



US will drop Ukraine-Russia peace efforts if no progress is made within days, suggests Rubio



US Secretary of State Marco Rubio

APRIL 18, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Friday, April 18, that the US may be ready to "move on" from efforts for a Russia-Ukraine peace deal if there is no progress in the coming days. Speaking in Paris after a marathon day of landmark talks among US, Ukrainian and European officials, Rubio said the discussions had been constructive and produced an outline for steps towards peace.

French officials said a new meeting in the same format is expected in London in the coming days. Rubio said he could join that meeting, and it's expected early in the week.

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Trump says he's in 'no rush' to end tariffs as he holds talks with Italy's Meloni

Meloni's meeting with Trump is testing her mettle as a bridge between the EU and the United States



President Donald Trump meets with Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni in the Oval Office of the White House, Thursday, April 17, 2025, in Washington. Photo: PTI

APRIL 18, 2025 WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP):

President Donald Trump said Thursday, April 17 that he is in "no rush" to reach any trade deals because of the revenues his tariffs are generating, but he suggested while meeting with Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni that it would be easy to find an agreement with the European Union and others.

Trump played down the likelihood of an accelerated timeline to wrap up deals, saying any agreements would come "at a certain point." "We're in no rush," said Trump, hinting that he has leverage because other countries want access to US consumers.

Meloni's meeting with Trump is testing her mettle as a bridge between the EU and the United States. She is the first European leader to have

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Vaisakhi celebrated Enthusiastically at the Indian Consulate in New York

BY PARVEEN CHOPRA

APRIL 12, 2025

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): Vaisakhi, the harvest festival of Punjab, and the day when Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th master of the Sikhs created a sect with a distinct identity and called them Khalsa in the year 1699 was celebrated with gusto and enthusiasm at the Indian consulate in New York on April 11.

The full room gathering of over a hundred in the ornate Ball Room of the Indian Consulate in New York enjoyed every moment of their presence at the Vaisakhi celebrations organized by The Indian Panorama with the support of the Consulate.

Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan described it as "a joyous celebration honoring the spirit of Baisakhi and Punjab's rich cultural heritage."

Speaking about the creation of the Khalsa, Ambassador Pradhan said that Guru Gobind Singh Ji "dedicated a community which was standing for righteousness, and service.

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Guests at the Vaisakhi celebrations at the Indian Consulate on April 11, 2025 First row, from L to R: Master Mohinder Singh, Keynote Speaker Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba, Guest Speaker Attorney Ravi Batra, Ms Batra, Mrs. Ranju Batra, Mrs. Monalisa Shuvadashini, Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, NY State Assemblymember Ed Braunstein, North Hempstead Town Clerk Ragini Srivastava, Koshy Oomen Thomas, Ahmed Shakir, Parveen Chopra, and Ashish Srivastava(guests)

All pics / Vijay Shah



(Third from left) Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla.

Photo: X/ @ISROspaceflight

Four decades after Rakesh Sharma, Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla set for space travel in May

APRIL 18, 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla is set to travel to the International Space Station next month as part of an Axiom-4 mission, four decades after Rakesh Sharma's iconic spaceflight on-board Russia's Soyuz spacecraft, Union Minister Jitendra Singh said on Friday, April 18.

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COMMENT

If we truly want to "Make America Great Again," we must remember who made America great in the first place-immigrants

By Indrajit Saluja



Two issues have returned to dominate American political discourse with renewed vigor-tariffs and immigration. For President Donald Trump and his inner circle of advisors, the latter has once again become a rallying cry. Rhetoric around "protecting American jobs" and "securing our borders" fills the airwaves, but this well-worn political drumbeat continues to ignore an enduring and essential truth: America was built by immigrants-and it still needs them.

Let us not forget that those in power today are descendants of immigrants-many of whom arrived under far more chaotic and desperate circumstances than those they now seek to shut out. The United States of America has never been an island for a single race, religion, or ideology. It is a mosaic, defined by the struggles and triumphs of those who left everything behind to make a new life here. And it is precisely these people-immigrants-who have given America its strength, resilience, and global leadership.

The American story is inseparable from the immigrant story. From the Irish fleeing famine, to Italians seeking work, to Jews escaping persecution, to South Asians, Latin Americans, Africans, and East Asians pursuing the American Dream-the lifeblood of the nation has flowed from across the seas.

Today, immigrants make up nearly 14% of the U.S. population, amounting to over 45 million people, according to the Pew Research Center. Add their U.S.-born children, and the number rises to over 80 million-about one-fourth of the entire population. This is not a fringe demographic. This is America.

IMMIGRANTS DISPROPORTIONATELY FILL ESSENTIAL ROLES IN AMERICAN SOCIETY:

HEALTH CARE: According to the Migration Policy Institute, immigrants make up 17% of all health care workers, including 28% of physicians and 38% of home health aides.

AGRICULTURE: An estimated 73% of agricultural workers in the U.S. are foreign-born. These are the individuals who pick our fruits and vegetables, often under grueling conditions.

CONSTRUCTION: Roughly 25% of construction laborers are immigrants, keeping our infrastructure standing and expanding.

TECHNOLOGY: In Silicon Valley, over 45% of tech start-ups are founded by immigrants or their children. Think Google (Sergey Brin), Tesla (Elon Musk), and eBay (Pierre Omidyar).

Without immigrants, hospitals would falter; food supply chains would break, infrastructure would stall, and innovation would dry up.

Contrary to populist fear-mongering, immigrants are not a burden on the American economy-they are an asset.

A 2016 study by the National Academies

of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine found that immigration has an overall positive effect on long-term economic growth. First-generation immigrants may consume more public benefits initially, but their children-U.S.-born-contribute more in taxes than they receive in benefits over a lifetime.

Moreover, immigrant-owned businesses employ over 8 million Americans, according to the American Immigration Council. As of 2021, immigrants made up 20% of all entrepreneurs in the country. They are not taking jobs-they are creating them.

The notion that America will benefit by keeping out low-skilled immigrants is equally flawed. A so-called "gold card" system-where only the wealthy or highly educated are admitted-may sound appealing on paper, but who will do the hard, unglamorous work that keeps cities, farms, restaurants, and households running?

It certainly won't be the financiers or tech moguls. America runs on the labor of millions-often undocumented-who clean hotel rooms, deliver groceries, wash dishes, and build homes. To pretend otherwise is willful blindness.

The irony of current immigration crackdowns is that they are coming at a time when America faces a looming labor shortage.

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, there are more than 9 million job openings across the country with only about 6 million unemployed workers to fill them. The mismatch is even starker in labor-intensive sectors like agriculture, hospitality, elder care, and manufacturing.

As birth rates fall and baby boomers retire, the U.S. needs a replenished workforce. Without immigration, America will not only struggle to fill jobs-it will lose its competitive edge globally. China, India, and the EU are surging ahead in population-driven growth and innovation. America risks falling behind not because it is overrun by immigrants, but because it is turning them away.

Policy debates often reduce immigration to numbers. But immigration is also about people-families, dreams, and sacrifices.

Many of today's immigrants arrived legally, worked tirelessly, paid taxes, and raised children who are now first responders, soldiers, doctors, and teachers. Yet they are dismissed, criminalized, or detained as if they are a threat.

Take the case of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), which protects over 600,000 Dreamers-young people brought here as children through no fault of their own. They grew up American, but face constant uncertainty about their

status. They are nurses, engineers, and students-yet treated as pawns in political games.

What does it say about us as a nation that we rip apart families, detain asylum seekers, or deny refuge to those fleeing violence, while continuing to benefit from their labor?

It's not just bad policy-it's inhumane.

No one disputes that the U.S. immigration system is broken. But the answer is not mass deportations or xenophobic walls. The answer lies in comprehensive, bipartisan immigration reform.

WE NEED:

- Pathways to citizenship for undocumented workers who have built lives here.
- Fixes to legal immigration channels, which are mired in bureaucracy and long wait times.
- Support for asylum seekers and better resources to process cases humanely.
- Visa reforms that reflect real labor market needs-especially in agriculture, caregiving, and construction.

Unfortunately, immigration policy has become the political football of our times. Presidents sign executive orders. Courts overturn them. Congress remains gridlocked. Meanwhile, the people-the immigrants-wait in limbo.

Let Congress step up-not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans. Let them look beyond short-term politics and see the human and economic reality. Immigration reform is not about "them"-it's about us.

Will we be the nation that values diversity, hard work, and the contributions of all people? Or will we be a country that closes its doors in fear, and in doing so, turns its back on the very ideals it was founded upon?

President Trump may seek to throw out millions of immigrants-but can America survive without them?

Let us not find out the hard way.

A Nation Built by Immigrants Must Not Be Broken by Intolerance.

greatness does not lie in homogeneity, but in its embrace of diversity. The laborers in the fields, the waiters in the diners, the nurses in the ICUs, and the engineers in Silicon Valley-they are all America.

If we truly want to "Make America Great Again," we must remember who made America great in the first place-immigrants.

The machinery of immigration needs fixing-but not at the cost of those who keep the machine running.

Immigrants are the Lifeblood of America's Past, Present, and Future. It is time we honored them-not just in words, but in policy. Time for Congress to act. Time for compassion to trump cruelty. Time to reclaim the soul of America.

Khalsa ੴ 1699

GIDRAN TO MAIN SHER BANAUN

CHIRIAN TE MAIN BAAZ TUDAUN

SAVA LAKH SE EK LADAUN

TABE GOBIND SINGH NAAM KAHAUN



Ranju Batra
Chair



Five Indian-origin researchers win 2025 Inflection Awards

APRIL 16, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): Five Indian-origin researchers, including two Indian Americans - Eshaan Patheria and Garima Raheja - are among the 30 best young scientists in the world working on breakthrough solutions to climate change chosen for the prestigious 2025 Inflection Awards.

Organized by Marble, a European climate-tech venture studio, and supported by Breakthrough Energy Fellows and the Quadrature Climate Foundation, the Inflection Awards celebrate early-career scientists tackling one of humanity's greatest challenges.

Selected through a rigorous evaluation process from hundreds of applicants, they stood out for their scientific excellence, ambition, and potential to drive real-world impact, according to a media release.

"This cohort of groundbreaking scientists represents the power of research, the drive of young minds, and the urgency of action. They are not just imagining the future, they are building it," it stated.

The 30 Awardees were honored at an exclusive event in Paris, engaged in a world-class bootcamp, and gained access to exceptional career opportunities.

Indian-origin researchers are:

Eshaan Patheria, California Institute of Technology, is a PhD candidate in chemistry at Caltech, developing high-energy-density lithium-ion battery cathodes using only inherently inexpensive, scalable raw materials.

He will complete his PhD in May 2025 and is working to scale this technology by leveraging existing lithium-ion battery manufacturing infrastructure.

Beyond his research, Eshaan is committed to expanding access to clean,



Eshaan Patheria, Garima Raheja, Monali Priyadarshini, Vikas Dhamu, and Mahendra Patel are among the 30 best young scientists in the world working on breakthrough solutions to climate change chosen for the prestigious 2025 Inflection Awards.

affordable energy.

In 2018-19, with the NGO Gram Vikas, he established India's first lithium-ion battery-powered microgrid in Kalahandi, Odisha.

Eshaan is a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow, a Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation Fellow, and holds an A.B. in Chemistry & Physics from Harvard University.

Garima Raheja, Columbia University, is a PhD candidate at Columbia University in NYC studying big data applications for air and energy.

Previously, she worked at on carbon-free electricity at the White House, earth observations at NASA, led an environmental strategy consulting org in Berkeley, and represented the US in climate diplomatic relations with Japan and South Korea.

She serves as an AGU Community Science Fellow and U.S. State Department Air Quality Fellow. She graduated with a BA in Data Science and a BS in Civil/Environmental Engineering from UC Berkeley. She is interested in careers in energy/finance/data.

Monali Priyadarshini, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, is an Assistant Professor at VIT Vellore. With a Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering from IIT Kharagpur, she specializes in wastewater management through advanced oxidation processes and bio-electrochemical systems.

She has an impressive research portfolio, including 27 publications in reputed journals, five book chapters, and two best paper awards at international conferences.

As a member of prestigious

organizations like the International Water Association (IWA) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Dr. Priyadarshini actively contributes to advancing her field.

She currently serves as an Editor for Scientific Reports and Discover Water journals and has reviewed over 50 articles for various international journals.

Vikas Dhamu, National University of Singapore, is a PhD student developing innovative methods for CO₂ storage in deep-sea sediments as clathrate hydrates, a promising solution for safely sequestering large amounts of CO₂.

He is driven to contribute to global efforts like mitigating global warming, achieving net-zero emissions, and accelerating the transition to renewable energy. By fostering sustainable solutions and promoting a green growth economy, Dhamu aims to help build a more resilient and sustainable future for all.

Mahendra Patel is a PhD student at EPFL, Switzerland, working on solar-driven renewable fuel production. He holds BS and MS degrees in Chemistry from IISER Pune and EPFL.

His research focuses on converting sunlight, water, and CO₂ into sustainable fuels such as hydrogen, syngas, and ethylene, with potential applications in gasoline and aviation fuel production.

By developing an innovative integrated photoelectrochemical device that utilizes concentrated sunlight, his work demonstrates high solar-to-fuel efficiency, offering a promising pathway for sustainable fuel production and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

Mahendra is passionate about advancing solar fuel technologies to tackle global energy challenges.

Indian American Sikh scholar Inni Kaur addresses session on Bhai Vir Singh

APRIL 11, 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): Indian American Inni Kaur, Creative Director of the New Jersey-based Sikh Research Institute (SikhRI), who is herself an author, visited the Niwas Sthaan of Bhai Vir Singh and addressed a session on his body of work. Talking about the Sikh scholar, philanthropist and writer, Inni Kaur, who has authored several books on Sikh values and teachings of Gurus, said that as a young girl, Bhai Vir Singh's literature introduced her to the Sikh way of life.



Inni Kaur, Creative Director of the New Jersey-based Sikh Research Institute (SikhRI), who is herself an author, visited the Niwas Sthaan of Bhai Vir Singh and addressed a session on his body of work

were commendable. He also shared that her translation of Sakhis in English is to be published by the Sahitya Sadan at Delhi.

"As a convent educated young girl, born and brought up overseas, it was only the writings of Bhai Vir Singh ji that connected me to my roots," she shared. The session had several noted Sikh scholars, writers and educators present.

In an emotional interaction with the sangat (audience), she shared her life experiences from an English living, being a scholar of Sikh literature, spirituality and authorship. She attributed it all to the wisdom of Bhai Vir Singh and his scholarship. Gunbir Singh, vice-president, Bhai Vir Singh Niwas Asthaan, said that Inni's contributions to the Sikh cause

Indian-origin diversity chief Neela Rajendra sacked after Trump's executive order

APRIL 15, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): NASA has sacked Neela Rajendra, former head of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at its Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), in compliance with a recent executive order issued by US President Donald Trump.

According to reports, the order mandates the termination of all DEI-related positions and programs across federal agencies.

Rajendra, who is of Indian origin, had served in a senior DEI leadership role for several years, spearheading initiatives like NASA's "Space Workforce 2030" pledge, which aimed to increase the hiring of women and minorities.

In an effort to retain her, NASA reportedly changed her title to "Head of the Office of Team Excellence and Employee Success" shortly after the executive order was issued. Although her title changed, her responsibilities remained largely the same, including overseeing affinity groups such as the Black Excellence Strategic Team. A new department was created around the revised role.

Despite these efforts, Rajendra was ultimately relieved of her duties in early April following stricter enforcement of the order.

According to a leading portal report, quoting British newspaper Daily Mail, an internal email from NASA's JPL Director Laurie Leshin confirmed her departure, stating: "Neela Rajendra is no longer working at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. We are incredibly grateful for the



NASA has sacked Neela Rajendra, former head of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at its Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), in compliance with a recent executive order issued by US President Donald Trump.

lasting impact she made on our organization. We wish her the very best."

Rajendra had previously survived DEI-related layoffs in 2024, when nearly 900 such roles were cut due to funding constraints. Even when NASA officially shut down its DEI office in March 2025, she remained in her newly reassigned position-until her removal this month.

Her departure aligns NASA with other federal agencies that have eliminated DEI roles in response to the Trump administration's directive, which claims such programs have fostered division and misused taxpayer funds. (Source: PTI)

भारत का प्रधान कौंसल
न्यू यार्क



CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA
NEW YORK

April 16, 2025

MESSAGE

I am pleased to know that The Indian Panorama is bringing out a special edition to mark Vaisakhi, the historic day of creation of the Khalsa in 1699 by the Tenth Master of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh. On this auspicious occasion, I extend my heartiest congratulations to the global Sikh community and the readers of The Indian Panorama.

Vaisakhi, a joyful harvest festival in Punjab, was given a profound and eternal meaning in 1699 by the Tenth Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. On this historic day, he created the Khalsa—a spiritual and martial order founded on the ideals of purity, justice, equality, and unwavering courage. Inspired by the sacrifices of his predecessors, especially the martyrdoms of Guru Arjan Dev Ji and Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, he galvanized a community rooted in fearless devotion and moral clarity.

Let us come together to honor our past, celebrate our present, and inspire our future generations to carry forward the rich legacy of our culture. May this Vaisakhi bring happiness, good health, and success to you and your loved ones.

Binaya S. Pradhan
(Binaya S. Pradhan)

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Sant Singh Chatwal, Padma Bhushan
New York

MESSAGE

I am pleased to learn that The Indian Panorama, a distinguished English-language weekly, is bringing out a special edition to commemorate Vaisakhi and the historic creation of the Khalsa. I warmly congratulate the publication and its team, led by Chief Editor Prof. Indrajit S. Saluja, a veteran journalist whose dedicated service to society deserves our deepest appreciation.

Vaisakhi, forever sanctified in 1699 by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, marks the birth of the Khalsa—a divine order rooted in righteousness, equality, and service to humanity. The Tenth Guru's call to "Recognize all humanity as one" echoes powerfully today, reminding us that beyond boundaries and barriers, we are united in a common spirit of brotherhood.

Guru Gobind Singh was not just a saint-soldier but a visionary who sought to reform a decaying social order by inspiring courage, moral clarity, and a collective will to uphold justice. His teachings go beyond religion; they offer a universal message of compassion, dignity, and unity.

Let us pledge to uphold the ideals he infused into the Khalsa and strive to create a world where truth prevails over tyranny, and service rises above selfishness.

Happy Khalsa Sajna Divas and a Joyous Vaisakhi to all!

(Sant Chatwal)



Ravi Batra ESQ
Attorney At Law

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New York, NY 10016

MESSAGE

Dear Prof. Saluja.

Ranju joins me in congratulating The Indian Panorama and its readers on the joyous occasion of Vaisakhi, and in particular, the Sikh community on the historic birth of the Khalsa. We are delighted to learn that The Indian Panorama is bringing out a special edition to commemorate this festival of faith, valor, and renewal.

Vaisakhi is more than just a harvest celebration—it is the day when Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the Tenth Master, founded the Khalsa in 1699, igniting a spiritual and social revolution. Guru Gobind Singh is my idol. More than three centuries ago, he championed values that are universally upheld today—equality, fraternity, courage, and selfless service. His message of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Mankind remains ever relevant.

Guru Gobind Singh not only preached sacrifice—he lived it, offering the lives of his four sons and enduring immense personal loss for the sake of justice. His ideals are a guiding light for the youth of today. Let them shed despair and intoxicants, and instead embrace his vision of empowered, ethical living.

On this sacred occasion, we extend our heartiest greetings.

Happy Vaisakhi, and Happy Birthday to the Khalsa!

(Ravi Batra)



Harry Singh Bolla,
President & CEO
Bolla Group of Companies

809 Stewart Ave
Garden City, NY 11530

MESSAGE

It gives me immense pleasure to learn that The Indian Panorama is bringing out a special Vaisakhi edition to commemorate the sacred festival of Vaisakhi, and the historic creation of the Khalsa by Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the readers of The Indian Panorama and to the global Sikh community on this joyous and spiritually significant occasion.

As a proud Sikh, I deeply cherish the timeless teachings of the Gurus. Guru Nanak Dev Ji, over 500 years ago, sowed the seeds of a revolutionary philosophy rooted in equality, compassion, and human dignity—ideals that predated modern democratic thought by centuries. These principles were later brought to a powerful culmination by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, who on Vaisakhi of 1699, founded the Khalsa—a fearless and saintly order committed to justice and righteousness for all.

The legacy of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh continues to illuminate the path of humanity. Their vision remains as relevant today as ever, inspiring countless people across the world to stand up against tyranny and uphold truth.

On this Vaisakhi, I pray for the Charhdi Kala of the Khalsa and wish the readers of The Indian Panorama a prosperous and inspiring celebration.

Harry Singh Bolla

Federal judge stops Trump administration from deporting Indian student



A US federal judge has temporarily blocked the Trump Administration from deporting a 21-year-old undergraduate Indian whose student visa was cancelled

APRIL 18, 2025

MADISON, WISCONSIN (TIP): A US federal judge has temporarily blocked the Trump Administration from deporting a 21-year-old undergraduate Indian whose student visa was cancelled.

Krish Lal Isserdasani has been pursuing a bachelor's degree in computer engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison with an F-1 student visa since 2021.

Court documents, as seen by PTI, said that "having maintained full-time enrollment and good academic standing, Isserdasani is now in the final semester of his senior year with less than 30 days remaining until an expected graduation on May 10, 2025."

The documents filed in the US District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin said on Tuesday that Isserdasani "acknowledges that he was arrested on November 22, 2024, after he

and his friends got into a verbal argument with another group while walking home late at night from a bar.

"Although Isserdasani was arrested for disorderly conduct, the District Attorney declined to pursue charges after reviewing the case. As a result, Isserdasani never had to appear in court and believed the matter was completely resolved with no possible immigration consequences," the court documents said adding that aside from this encounter, Isserdasani has had no other interactions with law enforcement.

However, on April 4, 2025, the University of Wisconsin-Madison's International Student Services (ISS) office informed Isserdasani by email that his Student and Exchange Visitor System (SEVIS) record had been terminated.

The SEVIS has been terminated by the US Student and Exchange Visitor Programme operated by the Department of Homeland Security for "Otherwise failing to maintain status- Individual identified in criminal records check and/or has had their VISA revoked. SEVIS record has been terminated."

The court papers state that Isserdasani received no communication from US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the university, or the State Department regarding any revocation of his visa.

"He was given no warning, no opportunity to explain or defend himself, and no chance to correct any potential misunderstanding before his F-1 student

visa record was terminated in SEVIS," it said.

It added that as a result of the termination, Isserdasani will be prevented from completing his degree and applying for Optional Practical Training (OPT) to gain work experience as authorized by his F-1 student visa.

F1 visa is issued to international students who are attending an academic programme or English Language Program at a US college or university.

OPT is temporary employment that is directly related to an F-1 student's major area of study. Eligible students can apply to receive up to 12 months of OPT employment authorization before completing their academic studies (pre-completion) and/or after completing their academic studies (post-completion).

According to the email notifying Isserdasani that his SEVIS record was terminated, his authorization to remain in the United States ends on May 2, 2025, before completing his final semester and graduating on May 10.

"Isserdasani and his family have reportedly invested approximately USD 240,000 in his education in the United States, and he stands to lose USD 17,500 in tuition for the current semester. He would also be liable for rental payments for the next four months despite being unable to remain in the country," the court papers said.

"Finally, Isserdasani reports that the psychological impact of the termination

has been overwhelming, causing difficulty in sleeping and fear that he will be placed in immediate detention and deportation. So much so that he reports being afraid to leave his apartment for fear of being apprehended at any moment," it added.

District Judge William Conley said in the order that Isserdasani's motion for a temporary restraining order is granted.

"Pending a preliminary injunction hearing", the defendants are enjoined from terminating Isserdasani's F-1 student status records from the Student and Exchange Visitor System and directly or indirectly enforcing, implementing, or otherwise taking any action or imposing any legal consequences as the result of the decision to terminate his SEVIS records, including revoking Isserdasani's visa or detaining him.

The court will hold a preliminary injunction hearing in the case on April 28.

Madison attorney Shabnam Lotfi said that the order is believed to be one of the first national victories for international student visa holders whose records were terminated. About 1,300 students nationwide have seen their SEVIS records terminated abruptly.

The targeting of foreign nationals affiliated with prestigious American universities comes amid the Trump administration's larger immigration crackdown, CNN reported.

(Source: PTI)

Indian-origin doctor Joy Saini, killed in New York plane crash



Dr. Joy Saini and her family died in a plane crash in upstate New York over the weekend while heading to the Catskills Mountains for a birthday celebration.

APRIL 15, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): An Indian-origin doctor and members of her family died in a plane crash in upstate New York over the weekend while heading to the Catskills Mountains for a birthday celebration.

Dr Joy Saini, a renowned urogynecologist, her husband Dr Michael Groff, a neuroscientist, their daughter Karena Groff, a former MIT soccer player and the 2022 NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) woman of the year, and son Jared Groff, a paralegal, died when the twin-engine plane crashed, according to media reports.

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) said in a statement that on April 12 about 12:06 pm, a Mitsubishi

MU-2B-40, N635TA, was destroyed when it was involved in an accident near Craryville, New York.

The family boarded Groff's private plane at Westchester County Airport in White Plains, New York.

NTSB said its investigators are collecting evidence and interviewing witnesses.

The victims included Jared Groff's partner Alexia Couyutas Duarte, who had planned to attend Harvard Law School later this year, and Karena Groff's boyfriend James Santoro who was an MIT graduate.

According to media reports, the family was headed to the Catskills for a birthday celebration and the Passover holiday.

