasser and Hafez Al-Assad --father of Bashar Al-Assad -- who were looked upon as pro-Soviet 'nationalist' Arab leaders.

Banna believed that the Quran was the best Constitution for Muslims and that an Islamic state could live 'in competition, not conflict with the West'. The US-led West appreciated the Muslim Brotherhood movement and even encouraged it.

When Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi, an admirer of Hasan Al Banna, launched Jamaat-e-Islami at Lahore in 1940, this pro-West Islamic stream spread to the Indian subcontinent too and became the ideological anchor of Nizam-e-Mustafa defined by President Zia-ul-Haq as the goal for Pakistan.

In the wake of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 and the Iranian Revolution of 1978, there was a wave of Pan-Islamism in the 1980s supported by the Saudi Arabia-led Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

At the fourth Islamic Summit held at Casa Blanca in 1984 under the auspices of OIC, Zia-ul-Haq declared that Muslims from 'Morocco to the Philippines' were one community

who must stand together to solve any common problems.

Pan-Islamism as a movement sought to counter the influence of Communism and was blessed by the US whose closest ally in the Muslim world, Saudi Arabia, was pioneering it. However, there was a much older anti-West sentiment in the Muslim world -- flowing from the historical memory of the 'Wahhabi Revolt' -- the name given to the Jihad launched by the leading Ulema of the times in the 19th century against Western encroachment of Muslim lands.

Developments in Afghanistan following the invasion of that country by the Soviet army facilitated the ascendancy of radical fundamentalists in the Afghan territory and this was to influence the course of events in the conflict-prone Middle East in subsequent years.

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The anti-Soviet armed campaign in Afghanistan was operationally led by the CIA-Pakistan's ISI combine and was run on the war cry of Jihad in which apart from the Pakistan-controlled Islamic militant outfits and Saudi-funded Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), radical forces headed by Al Qaeda of Osama bin Laden also took part.

The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1991 led to the dismemberment of the USSR and the demise of International Communism on one hand and put Afghanistan in the throes of anarchy on the other because of the feud among the warlords -- primarily the contest between General Ahmad Shah

Masood heading the nationalistic Northern Alliance and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of Hizbe Islami who was supported by US and Pakistan.

In 1993 Benazir Bhutto, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, sent the Taliban -- products of the Deobandi madrasas known for practicing a ruthless fundamentalist line -- to Afghanistan to control the situation there and they managed to install the Taliban Emirate at Kabul in 1996 under Mullah Mohammad Omar -- a close relative of Osama bin Laden.

Taliban carried the historical memory of the Wahhabi movement -- Darul Uloom Deoband was established near Saharanpur in India by the protagonists of the failed anti-British Jihad, in 1867 -- and the Emirate soon bared its fangs against the US which had to

work for bringing down the Emirate by 2001.

This laid down the turf for 9/11 which was planned by Osama bin Laden taking shelter in Afghanistan. The 'war on terror' that the US-led Coalition launched against Islamic radical forces first in Afghanistan and then in Iraq, in the aftermath of the attack on the Twin Towers, created worldwide repercussions and not unexpectedly paved the way for the spread of 'radicalization' in the two theatres.

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

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com



DUNKI ROUTE GOES BUST

In the past few years, ICE has apprehended over one-lakh Indian nationals, each year, trying to enter the US illegally. A significant portion of the undocumented Indians facing deportation come from high-migration states of Punjab, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh. Nearly 18,000 undocumented Indians in the United States face the risk of deportation, data revealed ahead of President-elect Donald Trump's January 20th inauguration. According to figures from US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), 17,940 Indians are among the 1.445 million individuals with final orders of removal.

For many of these undocumented Indians, securing legal status remains a major challenge. Numerous individuals are caught in prolonged legal proceedings, with hearings often scheduled years into the future. Most of the undocumented Indians facing deportation come from high-migration states of Punjab, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh, according to local immigration experts. India ranks 13th on ICE's list of 208 countries with undocumented immigrants in the US, following nations like Honduras and Guatemala. India is one of the few Asian countries on the list, alongside China.

India has been accused for not cooperating with US' ICE due to delays in verifying citizenship and issuing travel documents for deportation. US expects countries to assist by confirming the nationality of their citizens, conducting interviews, and facilitating their return, either through commercial or, charter flights. India is currently one of 15 nations classified as uncooperative, alongside Pakistan, China, Iran and Venezuela.

In recent attempts of illegal entry into United States has left 230 Indians, including 170 Gujaratis, stranded in Sharjah, UAE. It is believed the group, which includes families, was promised a chartered flight from Dubai to Brazil, allegedly a new route to reach the US. From Brazil, they were to enter the US illegally via Mexico's border by road. Investigations by authorities have unearthed the involvement of several agents, including the financier based in Dubai.