Shortly before the crash, the pilot had radioed air traffic control at Columbia County Airport to say he had missed the initial approach and requested a new approach plan.

According to the information on the website of Boston Pelvic Health & Wellness, a center founded by Saini, she was a "highly experienced and respected urogynecologist and reconstructive pelvic surgeon".

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin doctor convicted of health care fraud conspiracies

APRIL 17, 2025

PENNSYLVANIA (TIP): An Indian-origin doctor has been convicted by a US federal jury of his participation in conspiracies to commit health care fraud by giving medically unnecessary prescription medications to patients and unlawfully distributing controlled substances.

Neil K Anand, 48, of Bensalem, Pennsylvania, conspired to submit false and fraudulent claims to Medicare, health plans provided by the US Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Independence Blue Cross (IBC) and Anthem for "Goody Bags" of medically unnecessary prescription medications.

These medications were dispensed to patients by in-house pharmacies owned by Anand, the Department of Justice said in a statement.

As the evidence at trial showed, the conspirators required patients to take the Goody Bags, which they did not need or want, to receive prescriptions for controlled substances.

In total, Medicare, OPM, IBC, and Anthem paid over USD 2.3 million for the Goody Bags, the statement said.

Anand also conspired to distribute oxycodone outside the usual course of professional practice and without a legitimate medical purpose. In furtherance of the conspiracy,



Neil K Anand, 48, is scheduled to be sentenced on August 19 and faces a statutory maximum penalty of 130 years in prison

unlicensed medical interns wrote prescriptions for controlled substances using blank prescriptions that were pre-signed by Anand.

Anand prescribed 20,850 oxycodone tablets for nine different patients, as part of the scheme.

After learning that he was under investigation, Anand concealed the proceeds of the fraud by transferring approximately USD 1.2 million into an account in the name of his father and for the benefit of his minor daughter.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)



Prem Bhandari
President, RANA
President, Jaipur Foot USA

MESSAGE

The message of Vaisakhi, beautifully captured by Prof. Indrajit S. Saluja, reminds us of the profound legacy of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and the creation of the Khalsa—a timeless symbol of courage, purity, and justice. It is a powerful reminder that Vaisakhi is not just a harvest festival, but a call to stand against oppression and to uphold truth with unwavering strength.

As we celebrate this sacred day, let us honor the sacrifices of Guru Arjan Dev Ji and Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, who gave their lives defending religious freedom. Their martyrdom inspires us to embrace the Khalsa spirit—fearless, selfless, and devoted to the welfare of all.

In today's world, this message is more relevant than ever. May we continue to walk the path of righteousness, defending the oppressed, and promoting unity and equality for all.

Wishing everyone a meaningful and joyous Vaisakhi!

HAPPY VAISAKHI!

(Prem Bhandari)



V.K. Raju, MD, FRCS, FACS
President and Founder,
Eye Foundation of America

695 Westview Avenue
Morgantown, WV 26505

MESSAGE

Let us remember with reverence Guru Gobind Singh on this Vaisakhi day.

Guru Gobind Singh, born Govinda Das or Govind Rai in 1666 was the 10th and last human Sikh guru. He was one of the most powerful figures in Indian history. He was a poet, writer and scholar. At the age of nine after his father, Guru Tej Bahadur was executed by Aurangzeb—He was formally installed as the leader of the Sikhs. His four biological sons died during his lifetime (two in battle and two executed by the Mogul governor Wazir Khan)

In 1699, Guru Gobind Singh requested the Sikhs to congregate at Anandpur on VAISAKHI, the annual Spring harvest festival.

According to the Sikh tradition, he asked for a volunteer. One came forward, whom he took into the tent. The guru returned to the crowd alone with a bloody sword. He asked for another volunteer and repeated the same process of returning from the tent without anyone, and with bloody sword. Five times. After the fifth volunteer went with him into the tent the guru returned with all the 5 volunteers. All safe. He called them Panj Pyare, the first Khalsa in the Sikh tradition. Then he mixed water and sugar into an iron bowl stirring with a double-edged sword to prepare what he called Amrit. He then administered Amrit to the five Pyare accompanied with recitations from Adi Granth, thus founding the Khalsa, a warrior community. The guru also gave them a new surname Singh (Lion)

He asked the 5 to initiate him as a sixth Khalsa. He is the one to initiate the five Ks tradition to the Khalsa (uncut hair, a wooden comb, an Iron bracelet, a sword and short breeches)

He abolished the Masands—collecting wealth for Sikh causes as the system had become corrupt.

Let me conclude this brief article on this day of Vaisakhi. Let us remember with reverence Guru Gobind Singh's quotes that we can use today.

—The greatest comforts and lasting peace, are obtained when one eradicates selfishness from within

—He who regards all men as equals is religious.

—Recognize the whole human race as one.

Happy Vaisakhi!

(Dr. V.K. Raju)



George Abraham
Vice-Chairman
Indian Overseas Congress, USA

MESSAGE

I take this opportunity to wish happy Vaisakhi to all the Indian Panorama readers. Although primarily celebrated as a harvest festival, this festivity, mostly by the people of the Sikh faith, has deep religious and moral underpinnings. Vaisakhi represents the spirit of Punjab transcending its people the world over to an enchanting mood of thanksgiving, idyllic pleasure, and music and dance.

However, the most impressive aspect of the festival is its message to everyone about the values of brotherhood and love. Vaisakhi teaches the cardinal truth that, as human beings, we are all equal no matter where we come from. Even for those not from the region, one's heart can be touched as the famous celebration's core message reminds us of the need to live in harmony with all people regardless of our differences.

As someone who hails from Kerala, Vaisakhi reminds me a lot about Onam, a harvest festival exhorting people to strive for peace and tranquility in the world, encouraging people for resource sharing and economic well-being while aspiring for human justice and preservation of nature. Moreover, it sets a high standard for ethics and morals, compelling us to participate in building a better world around us.

Wishing you all peace and happiness and a Happy Vaisakhi.

(George Abraham)



Master Mohinder Singh
Educationist, Founder President,
Gurdwara Baba Makhn Shah Lobana Sikh Center, New York

MESSAGE

On the sacred occasion of Vaisakhi, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the readers of The Indian Panorama and to the global Sikh community on the historic anniversary of the birth of the Khalsa.

Vaisakhi of 1699 was no ordinary day—it marked the moment when Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the Tenth Master, transformed the Sikh faith into a dynamic force of spiritual strength and moral courage. On that day at Anandpur Sahib, he called upon the faithful to rise above fear and falsehood, creating the Khalsa—those who would live by the principles of equality, justice, truth, humility, and selfless service.

The creation of the Khalsa was not just a spiritual rebirth but a revolutionary call to stand against tyranny and protect the oppressed. Guru Gobind Singh Ji led by example, sacrificing his four sons, his father Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, and ultimately, every comfort for the sake of righteousness.

For over three centuries, the Sikh community has remained steadfast to these ideals—whether fighting colonial rule, serving on global battlefields, or offering humanitarian aid across continents.

On this blessed day, let us salute the Khalsa spirit and congratulate the Sikh community for its enduring contributions to humanity. Chardi Kala always!

(Master Mohinder Singh)

U.S. immigration processes need to be overhauled, not flouted



By Laura Collins

CHANGING THE RULES MEANS FOLLOWING YET ANOTHER MUNDANE PROCESS - DRAFTING AND PASSING BIPARTISAN LEGISLATION. THAT IS THE ONLY WAY TO GET THE IMMIGRATION SYSTEM AMERICA NEEDS.

"As we've seen over the last several years, the judicial branch is the backstop for this lack of process, holding the executive branch accountable when its policies don't respect legal process - regardless of which party is in the White House. Last November, a federal judge ruled the Biden Administration overstepped its authority with the Keeping Families Together initiative, designed to provide some relief to undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens. Just this week, the Supreme Court ruled 9-0 in favor of due process for immigrants the U.S. government was seeking to remove under the Alien Enemies Act. Those immigrants have the right to challenge their removal despite the broad authority that that law provides."

Legal processes are an essential component of U.S. immigration laws. There are rules covering everything from the admission of legal immigrants to enforcement against alleged violations of immigration laws, adjustment of status, and applications for protection from persecution.

The processes are often slow and cumbersome. Many are out of date, given the speed of today's world. But all of them are important to protect the safety, security, and legal rights of everyone already in this country as well as those seeking to come here.

The last decade-plus of immigration policy has shown that these processes need an overhaul by Congress. Humanitarian protection is secure but



Frustration with an inadequate immigration system isn't sufficient reason to abandon the legal rights and due process of the immigrants among us

incredibly slow. Refugees wait years to restart their lives. Asylum seekers get to resettle faster, but they live with the uncertainty that their cases can be denied, even after they establish themselves, find work, and form attachments in the United States.

Immigrants with family sponsorships often wait decades. Employment-based immigrants can also wait years for a permanent spot in the United States. These long wait times benefit no one.

With few and often cumbersome legal immigration processes, foreign-born workers attracted to America's freedom and opportunity have arrived in droves, stressing an asylum system that was never intended to be the single portal through which would-be economic migrants have access to the United States. Indeed, exit polling demonstrated that this apparent flouting of process was a decisive factor in the voting booth during the last presidential election. Americans disliked what they perceived as migrants cutting in line - accessing the country without going through an appropriate process.

Removing these immigrants - who often have overstayed visas or run out of appeals on their asylum claims - is also slow and bureaucratic. There are legal and diplomatic roadblocks that frustrate the United States' ability to swiftly deport people.

The executive branch is doing all that it can currently to challenge these roadblocks. A country won't take its citizens back? El Salvador will, for a

small amount of foreign assistance funding.

Young working age men have pending asylum cases? Declare them invaders and use the Alien Enemies Act to try to curtail their legal right to challenge removal.

Few immigrants are safe from this flouting of process, including many people admitted to the United States via legal processes such as the green card system or student visas.

As we've seen over the last several years, the judicial branch is the backstop for this lack of process, holding the executive branch accountable when its policies don't respect legal process - regardless of which party is in the White House. Last November, a federal judge ruled the Biden Administration overstepped its authority with the Keeping Families Together initiative, designed to provide some relief to undocumented spouses of U.S. citizens. Just this week, the Supreme Court ruled 9-0 in favor of due process for immigrants the U.S. government was seeking to remove under the Alien Enemies Act. Those immigrants have the right to challenge their removal despite the broad authority that that law provides.

What's been missing in this immigration conversation for too long is the third co-equal branch of government: the legislative one.

Unlike the executive and the judiciary, Congress has the power to actually change these processes rather than just

enforce or interpret them. And yet for decades now we've seen the legislature take a hands-off approach, demanding the executive branch enforce the laws Congress passed in the last century - laws whose built-in processes make it difficult to quickly remove the immigrants who didn't qualify.

At the moment, Congress seems content to leave immigration law as-is, while watching the executive branch abandon the pretense of process when enforcing those laws. In fact, Congress is trying to pass additional funding for the executive branch to continue its current enforcement policies. That legislative energy would perhaps be better used on solutions that focus on creating an immigration system that instead ensures America's prosperity, vitality, and security.

Frustration with an inadequate immigration system isn't sufficient reason to abandon the legal rights and due process of the immigrants among us. These enforcement tactics will continue to invite legal challenges, setting up the judicial branch to be the primary maker of immigration policy for another four years.

Changing the rules means following yet another mundane process - drafting and passing bipartisan legislation. That is the only way to get the immigration system America needs.

(Laura Collins is Director, Bush Institute-SMU Economic Growth Initiative George W. Bush Institute)

Trumponomics deserves to be taken seriously

While Donald Trump's detractors believe that he has embarked on the impossible, the fact is that this is a mission that the world will need to adjust to



By T.T. Ram Mohan

To me," United States President Donald Trump has famously said, "tariff is the most beautiful word in the dictionary". Mr Trump has shown that he means it. By imposing tariffs of varying degrees on a wide range of countries, he has initiated a trade war, the likes of which the world has not seen since the Second World War.

Following turbulence in the American bond market, Mr. Trump has announced a 90-day pause on tariffs on all countries except China. Hardly anybody thinks that Mr Trump will back off from tariffs for fear of visiting serious dislocation on the U.S. economy and the world at large. Trumponomics is a mission to fundamentally remake the American economy. It deserves to be taken seriously if only because the world will need to adjust to it.

FIRST, THE PROPOSITIONS

Trumponomics rests on a few key propositions. The first is that America needs to bring back manufacturing, lost to China and other economies over the past several decades. It needs to do so for several reasons.

Globalization and the offshoring of manufacturing in the U.S. have meant the loss of millions of jobs. Estimates of jobs losses in manufacturing vary. Stephen Miran, Chair, Council of Economic Advisers, The White House, cites a study that estimates jobs lost in manufacturing between 2000 and 2011 at two million (Stephen Miran, A User's Guide to Restructuring the Global Trading System). Robert E. Lighthizer, who was the U.S. Trade Representative in Mr. Trump's first term, says five million manufacturing jobs were lost in the period 2000-09.

Job losses have been concentrated in particular areas. Thriving industrial centers have been reduced to ghost towns and whole communities hollowed out. There are other social costs: homelessness, rising crime, drug abuse, and broken families. America's services sector has absorbed a portion of those who lost jobs in manufacturing. But these are low-wage jobs. For the vast majority of American adults, manufacturing remains the sole route to a high-wage job.

Trumponomics argues that America also needs manufacturing for the purpose of national security. It cannot afford to have its defense sector rely heavily on imports of steel, aluminum, and semi-conductors. In a crisis, American military capabilities could be seriously compromised. As Mr. Trump puts it, "If you don't have steel, you don't have a country".

A second key proposition of Trumponomics is that free trade is not necessarily fair trade. Imports from



Trumponomics is a mission to fundamentally remake the American economy'

File photo

China are cheaper because China provides subsidies to its firms in various forms, uses slave labor to drive down costs, invests funds in state-owned technology companies, and indulges in industrial espionage and theft of intellectual property. It makes no sense to have American companies wiped out by competitors that do not adhere to the rules of a free market economy.

The third proposition is that America's chronic trade deficits are unaffordable as the flip side is foreigners using their trade surpluses to acquire more and more American assets. In recent years, trade deficits have been of the order of \$500 billion to \$1 trillion a year.

Trade deficits are said to be self-correcting. When a country runs a trade deficit, the exchange rate of its currency is expected to depreciate. Exports will then rise and imports will fall, leading to a reduction in the trade deficit. Mr. Miran argues that the principle does not apply to the U.S. economy because the dollar happens to be the world's reserve currency. Nations park much of their foreign exchange reserves in U.S. government securities. This results in an overvalued dollar.

An overvalued dollar means more imports, less exports and hence a persistent trade deficit. As Mr. Miran puts it, America runs a trade deficit not because it imports more; it imports more because it is the provider of reserve currency to the world.

IMPETUS FOR DOMESTIC MANUFACTURING

How to restore manufacturing to the U.S. and reduce America's trade deficit when faced with "unfair" trade and an overvalued dollar? Enter tariffs on

imports. Tariffs will raise the cost of imports and cause imports to fall, thereby reducing the trade deficit. They will spur domestic manufacturing by protecting American manufacturers from import competition.

Economists fret that tariffs run counter to the principle of economic efficiency. Tariffs, they say, will spell higher costs for American consumers, an increase in the inflation rate and an inefficient manufacturing sector. Trumponomics says these concerns are based on first-round effects. Look farther and the outcomes change.

By raising the cost of imports, tariffs will result in fewer imports. A fall in imports will result in an appreciation of the dollar. If the "currency offset" to tariffs is perfect - say, a 10% tariff is offset by a 10% appreciation in the dollar - the dollar price of imports after tariffs will remain unchanged. The American consumer does not pay anything extra. Since the exporting country's currency has weakened, it earns fewer dollars than it did earlier.

Mr. Trump has been ridiculed widely for saying that the exporting nation, and not the American consumer, will pay for U.S. tariffs. Once you take into account the currency offset to tariffs, Mr. Trump's statement makes more sense. To be sure, if the currency offset is not perfect, there will be costs to the American consumer and an increase in the inflation rate. Mr. Miran estimates a one-time impact on the inflation rate of about 0.3-0.6 percentage points, an impact that is eminently bearable. This assumes there are no retaliatory tariffs.

Tariffs can lead on to other favorable second-round effects. As input costs rise, American manufacturers will look for ways to enhance efficiency and

lower costs. Tariffs will compel American and foreign companies to move operations to the U.S. and this will enhance efficiency and output in the U.S. economy. There are signs that major U.S. companies are already making such a move.

THE OTHER 'TRUMP CARDS'

More importantly, tariffs are but one of four elements in Trumponomics. There are three other elements: tax cuts, deregulation and more drilling of oil. Tax cuts, made possible by tariff revenues, will compensate companies for the higher costs of imports. Deregulation will drastically reduce compliance and operational costs. More drilling of oil will help lower oil prices and counter the inflationary effects of tariffs. Taken together, the four elements constitute a plausible alternative to the current economic model.

Trumponomics is driven by the principle that efficiency cannot be the sole or even overriding consideration in economic policy-making, a principle that India's policymakers had wisely embraced decades ago. Mr. Trump's detractors believe that he has embarked on Mission Impossible. Well, Mr. Trump does not think so. He is determined to pursue his vision of MAGA (Make America Great Again) regardless of the short-term cost to the U.S. As for the rest of the world, Mr. Trump does not particularly care.

(T.T. Ram Mohan is a former Professor at IIM Ahmedabad. He can be reached at ttrammohan28@gmail.com)

New Waqf law reeks of divisive agenda

The PM's lofty views about the amendments are not shared by the Muslim masses



---> By Julio Ribeiro

"In my view, laws such as the CAA and the Waqf (Amendment) Act are meant to needle the Muslim community and send a message to the hardcore votaries of Hindutva that the Modi-Shah government is going all out to tame Muslims and rub their noses in the dust. I concede that such manifestations of majoritarianism have gone down well with many of my own acquaintances, consolidating and widening the BJP's electoral base."

I recently read a blog post by Shriya Handoo, an advocate from the Kashmiri Pandit community. It said, "The Waqf amendments aren't about transparency - they're about tyranny". I could not agree more with that analysis. The whole rigmarole built around the legislation that was recently voted into law by Parliament was entirely unnecessary. The entire Opposition decided to participate in the debate and expose the ruling party's real intent. It was high time these parties displayed unity and maturity.

The real intent of the party in power was revealed by our Prime Minister himself when he addressed the 'Rising Bharat Summit', organized by a media group, on April 8 in New Delhi. He alleged that the Congress' politics of appeasement had led to the Partition, even as he accused the party of tweaking the Waqf law "to serve the interests of Muslim fundamentalists and land-grabbers".

The RSS has always claimed that Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were responsible for the Partition. What I did not know was that the Waqf law was an instrument used for that purpose. Most friends of mine were blissfully unaware of the Waqf role in the implementation of the two-nation theory propounded by Muhammad Ali Jinnah. (A caveat - I don't see any connection between the Partition and the Waqf law).

I knew that the 1995 Act (first amended in 2013) was being misused by unscrupulous operators connected to the Waqf Board and scamsters on the lookout for avenues to make a quick buck. Two respectable Muslim sisters, friends of my elder daughter, had complained once to me about some



Target: Any independent but fair-minded observer will conclude that the BJP has picked on Waqf boards as they are connected to the Muslim community.

Photo : PTI

Muslim residents of Mahim (Mumbai) eyeing their property located along the Mahim beach, near the place where the would-be land-grabbers resided. The Waqf Board was mentioned. I had conveyed these fears to the police in charge of that area with a request to safeguard the legal rights of two defenseless ladies.

The sisters were running an orphanage for destitute Muslim girls on the prime property owned by a trust set up by their deceased father. The girls were housed, fed, clothed and cared for by the staff employed by the trust. Except for the Gurkha watchman, the entire staff was female. They needed the assurance of police assistance in case of an emergency. And that was why the sisters had approached me.

There are wicked elements in every community waiting to pounce on the weak and the defenseless. Greed is not confined to Muslims. Wherever money flows, greedy individuals of that community or belonging to the government agency concerned plot and plan to dig their own soiled hands into the pie. Surely, our Prime Minister knows that. The machinations he is trying to prevent in the Waqf administration are also prevalent in other religion-based trusts.

Any independent but fair-minded observer will conclude that the BJP has picked on the Waqf boards as they are connected to the Muslim minority. The principle of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" that Modi glibly parrots at the drop of a hat is soon forgotten when it comes to this minority, in particular. Modi asserts that the amendments to the Waqf Act are

necessary in the interests of society, including poor Muslims. These lofty sentiments are neither shared, unfortunately, by those entrusted with the implementation of the laws nor by the Muslim masses that the PM says will be benefited by his concern.

Ever since the BJP-led government was installed in 2014, the Muslim community has felt that it is being targeted for punishment, meted out unjustly. Lynching of cattle traders who are mostly Muslims and accusations of 'love jihad' against Muslim boys in love with Hindu girls has become a regular feature over the past decade. One of the first pieces of legislation targeting them was the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). The Act itself was supposed to reassure Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and Parsis migrating from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan of acquiring Indian citizenship on demand, a facility already enjoyed by them before this BJP government arrived on the scene. Thousands, nay lakhs, of Hindu refugees from Pakistan and Bangladesh had already been granted Indian citizenship and rehabilitated. No special CAA was required. The government had plenipotentiary power to grant citizenship to these refugees and it had no hesitation in doing so, irrespective of the party in power. These refugees were welcomed with open arms and that was what other citizens expected its government to do.

In my view, laws such as the CAA and the Waqf (Amendment) Act are meant to needle the Muslim community and send a message to the hardcore votaries of Hindutva that the Modi-Shah

government is going all out to tame Muslims and rub their noses in the dust. I concede that such manifestations of majoritarianism have gone down well with many of my own acquaintances, consolidating and widening the BJP's electoral base.

The party has fueled hate and divisiveness across the country. I have heard Modi repeatedly appealing for 'unity in diversity', which is a sine qua non for a rising world power. On the ground, there is no sign of the government encouraging unity.

Protests and later, riots, broke out in Delhi after the CAA was passed by Parliament. The Waqf amendments have triggered unease and violence. In West Bengal's Murshidabad, hundreds of Hindus fled to avoid Muslim vandals. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee failed, like the Gujarat Government in 2002, to follow 'Raj Dharma'.

There is no doubt that the Waqf Act was sometimes misused by those who were in a position to do so. If any citizen grabs someone else's land or commits a cognizable offence in the course of administering the Act, that offender should be identified, prosecuted and punished. This is what the people of India expect of the government. Histrionics and false propaganda do not improve their quality of life, as Handoo and Rashtriya Janata Dal MP Manoj Kumar Jha, who wrote in an English-language daily earlier this week, have insinuated.

(The writer is a former governor and a highly decorated retired Indian Police Service -IPS- officer)



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Vaisakhi celebrated Enthusiastically at the Indian Consulate in New York

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

He gave them a unique identity and conduct and strength to stand against injustice. That's what Guru Gobind Singh stood for. And I think in six days, we celebrated two events associated with him, Hola Mohalla and Vaisakhi.

Amb. Pradhan highlighted the teachings of Sikh gurus who emphasized qualities of compassion, harmony, service, and equality. He also recognized the Punjabi community's contributions to India's nation-building.

Ambassador Pradhan is very concerned about the malpractices indulged in by some unscrupulous agents who are charging exorbitantly in the name of the Consulate or in the name of providing consular services. He spoke at length about the issue and warned against such agents.

Keynote Speaker Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba, a Sikh scholar and author reflected on the founding of the Khalsa and shared some interesting anecdotes from its history.

Eminent attorney Ravi Batra shared his moving experience at the Golden Temple and saluted the Sikh gurus for saving India as a nation with their sacrifices.

I, as a Hindu and founding editor of ALotusInTheMud.com, had the privilege to felicitate the Sikh community on Vaisakhi.

Ahmed Shakir spoke on behalf of Muslims and Koshi Thomas for Christians.

Apart from community leaders among the 100-plus audience, New York State Assemblyman Ed Braunstein, and North Hempstead Town Clerk Ragini Srivastava



Consul General Mr. Binaya Srikanta Pradhan giving his remarks



Mr. Ravi Batra was the guest speaker



Prof. Indrajit S Saluja welcomed the guests



Assemblymember Ed Braunstein addressed the gathering



Mr. Gurcharanjit Singh Lamba delivering the keynote address



North Hempstead Town Clerk Ragini Srivastava giving her remarks

CONTD ON PAGE 13

CONTD FROM PAGE 12



Mr. Parveen Chopra, on behalf of the Hindu community, felicitated the Sikh community on their day of creation by Guru Gobind Singh ji.



Mr. Ahmed Shakir, on behalf of the Muslim community, felicitated the Sikh community on their birthday



Mr. Koshy Oomen Thomas, on behalf of the Christian community, felicitated the Sikh community on the occasion of Vaisakhi

graced the event and spoke briefly.

Earlier, Prof. Indrajit Singh Saluja, Editor-Publisher of The Indian Panorama, who put together the program, while welcoming the guests, said Vaisakhi used to be a harvest festival of Punjab but in 1699 Guru Gobind Singh chose the day to create Khalsa, a sect with a distinct identity. Thus, today, Vaisakhi is both a socio-cultural event and also the birthday of the Khalsa.

The program began with a soulful Shabad, 'Deh Shiva var mohe', which means O Lord! Give me the boon to never turn away from doing good deeds and ended with a lively Bhangra performance.



Ragi Singh Ji and the young Singh Sahib accompanying on Tabla, kept the audience spellbound with the rendition of the hymn- Deh Shiva Ver Mohe Ihe, Shubh Karman te kabahoon na Taraun".



The exciting and electrifying Bhangra performance by Gurjit Singh's Bhangra group



The inimitable Emcee Pia Jyoti Kachroo, ITV Anchor, kept the audiences immersed in the program

All pics / Vijay Shah

After Consul, Culture, Pragya Singh kicked off the proceedings, ITV Gold anchor Pia Jyoti Kachroo ably emceed the program.

All the presenters were honored with shawls and a replica of the Golden Temple. Amb Pradhan's wife, Monalisa Shuvadardshini greeted and thanked each presenter.

Delicious appetizers and dinner from Michelin Chef Hemant Mathur's Saar were served.

Amb. Pradhan thanked The Indian Panorama and Prof Saluja for organizing the event, and for holding the Holi/Hola celebration on Long Island a week earlier.

(Parveen Chopra is the Founding Editor of ALotusInTheMud.com, the premium Wellness and Spirituality web magazine published from New York.)

EYE FOUNDATION OF AMERICA ORGANIZES FUNDRAISING GALA IN NEW ROCHELLE, NEW YORK

RAISES OVER \$55,000 TO HELP SUPPORT A NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART GREEN HOSPITAL IN INDIA, AS WELL AS OUTREACH PROGRAMS IN GHANA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

APRIL 13, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): "Every child deserves to see the world with clarity and purpose. Let's join hands to eradicate childhood blindness and unlock a brighter future for generations to come," said Dr. Vadrevu K. Raju, a world-renowned ophthalmologist, philanthropist, and the founder of the Eye Foundation of America (EFA) during a Spring Fundraiser Gala in New Rochelle, New York on April 12, 2025.



Dr. VK Raju, President and founder of the Eye Foundation of America shares his thoughts with the host Dr. Surendra Sharma, and Prof. Indrajit S Saluja, a committed supporter of the Eye Foundation of America

At the gala, organized by Dr. Surendra Sharma and Dr. Rachana Shukla, Eye Foundation of America raised funds to help support a new state-of-the-art green hospital in India, as well as outreach programs in Ghana and the Dominican Republic.

"Close your eyes for a moment. Now imagine never being able to open them to the vibrant colours of life, a loved one's smile, or the pages of a favourite story," said Dr. Rachana Shukla, who coordinated the efforts leading up to the fundraiser in India. "For millions of premature babies, this is their reality. Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) is a silent thief of sight, making it one of the leading causes of childhood blindness. Your kindness today can save a child's sight, their future, and their dreams."

"Childhood blindness is a solvable problem, but it requires our collective action," said Dr. Surendra Sharma, a key organizer of the gala. "Together, we can ensure that every child has access to quality eye care and a chance to reach their full potential." He along with Dr. Shukla offered ongoing collaboration



Dr. Leela Raju, the Secretary of the Eye Foundation of America explains the various eye ailments and the work of the Eye Foundation of America in promoting eyecare education and preventing loss of vision

and support to the Eye Foundation and its efforts to eradicate childhood blindness.

Dr. Leela Raju, in her address, stressed the importance of ensuring that more people know about the causes and the means to reduce childhood blindness and work towards eradicating it. Dr. Leela Raju stated that the discussions today focused on "not just glaucoma, but cornea and pediatric ophthalmology. And of course, regarding retinopathy and prematurity, which is our real push in both in India and around the world to reduce the burden of childhood blindness."

"I was born in a rural village in India, poor and legally blind, with no opportunity to exist," Sam Maddula, Pharm.D., a distinguished leader, visionary entrepreneur, and dedicated philanthropist, said. Sam went on to add, how his life turned from darkness to light as his parents stumbled upon an Eye Camp that the Eye Foundation of America had set up in 1987 in rural Andhra Pradesh. "It is



Prof. Indrajit S Saluja spoke appreciably about the services being rendered by the Eye Foundation of America and appealed to the gathering to support financially the Foundation to achieve its laudable objective of having a world without childhood blindness.

this organization that rescued me from a life of darkness. The Eye Foundation of America helped me get a visa to the United States. The esteemed Dr. VK Raju himself, performed dual corneal transplant surgery on me two weeks after my second birthday in the United States. He did it, working with the Eye Foundation for free. He cured me just like that, with the magic of his hands. I could see my life went from literal darkness to pure sunlight."

Sam shared his life story virtually with the audience during the Gala. This life-changing miracle is one of the millions of Eye Surgeries that The Eye Foundation of America, led by the legendary Dr. VK Raju has done in the past half a century, transforming the lives of millions of children, who are born every year with vision impairment.

Dr. Sanku Rao, a Board member of the Eye Foundation; Dr. Indrajit Saluja, Publisher and Chief Editor of The Indian Panorama; Parveen Chopra, Publisher and Chief Editor of A Lotus in the Mud were others who felicitated the Eye Foundation and the organizers of the event for their tireless efforts to

eradicate childhood blindness.

The Gala and Fundraising Event, attended by several community and business leaders, who joined the mission to help eliminate childhood blindness, included, entertainment, silent auction, raffles, fundraising, and a delicious cocktail dinner at the beautiful Surf Club on The Sound in New Rochelle, New York.

The Eye Foundation of America (EFA) was started in 1977 by Dr. VK Raju in the hope of improving accessibility and affordability in eye care in and around his hometown in southern India. Since then, EFA has grown and collaborated with doctors and non-profit organizations in over 30 countries.

For the past four decades, Dr. Raju and the EFA have been actively and tirelessly on a crusade to eliminate avoidable blindness in areas plagued by poverty and poor access to medical care. The EFA's mission is to eliminate avoidable blindness under the guiding principles of service, teaching, and research.

This noble mission is accomplished through eye camps and brick-and-mortar hospitals in developing countries, training of medical personnel to serve the needy, and educating the population at large on preventative eye care and healthy lifestyle choices. With adequate education, patients are empowered to take charge of their lives and their own health and prevent further deleterious consequences of their poor lifestyle choices, while sharing

this knowledge with their friends and families.

Through the efforts of the Eye Foundation, the public is educated on eye care and injury prevention, and local teachers are taught how to screen for early eye problems in children. Patients, their families, and the greater community benefit from preventative medical care, free procedures, and access to education.

The EFA has served approximately 2.5 million patients and performed 340,000+ vision-saving surgeries, with 30,000+ surgeries performed on children alone. His over 40 years of noble work has helped restore vision to millions in India and abroad.



Mrs. Sanku Rao, whose husband Mr. Sanku Rao, is a director of the Eye Foundation of Americas described her long association with the Eye Foundation of America. L to R: Dr. VK Raju, Mrs Rao, Dr. Sanku Rao and Dr. Surendra Sharma

With all of Dr. Raju's momentous achievements, he has also ensured that his life's work and vision are self-sustaining. The Goutami Institute, which has been honoured as the Best Eye Hospital in the state of Andhra Pradesh by the state Government continues to add new buildings, more staff and equipment, and mobile clinics to meet the growing demand for treatment for children and adults.

"I feel so incredibly thankful for my personal and professional gifts, and I make great efforts to share those gifts with those in need of my services," says Dr. Raju. "I am ever grateful to India for giving me stellar medical education for almost free. The work of EFA and the Goutami Eye institute wouldn't be possible without the support of our Board Members, who go beyond to enhance and help realize our mission to make the world free of blindness."



Dr. VK Raju honored the hosts of the fundraiser, Dr. Surendra Sharma and Dr. Rachna Shukla for their support to the Eye Foundation. The couple had earlier also organized a successful fundraiser.

Dr. Raju says, childhood blindness has far-reaching consequences. 75% of blind children never attend school. Blindness reduces employability by 50%. Blindness increases poverty and social isolation. Urging everyone to be part of this noble mission, Dr. Raju says, "Together, Let Us Illuminate Young Lives and Create a World Without Childhood Blindness. Your Support Can: Change Lives, Restore Vision, And Empower Futures. Now, Let's All Join the Movement; Be Part of Something Extraordinary."

To donate or would like to know more about the foundation, please Visit:
www.EyeFoundationofAmerica.org.

(Based on a Press Release by Ajay Ghosh)

LET'S SHARE A MEAL BRINGS JERSEY CITY MAYORAL RIVALS ON ONE PLATFORM



Jersey City Mayoral Candidate William O'Dea announced April as Sikh Awareness Month. "I'll be sponsoring a resolution before the County Board of Commissioners naming April Sikh Awareness Month. In the photo, from left: Onkar Singh Organizer, and Harvinder Manchanda businessman.

Photo : Mohammed Jaffer/Snapsindia



Former New Jersey State Governor Jim McGreevey, Jersey City Councilman Richard Boggiano, Mussab Ali, Mayoral candidate preparing food plates for Let's Share a Meal campaign for the needy in Jersey City on 5th April 2025.

Photo : Mohammed Jaffer/Snapsindia

APRIL 7, 2025

JERSEY CITY (TIP): Political rivals eyeing the Jersey City mayoral seat set aside their differences this week to join hands with the Sikh community for a shared cause of feeding 10,000 people in need. The event, held at the Nanak Naam Jahaj Gurudwara, was part of the long-running "Let's Share a Meal" campaign, a food drive rooted in the Sikh tradition of seva, or selfless service.

County Commissioner William O'Dea, former Governor of New Jersey James E. McGreevey, former Board of Education President Mussab Ali, Councilman Richard Boggiano, and community leaders came together to cook, pack, and distribute hot meals.

William O'Dea announced April as Sikh Awareness Month. "I'll be sponsoring a resolution before the County Board of Commissioners naming this April Sikh Awareness Month. So, if you have a chance, 567 Pavonia Avenue, 4:30, we'll have Sikh Awareness Month."

Many of the leaders had their sleeves rolled up. Mussab Ali, who is also running for mayor, was among the first to arrive.

"I think it's such an important event to make 10,000 hot meals for the people that are homeless here," Ali said. "We've been

here since 7:30 in the morning making these hot meals and making sure we can get those delivered. It's important to give back to our community. Thank you."

Former Governor McGreevey, known for his longtime ties to Jersey City, spoke with visible admiration for the Sikh tradition of community service.

"Thank you to the Sikh community, which is an incredible community. Jersey City is so blessed, and we're serving 10,000 meals today," he said. "And I just want to say, for the interest of clarity, it's Sikh women that are doing all the work."

He spoke about his own journey to the Golden Temple in Punjab and the lessons he drew from the Sikh ethos of service.

"The Sikh community has a great religious tradition of giving, of serving... not only in terms of their tradition are they strong warriors and defenders of their faith, but they're great community leaders, and they give back so much love and so much devotion."

Veteran Councilman Richard Boggiano, a familiar face at Sikh community events, was struck by the scale and consistency of the effort.

"I've been coming here for a number of years, and this is unbelievable," Boggiano said. "I can't believe they're

going to feed 10,000 people today. And this community is great."

Behind the scenes, orchestrating the massive food drive, was longtime organizer Onkar Singh. He expressed: "We've been doing this since 2008," Singh said. "And from the last many years, you are coming and supporting us. That's the main thing... we love the city. And the city always gives us the opportunity to do all these things."

Tom Zuppa, President of the Journal Square Community Association,

reflected on the personal significance of participating in such events.

Zuppa said that it was "an incredible honor as someone whose family immigrated to America from Italy and Ireland to join in the tradition of giving back that the Sikh community has to this city, to this neighborhood, and to the people throughout Hudson County and New Jersey." Mr. Onkar Singh thanked the volunteer's and sponsors who are the force behind this service organization.



Former New Jersey State Governor Jim McGreevey pushes a food cart.

Photo : Mohammed Jaffer/Snapsindia

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Eid Celebration at Indian Consulate Unites Communities in Spirit of Harmony and Joy



Speakers from the event, left to right: Consul General of India Binaya Pradhan; Consul General of the Kingdom of Morocco, Abdelkader Jamoussi; NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams; NYS Assembly Member Zohran Mamdani; Deputy Commissioner from the NYC Mayor's Office, Dilip Chauhan; IMNA Co-Chair Ahmed Shakir; young professional Nimra Fatima; and IMNA Chairman Ilayas Quraishi.

Photo: IMNA

IMNA President Mr. Imtiaz Siamwalla also addressed the gathering, emphasizing the importance of community solidarity and extending his support for future cultural initiatives.

Chairman Ilayas Quraishi delivered an impassioned speech, encouraging the community to stay engaged, bring their families to such gatherings, and foster inclusivity and leadership among the youth. "You heard from my daughter, Nimra Fatima, earlier as she beautifully described the spirit of Ramadan. I'm proud of her and of all our youth stepping forward," he said. "Every year, we aim to bring in the younger generation. I urge you all to bring your children, let them speak, let them lead. Each of you is an ambassador of our rich culture and heritage. India is our Janmabhoomi, and America is our Karmabhoomi. We must not only join events representing India - we must lead them."



IMNA President Mr. Imtiaz Siamwalla addresses the gathering. Photo: IMNA

The event was further elevated by the presence of distinguished guests including: Consul General of the Kingdom of Morocco, Mr. Abdelkader Jamoussi, who praised the Indian diaspora for their inclusive celebration.

New York State Senator Robert Jackson, who noted his annual attendance at the Eid celebration as a cherished tradition.

NYC Public Advocate Mr. Jumaane Williams, who expressed Eid greetings and appreciated the efforts to bring the community together, reaffirming his ongoing support for advocacy efforts within the community.

Deputy Public Advocate Kashif Hussain, who attended as a special guest in support of the South Asian and Muslim community.

NYS Assembly Member Mr. Zohran Mamdani, who proudly identified himself as an Indian Muslim and passionately shared how his family migrated from India nearly 200 years ago. He emphasized how his heritage continues to inspire his work and identity in public service.

Deputy Commissioner Mr. Dilip Chauhan from the NYC Mayor's Office for International Affairs, who affirmed his commitment to supporting such meaningful initiatives.

A representative from NYC Councilman Salam Yousef's office, who joined the gathering and commended the event's spirit of inclusion and cross-cultural unity.

In recognition of IMNA's continued service and community leadership, a special citation was presented by the Office of NYC Mayor Eric Adams, honoring the organization's dedication to cultural harmony and interfaith unity.

A special video message from Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer extended heartfelt Eid greetings to the Muslim community and acknowledged the efforts of the diaspora in strengthening multicultural ties.

As a tribute to community service and talent, several local leaders and artists were honored during the program, including:

- Plaque for Khaliq Ahmed for outstanding contributions to Community Service
- Plaque for Care and Share Foundation for Community Service
- Honor to Mr. Jagdish Sehvani as a respected community leader
- Plaque for Dr. Mohammed Abdul Muneer for excellence in Science and Research
- Special recognition to an Indian American artist who flew in all the way from Boston to share in the celebration and showcase community talent

APRIL 12, 2025

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): The Consulate General of India in New York, in collaboration with the Indian American Muslims of North America (IMNA), hosted a vibrant and heartwarming Eid celebration that brought together community members, faith leaders, dignitaries, and elected officials under one roof to mark the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

The evening commenced with a soulful recitation from the Holy Quran by Qari Hafiz Faizan Mohammed Khan, with the English translation beautifully delivered by Zoha Fatima Ahmed. This spiritual opening set a peaceful tone for the evening's program, centered on themes of reflection, unity, and celebration.

A young speaker, Nimra Fatima, shared a heartfelt reflection on growing up as a Muslim in America and how the month of Ramadan shaped her identity and connection with her cultural and religious heritage. Her remarks resonated with the audience, highlighting the importance of empowering the next generation.

Consul General of India in New York, Mr. Binaya Pradhan, delivered the keynote address. He spoke fondly of his childhood Eid memories in India and applauded the diaspora for preserving and celebrating the spirit of Eid in their adopted homeland. He thanked all guests and collaborators, especially the Indian American Muslims of North America, Chairman Ilayas Quraishi, and Co-chair Ahmed Shakir, for their efforts in organizing the event.



A full house turned out to attend the event, undeterred by the weather - a testament to the community's spirit and unity.

Photo: CGI



Ghazal performance by Suman Laskar, accompanied by Arindam Chakraborty.

Photo: CGI

Ahmed Shakir offered warm welcome remarks and expressed gratitude to the community and all participants for their support.

The evening concluded on a melodious note with a soulful ghazal performance by Suman Laskar, accompanied by Arindam Chakraborty on tabla, leaving the audience in awe and adding a poetic charm to the night of celebration.

Suozzi Makes History as First U.S. Congressman to Visit Kartarpur Corridor

Commends India and Pakistan for Peaceful Cooperation: "A powerful symbol of unity and reconciliation"



Tom Suozzi in front of the Gurdwara Sahib at Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan

APRIL 18, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Congressman Tom Suozzi (D-NY), a member of the Congressional India Caucus and a champion of interfaith understanding, made history during a recent bipartisan Congressional delegation trip to Pakistan by becoming the first sitting Member of the United States Congress to visit the sacred Kartarpur Sahib via the Kartarpur Corridor.

The Kartarpur Corridor, a historic initiative jointly undertaken by India and Pakistan, allows Sikh pilgrims from India visa-free access to the final resting place of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism.

"Kartarpur Sahib is a powerful symbol of peace, unity, and reconciliation. In a world too often divided by conflict and mistrust, this sacred site reminds us of our shared humanity," said Suozzi. "It's nothing short of miraculous that two countries, often at odds, came together in mutual respect and reverence for Guru Nanak Dev Ji to open this corridor."



Tom Suozzi in the Gurdwara Sahib Diwan Hall



Tom Suozzi in conversation with a Sikh gentleman

corridor, opened in 2019, has become a deeply symbolic site for reconciliation and reunion.

"To see Indian and Pakistani citizens embrace across a border that for decades separated families was one of the most emotional experiences of my life," Suozzi said. "I commend both governments for creating this humanitarian bridge."

Kartarpur Sahib holds deep historical significance as the place where Guru Nanak Dev Ji spent the final years of his life preaching the values of compassion, equality, and unity. His message continues to inspire Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike across South Asia and around the world.

In a spur of the moment event, Suozzi met several of his own constituents from Hicksville, Syosset, and Bellerose who had traveled to Kartarpur to pay their respects.

"Whether on Long Island or in Kartarpur, our shared values transcend borders," said Suozzi. "I will continue working to strengthen U.S. partnerships with both India and Pakistan, promote religious freedom, and support the vibrant South Asian communities that enrich New York's 3rd Congressional District."



Tom Suozzi with a mixed crowd of Indians and Pakistanis at the Gurdwara Sahib

Suoizzi's visit to Kartarpur came during a congressional delegation to Pakistan, where he met with civil society leaders and government officials. While in Punjab, Suozzi stood at the border between India and Pakistan, reflecting on the power of connection that flows through the border divides. The

AAPI Legislative Day Planned For May 8th on Capitol Hill



We expect to have the participation from dozens of key Congressmen and Senators. The annual Legislative Day will be a unique opportunity for AAPI to be part of the decision-making process on matters related to healthcare", said AAPI President Dr. Sathesh Kathula

APRIL 16, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Healthcare continues to be the center of the nation's focus, especially with changes in policies on immigration, Medicare/Medicaid, and Medical Education. AAPI's annual Legislative Day comes to be a vital part of AAPI's growing influence and having its

united voice heard in the corridors of power. "We are excited to announce that our next Legislative Day is on Thursday, May 8th, in Washington, DC," said Dr. Sathesh Kathula, President of AAPI. "We expect to have the participation from dozens of key Congressmen and Senators. The annual Legislative Day will be a unique opportunity for AAPI to be part of the decision-making process on matters related to healthcare."

The day-long event will begin at 10:00 am and will conclude in the afternoon at 3 pm, giving participants the opportunity to meet with their own Congressman/Senators on their own time.

AAPI represents the interests of over 100,000 physicians and 40,000 medical students and residents of Indian heritage in the United States. Dr. Sunil Kaza, Chair of AAPI BOT said, "The mission AAPI, the largest ethnic organization of physicians, is to provide a forum to facilitate and enable Indian American physicians to excel at inpatient care, teaching and research, and to pursue their aspirations in professional and community affairs. The Executive Committee is working hard, enabling AAPI's voice to be heard in the corridors of power, and thus taking AAPI

to new heights."

During the annual Legislative Conference, among others, AAPI will discuss Medicare and Medicaid Reimbursements, Prior Authorization, Immigration Reform, Increased Residency Slots, Addressing Physician Shortage, and Scope of Medical Practice Issues.

"AAPI Legislative Day is a flagship annual event that is eagerly awaited to rekindle and renew our energy in bringing up the issues that we need to bring to the attention of national policy makers and leaders of the US Congress on Capitol Hill," said Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, president-elect of AAPI. "It is a tradition of nearly three decades, which has brought many important transformations in National Healthcare policies that have helped Physicians of Indian Origin. Now, it is the need of the day to renew our friendship with new leadership under President Donald Trump and Vice President J D Vance and brief the Congressional leadership on issues that are important to us."

"AAPI is once again in the forefront in bringing many burning health care issues facing the community at large and bringing this to the Capitol and to the US

Congress," says Dr. Sudhir Parikh, Co-Chair of AAPI Legislative Affairs Committee. Dr. Parikh urged "AAPI colleagues and everyone interested in or connected with providing health care to attend this event and ensure that our concerns and needs are heard by our lawmakers and ensure that they act on them."

AAPI has been seeking to collectively shape the best health care for the people of the US, with the physicians at the helm, caring for the medically underserved as it has done for several decades, when physicians of Indian origin came to the US in larger numbers.

US is currently experiencing a physician shortage, which will be exacerbated by retiring baby boomers, affecting thousands of patients' access to a physician, and ultimately the health care they need, AAPI has strongly supported the much needed Immigration Reform, particularly with the focus on H-1 and J-1 visas are used by many South Asian American physicians, playing an important role in providing critical health care across the country.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

1st Baisakhi Celebrated at the State Capitol in Olympia (Washington)

APRIL 15, 2025

OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON (TIP): Consulate General of India in Seattle hosted the first celebration of Baisakhi at the State Capitol in Olympia today. The event was attended by Washington State Governor Hon'ble Bob Ferguson, Lieutenant Governor Denny Heck and Secretary of State Steve Hobbs. This event marks the first such celebration of the festival of Baisakhi at the State Capitol. State Senators and Legislators from the Washington State Legislature also attended the ceremony, in addition to prominent members of the Sikh community resident in Washington.

Addressing the distinguished gathering, Governor Bob Ferguson welcomed the contributions of the Indian American Sikh community in the State of Washington and appreciated the hosting of the Baisakhi celebrations at the State Capitol in Olympia. In a special gesture, Governor of Washington also issued a special proclamation on the occasion of Baisakhi. In addition, King County (covering 39 cities of Greater Seattle area), along with Snohomish County, and cities of Kent, Auburn and Marysville also issued special proclamations declaring 14th April as the Baisakhi Day celebration across the Greater Seattle area.

It may be noted that a large number of Indian



Eminent leaders of the Sikh community felicitated at the Baisakhi celebration



Washington State Governor Hon'ble Bob Ferguson with the members of the Sikh community at the Baisakhi celebration



Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu being felicitated as part of the Baisakhi celebration



Members of the Sikh community participating in the Baisakhi celebration



Sikh Priest rendering Ardaas prayers at Opening Ceremony of Baisakhi celebration



Washington State Governor Hon'ble Bob Ferguson addressing the Baisakhi celebration



All female Bhangra dance performance at the Baisakhi celebration



Secretary of State Steve Hobbs addressing the Baisakhi celebration



Washington State Governor Hon'ble Bob Ferguson addressing the gathering



All female Bhangra dance performance at the Baisakhi celebration (14 April 2025, State Capitol, Olympia)

American Sikh community members are resident in the State of Washington and engaged in small and medium enterprises/ businesses and also actively contribute to public service enriching the State's

cultural and economic diversity. Some of the eminent leaders of the community were also recognized and felicitated for their positive contributions to the Greater Seattle area.

India Sends 26 Tons of Humanitarian Aid to Honduras in Wake of Tropical Storm SARA



Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra handing over humanitarian relief to COPECO, in the presence of Foreign Minister H.E. Enrique Reina



Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra with the Hon'ble FM Mr. Enrique Reina and officials of COPECO during the handing over of humanitarian aid.

APRIL 14, 2025

GUATEMALA CITY (TIP): Demonstrating a strong commitment to international solidarity and support for the Global South, the Government of India has extended 26 tons of humanitarian assistance to the Republic of Honduras in response to the devastating impact of Tropical Storm SARA. The storm, which struck Honduras in November 2024, caused widespread destruction across the country, triggering massive floods and landslides. Entire communities were displaced as homes, public infrastructure, and essential services, including healthcare facilities, were severely affected. Thousands of people remain in temporary shelters, struggling with limited access to clean water, sanitation, and medical care.



Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra highlighted introduction of the Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) in Honduras

In response to the crisis, India has delivered humanitarian relief in two phases: the first tranche, weighing 6.5 tons, was officially handed over on April 8, 2025, Ambassador Manoj Mohapatra, to the Secretariat of Risk Management and National Contingencies (COPECO), in the presence of Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Enrique Reina. The second and final consignment, totaling 19.5 tons, is expected to arrive by the end of April. Humanitarian Aid includes essential medical and sanitary supplies such as surgical instruments, glucometers, pulse oximeters, gloves, syringes, intravenous fluids, thermal blankets, sleeping mats, and hygiene kits, materials aimed at addressing the urgent needs of affected communities, particularly the most vulnerable.

This is not the first time India has stepped forward to assist Honduras during times of crisis. In recent years, New Delhi provided critical support during the COVID-19 pandemic and other natural disasters. The latest initiative further cements India's reputation as a reliable partner and responsible global actor in humanitarian response efforts. India's commitment to global health was notably recognized during the COVID-19 pandemic, when it provided essential medicines and vaccines to over 170 countries, earning it the title of the "Pharmacy of the World."