Another source in the know revealed, "Passengers arranged by illegal immigration agents from Kadi, Kalol and Ahmedabad, were to board the particular flight. The agents collected Rs 3-crore in advance to book the charter flight, which was initially scheduled to depart Dubai on Dec 11. However, it was rescheduled to Dec 20 due to concerns over the conditions at the Mexico-US border." The agents, allegedly, have not provided the passengers with flight route details. "However, the passengers have been given a firm assurance that everyone will be sent to the US before President-elect Donald Trump assumes office," said the source, close to the investigation.

Many of these agents are based out of Punjab, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh in India, with their counter parts in Dubai and other transit countries. Not too long ago an entire family from Gujarat froze to death while attempting the crossing the Canada-US border on foot.

Why do these people risk their lives and life-savings to try illegally immigrate into US or Canada? According to few we met say, the lure of dollars and a better life. Thereafter, mostly the reason used to acquire legal status is 'asylum sought from prosecution by Indian authorities'. But the real story is different. All citizens live equally and respectfully across India, unless one is involved in anti-social activities or, terrorism.

Located around 245 km from Bangalore, Kabini is primarily known for its handful of luxury resorts around the Kabini River and Nagarhole National Park in the vicinity. Please note that there are not many budget-friendly accommodations near Kabini River. It is a popular weekend getaway from Bangalore, Mysore and Mangalore.

Once a private hunting area for the British, Kabini is a wildlife destination that is the largest place for Asiatic Elephants in the world. The Kabini Forest Reserve (which comprises the south-eastern part of Nagarhole National Park) is famous for its amazing wildlife and birdlife. Kabini is also home to the world's most famous living

black panther "Saya". Even though it is not impossible to spot him, it is very rare. Black panther, in the South-Western Indian State of Karnataka. It is built on River Kabini, which is a major tributary of River Cauvery in Southern India. The dam forms an enormous reservoir called the Kabini Reservoir near the town of Sargur and is at a distance of about 60 kilometers from Mysore.

The location is picturesque with lush green surroundings and the pristine river water flowing serenely towards its destination. Visitors often come here to experience peace; hence the reservoir is a preferred picnic spot for locals. Many travellers are engineering enthusiasts who love exploring structures across the globe and never miss a chance to visit this engineering marvel in South-West India.

Nature Walks and Campfire: Kabini is a quaint place enveloped in dense woods and lush greenery. One of the most popular things to do in Kabini is setting out on nature walks. While there are tour guides available to help you all along the way, you can also undertake the expedition on your own. There are also trails market for bicycle tours. And in the evenings, you can enjoy bonfires and campfires to make your trip all the more memorable.

BEST TIME TO VISIT KABINI

October to May is the best time to visit Kabini as these are the non-monsoon months. This area receives heavy rainfall during the monsoon. So it

is advisable not to visit Kabini from June to September. But Kabini is an exquisite destination that can be visited any time of the year, as the wildlife here can be spotted almost throughout the year.

HOW TO REACH KABINI

The nearest airport to Kabini is Bangalore (Kempegowda International Airport) or Coimbatore (Coimbatore International Airport). www.holidify.com

Kabini

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black panther "Saya". Even though it is not impossible to spot him, it is very rare.

Boat Safari and Jeep Safari in the Kabini jungle is the ideal way to spot the tiger, leopard, gaurs, elephants and other majestic species. Kabini is also one of the best places in India to photograph leopards.

PLACES TO VISIT IN KABINI

Jungle Safari: The jungle safari is a wonderful opportunity for all the environmental enthusiasts to mingle among the variety of flora and fauna.

Tourists can spend some enjoyable time here by taking a nature walk under the guidance of tour operators.