Both countries are currently engaged in discussions to introduce the Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) in Honduras, a flagship Indian initiative aimed at providing affordable, high-quality generic medicines to underserved populations. In addition, an Indian company has expressed interest in donating medical equipment and devices to support the establishment of a proposed oncology center in Honduras, reflecting growing bilateral cooperation in the healthcare sector. The Government of India has also reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening healthcare infrastructure in Honduras through targeted development initiatives. As part of a recently concluded Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the framework of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), India will support the upgradation of health clinics and facilitate the provision of reliable solar electricity supply to healthcare centers across the country. These initiatives aim to enhance the operational capacity of local health facilities, especially in remote and underserved regions, thereby improving access to essential medical services and contributing to overall public health resilience in Honduras.



Officials from both countries have expressed appreciation for the ongoing partnership

India and Honduras share a history of friendly bilateral relations, underscored by cooperation in areas such as healthcare, education, and disaster management. By responding swiftly to Honduras's urgent humanitarian needs, India continues to champion the principles of South-South cooperation and reinforce its commitment to global solidarity. Officials from both countries have expressed appreciation for the ongoing partnership, highlighting the importance of international collaboration in building resilience and responding effectively to climate-induced disasters.

(Based on a Press Release issued by Ramesh Khulbey)

Embassy Kicks Off "75 Days to IDY-2025" with Vibrant Yoga Events in Guatemala



Children from San Juan Sacatepaques participate in the event

to be observed globally on June 21, 2025, underlining yoga's universal appeal and its transformative impact on physical and mental well-being.

The first event, a vibrant curtain-raiser session held in partnership with the San Juan Sacatepéquez Municipality, brought together 200 enthusiastic young participants. The gathering buzzed with energy as attendees practiced yoga asanas, breathing exercises, and meditation, embracing the theme of fostering holistic health. The Embassy's efforts to engage local sponsors ensured that all participants received nutritious food and commemorative t-shirts, enhancing the festive spirit and reinforcing community involvement. This event set an inspiring tone for the countdown, highlighting yoga's role in uniting diverse groups through shared values of wellness and mindfulness.

Simultaneously, over 100 students from Colegio Benito Juárez joined the



Yoga enthusiasts at San Juan Sacatepaques

celebrations with a special yoga event tailored to inspire the younger generation. The session introduced students to yoga's benefits, encouraging them to adopt practices that promote balance and harmony in their daily lives. Guided by experienced instructors, the students participated eagerly, embodying the spirit of IDY-2025. Local sponsors again played a pivotal role, providing food and t-shirts to ensure a memorable experience for all. The Embassy's commitment to inclusivity shone through, as both events welcomed participants from varied backgrounds, fostering a sense of global unity.

The Embassy of India in Guatemala has built a strong legacy of promoting yoga through impactful International Day of Yoga celebrations across Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. In 2022, under the theme "Yoga for Humanity," the Embassy held yoga sessions at iconic locations including Mariscal Zavala, Antigua Guatemala, and Lake Atitlán, with approximately 2,500 participants joining the event at Mariscal Zavala alone. In 2023, the Embassy expanded its reach with the theme "Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," fostering global unity through events that drew around 3,500 participants at Mariscal Zavala. In 2024, aligning with the theme "Yoga for Self and Society," the Embassy partnered with municipalities, government institutions, and community groups to host a record-breaking IDY event, engaging 5,000 yoga enthusiasts at Mariscal Zavala, complemented by workshops in rural areas. These efforts underscore the Embassy's commitment to making yoga widely accessible and meaningful.

To sustain momentum for IDY-2025, Embassy's proactive approach extends beyond these curtain-raisers, with plans for workshops, community sessions, and digital campaigns over the next 75 days. By collaborating with local governments, schools, and organizations, the Embassy aims to deepen yoga's reach, encouraging

APRIL 8, 2025
GUATEMALA CITY
(TIP): The Embassy of India, in collaboration with the San Juan Sacatepéquez Municipality and local partners, launched the countdown to the 11th International Day of Yoga (IDY-2025) with two spirited events on April 7, 2025, engaging over 300 young participants in a celebration of wellness, unity, and harmony. These initiatives mark the beginning of a 75-day journey toward IDY-2025, to



100 students from Colegio Benito Juárez joined the celebrations

sustainable lifestyle changes among Guatemalans. To mark "50 Days to IDY-2025" and "25 Days to IDY-2025" Mission is organizing events on 2nd May 2025 and 27 May 2025 and around 700 participants will be joining the countdown celebrations. In these events also local sponsors had committed to providing food and T-shirts for these 700 participants. Mission is also coordinating to organize countdown events accredited countries i.e., El Salvador and Honduras. On 13th June 2025, Embassy is organizing International Day of Yoga celebrations in Cobán, located 200 km from the capital - marking the first time the event to be hosted outside Guatemala City. For the main



Participants practicing Yoga at Colegio Benito Juárez

event, the initial response has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic, receiving more than 9,000 registrations and an estimated participation will be of around 12,000 people. This exceptional turnout is set to make the event the largest yoga gathering outside of India. Embassy invites all yoga enthusiasts to join us during the forthcoming yoga events.

Ambassador of India receives the Keys to the City of Quetzaltenango in recognition of his contribution to the local community



The Municipal Council conferred the Keys to the City upon H.E. Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of the Republic of India to Guatemala



Ambassador Mohapatra expressed profound gratitude and humility

APRIL 15, 2025

GUATEMALA CITY (TIP): In a distinguished ceremony held on 14 April 2025 in the Hall of Honor of the Quetzaltenango Municipality, the Municipal Council conferred the Keys to the City upon H.E. Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of the Republic of India to Guatemala. This prestigious honor recognizes Ambassador Mohapatra's outstanding contributions to the local community and his instrumental role in strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation between India and Guatemala, particularly with Quetzaltenango and neighboring municipalities.

During his tenure, Ambassador Mohapatra has spearheaded several transformative initiatives that have had a lasting impact on the Municipality of Quetzaltenango. These include the donation of essential medicines to bolster local healthcare services, in line with India's philosophy of Sarbe Santu Niramaya (let everyone remain healthy), the creation of hundreds of employment opportunities through Indian enterprises, the promotion of technological advancements, development of infrastructure by Indian companies, and active support for community-driven development programs. His efforts embody India's broader commitment to promoting social and economic progress in Guatemala.

The event was graced by the Honorable



This prestigious honor recognizes Ambassador Mohapatra's outstanding contributions to the local community and his instrumental role in strengthening the bonds of friendship and cooperation between India and Guatemala

Mayor H.E. Mr. Juan Fernando López, members of the Municipal Council, diplomatic representatives, and distinguished members of civil society. The award symbolizes the deep appreciation of the people of Quetzaltenango for Ambassador Mohapatra's remarkable service and the enduring partnership between the two nations.

In his acceptance remarks,

Ambassador Mohapatra expressed profound gratitude and humility. He acknowledged the robust and growing India-Guatemala partnership and reaffirmed his commitment to working together for the benefit of the people of Xela, united by shared aspirations for progress and prosperity. He extended heartfelt thanks to Mayor López, the

Municipal Council, and the vibrant community of Quetzaltenango for the singular honor. Mayor López praised Ambassador Mohapatra as a true friend of Quetzaltenango, highlighting his impactful contributions in the fields of healthcare, employment, and development. He emphasized that the gesture of presenting the Keys to the City reflects the city's gratitude and its desire to further deepen bilateral cooperation. The awarding of the Keys to the City to Ambassador Mohapatra is not only a testament to his distinguished service but also a reaffirmation of the mutual desire to strengthen collaboration between India and Quetzaltenango within the framework of a supportive and development-oriented diplomacy.

A particularly memorable highlight of the ceremony was the moving rendition of the Indian National Anthem performed by the Xela Orchestra, a tribute that was deeply appreciated by the Embassy of India. This artistic gesture symbolized the cultural respect and growing closeness between the people of India and Guatemala.

The Embassy of India reiterates its commitment to supporting initiatives that contribute to the welfare of Guatemalan communities and looks forward to fostering new avenues of cooperation in the years ahead.

(Based on a press release issued by Ramesh Khulbey)



SC gives govt week to reply after it vows not to denotify Waqf assets

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Centre on Thursday, April 17, categorically told the Supreme Court that it will not appoint any non-Muslims to Waqf councils and boards as per the provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act-2025 or denotify existing Waqf properties, including Waqf-by-user or Waqf-by-deed already declared by notification or gazetted.

Following a statement made by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, a three-judge Bench led by CJI Sanjiv Khanna deferred passing any interim orders and issued notice to the Centre asking it to respond to the petitions challenging the amendment within a week.

Giving five days to the petitioners to file their rejoinders to the Centre's reply, the Bench, which also included Justice Sanjay Kumar and Justice KV Viswanathan, posted the matter for further hearing on May 5 when it will consider preliminary objections before passing an interim order.

Thursday's order came after Mehta submitted at the very outset of the hearing that the top court should not take the harsh measure of staying a law passed by Parliament "with due deliberations" without hearing the government properly.

"Your lordship is taking a harsh step... allow me to place within a week my preliminary reply with documents to show how this (law) came into picture," Mehta said, adding that staying the Waqf Act on prima facie reading of some provisions may not be appropriate and



that the court will have to consider the history of the legislation.

"We, as the government and Parliament, are answerable to the people.... Villages and villages are taken as Waqf. It's a considered piece of legislation," Mehta said, adding the petitions were filed even before the Presidential assent and were taken up immediately by the top court.

Noting that there were certain positive things as well in the amendment, the CJI, however, said the court didn't want the situation to change on the ground as

there were some infirmities as well.

"Let me say, somebody asked for a complete stay, we didn't say anything. Today, we don't want the situation to change... there are provisions such as five-year practice of Islam... we are not staying that... There is another thumb rule... Normally, the situation prevailing today should continue to not upset the rights of parties," CJI Khanna told Mehta.

On behalf of the petitioners against the amendment, senior counsel Kapil Sibal, AM Singhvi and Rajiv Dhavan

wanted the Bench to ensure that Waqf under Waqf-by-user should also be protected.

Finally, the CJI dictated the order that recorded the Solicitor General's assurance given to the top court. "During the course of hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta states that the respondents (Centre and others) would like to file a short reply within seven days. He further assures that till next date of hearing, no appointment shall take place to the (Waqf) councils and (Waqf) boards under Sections 9 and 14 of the 2025 Act. He also assures that Waqfs, including Waqf-by-user already declared by notification or gazetted... their status shall not be changed. We take the statement on record. Let the reply be filed within seven days. Reply to that be filed within five days of the service," the Bench ordered.

Noting that it's impossible to deal with 100 or 120 petitions, the Bench said it would only deal with five petitions and would treat others as "disposed of" or as "applicants". However, it clarified that the writ petitions challenging the 1995 Waqf Act and amendments made in 2013 shall be separately shown from this list.

Amid violent protests against the Waqf amendment in West Bengal and other states, the Supreme Court had on Wednesday proposed to stay some of its key provisions, including the power to de-notify properties declared as Waqf by courts and inclusion of non-Muslims in central Waqf councils and boards, saying it would "balance the equities".

Source: TNS

'Focus on your own minorities': India rejects Bangladesh's 'Muslim minority protection' remarks

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India on Friday, April 18, rejected Bangladesh's remarks calling for "protection against minority Muslim population" in West Bengal and instead urged Dhaka to focus on protecting the rights of its own minorities.

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said, "We reject the remarks made by the Bangladesh side with regard to the incidents in West Bengal. This is a barely disguised and disingenuous attempt to draw a parallel with India's concerns over the ongoing persecution of minorities in Bangladesh where the criminal perpetrators of such acts continue to roam free."

The MEA spokesperson said, "Instead of making unwarranted comments and indulging in virtue signaling, Bangladesh would do better to focus on protecting the rights of its own minorities."

India's reaction comes after Bangladesh rejected attempts to link it to the recent communal violence in West Bengal's Murshidabad district.

Bangladesh's Chief Adviser's press secretary Shafiqul Alam had stated that the country's interim government "strongly protested" India's attempts to involve Bangladesh in the incident. "We strongly refute any attempts to implicate Bangladesh in the communal violence in Murshidabad. We



urge the Government of India and West Bengal to take all steps to fully protect the minority Muslim population," Bangladesh's CA press secretary Alam told media in the country.

The violence erupted in West Bengal during protests against the Waqf (Amendment) Act and spread across Murshidabad, Malda, South 24 Parganas, and Hooghly, with incidents of arson, stone-pelting and road blockades.

Happy Passia, the man who terrorised Punjab from abroad, detained in US

Happy Passia-- reportedly detained by the US security agencies on Thursday--has been the biggest headache for the Punjab Police in recent months as he was the alleged mastermind behind 16 targeted grenade attacks in the state.

Originally known as Harpreet Singh from Passia village in Ajnala, he has emerged as a formidable challenge for the Punjab Police due to his extensive involvement in criminal and terrorist activities.

A police official confirmed that he illegally entered US via-Mexico, the illegal human trafficking route in 2021.

Earlier, he had escaped to the UK with the help of a fake identity in 2020.

He stayed there for several months before he entered the US.

A matriculate, Passia belonged an agriculturalist family, while his father had expired.

CBI books, raids AAP ex-MLA over foreign donations

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday, April 17, conducted searches at the premises of former AAP MLA and party's Gujarat poll co-incharge Durgesh Pathak after registering an FIR against him for allegedly receiving foreign donations for his party in contravention of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) norms, officials said. Besides Pathak, the agency booked another office-bearer of the party Kapil Bhardwaj in the case.

The Aam Aadmi Party, while receiving funds from overseas supporters, "deliberately" committed a series of irregularities as it wanted to conceal the identity and nationality of real donors, the CBI found in its investigation in the FCRA violation case against the party leaders. According to the FIR accessed by The Tribune, the Ministry of Home Affairs had in May 2024 asked the CBI to investigate a possible violation of FCRA by AAP and its office-bearers on a secret information shared by the ED.

The CBI then began probing the matter for almost a year and found a series of discrepancies in FCRA contribution.

SC acting as super Parl, says VP Dhankhar on timeline for Prez

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Thursday, April 17, raised concerns over a recent Supreme Court ruling that mandated the President to decide on state Bills reserved by Governors within three months.

"We never bargained for a democracy where the President is bound by timelines... where judges legislate, perform executive functions, act as super Parliament and have absolutely no accountability because the law does not apply to them," Dhankhar said while addressing the sixth batch of Rajya Sabha interns at the Vice-President's Enclave.

A staunch advocate for the separation of powers, the Vice-President also questioned the absence of an FIR in the case involving the alleged recovery of cash from the official residence of Delhi High Court judge Yashwant Varma, who has since been transferred. If there are skeletons in the cupboard, they must tumble out, he said.

He further questioned the constitutionality of the three-member committee formed by the SC to probe the matter, pointing out that while the Vice-President, Prime Minister and parliamentarians are accountable under the law, judges are not. Expressing dismay over the SC's five-day-old ruling imposing timelines on the President, Dhankhar said, "I never thought I would see such a day. Only the President takes an oath to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution. All others — the PM, Vice-President, ministers, MPs and judges — take an oath to abide by it. Yet, a recent judgment directs the President?"



He noted while all MPs and MLAs were mandated to declare their assets, judges were exempt. "We cannot have a situation where you (the SC) issue directives to the President and on what basis?" he asked.

Dhankhar Article 142 of the Constitution which grants the Supreme Court discretionary powers to ensure complete justice had become a "nuclear missile against democratic forces, available to the judiciary 24x7".

He said the only right available to the SC was to interpret the Constitution under Article 145(3). "For this there have to be five judges or more but when Article 145(3) came into force, the number of judges in the SC was eight and five made the majority. Today the SC has 30 judges," he said. *Source: TNS*

Congress flags American visa revocation of Indian students, asks will EAM take it up with US

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Congress on Friday, April 18, expressed concern over the American Immigration Lawyers Association's claim that out of the 327 visa revocation cases of international students collected by it so far, 50% are Indians, and asked whether External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will take up the issue with his US counterpart.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh shared on X a press statement issued on Thursday by the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and said it is "cause for concern to us in India".

"Out of the 327 visa revocation cases of international students collected by the organisation so far, 50% are Indians. The reasons for revocation are random and unclear. There is growing fear and apprehension," Ramesh said.

"Will the External Affairs Minister take note and raise the concern with his US counterpart? Ramesh said and tagged Jaishankar.

"The Department of State (DOS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) are aggressively targeting international students, including those without a history of protest, for visa revocation, termination of their status, and removal," the American



Jairam Ramesh.

Immigration Lawyers Association statement said.

AILA collected 327 reports of visa revocations and Student and Exchange Visitor Information System terminations from attorneys, students and university employees, it said.

"Of these reports - 50 per cent of these students were from India, followed by 14 per cent from China. Other significant countries represented in this data include South Korea, Nepal and Bangladesh," the statement said.

Plans on to ease nuclear liability laws to attract foreign firms, say sources

NEW DELHI (TIP)

"Plans are on to ease nuclear liability laws to cap accident-related penalties on equipment suppliers, in a move to attract U.S. firms that have been holding back owing to the risk of unlimited exposure," three government sources said.

The proposal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is the latest step to expand nuclear power production capacity by 12 times to 100 gigawatts by 2047 as well as provide a fillip in trade and tariff negotiations with the U.S.

"A draft law prepared by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) removes a key clause in the Civil Nuclear Liability Damage Act of 2010 that exposes suppliers to unlimited liability for accidents," the sources said.

The DAE, the Prime Minister's Office and the Finance Ministry did not respond to requests seeking comment.

"India needs nuclear power, which is clean and essential. A liability cap will allay the major concern of the suppliers of nuclear reactors," Debasish Mishra, chief growth officer at Deloitte South Asia, said.

The amendments are in line with the international norms that put the onus on the operator to maintain safety instead of the supplier of nuclear reactors. The Union Government hopes that the changes will ease concerns of

mainly U.S. firms such as General Electric Co. and Westinghouse Electric Co. that have been sitting on the sidelines for years owing to unlimited risks in case of accidents.

Analysts say passage of the amended law is crucial to negotiations between India and the U.S. for a trade deal this year that aims to raise bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030 from \$191 billion last year.

"Modi's administration is confident of getting approval for the amendments in the monsoon session of Parliament, set to begin in July," according to the sources.

Under the proposed amendments, the right of the operator to compensation from the supplier in case of an accident will be capped at the value of the contract. It will also be subject to a period to be specified in the contract.

Currently, the law does not define a limit to the amount of compensation an operator can seek from suppliers and the period for which the vendor can be held accountable.

The 2010 nuclear liability law grew out of the 1984 Bhopal gas disaster, the world's deadliest industrial accident, at a factory owned by U.S. multinational Union Carbide Corp. in which more than 5,000 people were killed.

Source: Reuters

India in history this Week

APRIL 18 TO APRIL 24

18 APRIL

1859 Taty Tope, who had created a reputation for independence in the country, was hanged for playing a decisive role in the first revolution of independence of 1857.

1917 Gandhiji selected Champaran in Bihar to start his Satyagraha movement.



1950 Vinoba Bhave started the Bhoodan movement with 80 acres of land in Panchampalli village in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh.

1971 India's first jumbo jet Boeing 747 arrives in Bombay. It was named Emperor Ashoka.

1978 Sobha Singh, who built modern New Delhi, died.

1991 Kerala was declared the first fully literate state in the country.

1991 Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee lost the confidence vote in the Lok Sabha by one vote.

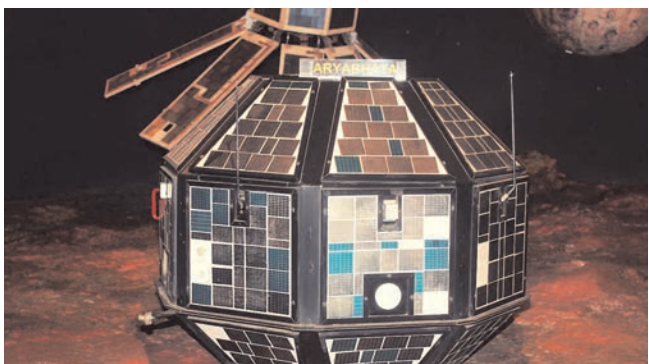
2001 16 soldiers of India martyred due to the firing of Bangladesh army into Indian border.

2008 India and Mexico enter into new agreements in the field of civil aviation and energy.

19 APRIL

1451 Bahlol Lodi captured Delhi.

1950 Shyama Prasad Mukherjee becomes the first Minister to resign from the Union Cabinet.



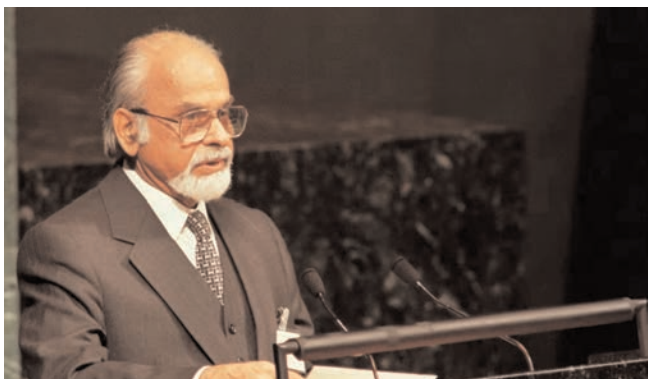
1975 India enters the space age by launching its first satellite Aryabhata. It was the first scientific satellite of India.

1882 Start of first maternity hospital in Calcutta.

1971 India defeated the West Indies and won the Test cricket series.

20 APRIL

1997 Indra Kumar Gujral became the 12th Prime Minister of the country.



21 APRIL

1451 Bahlol Khan Lodi, the founder of the Lodi dynasty, became the ruler of Delhi in 1451.

1938 The famous poet Mohammad Iqbal, author of Saare Jahan Se Achcha Hindostan Hamara..., died in Lahore, Pakistan.

1996 Sanjay Thapar of the Indian Air Force was landed on the Northern Dhruv by parachute.

1526 Ibrahim Lodi was killed in the first battle of Panipat in 1526 between Babar and Ibrahim Lodi, the ruler of the Mughal Empire.

1720 Baji Rao I succeeded Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath in 1720.

2001 India lodged a strong protest over the brutal killing of Indian soldiers in Bangladesh.



1924 Birth of India's first shooter Karni Singh in 1924, honored with the 1961 'Arjuna Award'.

22 APRIL



1921 Netaji Subash Chandra Bose resigned from the Indian Civil Service in 1921.

1970 Earth Day was celebrated for the first time in the world.

1958 Admiral RD Katari became the first chief in the Indian Navy in 1958.



1974 Indian writer Chetan Bhagat was born in 1974.

1969 The famous revolutionary of 'Kakori Kand' Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee passed away in 1969.

23 APRIL

1858 Babu Veer Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur, the hero of India's first freedom struggle passed away.

1987 The Supreme Court ruled the widows share in the property.

1992 Satyajit Rai, who was awarded the Bharat Ratna, the famous Indian filmmaker-director, died in 1992.



1995 Celebration of World Book Day began.

1984 Scientists found out about the AIDS virus in 1984.

2005 The first video was uploaded to YouTube in 2005.

1504 Birth of the second Sikh religious leader Guru Angad in 1504.

24 APRIL



1973 Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar, the country's greatest cricketer who was considered among the best batsmen in the world in the history of cricket, was born on this day.

1815 The Gorkha Regiment, considered the first and bravest battalion of the Indian Army, has completed 200 years today.

1815 The foundation stone of Gorkha Regime was laid in 1815 in Himachal.

1972 The famous Indian painter Gemini Roy died on this day in 1972. He was also awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1955.





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Tips for Seeing Well As You Age

It is no secret that your eyes become worse with age but there are ways to slow down the aging process. Here are a few simple tips that are often forgotten:

1. Do not smoke as it is not just bad for the body but also increases the risk of age-related macular degeneration
2. Eat a well balanced diet. Lots of fruits and vegetables keep your eyes healthy and disease free
3. Wear sunglasses to protect from the sun's UV rays

Vaisakhi: A festival of harvest, faith and heritage

Vaisakhi, also spelled Baisakhi, is one of the most vibrant and important festivals in northern India, especially in Punjab, and holds immense significance for the Sikh and Hindu communities. Celebrated every year on April 13 (and occasionally on April 14 due to leap years), Vaisakhi marks the Punjabi New Year, the harvest festival, and the foundation of the Khalsa Panth in Sikhism. Its uniqueness lies in the blend of agricultural celebration, spiritual awakening, and social unity, making it a multidimensional festival that resonates not only in India but across the world.

Historical Background

1. Agrarian Origins

Long before its religious transformation, Vaisakhi was observed as a seasonal harvest festival by rural communities in the Indus Valley. It coincided with the ripening of Rabi crops, especially wheat, and marked the end of the farming season. Farmers celebrated with songs, dance, food, and prayers to thank nature for its blessings and to ensure prosperity in the coming season.

2. The Birth of the Khalsa - 1699

The true transformation of Vaisakhi into a religious festival happened on March 30, 1699 (which corresponded with Vaisakhi that year), under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs.

At Anandpur Sahib, he summoned thousands of Sikhs to gather. In a powerful and dramatic moment, he asked who among them was ready to give their head for the Guru and faith. One by one, five men came forward. To the awe of the crowd, he emerged with each one alive, dressed in saffron robes. These five became the Panj Pyare (Five Beloved Ones), the first members of the newly created Khalsa.

He performed a ritual of baptism (Amrit Sanchar), mixing water and sugar with a double-edged sword while reciting the five sacred banis. He gave them the surname "Singh" (lion), and later asked for baptism from them himself—symbolizing that all are equal in the eyes of God, regardless of caste or status.

This day marked the birth of the Khalsa Panth, a community of saint-soldiers dedicated to truth, justice, and protecting the weak. The Khalsa were bound by five articles of faith known as the Five Ks:

- Kesh - Uncut hair
- Kanga - Wooden comb
- Kara - Steel bracelet
- Kachera - Cotton undergarment
- Kirpan - Ceremonial sword

Religious Significance

For Sikhs:

- **Founding of the Khalsa Panth:** It is one of the holiest days in Sikhism, symbolizing rebirth, commitment to faith, and courage.
- **Baptism Ceremonies (Amrit Sanchar):** Many Sikhs choose Vaisakhi to formally be initiated into the Khalsa.
- **Prayers and Hymns:** Special Akhand Path (continuous reading of the Guru Granth Sahib) is held in



- **Gurdwaras:** Seva (Selfless Service): Langar (community kitchen) and acts of service are emphasized.

For Hindus:

In the Hindu tradition, Vaisakhi is tied to the solar calendar and marks the solar new year in several Indian regions. It often aligns with Surya Sankranti, a transition of the sun into the Aries zodiac sign. It is a time for ritual bathing, visiting temples, charity, and celebrating the beginning of a new financial year in many Hindu business communities.

How Vaisakhi is Celebrated

In Punjab:

- **Morning Gurdwara Services:** Devotees participate in special prayers and kirtans.
- **Nagar Kirtans (Religious Processions):** Led by Panj Pyare, these processions include the Guru Granth Sahib, devotional music, Gatka (Sikh martial arts), and decorated floats.
- **Bhangra and Gidda:** High-energy traditional dances are performed in villages and cities alike.
- **Langar:** Gurdwaras serve free community meals to people of all religions and castes.
- **Fairs and Cultural Events:** Local melas (fairs) with food, crafts, folk performances, and games.

Global Celebrations:

Vaisakhi is celebrated with equal devotion and grandeur by Sikh diaspora communities across the globe:

- **United Kingdom:** Large parades in

London, Birmingham, and Leicester, attended by hundreds of thousands.

- **Canada:** Vancouver and Surrey host some of the biggest Vaisakhi parades in the world, reflecting the strength of the Punjabi-Sikh population.
- **United States:** Celebrated in cities like Fresno, New York, and Yuba City, with cultural events, processions, and interfaith gatherings.
- **Australia and New Zealand:** Growing celebrations, especially in Melbourne and Auckland, with Gurdwara events and community outreach.

Symbolism and Modern Relevance

Vaisakhi is more than a festival—it is a symbol of:

- **Social Equality:** The formation of the Khalsa rejected caste hierarchies and discrimination.
- **Courage and Sacrifice:** Reflects the warrior spirit of Sikhs who stood against oppression.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Promotes Punjabi music, language, dress, and traditions.
- **Community Service:** Embodies the spirit of "Sarbat da Bhala"—the welfare of all.
- **Unity in Diversity:** A festival celebrated differently across regions, yet united by themes of renewal and gratitude.

How Vaisakhi is Celebrated in India

Gurdwaras are decorated with lights of various colours while the Sikhs organise "Nagar Kirtan"—a

procession led by five Khalsa. The procession is marked by people singing hymns from the Sikh texts. Some of the bigger processions keep a copy of the Guru Granth Sahib as a show of respect.

Events that depict the true culture of Punjab are organised. Traditional folk dance or Bhangra, essentially a harvest festival dance, is quite common in these cultural events. People flock to local fairs that form an integral part of the Punjabi culture.

In other parts of India, Hindus celebrate the day as the beginning of the new year. People take a dip in the holy Ganges and other holy rivers before starting the day. Dressing up in traditional attire, indulging in local delicacies, and visiting friends' and relatives' houses are quite common. Vaisakhi is also considered as an auspicious day to start a new venture.

Vaisakhi is celebrated across India, albeit the names being different in different states. The festival is seen as a symbol of prosperity for all.

People dance, sing and wear new clothes to celebrate the festival. They enjoy watching parades that shall take place during this time. Both men and women dance.

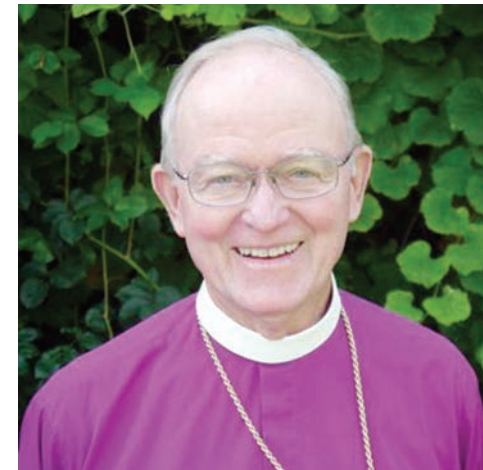
Men perform the Bangra form whereas women perform the Gidda form to celebrate the event. People prepare holiday meals and sweets and share among themselves. It has been a special day for Sikhs, who carry processions and celebrate the day with great fanaticism. Vaisakhi is grandly celebrated in Haryana and Punjab, the northern states of India.

Global Champions of Interfaith Unity Win Hofstra's Prestigious \$50K Guru Nanak Prize

Oxford Scholar and World's Largest Grassroots Faith Network Honored for Promoting Peace Through Dialogue



Dr. Thea Gomelauri, founder of the Oxford Interfaith Forum



Rt. Rev. William E. Swing, founder of United Religions Initiative

Sardar Isha Singh Bindra and Sardarni Kuljit Kaur desired to bring better understanding among people of various faiths and founded Interfaith Prize in collaboration with Hofstra University to promote interfaith dialogue and to recognize individuals or organizations that bring people together.

APRIL 15, 2025

HEMPSTEAD, NY (TIP): Hofstra University, in partnership with the Sardarni Kuljit Kaur Bindra Charitable Foundation, is proud to award the 2024 Guru Nanak Interfaith Prize to two visionaries: Dr. Thea Gomelauri, founder of the Oxford Interfaith Forum, and the United Religions Initiative (URI), founded by pioneering interfaith leader and president emeritus Rt. Rev. William E. Swing.

The biennial prize - \$50,000 split between the two winners - recognizes extraordinary contributions to promoting peaceful dialogue between faiths and cultures. The ceremony will take place April 22, 2025, at the Crest Hollow Country Club in Woodbury, NY.

"It was our parents desire to bring better understanding among people of various faiths and founded Interfaith Prize in collaboration with Hofstra University to promote interfaith dialogue and to recognize individuals or organizations that bring people together. It is named after Guru Nanak who preached and practiced equality of all human beings irrespective of their religion, caste, color, creed or sex. We are very pleased with the selection of two very well deserving awardees for 2024

Guru Nanak Interfaith Prize" said T J Bindra of Bindra Family.

"The Guru Nanak Prize embodies Hofstra University's mission to foster global understanding while preparing students to thrive in the complexity of our interconnected world," said Dr. Eva Badowska, dean of Hofstra College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. "At a time when peaceful collaboration, civil discourse, and cultural awareness are essential to addressing profound global challenges, this prize honors the principles of peace, interfaith dialogue, and selfless service that resonate deeply with the University's values. It reminds us that education is not just about knowledge - it's about inspiring action and shaping a better future for all."

From the Halls of Academia to the Grassroots: Two Leaders, One Vision

Dr. Thea Gomelauri, a biblical scholar at the University of Oxford and director of the Oxford Interfaith Forum, has brought together academics across the globe to explore sacred texts and religious traditions through an inclusive lens.

Her groundbreaking research on Georgian Jewry - the world's oldest surviving Jewish diaspora - has helped shed light on forgotten communities and

manuscripts, earning her international acclaim.

"This prestigious award in the name of Guru Nanak Dev Ji inspires us to continue the promotion of universal peace through interreligious education at this critical time in our history," Dr. Gomelauri said.

The Forum was recently honored by King Abdullah II of Jordan with the UN World Interfaith Harmony Week Award for its contributions to peace and religious education.

The United Religions Initiative, meanwhile, stands as the largest grassroots interfaith network in the world, spanning more than 100 countries. Born out of a bold vision by Bishop William E. Swing during a 1993 interfaith service at the United Nations, URI now mobilizes everyday people - from youth activists to elders - to build peace in their own communities.

"The generous heart of Guru Nanak was powerful in his time, and through this award the spiritual power only increases," said Bishop Swing. "To be honored in his name is an inward blessing."

URI's work ranges from conflict resolution to environmental sustainability to advocacy for human rights, impacting communities on every continent across the globe.

"We feel proud and grateful for this honor which celebrates URI, its founder,

and the entire URI network of interfaith activists who dedicate their lives to a world where we can all live in trust, love and unity, beyond and through our necessary and lauded differences," said Eric Roux, chair of the URI Global Council.

Honoring the Legacy of Peace

Founded in 2006 by Sardar Isha Singh Bindra and family. The Guru Nanak Interfaith Prize celebrates the legacy of Guru Nanak, the 15th-century founder of Sikhism, who championed equality, service, and unity across faiths. Past recipients include His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and Dr. Eboo Patel, founder of Interfaith America.

Dr. Julie Byrne, Hofstra University's Monsignor Thomas Hartman Chair in Catholic Studies and chair of the Department of Religion, said of this year's honorees, "The committee was deeply impressed by the complementary work done by these two stellar interfaith organizations: the United Religions Initiative that concentrates on grassroots networks of communities, and the Oxford Interfaith Forum that brings together scholars for the sharing and production of new knowledge about religions and their interactions. Community-based and scholarly approaches are both needed to advance understanding and acknowledgment of difference in today's global world."

The INDIAN PANORAMA
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wishes readers a very

HAPPY
Vaisakhi



Khalsa Sajna Diwas, observed each year on Vaisakhi (13 or 14 April), marks one of the most significant events in Sikh history—the creation of the Khalsa Panth in 1699 CE by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Sikh Guru. This day is not only a religious festival but also a sacred commemoration of identity, equality, valor, and spiritual discipline.

The founding of the Khalsa was a watershed moment—not just in the evolution of Sikhism, but also in the broader context of Indian resistance against tyranny, caste oppression, and religious intolerance.

Historical Background

In the late 17th century, India was witnessing intense social and religious turmoil. The Mughal Empire, under Emperor Aurangzeb, was expanding its control with aggressive enforcement of Islamic orthodoxy. Non-Muslims, particularly Hindus and Sikhs, were under growing pressure to convert. Temples were destroyed, religious taxes like jizya were imposed, and executions of dissenters became frequent.

Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur

The father of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, was executed in Delhi for refusing to convert to Islam and for standing up for the rights of Kashmiri Pandits. His public beheading was meant to instill fear—but it sparked a new era of spiritual and political resistance in Sikhism.

This incident deeply influenced the young Guru Gobind Rai, who was only 9 years old at the time. He grew up with a burning sense of mission—to ensure that his community would never bow to tyranny, and that faith would never be dictated by fear.

Vaisakhi of 1699: A Spiritual and Social Revolution

A Call to the Devout

Guru Gobind Singh Ji called for a grand gathering of Sikhs from across the Indian subcontinent at Anandpur Sahib on March 30, 1699, coinciding with Vaisakhi—a day already celebrated as a harvest festival in Punjab.

Thousands came, expecting a sermon or celebration. But what they witnessed was revolutionary.

The Test of Faith: Birth of the Panj Pyare

Standing before the crowd with a drawn sword, Guru Ji demanded a volunteer ready to sacrifice his head. After a tense silence, Bhai Daya Ram from Lahore stepped forward. Guru Ji took him inside a tent and returned alone—with a bloodied sword.

He repeated the request four more times. Four others stepped forward:

- Bhai Dharam Das of Hastinapur (UP)
- Bhai Himmat Rai of Jagannath Puri (Odisha)
- Bhai Mohkam Chand of Dwarka (Gujarat)
- Bhai Sahib Chand of Bidar (Karnataka)

To everyone's astonishment, all five re-emerged alive, dressed in saffron robes, having passed the ultimate test of

Khalsa Sajna Diwas: A defining moment in Sikh history



devotion and fearlessness.

These five were named the Panj Pyare (Five Beloved Ones)—representing the ideal Sikh who was ready to sacrifice everything for righteousness and truth, without regard to caste, region, or social background.

The Khalsa Initiation: A New Spiritual Order

Guru Gobind Singh Ji created a new spiritual community, called the Khalsa, meaning "the pure". He prepared Amrit (nectar of immortality) in an iron bowl, mixing water and sugar with a double-edged sword (Khanda), while reciting five sacred banis (prayers). He administered it to the Panj Pyare.

The Code of the Khalsa

The initiated Khalsa were given:

- A new surname: Singh for men (meaning lion), later Kaur for women (meaning princess)
- A distinct identity through the Five Ks:

- Kesh (uncut hair) - respect for God's creation
- Kanga (wooden comb) - cleanliness and order
- Kara (steel bracelet) - eternal bond with God
- Kachera (cotton undergarment) - modesty and self-control
- Kirpan (ceremonial sword) - commitment to protect the weak and uphold justice

Guru Gobind Singh Ji then knelt before the Panj Pyare and asked to be initiated himself. This gesture made him the first among equals, reinforcing the idea that no one is above the community.

This was the first time in Indian history that caste hierarchy was publicly rejected in favor of complete spiritual and social equality.

Spiritual Meaning of Khalsa

"Deg Teg Fateh"

The Khalsa embodied a dual ideal:

- Deg: Providing food and service to the needy (langar and seva)

- Teg: Wielding the sword to defend the oppressed

The Khalsa was created to be a warrior-saint, devoted to God, but willing to fight against injustice, regardless of the enemy's power.

The Khalsa Identity

The Khalsa was to be:

- Nirbhau (fearless)
- Nirvair (without enmity)
- Gurmukh (God-centered)
- A guardian of Dharam (righteousness) and freedom

Khalsa Sajna Diwas Celebrations

1. Gurdwara Services:
 - Morning prayers, Akhand Path, and Kirtan
 - Historical narrations and Katha (spiritual discourse)
2. Amrit Sanchar Ceremonies:
 - Thousands take initiation into the Khalsa on this day
3. Nagar Kirtans (Processions):
 - Led by Panj Pyare, featuring the Guru Granth Sahib, music, martial arts displays (Gatka), and decorated floats
4. Seva and Langar:
 - Mass community kitchens serve free meals to people of all faiths
5. Decorated Gurdwaras:
 - Illuminated buildings, flower garlands, and Nishan Sahib (Sikh flag) washing ceremonies

Global Celebrations

In the Diaspora (UK, Canada, US, Australia):

- Vaisakhi Parades attract hundreds of thousands
- Interfaith dialogues, blood donation camps, and cultural exhibitions are held
- Khalsa Sajna Diwas becomes a symbol of Sikh pride and heritage

Impact and Legacy of the Khalsa

1. Political and Military Strength

The Khalsa formed the backbone of Sikh resistance against Mughal tyranny and later British colonialism. Notable figures like Banda Singh Bahadur, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and countless Sikh warriors were Khalsa initiates.

2. Religious and Social Revolution

Khalsa Panth was the first organized religious movement in India that:

- Eradicated caste distinctions
- Promoted gender equality
- Emphasized universal brotherhood and service

3. Modern Relevance

The Khalsa identity today is a source of:

- Strength for young Sikhs in the diaspora
- A reminder of spiritual duty and social justice
- A commitment to selfless service (seva) and community well-being

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Guru Gobind Singh Ji : The Saint Soldier

Guru Gobind Singh, (1666–1708) the 10th and last master of the Sikhs, was born on 7th day of the month of POH, samvat 1723, (22nd December, 1666 AD) at Patna Sahib in Bihar. Guru ji was a great revolutionary whose greatest achievement was the creation of the Khalsa Panth on Baisakhi Day of 1699 at Anandpur Sahib in Punjab. Guru ji was a linguistic familiar with many languages like, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit as well as his native Punjabi. Guru ji codified Sikh law, wrote martial poetry and music, fought many battles and won.

Guru ji wrote the renowned holy Granth called the Dasam Granth. The noted prayers included in this Granth are Jaap Sahib, Chandi Di Vaar, Tav-Prasad Savaiye, Zafarnamah, Bachittar Natak, Akal Ustat, Chaupai Sahib and more.

Guru Gobind Singh Sahib Ji was a revolutionary prophet who practiced his spiritual ideals to counter the forces of tyranny and injustice. Tyranny in all its forms – social, political, and religious was to be countered and annihilated. A state which could not provide basic human rights, social justice, equality and religious freedom was to be opposed.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji's contributions not only shaped Sikhism into a vibrant, sovereign, and spiritual tradition, but also inspired resistance against tyranny and uplifted the downtrodden. His establishment of the Khalsa in 1699 and his declaration of Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the eternal Guru remain the two most defining moments in Sikh history.

Early Life of Guru Gobind Singh Ji

- Birth Name: Gobind Rai
- Born: December 22, 1666 (7 Poh, Samvat 1723), Patna Sahib, Bihar
- Father: Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji (9th Sikh Guru)
- Mother: Mata Gujri Ji

Childhood in Patna and Anandpur Sahib

Guru Gobind Singh Ji was born in Patna Sahib, where his early years were marked by brilliance in language, philosophy, and martial training. His family later moved to Anandpur Sahib, which became the center of Sikh learning and resistance under his leadership.

Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji

In 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was publicly executed in Delhi by Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb for defending the religious rights of Kashmiri Hindus. At the young age of nine, Guru Gobind Rai was formally anointed as the Tenth Guru, taking on an enormous spiritual and social responsibility.

Leadership and Transformation of the Sikh Community

From the age of nine onward, Guru Gobind Singh Ji led the Sikh Panth



with vision, strength, and purpose, shaping it into a resilient and sovereign spiritual order.

Creation of the Khalsa (1699)

On Vaisakhi Day in 1699, Guru Gobind Singh Ji summoned thousands of Sikhs at Anandpur Sahib. Through a dramatic call for sacrifice, he created the Khalsa Panth, a community of initiated warrior-saints who embodied the virtues of:

- Spiritual devotion (bhakti)
- Martial courage (shakti)
- Equality, justice, and righteousness

The Khalsa was required to uphold the Five Ks (Kakaars) and live by a strict code of conduct, known as the Rehat Maryada.

"When all other means fail, it is righteous to draw the sword."

-Guru Gobind Singh Ji

This transformation empowered the Sikhs to resist religious persecution, caste oppression, and political tyranny.

Teachings and Philosophy

Guru Gobind Singh Ji's teachings combine devotion, discipline, and dharam yudh (righteous warfare). He emphasized internal purity, service to humanity, and unwavering faith in One God.

1. God is One and Formless

Guru Ji reinforced the belief in Ik Onkar-the One Universal Creator. He rejected idol worship and rituals, calling instead for:

- Meditation (Simran)

- Honest living (Kirat Karni)
- Sharing with others (Vand Chakna)

2. Equality of All

He denounced the caste system, declared all human beings equal, and promoted gender equality.

"Manas ki jaat sabhe ek pehchaanbo" - Recognize the whole human race as one.

3. The Ideal Saint-Soldier

Guru Gobind Singh Ji conceptualized the ideal Sikh as a Saint-Soldier (Sant-Sipahi)-a person of high spiritual awareness, humility, and martial readiness to fight for justice, never out of anger or greed.

4. Fearlessness and Self-Sacrifice

He emphasized the cultivation of Nirbhau (fearlessness) and Nirvair (without hatred). His own life, and the sacrifices of his family, are unparalleled in Indian history.

Literary Genius and Writings

Guru Gobind Singh Ji was a scholar of Persian, Braj, Sanskrit, and Punjabi, and composed an extensive body of spiritual and philosophical literature.

- Major Works
- Jaap Sahib - A poetic composition praising the attributes of God
 - Akal Ustat - Hymns in praise of the Timeless One
 - Chandi di Var - Heroic ballads of the divine feminine (Chandi/Devi)
 - Zafarnama - A Persian epistle to Aurangzeb, criticizing his tyranny

and dishonesty

These texts form a part of the Dasam Granth, a collection of Guru Gobind Singh Ji's writings.

Personal Sacrifices and Battles

Family Martyrdom

Guru Gobind Singh Ji's life was marked by immense personal loss:

- His father, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji - Beheaded for defending religious freedom

His four sons:

- Sahibzadas Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh - Martyred in the Battle of Chamkaur
- Sahibzadas Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh - Bricked alive by the Mughals in Sirhind
- His mother, Mata Gujri Ji - Passed away in captivity upon hearing of her grandsons' death

Despite these tragedies, Guru Ji remained steadfast in faith, mission, and purpose.

Key Battles

He fought several defensive wars against the Mughal and Hill Rajput rulers, including:

- Battle of Bhangani (1688)
- Battle of Chamkaur (1704)
- Battle of Muktsar (1705)

These battles were fought not for power, but for dharma (righteousness) and freedom of belief.

Declaration of the Guru Granth Sahib as the Eternal Guru

Before his passing in 1708, Guru Gobind Singh Ji abolished the line of human Gurus and declared the Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the eternal, living Guru of the Sikhs:

"Sabh Sikhian ko hukam hai, Guru manyo Granth."

This ensured that the Word of God, not a person, would guide the Panth forever.

Martyrdom at Nanded

Guru Gobind Singh Ji passed away on October 7, 1708, in Hazur Sahib, Nanded (Maharashtra), after being attacked by an assassin. Even in his final moments, he remained composed, instructing the Sikhs to uphold the Khalsa and revere the Guru Granth Sahib.

Legacy of Guru Gobind Singh Ji

- Founder of the Khalsa Panth
He gave Sikhs a unique identity and unified purpose-to be selfless, courageous, disciplined, and God-fearing.
- Champion of Human Rights and Freedom
- Guru Gobind Singh Ji's message resonates universally: stand for the oppressed, live truthfully, and never bow before injustice.
- He was not only a warrior but also a visionary poet and philosopher. His writings inspired generations to live lives of spiritual and ethical excellence.

Happy Khalsa Sajna Divas & Happy Vaisakhi



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Symbols and tenets of Sikhism

A Path of Oneness, Courage, and Compassion

Sikhism, or Sikhi, is more than a religion—it's a spiritual way of life rooted in devotion, equality, and service. It began in the late 15th century with the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and was developed over 239 years by Ten Gurus who collectively shaped a powerful synthesis of spiritual discipline, social reform, and community service.

The Sikh worldview is expressed not only through profound philosophical teachings but also through distinctive symbols that offer constant guidance in daily life. These tenets and symbols help the Sikh remain connected to the Divine, conscious of their duties, and committed to justice in society.

Fundamental Tenets of Sikhism: The Building Blocks of a Sikh Life

- Belief in One Timeless God (Ik Onkar)

At the very heart of Sikh belief lies Ik Onkar: "There is but One God."

- God is Formless (Nirankar), without image, gender, or limits
- God is Truth (Satnam), the Eternal Creator (Karta Purakh)
- God is accessible through Naam Simran (meditation on the Name)

This universal God is not exclusive to Sikhs but is present in all creation, transcending caste, religion, or race.

"There is but One God, whose Name is Truth, the Creator, Fearless, Timeless, Unborn, Self-existent." - Guru Granth Sahib Ji (Japji Sahib)

- Three Pillars of Sikh Practice (Guru Nanak's Code)

Guru Nanak Dev Ji established a revolutionary lifestyle model based on spiritual awareness within society, not outside of it.

- Naam Japna (Remembering God's Name)
- A meditative practice that focuses on internal connection with the Divine
- Promotes humility, detachment from ego (Haumai), and spiritual peace
- Encouraged through recitation (Jap), singing (Kirtan), and contemplation (Simran)
- Kirat Karni (Honest Living)
- Earn your livelihood through truthful and fair means
- Avoid cheating, corruption, or exploitation
- Work is seen as divine duty, not separate from worship
- Vand Chakna (Sharing with Others)
- Sharing wealth, food, and time with those in need
- Builds community, reduces inequality, and promotes compassion
- Practiced practically through Langar, charity, and volunteering (Seva)
- Rejection of Ritualism and Superstition

Sikhism encourages direct connection



with God, free of:

- Idol worship
 - Ritual sacrifices
 - Astrology, fasting, or pilgrimage as a substitute for inner devotion
- Instead, it teaches ethical conduct, prayer, and honest effort.

"Superstition is the root of bondage. Seek the truth within." - Guru Nanak Dev Ji

Equality and Social Reform

The Sikh Gurus fought entrenched social hierarchies:

- Caste system was firmly rejected. The Gurus dined and served with people of all backgrounds.
- Women's equality was emphasized. Sikh women were empowered as spiritual leaders, warriors, and scholars.

"Why call her inferior, from whom kings are born?" - Guru Nanak Dev Ji

- Seva (Selfless Service) and Compassion

Seva is sacred work done without desire for reward. It embodies:

- Compassion for all beings (Daya)
 - Egolessness (Nimrata)
 - A sense of universal responsibility
- From local Gurdwaras to global disaster relief, Seva is a core expression of love and spirituality in Sikh life.
- Justice and Righteous Action (Sant-Sipahi)

Sikhs are encouraged to live as saint-soldiers (Sant-Sipahi), combining:

- Spiritual wisdom (Sant) with
- Moral courage (Sipahi)

Standing up against injustice is not just a right—it's a duty.

"When all other means fail, it is righteous to draw the sword." - Guru Gobind Singh Ji

Sacred Symbols of Sikhism:

Expressions of the Inner Journey

Sikh symbols are visible commitments

to the Guru's teachings and reminders of one's spiritual and moral obligations.