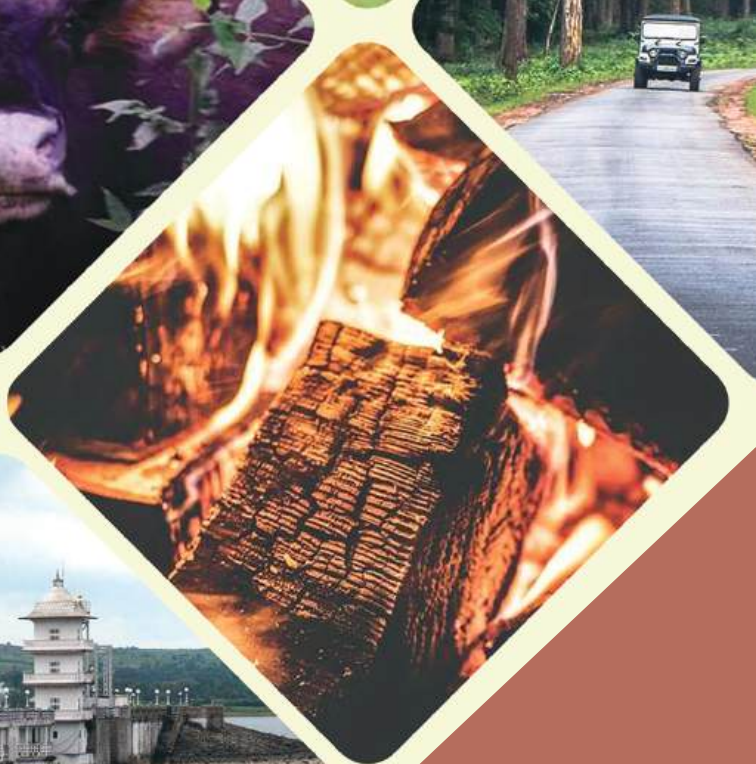
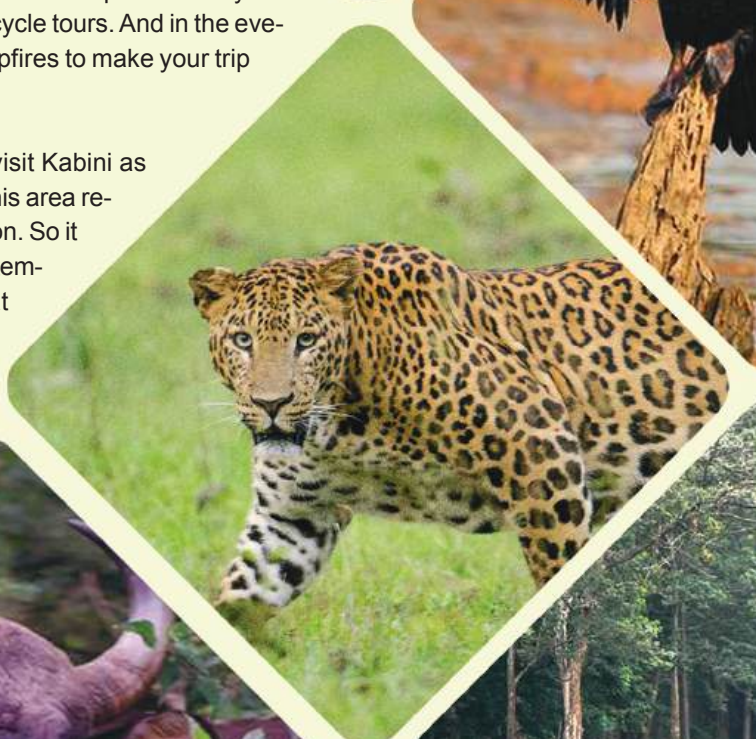
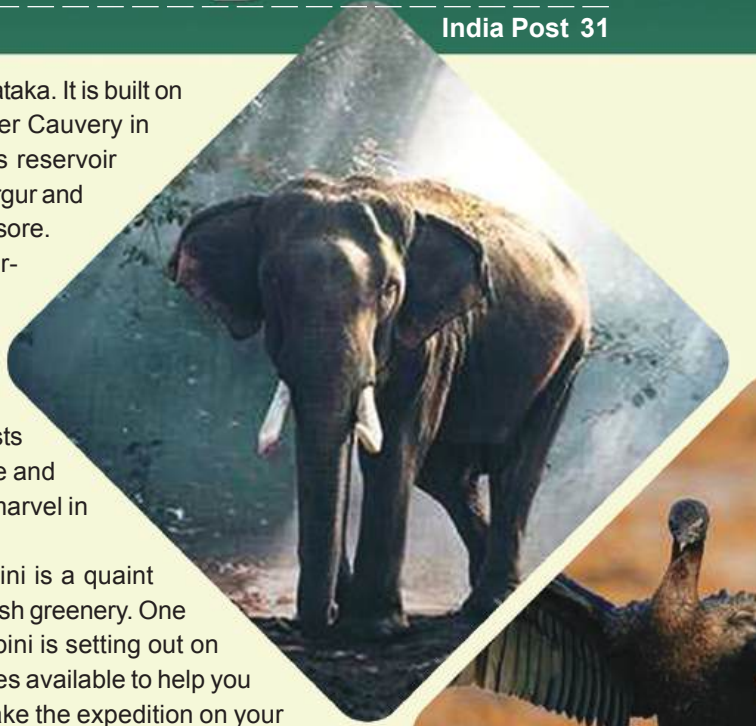
Boating in Kabini: Boating down the Kabini River is a feast for the eyes with the wondrous scenery that is put forth on such a ride.

Along with the dense forests, various animals can be seen in their natural habitat while boating.

Nagarhole National Park: Located in the Mysore district of Karnataka, Nagarhole National Park boasts of rich wildlife including both flora and fauna. Located near Bandipur National Park, it is packed with the bounty of raw nature in its best form. Bestowed with best of wildlife, forest cover and varied topography, this place offers gushing streams, gentle slopes and shallow valleys. The place is a paradise for nature lovers and those seeking solitude.

A variety of species such as Elephants, Jackals, Tigers, Panthers, Gaurs, Sambars, Spotted Deer, Mongoose, Civet cats, Hyenas, Sloth Bears and over 250 species of birds call this place their home. The park is bounded by Kabini River on the north while Bandipur National park forms its southern boundaries.

Kabini Dam: Kabini Dam is located in Mysore Dis-



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