- Ik Onkar

Pronounced "Ik Oangkar"

- The first word in Guru Granth Sahib Ji

Represents unity of God, creation, and eternal truth

It is the starting point of Sikh theology, often inscribed at the top

of scriptures, Gurdwaras, and Sikh literature.

- Khanda: The Sikh Emblem

The Khanda symbolizes divine sovereignty, justice, and spiritual balance.

Three Elements:

- Double-edged sword (Khanda): Power of truth and spiritual knowledge

- Chakkar (circle): Unity of all creation and eternity

- Two Kirpans: Miri (temporal power) and Piri (spiritual authority)

This symbol reflects the Khalsa ideal: devotion, discipline, and defense of righteousness.

- Nishan Sahib: The Sikh Flag

- A tall triangular flag outside every Gurdwara Sahib

- Saffron/orange for courage, sacrifice, and humility

- Flown as a beacon of sanctuary, community, and unity

During celebrations, the flag and its pole are respectfully washed and rewrapped with fresh cloth in a Nishan Sahib Seva ceremony.

- The Five Ks (Panj Kakaar): Living the Khalsa Code

Introduced at the historic event of Khalsa Sajna Diwas (1699), these articles are worn by baptized Sikhs (Khalsa) as daily discipline and identity.

Kakkhar Symbolizes Spiritual Significance

- Kesh (Uncut Hair) Respect for God's creation Spiritual wisdom, submission to divine will
- Kangha (Wooden Comb) Cleanliness and order Daily hygiene, mental clarity
- Kara (Steel Bracelet) Bond with God Infinity, moral restraint
- Kachera (Cotton Undergarment) Chastity and modesty Self-control, alertness
- Kirpan (Ceremonial Sword) Courage and justice Duty to protect the innocent

These symbols transform the body into a spiritual instrument and a living shrine of discipline.

Guru Granth Sahib Ji: The Eternal Guide

After Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the scripture itself became the Guru:

- Comprises hymns (Shabads) of Sikh Gurus and Bhagats (saint-poets of Hindu and Muslim backgrounds)
- Written in Gurmukhi, blending Punjabi, Sanskrit, Persian, and Braj
- Focuses on Naam, truth, service, and divine love

It is read with utmost reverence, and its teachings are central to Sikh worship and decision-making.

The Gurdwara: House of Worship and Service

- Open to all people, regardless of faith
- No idols or images—only Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the spiritual focus
- Langar (free communal meal) offered daily
- Core values practiced: equality, humility, hospitality

Five Takhts: Seats of Sikh Authority

- Akal Takht Sahib (Amritsar) - Supreme temporal authority
- Takht Sri Keshgarh Sahib (Anandpur Sahib) - Birthplace of Khalsa
- Takht Sri Damdama Sahib (Talwandi Sabo) - Site of Guru Granth Sahib Ji's final compilation
- Takht Sri Patna Sahib (Bihar) - Birthplace of Guru Gobind Singh Ji
- Takht Sri Hazur Sahib (Nanded) - Where Guru Gobind Singh Ji passed the Guruship to the scripture

Universal Message and Modern Relevance

- Equality for all, regardless of background
- Environmental stewardship as part of spiritual responsibility
- Humanitarian service through global Sikh organizations
- Moral leadership in politics, military, medicine, and public service

Happy Khalsa Sajna Divas and a Happy Vaisakhi



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Key warriors in Sikh history: Guardians of faith and freedom

Sikh history is marked not only by spiritual enlightenment but also by heroic resistance against oppression. Rooted in the teachings of the Gurus, especially Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the concept of the Sant-Sipahi—the Saint-Soldier—emerged as an ideal for all Sikhs. A true Sikh must be deeply spiritual, yet also courageous enough to fight tyranny and defend the weak. From the early Mughal period to British colonial times, countless Sikh warriors stood as beacons of valor, sacrifice, and justice, often in the face of overwhelming odds. Below are some of the most revered warriors in Sikh history.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh

The only ruler of a united Sikh Empire, Ranjit Singh is more commonly known as Shere-e Panjab (the lion of Panjab) equally famed for contributing to the rise and fall of Sikh power.

Ranjit Singh was born in 1780 to Mahan Singh Sukerchakia, the leader of one of Panjab's leading Misls (confederacies). His youth was spent fighting Afghan invaders, local rajas and other Sikh Misls in order to gain power in Panjab, in fact, he joined his father in his first battle aged just 10. A bout of smallpox at an early age disfigured his face and he lost the sight of one eye, but by the age of 12 he had risen to leadership of his Misl. By his teens, the young leader began drinking alcohol, a habit that would increasingly lead to alcoholism in his older age and contribute to illnesses that would take his and his son's life and leave a power vacuum after his death.

Ranjit Singh was constantly waging battles in his youth and in 1797, at the age of only 17 he fought against invading Afghans and killed their leader, Shah Zaman. Victories over rival Misls left him in command of the one of the strongest military forces in Panjab. By the age of 21, Ranjit Singh, together with Sada Kaur of the Kanheya Misl jointly entered Lahore and Ranjit Singh was crowned Maharaja of Panjab by defeating the Bhangi Misl.

His first decade was spent consolidating his power by either signing treaties of peace with other Sikh chiefs (as with the Ahluwalia or Kanheya Misls) or conquering their territories by force (as with the Bhangi Misl). However he also showed the intelligence that would serve him well. After the Marathas were defeated by the British, one of their leaders, Jaswant Rao Holkar entered Panjab to ask for Sikh help to attack the British. Ranjit Singh, along with Fateh Singh Ahluwalia entered a British camp in disguise to estimate British power. Taken aback by the power of English weaponry and resources, the young Ranjit Singh refused Holkar any assistance until he felt the Sikhs were in a better position to fight.

After subduing his rivals, he began an expansionist policy that saw the height of centralised Sikh power. After centuries of being the gateway of invasions to India, Ranjit Singh reversed the history of Panjab and built an

Maharaja Ranjit Singh



Rani Sada Kaur



Baghel Singh Karora Singhia

empire that extended from India into present day Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and Nepal. An astute strategist, he solidified his southern boundary with the British and increased the strength and prestige of his nation which reached

its extent by the time he died in 1839.

In 1818 the Maharaja conquered Multan, and a year later Kashmir also fell to his forces, and by 1834 he had taken Peshawar, a city on the border with Afghanistan. Whilst some of his forces

battled the Chinese in north, others ensured the integrity of the border in the south with the British where many Sikhs had chosen to stay under British protection than fall under the dominion of Ranjit Singh, these Sikhs would eventually be the nail in the Empire (Sarkar Khaksa) Ranjit Singh built up during his life.

Ranjit Singh modernised the Sikh Army, bringing in Europeans to build an army modelled on that of Napoleon in France. Jean Francois Allard, Jean Baptiste Ventura (Italy) and Claude Auguste Court are some of the most famous names, however American, Spanish and Dutch soldiers are also documented to have been employed by the Sarkar Khalsa. The country was also the only one in Asia at the time capable of producing its own modern war munitions and had become completely self sufficient in weaponry.

Rani Sada Kaur

The first of three female warriors on my list, Sada Kaur was responsible for the rise of the Sikh Empire through her battlefield bravery and strategic foresight.

After the Afghan ruler, Ahmed Shah Abdali's invasions of India had receded, the Sikhs not having an external enemy began fighting with each other. The era of the Sikh Confederacy, or Misls was characterised by a number of competing Sikh kingdoms that would come together when presented with an external enemy, but would go back to intra Sikh fighting once any danger receded. Sada Kaur took the leadership of the Kanheya Misl following the death of her husband in a battle against the Sukerchakia Misl and the death of her father-in-law the famous Jai Singh Kanheya. At her disposal, Sada Kaur had over 10,000 cavalry and other sizeable resources. In what is widely regarded as one of the most farsighted decisions supporting Sikh growth, she arranged for the marriage of her daughter, Mahitab Kaur Kanheya with the son of the Sukherchakia Misl, Ranjit Singh. Sada Kaur then pushed her troops to support Ranjit Singh in his quest to become the premier Sikh chief, She also realised that anyone that wanted to control Panjab first had to control the capital Lahore and pushed Ranjit Singh to enter the city.

Sada Kaur and Ranjit Singh entered Lahore together as joint rulers, however Sada had Ranjit Singh crowned Maharaja of Panjab. Sada Kaur joined Ranjit Singh in a number of battles against rival Sikh chiefs until he was unquestionably the dominant leader of the Sikh nation.

Baghel Singh Karora Singhia

Despite being the only Sikh to conquer Delhi, very few people know about the extraordinary life of Baghel Singh

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From P34

Dhaliwal. Born in 1730 to humble origins, Baghel Singh joined Sardar Karor Singh of the Karora Singhia Misl during the age of the Sikh Confederacy in the 1750s. In 1764, Baghel Singh was one of the Sikhs caught up in the Wada Ghallughara (the Great Holocaust) where two thirds of the entire Sikh population in existence at the time was wiped out in a campaign led by Ahmed Shah Abdali. Baghel Singh fought day and night over a period of weeks protecting a slow moving baggage train of Sikh civilians while the Afghan invaders would constantly break through the cordon of Sikh fighters, slaughter thousands of women, children and the elderly and then disperse. Even Sikh historians noted the effectiveness of Afghan attacks and their Muslim soldiery.

Showing great leadership potential, bravery on the battlefield and an excellent understanding of politics, Baghel Singh succeeded Karor Singh to become the leader of his Misl in 1765 and according to Mughal comentator Syed Ahmad Latif, he had 12000 men under his command.

Jassa Singh Ramgarhia

Jassa Singh Ramgarhia (1723 - 1803) was a prominent Sikh leader during the period of the Sikh Confederacy. He became the Misdar (Chief/Leader) of the Ramgarhia Army (misl). This period was an interlude, lasting roughly from the time of the death of Banda Singh Bahadur in 1716 to the founding of the Sikh Empire in 1801. The period is also sometimes described as the Age of the Misl.

Jassa Singh Ramgarhia is not to be confused with Jassa Singh Ahluwalia; both were prominent Misdars of separate powerful Sikh army groups, called Misl. Ramgarhia's father was called Giani Bhagwan Singh.

The Ramgarhia Misl

In 1716 Ahmed Shah Durrani left Lahore, Adina Beg the Afghan Governor of Punjab was hunting for the heads of the sikhs, they dispersed and scattered in all directions. Jassa Singh and others in the band took refuge in the mud fort of Ram Rauni near Amritsar where they were surrounded and attacked during the ensuing period. In 1758 Adina Beg died and there was a power vacuum in Punjab and those who escaped from the fort of Ram Rauni assumed the name of Ramgarhias and Jassa Singh became its head. The Misal (Confederacy) was called Ramgarhia.

The main concentration of the Misl was in and around the Riarki area of Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Batala (in Majha). The Ramgarhia constructed and fortified the mud fortress of Ram Rauni just outside Amritsar. It was named in honour of the founder of the city, the fourth Sikh Guru, Guru Ram Das. His Misl contained more than 10000 cavalry who were always on the move, helping the Dal Khalsa whenever the Mughals or Afghans attacked. Whilst the Mughal administration controlled the cities, it was the Sikhs who were in control of the villages. Twenty years earlier, Banda Bahadur had wreaked havoc on the



Jassa Singh Ramgarhia



Sepoy Gurmukh Singh



Deep Kaur

Mughal administration by abolishing all taxes and the Zamindari system. Now only a "dasvand" (10% of income) was levied on the Sikhs - as protection tax to pay for the armies.

Sepoy Gurmukh Singh

Sikh history is filled with famous last stands, but one of the best documented was the last stand at the Battle of Saragarhi by 21 Sikhs of the British Indian Army.

Following 1849, British Indian soliders, in particular Purbiyas (east Indians) were promoted to high civilian posts in Panjab. To add further insult to Sikh injury, these Indian soliders would constantly remind the Sikhs that they

had defeated the Khalsa Army. The Sikhs felt that the treachery of their leaders coupled with superior British Arms were the cause of their downfall and they began to resent the foreign Indian Purbiyas.

When the Mutiny happened in 1857, the Sikhs decided to side with the British against the Indians and help put down the rebellion. For their support, the British, who were hesitant to raise soldiers from the fiercely independent Sikhs, began to employ Khalsa soldiers in large numbers. Within decades, Sikhs made the backbone of the British Indian Army, making up a quarter of the Indian Army officers despite being less than 2% of the population.

The Battle of Saragarhi took place on the North-West Frontier Province, the volatile border area between British India and Afghanistan, an area formerly controlled by Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Sikhs. Despite British suzerainty, the tribal Afghans would attack the area from time to time. To counter this, the British decided to consolidate a series of forts that Ranjit Singh had built in the area nearly 75 years earlier. On 12 September 1897, 10,000 Afghan tribesmen decided to attack a signalling post at the village of Saragarhi to ensure communications would be lost between the forts, therefore ensuring local army units would be isolated and defeated.

The Sikhs were led by Ishar Singh, and the battle is very well recorded due to the presence of Gurmukh Singh who signalled the events using a heliograph to the British. At 9am he signalled that the post was under attack and in response the British replied that they would not be able to send reinforcements the same day. At this point Ishar Singh decided the Singhs would continue the ancient Sikh tradition of dying on the battlefield. Bhagawan Singh was the first casualty and by midday the British had estimated that the Saragarhi signalling post was under attack by 10,000-14,000 Afghans. After making two strong attempts to breach the post, but being repulsed by the Singhs on both occasions, the Afghans began making promises of safety and riches to entice the Singhs to leave the post. The 21 Sikhs rejected all offers. Later that afternoon, the Afghans finally managed to breach the walls and the Singhs met them with fierce hand to hand combat. Ishar Singh ordered all his men into the inner layer of defences while he provided cover, falling on the field after ensuring the safety of his men.

As Singhs started falling around him, Gurmukh Singh communicated to the British that he was the last of the 21 alive. He signed off by communicating that he was going to join the battle. From his communication of the battle, and the bodies the British found the next day, Gurmukh Singh is stated to have killed 20 Afghans by himself, the tribesmen having to set fire to the post to finally kill him.

The Afghans finally took control of the signalling post, but the defence put up by the Sikhs meant they had lost too much time and reinforcements soon arrived to drive the tribesmen away. The British were astounded to see the scene that they arrived to, Fallen Sikhs in the signalling post still clutching their swords and guns, and the bodies of approximately 600 Afghan tribesmen scattered around them.

The battle is compared to that at Thermopylae where 300 Spartans fought to the death against the invading Persians. In this instance, just 21 Singhs held off 10,000 Afghans and like the Spartans, and Singhs before them, they all chose to fight to the death.

Deep Kaur

Deep Kaur is the second female warrior on my list and one who's actions are needed in a country where sexual abuse of women has reached epidemic

Heartiest Greetings on Khalsa Sajna Divas and a Happy Vaisakhi

“ Let us pledge to follow the path of Gursikhi
as recommended by Guru Gobind Singh Ji ”



Gurmej Singh
917-513-9830

Former President, Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah
Lobana Sikh Center, New York



Daler Singh
917-849-9033

Former President,
Akali Gatra Gurmat Group

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levels. Living in northern India, her husband had joined a group of Singhs who went to visit the 10th Guru. Deep Kaur had remained at home to protect the house as her family were the only Sikhs in a relatively hostile area. Having a change of heart she left to join her husband and visit the 10th Guru for herself, however, after travelling a short while on the outskirts of the village she came across a contingent of Mughal soldiers (Turkish mercenaries according to some sources).

At first trying to conceal herself off the main road, she was discovered by the group of 6 soldiers. Various witnesses describe the leader of the group making sexual advances towards Deep Kaur, after spurning his advances, he finally decided to force himself on her. As he pulled her close to him, she pulled out her dagger and stabbed him in the stomach. She then snatched his sword and began stabbing at the other soldiers. Two more fell although not after they had mortally wounded the warrior princess.

At this juncture, a passing Jatha of Singhs heard the commotion and rode over on their horses, frightening the remaining Mughal soldiers into flight. On arriving at the scene, they saw a dying Deep Kaur surrounded by the bodies of Mughal soldiers. The dying Deep Kaur was then taken by the Singhs to the Guru's court where the Guru bowed down to Deep Kaur in a sign of respect.

Jassa Singh Ahluwalia

Forty years before Ranjit Singh was made Maharaja of Panjab, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia conquered the provincial capital of Lahore and was bestowed the title Sultan-ul-Quam, the leader of the nation.

Jassa Singh spent his entire life during the darkest period of Sikh history, born in 1718, two years following the collapse of Banda Bahadurs Sikh state and dying in 1783, just under 20 years before Ranjit Singh's Sikh state. It was under Jassa Singh's leadership that the Sikhs managed to get through the difficult 18th century and its a testament to his leadership that they came out stronger than they entered.

Reclaiming the honour of Golden Temple

Sikhs were under great pressure because of government violence against them. They became enraged when they found that Massa Rangar, the official in charge of the Amritsar region, drank alcohol and smoked in the Golden Temple. Two Sikhs, Sukha Singh and Mehtab Singh, came disguised as revenue collectors and cut off his head. It was a signal to the government that the Sikhs would never tolerate any disrespect to their sacred Harimandar Sahib.

The Governor of Lahore sent military squads to kill the Sikhs. When Jaspat Rai, brother of Lakhat Rai, the Dewan (premier) of Lahore, faced the Sikhs in a battle, one of the Sikhs held the tail of his elephant and got on his back from behind. With a quick move, he chopped off his head, giving another blow to the government's image.

Jassa Singh Ahluwalia



Mai Bhago



Lakhat Rai, after this incident, committed himself to destroying the Sikhs. In 1746, a new wave of violence was started against them with all of the resources available to the government. The army was sent to destroy the Sikhs. All of the village officials were ordered to cooperate in the expedition. About 15,000 Sikhs including Jassa Singh and other important leaders were camping in riverbeds in the Gurdaspur district (Kahnuwan tract). Local people were forcibly employed to search for the Sikhs

to be killed by the army. An estimated 7,000 to 10,000 Sikhs were thus murdered. Those Sikhs who were arrested alive were taken to Lahore, tortured and executed near the Horse Market. There now stands a Gurdwara called Shaheed Ganj. Even the Sikhs living in peace in the city were arrested without any reason. They were also butchered. This first massacre of 1746 is known as the Chhota Ghalughara (the small massacre) of the Sikhs.

Formation of the Dal Khalsa and the Misl

Until 1745, the Sikh forces were divided into 65 jathas(bands). Sardar Nawab Kapur Singh reorganised them into eleven bands, each of with its own name, flag and leader. These Armies or jathas, which came to known later on as Misl (literally "equal", also "an example") together were, however, given the name of the Dal Khalsa (or the Army of the Khalsa). Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia was nominated as the Supreme Commander of the Sikh Confederacy in addition to being Sardar of the Ahluwalia Army (misl). Nawab Kapur Singh appointed him as his successor on the eve of his death in 1753. Elated at his successful helmsmanship, the Khalsa honoured Jassa Singh with the title of Sultan-ul-Qaum (King of the nation), when they captured Lahore in 1761. He has been credited for rebuilding the present day holy Harmandir Sahib, in the year 1764, which was destroyed, during the Afghan Invasions.

Mai Bhago

Not much is known about early life of the highest ranking female warrior on my list, but her later life is well documented.

Her father, Malo Shah, was a part of the Akaal Sena created by Guru Hargobind and passed on his Shaster Vidhya (knowledge of weaponry and fighting) to his daughter a young age.

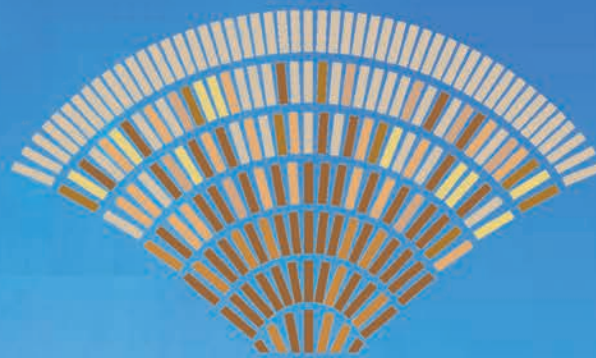
In 1704 a large Mughal force attacked the 10th Guru, Gobind Singh at Anandpur. After defeating the expeditionary unit led by Saiyad and Ramjan Khan, the Mughals returned under Wazir and Zaberdest Khan in May to kill or capture the Guru. They began laying a protracted siege. During the siege, many of the Guru's followers began to doubt their leader, openly rebelling. In response, the Guru told his followers that they were free to leave after signing a document stating that he was no longer their Guru and they were no longer his Sikhs. After consultation, 40 Sikhs from the Majha area agreed to sign the document and escaped from the siege. According to Max Arthur Macauliffe, a noted British historian, the number of Sikhs that left the Guru was actually considerably more, however the Singhs from Majha formed a significant core of the Guru's army.

Following the Battle of Anandpur, Battle of Sirsa and the Battle of Chamkaur in 1704, the Mughal Army relentlessly pursued the Guru across Panjab. Meanwhile, the 40 Sikhs had returned to their native villages. On hearing the Guru's plight, the wife of Nidhan Singh Patti, Mai Bhago told her husband to take care of the household as she would go fight for the Guru's cause. Donning her armour and taking their horse, she began to gather the women of the local village together. Feeling ashamed, the 40 Sikhs had a change of heart and decided to follow the warrior princess into battle.

With the Guru continuously pursued, the 40 Sikhs decided to assist the Guru and fight a rearguard action to stall the Mughal advance. In 1705, Mai Bhago led the 40 Sikhs into battle at Muktsar. The battle was fierce, but the Sikhs put together a historic last stand, fighting to

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the last man. Following the battle, the Guru returned to the field and saw the bodies of dead and dying Singhs. As the Guru cradled the body of one Mahan Singh he asked for a dying wish which the Guru promised he would grant. Mahan Singh asked the Guru to tear up the document of desertion they had signed at the siege of Anandpur. Gobind Singh, on finding the document ripped it up and called Mahan Singh his Sikh. With this the 40 Sikhs from Majha became the 40 liberated ones.

Mai Bhago, although injured, survived the battle. The effect she had on Sikh history is incredible. The battle had brought the Guru considerable time and for the first time in over a year, the Guru was no longer pursued by the Imperial forces. From here the Guru was able to proceed to Nanded, relatively unmolested and so begin the next phase of his mission. Mai Bhago took up service in the Guru's bodyguard retinue and lived to an old age.

Hari Singh Nalwa

There is a case to be made that in terms of their generalship on the battlefield, Hari Singh is the greatest Sikh on this list. Hari Singh Nalwa was the commander-in-chief of the Sikh Empire (Sarkar Khalsa) under Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Times of London wrote an article in 1881 where they not only noted his battlefield prowess but also his success as an administrator and foresight. The article went on to state that "had he had the money and resources of available to European states, it would have been entirely possible that he could have reached the border of Europe."

Despite reaching lofty heights, Hari Singh Nalwa had humble beginnings. Born in 1791 as Hari Singh Uppal, the youngster, like so many others on this list, lost his father at an early age. In 1804 his mother sent him to the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh to resolve a property dispute. While there Hari Singh explained that his father and grandfather had both fought under Ranjit Singh's Sukerchak Misl for both his father Maha Singh and his grandfather Charat Singh. The Maharaja decided the arbitration in Hari Singh's favour and impressed by his skill as a musketeer gave him a job as a personal attendant. Hari Singh's climb to fame began later that year during a hunt where his party was attacked by a tiger. In one of the most famous stories in Sikh history, Hari Singh killed the tiger by ripping it apart using his hands, this earned him the nickname Baagh Maar, or Tiger Killer. As his reputation grew from the story, he was commissioned as a Sardar and given 800 horses and footmen under his command.

Hari Singh led his first independent contingent into battle in 1807 at Kasur under the leadership of the Maharaja, Jodh Singh Ramgharia and Akali Phula Singh Nihang. Hari Singh's performance was rewarded by a jagir (land based revenue) and his fame continued to grow. A year later Hari Singh led his first command of an army at the Battle of Sialkot where the 17 year old defeated Jiwan Singh.

The young Hari Singh fought

Hari Singh Nalwa



Banda Singh Bahadur



numerous battles over the coming years in Attock, Kashmir and Mahmudkot. During the Battle of Multan in 1818, Hari Singh Nalwa led a division of Sikhs against Muzaffar Khan. The Muslim ruler put up one of the strongest fights the Sikhs had encountered and although instrumental in the victory, Hari Singh Nalwa was badly burnt from a firepot thrown from the fort, putting him out of action for a number of months. However, he was fully recovered by 1819 to lead the rearguard of the Sikh conquest of Kashmir. The victory ended 5 centuries of Muslim rule and the cities of Lahore and Amritsar were lit up in celebration for three nights.

The conquest of Kashmir ushered in a decade of rapid Sikh conquest, and Hari Singh Nalwa was involved in or led most of the major battles. The 1827 Battle of Saidu was one of the most comprehensive. Sayed Bareli had proclaimed himself to be a messenger of the Prophet Muhammed telling all his tribesmen that he would deliver the Muslims from Sikh rule. As local Muslim rulers began to heed his call, he eventually managed to command an army of over 15,000 Muslims, ready to raise Jihad against the Sikhs. On 23 February, the Sikhs under Hari Singh and Budh Singh Sandhanwalia met the self proclaimed messenger in battle and routed his army. They then pursued the enemy for 6 miles, plundering and pillaging as they went. By 1834 the Sikhs occupied Peshawar. At this point Hari Singh's reputation had become so

widespread that Afghan women used to scare their children to sleep by mentioning that if they stayed awake "Hari Singh and his Sikhs would get them".

Banda Singh Bahadur

Banda Singh Bahadur (1670-1716) was a Sikh military leader who fought against the Mughal Empire. He was born as Lachhman Das, later becoming Madho Das before Guru Gobind Singh bestowed upon him the name Banda Singh Bahadur. He is remembered for leading the Khalsa army and establishing Sikh rule in parts of Punjab, particularly after the death of Guru Gobind Singh.

Early Life and Transformation:

- Banda Singh Bahadur was born into a Minhas Rajput family in 1670.
- He initially lived a life of worldly pleasures, including hunting, but a transformative incident led him to renounce the world and become a Bairagi Sadhu.
- He then journeyed to Nanded, where he established an ashram and became a well-known figure known for his ascetic practices.
- In 1708, he was visited by Guru Gobind Singh, who bestowed upon him the name Banda Singh Bahadur and appointed him as the commander-in-chief of the Khalsa army.

Military Leadership and Reforms:

- Armed with Guru Gobind Singh's blessing and authority, Banda Singh

Bahadur began his struggle against the Mughal Empire, leading the Khalsa army.

- His first major action was the capture of Samana, a Mughal provincial capital, in November 1709.
- He established Sikh rule in parts of Punjab and introduced significant reforms, including the abolition of the oppressive zamindari system and the granting of property rights to the tillers of the land.
- He also introduced Nanak Shahi coins, reflecting his commitment to Sikh values.

Capture and Martyrdom:

- Banda Singh Bahadur's defiance of the Mughal Empire led to his capture and imprisonment in Delhi.
- He and his followers were subjected to brutal torture and execution by the Mughals, with many being martyred publicly.
- Banda Singh Bahadur himself was tortured to death with red-hot irons in 1716, remaining steadfast in his faith.

Baba Deep Singh

After 19 incredible stories, what does it take to be first on this list? Not much, just cheating death, fighting whilst fatally wounded and changing the course of Sikh and Indian history.

He is the most celebrated Sikh warrior and in the period following Guru Gobind Singh's death is considered the greatest Sikh. His death gave rise to Sikh rule and his story has been noted as a personal inspiration for at least 8 individuals on this list. He is considered the founder of the Damdami Taksaal, a centre of scholastic and weaponry learning, a leader of a Nihang Misl that was named after his death, and considered one of the greatest Akali Nihang Singhs in their celebrated history.

Born as Deep Singh Sandhu in 1682, the young Sikh took Amrit in the presence of Guru Gobind Singh within a year of the establishment of the Khalsa, some sources state he actually took Amrit in 1699 at the founding of the Khalsa. His younger years were spent in the court of Guru Gobind Singh where he learned hunting, weaponry and other martial skills as well as reading, writing and understanding Gurbani under the tutelage of Bhai Mani Singh. He eventually mastered a number of languages including Gurmukhi, Persian and Arabic. His aptitude for learning was rewarded in 1705 when he was summoned by Guru Gobind Singh to make copies of Guru Granth Sahib at Takht Sri Damdama with Mani Singh.

Despite becoming a prolific scholar, Deep Singh continued practising his martial skills, joining Banda Singh Bahadur in two battles; Sadhaura and Sirhind. When Nawab Kapur Singh split the Sikh forces into 12 Misls in 1733, Deep Singh was given leadership of one of the Misls and this meant he was involved in the skirmishes with both Nadir Shah of Persia and Ahmed Shah Abdali of Afghanistan. It was during the latter's invasion of India in 1757 that Deep Singh took his place in Sikh history.



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CONTINUITY OF THE SIKH PHILOSOPHY

Guru Gobind Singh is an ideal and should be an idol for the young generation of today. All pessimism will vanish, and instead robust optimism will fill the youth should they imbibe the ideals and values of the Guru. Let them give up their weakness for intoxicants and have faith in their innate energy to countenance any challenge and overcome any obstacle. Let them follow the Guru's progressive humanism empowered with spirituality and sacrifice. Let them derive strength and courage from the tenth Guru who expressed all optimism and positive attitudes for the victory of the forces of righteousness over evil and repression.

BY Prof. Balwinder Pal Singh

Historically, it was on Vaisakhi day of 1699 A.D. When the tenth Master Guru Gobind Singh created Khalsa Panth out of the Sikh Sangat (GUR SANGAT KINI KHALSA). The creation of Khalsa is a virtual culmination of the process of human resource development started by the first Master Guru Nanak. That's why the Sikhs call their Gurus: First Nanak, second Nanak and so on to salute them and to recall their heritage.

There has been some misconception among non-Sikhs, in particular, and to some extent, among the Sikhs also that the philosophy of the tenth Guru was different from that of the first and the subsequent Gurus. This impression is taken from the paintings of these Gurus. These show the difference between armed and unarmed personalities. The sixth, the seventh, the ninth and the tenth Guru waged an armed struggle against tyranny and repression. These were the battles for Dharma and not for any material or personal gains.

Sikhism is a revealed religion founded by Guru Nanak Dev (1469 - 1539 A.D.). The basic principles of Sikhism remained unchanged and intact from its very inception to its culmination in the hands of the tenth Guru. Guru Nanak raised his voice of protest against state repression, social injustice, religious hypocrisy and economic corruption. He traversed various corners of the world to spread his message of humanism. He rejected all divisions based on caste, creed and color. Gurbani was the main source of spiritual power and awareness, and a practical approach was followed in respect of social and political issues. Up to the fifth Guru, Sikh culture and institutions were developed in a phased manner. The compilation and emergence of the "Adi Granth" was the greatest historical development in the hands of Guru Arjan Dev. The Sixth Guru, Sri Hargobind Sahib took to arms to protect Dharma from State repression. He established the institution of MEERI-PEERI (Saint-Soldier). In his times, nobody who was not pure and religious could join his army. A high moral standard was required of anybody aspiring to be a soldier in Guru Hargobind's army. Thus, right from the day of Guru Nanak, the emphasis has been on righteousness and purity of personal conduct.



After the supreme martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, Guru Gobind Singh raised his voice fearlessly against injustice and tyranny of the Mughal King, Aurangzeb. This reaction was not the result of nay personal grudge or enmity, it was based on the principle which is the cornerstone of Sikhism-to fight against injustice. Infact, Guru Gobind Singh had himself suggested to his father to sacrifice himself for protecting Hindu religion and the Kashmiri Pandits. Like Guru Hargobind, Guru Gobind Singh, too, proved that Bhakti and Shakti are complimentary and not contradictory to each other.

Bhai Gurdas Singh, a renowned contemporary Sikh scholar describes Guru Gobind Singh thus:

'Behold, there manifests the incomparable Man, the Hero unsurpassed, Glory be to Gobind

Singh, Master Disciple" Prof. Jaswant Singh writes about the tenth Guru: "Rarely is found a person in the history of mankind who had left such a deep imprint on the life" and character of people within a brief span of forty-two years. He continues to move millions of men and women not only in India, the great subcontinent of Asia but the entire world; such a unique person was Guru Gobind Singh."

The images of God as portrayed by Guru Gobind Singh is the same as painted by Guru Nanak Devji. The Mool Mantra of Japji Sahib and the first stanza of Jaap Sahib (Poetic work of the tenth Guru) provide an interesting study from this point of view.

The Almighty of Guru Gobind Singh is the "True Lord of All, has neither distinguishing signs nor marks, no one can discern him, the

moveless being and beyond limitations, and is manifested as the light of the Spirit, the Lord God of a myriad Indiras and is proclaimed the King of kings, of the gods, man and demons....."

Guru Gobind Singh gave the message of equality and fraternity i.e., Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of mankind. He said, "Some are of the Shia persuasion and some of Imam Shafai, mankind is all of one race". Guru Gobind Singh goes beyond the shores of India when he seeks blessings of God for the welfare of aliens also alongside the welfare of countrymen, be they Marathas, Moghuls, Telugus, Bhillas, Bangash or Bengalis.

The eminent historian, Cunningham states that though the last apostle of the Sikhs did not see his own ends accomplished, he effectively raised the dormant energy of a vanquished people and filled them with a lofty although fitful longing for social freedom and national ascendancy, the true adjunct of that parity of worship which had been preached by Nanak.

Guru Gobind Singh not only patronized the Sikh institution of sacrifice, but he also actually sacrificed his whole family. Guru Gobind Singh is an ideal and should be an idol for the young generation of today. All pessimism will vanish, and instead robust optimism will fill the youth should they imbibe the ideals and values of the Guru. Let them give up their weakness for intoxicants and have faith in their innate energy to countenance any challenge and overcome any obstacle. Let them follow the Guru's progressive humanism empowered with spirituality and sacrifice. Let them derive strength and courage from the tenth Guru who expressed all optimism and positive attitudes for the victory of the forces of righteousness over evil and repression.

Sikh Culture and religion are a rich heritage to be protected and glorified. The mission of Guru Nanak-Gobind Singh is cosmic. May the almighty Akal Purakh bestow His blessings on all human beings, particularly the young generation of the Sikhs and fill them with tremendous strength and will to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

(The author, an educationist, is Editor of SADA VIRSA SADA GAURAV)

(Reprinted from Punjab Beat)



*Warmest Wishes for a Prosperous & Joyful
Vaisakhi*



Vaisakhi celebrations around the world

Annual Vaisakhi parade draws thousands to Vancouver's Punjabi Market



The streets of South Vancouver transformed into a lively, colourful celebration on Saturday as hundreds of thousands of people gathered for the city's annual Vaisakhi parade, which organizers say is one of the largest of its kind in Canada.

The parade kicked off on Marine Drive at the Ross Street gurdwara, weaving its way through the heart of the Punjabi Market district at the intersection of Main Street and 49th Avenue, down Fraser Street and back to the temple.

Along the route, crowds were met with colourful floats playing hymns, energetic dancers, and free meals from dozens of volunteer-run food stalls — a tradition rooted in the Sikh practice of langar, or communal kitchen.

"Vaisakhi is always on [April 13], but we celebrate it on Saturday," said Kashmir Singh Dhaliwal, general secretary of the society.

Hundreds of volunteers helped prepare the temple before the parade, with organizers saying that an estimated 250,000 to 300,000 people attended the festivities.

Jagdeep Sanghera, vice-president of the Khalsa Diwan Society, said that there was a flag-changing ceremony on Friday ahead of the celebration.

"We welcome everybody, all political, different views," he said.

This year's festivities were marked by a wave of patriotism, as attendees proudly waved Canadian flags.

B.C. Premier David Eby joined the celebrations and praised the community's spirit of inclusion and resilience.

"The values of the Sikh religion is that we're all human, we see each other's humanity and we support each other," Eby told CBC News. "I think that's what you're seeing, patriotism as well as the value is reflected in all of us coming together."

Armor Valor Corrales, board director of Filipino B.C., who grew up in South Vancouver, says he has embraced the Vaisakhi parade as part of his own cultural fabric.

This year, he stepped further into the spirit of the celebration by tying a turban.

In a first, Baisakhi celebrated at State Capitol in Olympia city

Vaisakhi was celebrated for the first time at the State Capitol in Olympia, the capital city of Washington state, with special proclamations being issued on the occasion to commemorate the Indian festival.

The consulate general of India in Seattle hosted the first celebration of Baisakhi at the State Capitol in Olympia on Monday. The special celebration was attended by Washington state governor Bob Ferguson, lieutenant governor Denny Heck, secretary of state Steve Hobbs as well as by state senators, legislators from the Washington state legislature, in addition to prominent members of the Sikh community residing in Washington.

The event marks the first such celebration of the festival of Baisakhi at the State Capitol, a press release issued by the Seattle consulate said.

Addressing the gathering, Ferguson welcomed the contributions of the Indian-American Sikh community in the

state of Washington and appreciated the hosting of the Baisakhi celebrations at the State Capitol in Olympia.

In a special gesture, the governor of Washington also issued a special proclamation on the occasion of Baisakhi. In addition, King County - covering 39 cities of Greater Seattle area, along with Snohomish County, and cities of Kent, Auburn and Marysville also issued special proclamations declaring April 14 as the Baisakhi Day celebration across the Greater Seattle area.

A large number of Indian-American Sikh community members are resident in the State of Washington and engaged in small and medium enterprises and businesses. They also "actively contribute to public service enriching the State's cultural and economic diversity", the Consulate said adding that some of the eminent leaders of the community were recognised and felicitated on the occasion for their positive contributions to the Greater Seattle area.



Sikh pilgrims gather to pay their respects at the Gurdwara Panja Sahib during 'Baisakhi', the annual spring harvest festival, in Hasan Abdal on April 16, 2025. (Photo: AFP)

UK PM Starmer hails British Sikhs' contribution in Baisakhi message

Prime Minister Keir Starmer hailed the contributions of British Sikhs across all walks of life in the UK in his Baisakhi greetings from 10 Downing Street on April 13.

Having hosted a special reception earlier this week to mark the festival symbolising the birth of the Khalsa, Starmer posted a video on social media showcasing the festivities along with his Baisakhi message. "It's really fantastic to be able to come together and to celebrate the contribution of British Sikhs to our nation, and what a contribution that is and has been and will be into the future," said Starmer. "From across our society, armed forces, those who contribute to our schools, NHS, charities, and businesses. If you think about it, throughout our history, from fighting for Britain in the World Wars and today the work supporting people struggling with the cost of living, or welcoming refugees from Ukraine, the generosity of gurdwaras across Britain," he said.



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Tamannaah dances her way to B-Wood big league

Tamannaah Bhatia seems to have become the face of item numbers in Bollywood. The actor belly dances her way through 'Nasha' in Ajay Devgn's *Raid 2*. Her look and dance movements are very similar to her chart-topping number 'Aaj Ki Raat' from *Stree 2*.

Dressed in a cream-and-gold chiffon skirt with a thigh-high slit, and gold bustier, Tamannaah's look from the film has gone viral. Several netizens predicted that 'Nasha' would be the dance number of the year. Some even went to the extent of saying Tamannaah Bhatia is giving the Queen of Dance, Nora Fatehi, stiff competition.

"Ironical. Nora Fatehi, from dancing, has now taken to acting in films. While Tamannaah is doing the opposite," wrote one social media user.

An industry insider revealed that the actor had signed a three-film deal with Ajay Devgn Films, and *Raid 2* was the first of the lot. "Hindi films haven't given Tamannaah the platform she deserves. Babli Bouncer failed, followed by Plan A Plan B, and her recent *Sikandar Ka Muqaddar*. These were all OTT releases. 'Aaj Ki Raat' became a sensation and played a large part in *Stree 2*'s success. It's a win-win for her.

'I'm grateful for comfort, but I'm chasing lot more': Rakul Preet

Rakul Preet Singh, one of the most versatile actresses in Indian cinema today, continues to charm audiences with her dynamic performances and unwavering passion for the craft. With films across multiple languages and genres, Rakul has carved a niche for herself in the industry — not just as a glamorous face, but as a performer with depth and commitment.

Speaking about her journey, Rakul opened up with a heartfelt reflection on growth, gratitude, and never settling. She says,

"I feel there's a lot to chase. The day you start thinking in life that I have arrived or I am good enough — of course, I am good enough is different — but like, I am good and I'm not chasing anything anymore, I feel that's when you become laid-back. So, for me, yes, I am very grateful for what I have, every moment, but I feel the buck doesn't stop there. I still have a lot more to do, and I still have... and you know, we are in one direction — that these are films, I am acting, and I am an actor — but there can be so many different dimensions to you. Life is a huge canvas, and you can just throw paint on it. So I feel like there is so much to explore, learn, grow, evolve, that I don't have that thought — that I've arrived, or now I am comfortable. Yes, I am comfortable, and I'm grateful for that comfort, but I'm chasing a lot more."

With a mindset rooted in purpose and exploration, Rakul is all set to take over 2025 with a stellar line-up. From *De De Pyaar De 2* to *Ameeri*, and several big-ticket projects yet to be announced, she is truly on a roll — chasing dreams, breaking boundaries, and painting her canvas with every shade of brilliance.

Source : Deccan Chronicle



Meghna Gulzar to direct Kareena, Prithviraj Sukumaran in crime-drama

Kareena Kapoor Khan and Prithviraj Sukumaran have boarded the new film by "Talvar" and "Raazi" director Meghna Gulzar.

Titled "Daayra", the film taps into the pulse of the people as it confronts the topical and diabolical realities unfolding in society today. This crime-drama thriller explores the age-old paradox of crime, punishment, and justice, according to a press release by the makers.

"As I celebrate 25 incredible years in Hindi cinema, I'm thrilled to announce my next film, *Daayra*, with the incredible Meghna Gulzar in the director's chair. I've long admired her work, from *Talvar* to *Raazi*, and to be directed by her is a dream come true. The opportunity to collaborate with the talented Prithviraj is also a highlight, and I'm drawn to the film's bold, thought-provoking narrative," Kareena said in a statement.

"*Daayra*", she said, promises to be a cinematic experience that would be challenging and inspiring. After "Talvar" and "Raazi", it is the third

collaboration between Gulzar and Junglee Pictures.

Sukumaran, who last directed and starred in Malayalam superhit "L2: Empuran", said, "When the script was narrated to me, I knew I had to do this. I was thoroughly absorbed by my character and what he brings to the table as the story progress. It is layered and will definitely connect with the masses." The film is co-written by Gulzar, Sima Agarwal and Yash Keswani.

Gulzar said the film is a story that will compel one to "reflect on the society we live in and its institutions that pilot us".

"With co-writers Sima and Yash, unravelling the greys within the black and white, was both challenging and exciting. And as Kareena and Prithviraj bring the lead characters to life, the narrative dynamics are all set to elevate further! It's always creatively gratifying to collaborate with Junglee Pictures, known for backing stories that are compelling and demand telling," the director said.

Source: PTI



Blake Lively, Anna Kendrick reunite in London amid feud rumors

Blake Lively and Anna Kendrick are squashing feud rumors with a joint appearance in London, England to celebrate the premiere of *Another Simple Favor*. The movie is the sequel to 2018's *A Simple Favor*, a thriller that follows single mom Stephanie (Kendrick) and her glamorous friend Emily (Lively). In the trailer for the follow-up film, the duo reunite for a wedding in Capri, Italy, where it seems their dramatic push-and-pull "friendship" will continue apace.

Another Simple Favor made its official debut South by Southwest last month, with Lively later comparing the premiere to a "rock concert."

"Thank you to the very best audience. Texas turns it out," she wrote on Instagram. "Making this movie was already the gift, every element of it. To share it with you all and feel the love returned to us was the best feeling. Thank you for having us Austin."

Aside from her promotional tour for *Another Simple Favor*, Lively is simultaneously in the middle of a legal battle with her *It Ends With Us* co-star and director Justin Baldoni. After filing multiple lawsuits, the pair are currently preparing for their day in court, which is set for March 9, 2026.

Kendrick, meanwhile, is "not used to being caught up in any drama" and was reportedly "upset" by the online negativity surrounding the film, as some fans pledged to not to see the movie because of Lively. "The comments on Instagram have upset her, especially the ones saying fans are now refusing to watch the movie because they don't want to support Blake," an insider told *People*.

As for her supposed feud with Lively,



however, it seems the pair have successfully put the rumors to rest. "There is no drama," a source recently told *E! News*. "They are not enemies. They are coworkers; friends and get along well."



Johnny Depp looks unrecognisable as first look from *Day Drinker* is unveiled

Hollywood superstar Johnny Depp is all set to return to big screen with his upcoming film *Day Drinker* following his much publicised defamation trial with ex-wife Amber Heard. Producers of the film unveiled the first look of actor's character and the internet went wild.

Lionsgate revealed the Johnny's look along with mention of the ensemble star cast. In a post on X (formerly Twitter) makers said, "The first look at #DayDrinkerMovie. Starring Johnny Depp, Penélope Cruz, Madelyn Cline, Manu Ríos, Arón Piper, Juan Diego Botto, and Anika Boyle – coming soon."

The fans couldn't keep calm as they found Johnny unrecognisable in the first look. One comment read, "Johnny Depp looks nearly unrecognizable in the first look at his mainstream Hollywood return in 'Day Drinker' while another said, "Was not expecting this look! Johnny Depp looks amazing! Photo of the divine Spanish goddess, Penelope Cruz next". Another user was in awe of Johnny's silver hair look and wrote, "Johnny Depp absolutely rocking the silver fox look during filming of *Day Drinker*! This movie is going to be amazing!"

Priyanka Chopra announces next Hollywood project, teams up with *Baywatch* co-star Zac Efron for a comedy



Actor Priyanka Chopra is adding another Hollywood comedy to her lineup. The actor is reuniting with her *Baywatch* co-star Zac Efron in Nicholas Stoller's upcoming comedy for Amazon MGM Studios. The film also features Michael Peña and Will Ferrell.

According to *Hollywood Reporter*, the film also stars Regina Hall, Jimmy Tatro and Billy Eichner. Nicholas is helming the film from his own script. With the project, he is reuniting with the studio behind his recent feature *You're Cordially Invited* which starred Will Ferrell and Reese Witherspoon.

The film was previously titled *Judgment Day*. It focuses on a young convict (Zac Efron) who gets out of prison and takes an unscripted TV courtroom hostage because he is convinced that the judge (Will Ferrell) delivered a ruling that destroyed his life.

The roles of Priyanka and Michael in the upcoming comedy film are currently under

wraps, with details remaining tightly sealed.

Priyanka confirmed her involvement in the project by sharing a sneak peek of the casting announcement on her Instagram stories, generating buzz among fans.

The film is being produced by Will Ferrell, Jessica Elbaum and Alex Brown for Gloria Sanchez Productions and Nicholas for Stoller Global Solutions.

Meanwhile, Priyanka has been busy with the shoot of her next film with director SS Rajamouli. She recently wrapped up a shooting schedule in Odisha's Koraput. The film also stars Mahesh Babu. Rajamouli's father, writer Vijayendra Prasad, has penned the story for *SSMB 29*, and it is said to be an action-adventure similar to *Indiana Jones*. Priyanka has several other exciting projects lined up, including *Heads of State* alongside Idris Elba and John Cena. She will also be seen in a role as a 19th-century Caribbean pirate in *The Bluff*.

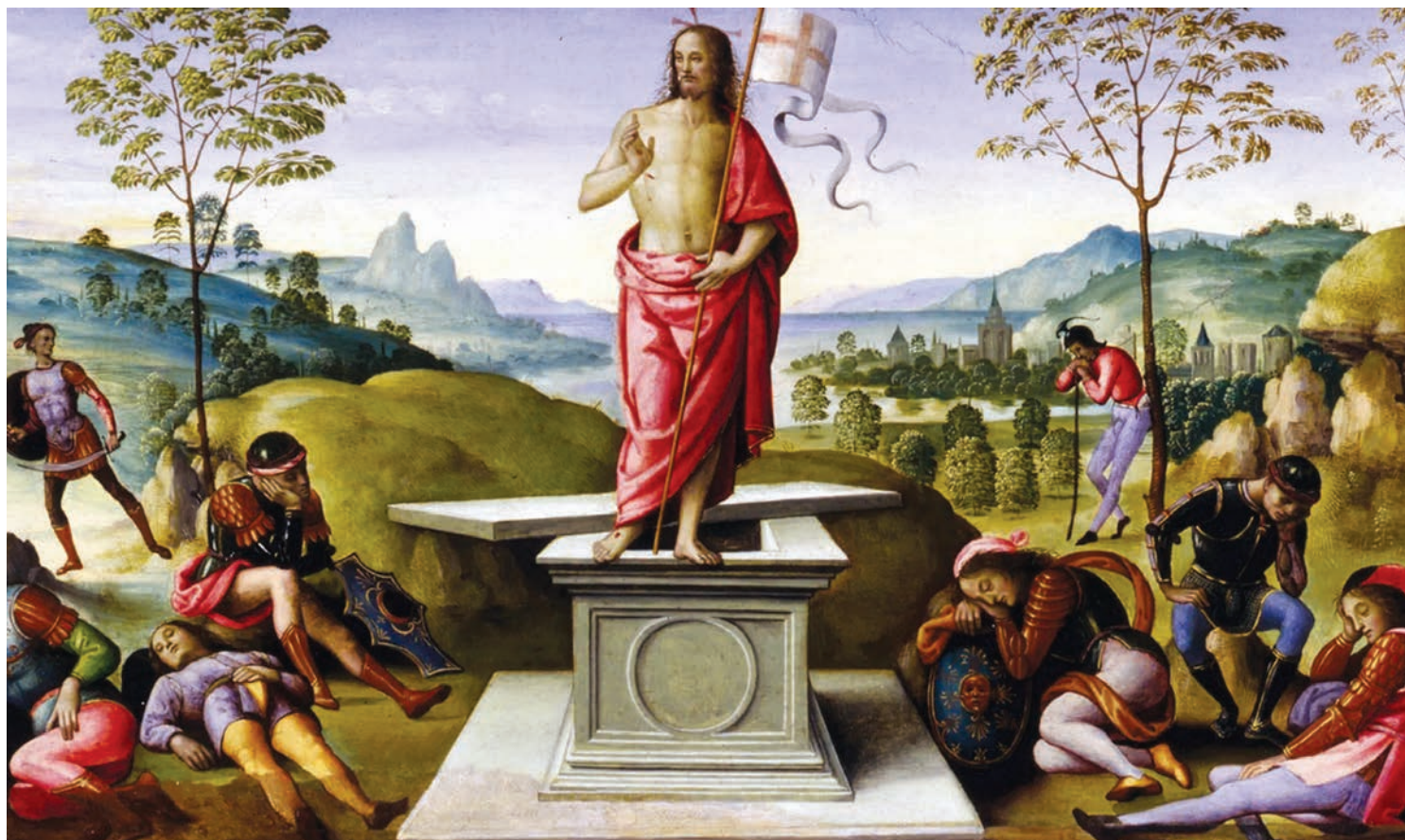
Easter: The resurrection of Jesus Christ

Easter, principal festival of the Christian church, which celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day after his Crucifixion. The earliest recorded observance of an Easter celebration comes from the 2nd century, though the commemoration of Jesus' Resurrection probably occurred earlier.

The English word Easter, which parallels the German word Ostern, is of uncertain origin. One view, expounded by the Venerable Bede in the 8th century, was that it derived from Eostre, or Eostræ, an Anglo-Saxon goddess possibly associated with spring and fertility. (In the modern era the connection between Eostre and spring has been disputed; she may have been a local protective deity rather than a fertility figure.) This view presumes—as does the view associating the origin of Christmas on December 25 with pagan celebrations of the winter solstice—that Christians appropriated pagan names and holidays for their highest festivals. Given the determination with which Christians combated all forms of paganism (the belief in multiple deities), this appears a rather dubious presumption. There is now widespread consensus that the word derives from the Christian designation of Easter week as *in albis*, a Latin phrase that was understood as the plural of *alba* (“dawn”) and became *eostarum* in Old High German, the precursor of the modern German and English term. The Latin and Greek *Pascha* (“Passover”) provides the root for *Pâques*, the French word for Easter.

The date of Easter

Fixing the date on which the Resurrection of Jesus was to be observed and celebrated triggered a major controversy in early Christianity in which an Eastern and a Western position can be distinguished. The dispute, known as the Paschal controversies, was not definitively resolved until the 8th century. In Asia Minor, Christians observed the day of the Crucifixion on the same day that Jews celebrated the Passover offering—that is, on the 14th day of the first full moon of spring, 14 Nisan (see Jewish calendar). The Resurrection, then, was observed two days later, on 16 Nisan, regardless of the day of the week. In the West the Resurrection of Jesus was celebrated on the first day of the week, Sunday, when Jesus had risen from the dead. Consequently, Easter was always celebrated on the first Sunday after the 14th day of the month of Nisan. Increasingly, the churches opted for the Sunday celebration, and the Quartodecimans (“14th day” proponents) remained a minority. The Council of Nicaea in 325 decreed that Easter should be observed on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox (March 21). Easter, therefore, can fall on any Sunday between March 22 and April 25.



Eastern Orthodox churches use a slightly different calculation based on the Julian rather than the Gregorian calendar (which is 13 days ahead of the former), with the result that the Orthodox Easter celebration usually occurs later than that celebrated by Protestants and Roman Catholics. Moreover, the Orthodox tradition prohibits Easter from being celebrated before or at the same time as Passover.

In the 20th century several attempts were made to arrive at a fixed date for Easter, with the Sunday following the second Saturday in April specifically proposed. While this proposal and others had many supporters, none came to fruition. Renewed interest in a fixed date arose in the early 21st century, resulting from discussions involving the leaders of Eastern Orthodox, Syriac Orthodox, Coptic, Anglican, and Roman Catholic churches, but formal agreement on such a date remained elusive.

Liturgical observances

In the Christian calendar, Easter follows Lent, the period of 40 days (not counting Sundays) before Easter, which traditionally is observed by acts of penance and fasting. Easter is immediately preceded by Holy Week, which includes Maundy Thursday, the commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples; Good Friday, the day of his Crucifixion; and Holy Saturday, the transition between Crucifixion and Resurrection. Liturgically, Easter comes after the Great Vigil, which was originally observed sometime between sunset on Easter Saturday and sunrise on Easter Sunday. Later it would be celebrated in Western churches on Saturday evening, then on Saturday afternoon, and finally on Sunday morning. In 1955 the Roman Catholic Church set the time for the vigil at 10 PM,



which allowed for the Easter mass to be celebrated after midnight. In the Orthodox traditions the vigil continues to be an important liturgical event, while in Protestant churches it is little known.

By the 4th century the Easter vigil was well established in various liturgical expressions. It was characterized by a spirit of joyful anticipation of the Resurrection and—because of the belief that Jesus' Second Coming would occur on Easter—the return of Jesus. In the Roman Catholic tradition the vigil has four parts: the celebration of lights focused on the Paschal candle; the service of lessons called the prophecies; the administration of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation to adult converts; and the Easter mass. The use of the Paschal candle, to denote the appearance of light out of darkness through the Resurrection, was first recorded in the year 384; by the 10th century it had gained general usage. The prominence of baptism at Easter goes

back to early Christianity, probably the 4th century, when baptism was administered only once a year, at Easter. In the Roman Catholic service the priest blesses the water to be used in the forthcoming year for baptism, with the faithful taking some of that water with them to receive protection from vicissitudes. Lutheran and Anglican churches use variations of this vigil service.

Easter customs

Easter, like Christmas, has accumulated a great many traditions, some of which have little to do with the Christian celebration of the Resurrection but derive from folk customs. The custom of the Easter lamb appropriates both the appellation used for Jesus in Scripture (“behold the lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world,” John 1:29) and the lamb's role as a sacrificial animal in ancient Israel. In antiquity Christians placed lamb meat

under the altar, had it blessed, and then ate it on Easter. Since the 12th century the Lenten fast has ended on Easter with meals including eggs, ham, cheeses, bread, and sweets that have been blessed for the occasion.

Easter egg

The use of painted and decorated Easter eggs was first recorded in the 13th century. The church prohibited the eating of eggs during Holy Week, but chickens continued to lay eggs during that week, and the notion of specially identifying those as “Holy Week” eggs brought about their decoration. The egg itself became a symbol of the Resurrection. Just as Jesus rose from the tomb, the egg symbolizes new life emerging from the eggshell. In the Orthodox tradition eggs are painted red to symbolize the blood Jesus shed on the cross.

The custom of associating a rabbit or bunny with Easter arose in Protestant areas in Europe in the 17th century but did not become common until the 19th century. The Easter rabbit, or Easter bunny, is said to lay Easter eggs as well as decorate and hide them. In the United States the Easter bunny also leaves children baskets with toys and candies on Easter morning, a tradition enjoyed by non-religious families and Christians alike. The practice has been seen as a manifestation of the Protestant rejection of Catholic Easter customs. In some European countries, however, other animals—in Switzerland the cuckoo, in Westphalia the fox—brought the Easter eggs.

Easter egg hunts are popular among children in the United States. Modern egg hunts often involve real and plastic eggs, the latter being filled with candies or small toys. Sometimes one or more “prize eggs” are hidden, which earn a treat-filled basket or other prize for the finder. First lady Lucy Hayes, the wife of Pres. Rutherford B. Hayes, is often credited with sponsoring the first annual Easter egg roll (an event where children and their parents were invited to roll their eggs on the Monday following Easter) on the White House lawn, in 1878. That year the event was moved to the White House from the grounds of the U.S. Capitol Building, where large numbers of children had gathered beginning in the early 1870s to roll their eggs and play on Easter Monday. Members of Congress were dismayed by the large crowds on Capitol Hill and feared that the foot traffic was damaging the grounds. By 1876 Congress and Pres. Ulysses S. Grant passed a law that forbade the practice of egg rolling on Capitol Hill. Some historical records note that the Hayes first opened the White House lawn to egg rolling festivities the following year, in 1877, after a young boy asked President Hayes directly for permission to use the space.

Christianity, major religion stemming from the life, teachings, and death of Jesus of Nazareth (the Christ, or the Anointed One of God) in the 1st century CE. It has become the largest of the world’s religions and, geographically, the most widely diffused of all faiths. It has a constituency of more than two billion



believers. Its largest groups are the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox churches, and the Protestant churches. The Oriental Orthodox churches constitute one of the oldest branches of the tradition but had been out of contact with Western Christianity and Eastern Orthodoxy from the middle of the 5th century until the late 20th century because of a dispute over Christology (the doctrine of Jesus Christ’s nature and significance). Significant movements within the broader Christian world and sometimes transcending denominational boundaries are Pentecostalism, Charismatic Christianity, Evangelicalism, and fundamentalism. In addition, there are numerous independent churches throughout the world. See also Anglicanism; Baptist; Calvinism; Congregationalism; Evangelical church; Lutheranism; Oriental Orthodoxy; presbyterian; Reformed and Presbyterian churches.

The church and its history

At its most basic, Christianity is the faith tradition that focuses on the figure of Jesus Christ. In this context, faith refers both to the believers’ act of trust and to the content of their faith. As a tradition, Christianity is more than a system of religious belief. It also has generated a culture, a set of ideas and ways of life, practices, and artifacts that have been handed down from generation

to generation since Jesus first became the object of faith. Christianity is thus both a living tradition of faith and the culture that the faith leaves behind. The agent of Christianity is the church, the community of people who make up the body of believers.

To say that Christianity “focuses” on Jesus Christ is to say that somehow it brings together its beliefs and practices and other traditions in reference to a historical figure. Few Christians, however, would be content to keep this reference merely historical. Although their faith tradition is historical—i.e., they believe that transactions with the divine do not occur in the realm of timeless ideas but among ordinary humans through the ages—the vast majority of Christians focus their faith in Jesus Christ as someone who is also a present reality. They may include many other references in their tradition and thus may speak of “God” and “human nature” or of the “church” and the “world,” but they would not be called Christian if they did not bring their attentions first and last to Jesus Christ.

While there is something simple about this focus on Jesus as the central figure, there is also something very complicated. That complexity is revealed by the thousands of separate churches, sects, and denominations that make up the modern Christian tradition. To project these separate bodies against the background of their development in the

nations of the world is to suggest the bewildering variety. To picture people expressing their adherence to that tradition in their prayer life and church-building, in their quiet worship or their strenuous efforts to change the world, is to suggest even more of the variety.

Given such complexity, it is natural that throughout Christian history both those in the tradition and those surrounding it have made attempts at simplification. Two ways to do this have been to concentrate on the “essence” of the faith, and thus on the ideas that are integral to it, or to be concerned with the “identity” of the tradition, and thus on the boundaries of its historical experience.

Modern scholars have located the focus of this faith tradition in the context of monotheistic religions. Christianity addresses the historical figure of Jesus Christ against the background of, and while seeking to remain faithful to, the experience of one God. It has consistently rejected polytheism and atheism.

A second element of the faith tradition of Christianity, with rare exceptions, is a plan of salvation or redemption. That is to say, the believers in the church picture themselves as in a plight from which they need rescue. For whatever reason, they have been distanced from God and need to be saved. Christianity is based on a particular experience or scheme directed to the act of saving—that is, of bringing or “buying back,” which is part of what redemption means, these creatures of God to their source in God. The agent of that redemption is Jesus Christ.

It is possible that through the centuries the vast majority of believers have not used the term essence to describe the central focus of their faith. The term is itself of Greek origin and thus represents only one part of the tradition, one element in the terms that have gone into making up Christianity. Essence refers to those qualities that give something its identity and are at the centre of what makes that thing different from everything else. To Greek philosophers it meant something intrinsic to and inherent in a thing or category of things, which gave it its character and thus separated it from everything of different character. Thus, Jesus Christ belongs to the essential character of Christianity and gives it a unique identity.

If most people are not concerned with defining the essence of Christianity, in practice they must come to terms with what the word essence implies. Whether they are engaged in being saved or redeemed on the one hand, or thinking and speaking about that redemption, its agent, and its meaning on the other, they are concentrating on the essence of their experience. Those who have concentrated from within the faith tradition have also helped to give it its identity. It is not possible to speak of the essence of a historical tradition without referring to how its ideal qualities have been discussed through the ages. Yet one can take up the separate subjects of essence and identity in sequence, being always aware of how they interrelate.



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

After Parliamentarian Bob Blackman asked the British Government to formally "apologize" for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, former MP and Chairman of the National Minorities Commission, Mr Tarlochan Singh, has urged the first turbaned Sikh British MP, Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, to endorse his fellow MP's demand.

In a letter to Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, Mr Tarlochan Singh wants him to raise the issue in the British House of Commons to seek an "official apology" for one of the worst "massacres of innocents" in the last century.

Demanding the apology on the lines the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau tendered in the House of Commons for the Komagata Maru episode, Mr Tarlochan Singh said that "the gravity of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre was much more serious as innocents were greeted with cannon when they assembled for a peaceful congregation to demand independence."

Justin Trudeau had tendered an unconditional apology for the Komagata Maru incident on May 18, 2016, in which hundreds of Sikhs, Muslim and Hindu passengers were denied entry to Canada and forced to return to an uncertain and ultimately violent fate in India.

The Then-Opposition Leader, Rona Ambrose, NDP Leader Tom Mulcair, BQ Leader Rheel Fortin, and Green Party Leader Elizabeth May also rose to add their voices and endorse the apology.

"Canada does not bear alone the responsibility for every tragic mistake that occurred with the Komagata Maru and its passengers, but Canada's government was without question responsible for the laws that prevented these passengers from immigrating peacefully and securely. For that, and for every regrettable consequence that followed, we are sorry," Trudeau said in his statement.

Though demand for a similar apology has been raised from time to time, including during the visit of the British Monarch and Prime Ministers to India, it has not progressed beyond "regrets" expressed by the British top elite.

As the worst massacre approaches its 106th anniversary, the demand has surfaced again, this time a British MP, Bob Blackman, raising it.

It is time to analyze the issue in perspective. It was not only the worst massacre in recent memory of mankind, but it also infringed upon various sensitive issues, including human rights and freedom of expression.

Let us have a look at the broader issues and sequence of events that led to this darkest phase of the Indian freedom struggle.

Issues

- Did it give birth to the concept of state terrorism
- Was it the handiwork of General Dwyer alone

Jallianwala Bagh, a conspiracy or a planned massacre?

Is it time for the British Empire to apologize for the worst massacre reported in recent times?

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, took place on 13 April 1919. A large crowd had gathered at the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, Punjab, British India, during the annual Baisakhi fair to protest against the Rowlatt Act and the arrest of pro-Indian independence activists Saifuddin Kitchlew and Satyapal. In response to the public gathering, the temporary brigadier general R. E. H. Dyer surrounded the people with his Gurkha and Sikh infantry regiments of the British Indian Army. The Jallianwala Bagh could only be exited on one side, as its other three sides were enclosed by buildings. After blocking the exit with his troops, Dyer ordered them to shoot at the crowd, continuing to fire even as the protestors tried to flee. The troops kept on firing until their ammunition was low and they were ordered to stop. Estimates of those killed vary from 379 to 1,500 or more people; over 1,200 others were injured, of whom 192 sustained serious injury. Britain has never formally apologised for the massacre but expressed "deep regret" in 2019. (Wikipedia)



The Massacre: The Jallianwala Bagh massacre, also known as the Amritsar massacre, took place on 13 April 1919. Estimates of those killed vary from 379 to 1,500 or more people; over 1,200 others were injured, of whom 192 sustained serious injury.

- Has the country done justice to martyrs and their families
- Is it time to look beyond rituals
- Bagh's epoch and media
- Punjab's tryst with Censorship
- Should the British Government apologize for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre?

In a liberal democracy, the media have a vital role to play. Though acknowledged as the fourth Estate, freedom of the Press has become a mere bogey as it was during the Jallianwala Bagh epoch.

Not many would know that it was the Jallianwala Bagh epoch that saw the British using the draconian law to curb the freedom of the Press. They resorted to Censorship, not once, but twice, to gag the media. Still not satisfied, the then Editor of The Tribune, Mr Kalinath Ray, was taken into custody for opposing the Empire.

A section of media, including The Tribune, served its readers as a fearless voice of the people of Punjab. When one looks back at the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, one cannot overlook the role the media played.

Gruesome massacre

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre was a gruesome episode that changed the narrative of the freedom struggle. It not only symbolized the brute power that the British used to contain the growing demand of the populace for freedom, liberty and equality, but also exposed the desperation of the rulers in suppressing the growing revolt. This epochal event not only gave a new direction to the war for independence but also changed the course of sub-continental history. It paved the way for Mohan Dass Karam Chand Gandhi to become Mahatma.

Before the Vaisakhi 1919 massacre, Jallianwala Bagh was a dumping ground of no political significance. But things witnessed a massive change afterwards. It provided the much-needed launch pad that guided the destiny of the nation. Interestingly, many in the crowd had come to Amritsar to join Vaisakhi celebrations at the Golden Temple, and some others were there for the annual cattle fair. To kill time, they headed for Jallianwala Bagh without realizing what was in store for them. That day no leader in the Bagh could control or keep the gathering together.

Historian VN Dutta believed that the

alleged culprit was Hans Raj, chief organizer of the rally. It was he who prevented people from dispersing. Rather, he asked everyone to sit down as the Government would not resort to feared fire.

"After a while, he waved his handkerchief, signaling to Dwyer and his Indian soldiers to open fire. Hans Raj had already left. He was an agent provocateur. He was later moved away to Mesopotamia, and his house in Amritsar was burnt," V.N. Dutta had said in an interview. General Dwyer refused to believe that the crowd that had assembled at Jallianwala Bagh was innocent but hostile and had come prepared to defy authority.

Has the nation given Jallianwala Bagh and its martyrs their due? The Bagh may have been renovated and given a facelift in recent years. But does that mitigate the anguish of the people who lost their near and dear ones or the countrymen who wanted freedom from the British empire? The British Government is still not ready to apologize for its action 106 years ago. It should have taken a lesson from the Canadian government that offered an unconditional apology for its

comparatively lesser grave action in the Komagata Maru episode.

Six years ago, rituals were gone through meticulously as the events unfolded for observing the centenary of the epochal event. The country's Vice-President came, laid a wreath, joined a ceremonial salute to the unknown martyrs, released a coin and a set of postage stamps to mark the historic event. Unfortunately, after 106 years, no one knows how many freedom seekers laid down their lives in a most controversial, barbaric action that in the present day would have put to shame the infamous 9/11 terrorist attack on the twin towers in New York.

At that time, there were no human rights activists, and not many would know what terrorism, including state terrorism, was all about.

Even after more than a century, the majority belief that the Jallianwala Bagh massacre was the result of a conspiracy that has not been satisfactorily countered. Was it a unilateral action on the part of then Lieutenant Governor Sir Michael O. Dwyer? Or was it the culmination of incidents, including the widespread violence following the arrest of some Punjab leaders, including Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr Satya Pal, besides the murder of five Europeans and the assault of missionary Miss Sherwood? Or was it because of the infamous Rowlett Bills?

Whatever be the background or provocation, it was one of the single largest instances of brutal misuse of state power against innocent, unarmed, and peaceful protestors. Was the punishment given to the victims proportionate to the violation of law committed by them, wittingly or unwittingly? Not many references were made in those days about terrorism, what to talk of State terrorism. Now, when the world has redefined terrorism and state terrorism, social scientists in general and those studying armed conflicts will have little or no hesitation to identify the Jallianwala Bagh massacre as probably the beginning of State terrorism of suppressing or silencing the voice of dissent with brute firepower. It was the worst or blatant violation of human rights.

While the demand for apology from the British for this unprecedented massacre has been growing louder year after year, many still see it as a major aberration or act of rashness on the part of General O'Dwyer. He believed that by killing innocent people in Jallianwala Bagh, he was sending a message to Punjab and the world that he would manage to put a finger in the dyke. Provoked by the Punjab rebellion, especially after incidents of April 10, 11 and 12, O Dwyer became furious and aggressive. With 25 Gurkhas and an equal number of Baluchis, he reached Jallianwala Bagh on the fateful day. The troops fired about 1650 bullets.

The number of people killed in the firing and those who jumped into the well could not be authenticated even after 106 years. Even today, no one has an authentic number of those who attained martyrdom that day. Many injured died



The renovated Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar.

due to a lack of medical attention.

The figures of 359 or 379 killed in firing were not working figures. Local newspapers, however, put the figure of those killed at over 1,000. Historian VN Dutta held that as many as 700 were killed in the firing. Besides, several thousand were injured who received treatment at non-official clinics or health centers. All O'Dwyer wanted was to send a strong message that Amritsar in Punjab could become a storm center of rebellion against the British Empire, and the evil had to be nipped in the bud.

Realizing that Vaisakhi was a big event and there could be massive turnouts for protests against Rowlett Bills, the British ordered prohibitory orders on April 12 and 13 that banned public rallies, taking out of processions or gathering of groups of people at a place. Without any warning to the crowd, he ordered fire. Havoc ensued. The gathering, terrorized by the firing, broke up. People ran for shelter, and the narrow passageways were all crammed. Some jumped into the well for safety. Those who tried to climb the walls were caught.

Killing armless innocent people in cold blood in Jallianwala Bagh probably gave birth to ruthless State Terrorism. For Punjab, it was nothing new except that the magnitude this time was enormous.

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre was also a litmus test for the media, which at that time was in its infancy and limited to a few newspapers. One of the newspapers that the British tried to dismiss as a small local newspaper was The Tribune.

Media coverage of the events became a subject of considerable comment and criticism. The State used law not only to prevent publication of what was called "objectionable material", but the publishers of several newspapers, including those who were opposed to the



British Empire, were accused of "secessionist propaganda". But it did not deter upright media. Punjab was the center point of growing turbulence. Intriguingly, the laws the British framed to curb freedom struggle have subsequently been used by Independent India. Not many would forget the days after the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi tried to curb freedom of the Press during the draconian emergency days. Subsequently, Punjab, too, suffered its repeated doses of censorship both during and after Operation Bluestar.

In a liberal democracy, the media have a vital role to play. Though acknowledged

as the fourth Estate, freedom of the Press has become a mere bogey as it was during the Jallianwala Bagh epoch. The concept of the notorious "Gaudi Media" has of late come to stay. The coverage of the farmers' agitation in recent years has been an example. And the latest is the case of the stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra. Not many would know that it was the Jallianwala Bagh epoch that saw the beginning of censorship.

The British used the draconian law to curb the freedom of the Press. They resorted to Censorship, not once, but twice, to gag the media. Still not satisfied, the then Editor of The Tribune, Mr Kalinath Ray, was taken in custody for opposing the Empire.

In 1919, a section of media, including The Tribune, served its readers as a fearless voice of the people of Punjab. When one looks back at the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, one cannot overlook the role the media played.

It was repeated during the 1977 emergency when again Editor of The Tribune, Madhavan Nair, and senior journalists like Shyam Khosla and Makhan Lal Kak had to face the wrath of the black laws, including detention under the draconian National Security Act and Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA). In 1984 again, these draconian laws were frequently used by the State to gag Indian media in general and that of Punjab and Chandigarh in particular.

(Prabhjot Singh is a veteran journalist with five decades of experience covering a wide spectrum of subjects and stories. He has covered Punjab and Sikh affairs for more than four decades, besides covering 10 Olympics and several major sporting events and hosting TV shows. For more in-depth analysis, please visit probingeye.com or follow him on [Twitter.com/probingeye](https://twitter.com/probingeye))

CHINA'S LEADER XI JINPING ARRIVES IN CAMBODIA TO WRAP UP THREE-NATION SOUTHEAST ASIA TOUR

17 APR 2025

PHNOM PENH (TIP): Chinese President Xi Jinping arrived in Cambodia on Thursday for a two-day state visit that serves as an opportunity to further strengthen already robust relations.

The visit, Xi's first since 2016, will conclude a three-nation Southeast Asian tour that included stops in Vietnam and Malaysia.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet recently described Beijing as "an important and indispensable friend of Cambodia that has helped support the country's economic and social development."

Xi was greeted at the airport in Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh by King Norodom Sihamoni. During his visit, Xi is also scheduled to meet Prime Minister Hun Manet and Senate President Hun Sen, who is Hun Manet's father and predecessor as prime minister.

Trade will likely be a major topic of Xi's discussions in Cambodia, which faces among the highest tariff rates proposed by Washington. In addition to Trump's universal 10% tariff, the country faces the threat of a 49% tax on exports to the US once his 90-day pause expires.

In addition to discussions on strengthening bilateral ties and regional and international issues, several agreements are expected to be signed on cooperation in various sectors.

In both countries, Xi emphasized strengthening ties, particularly in trade and investment, amid global economic uncertainties and the backdrop of trade tensions with the United States. He underscored the need to oppose unilateralism and protectionism and uphold the multilateral trading system.

China is presenting itself as a source of stability and certainty as Southeast Asia scrambles to respond to tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump, which threaten the region export-oriented economies whose largest markets are generally the United States.

The visit comes on the 50th anniversary of the April 17, 1975 takeover of Cambodia by the communist Khmer Rouge, which imposed a reign of terror with Maoist-inspired policies that saw an estimated 1.7 million Cambodians die of starvation, overwork or executions.

Beijing was the main foreign backer of the Khmer Rouge and supported the group in carrying on a guerrilla war after it was ousted from power in 1979 by an invasion from Vietnam, though such history is rarely discussed by either country.

Cambodia's rapid growth in recent decades has been fueled largely by Beijing. (AP)

'How will I be able to hug you?': Portrait of Palestinian boy who lost both arms in Israeli strike wins World Press Photo

17 APR 2025

THE HAGUE (TIP): A portrait of a young Palestinian boy who lost both arms as a result of an Israeli attack in Gaza was honored Thursday as World Press Photo of the year.

The photo, taken by Qatar-based Palestinian photographer Samar Abu Elouf for The New York Times shows 9-year-old Mahmoud Ajjour with his arms missing just below each shoulder.

"One of the most difficult things Mahmoud's mother explained to me was how when Mahmoud first came to the realization that his arms were amputated, the first sentence he said to her was, 'How will I be able to hug you?'" Abu Elouf said in a statement released by the World Press Photo organization.

The winner of the 68th edition of the prestigious photojournalism contest was selected from 59,320 entries submitted by 3,778 photographers from 141 countries.

"This is a quiet photo that speaks loudly. It tells the story of one boy, but also of a wider war that will have an impact for generations," said World Press Photo Executive Director Joumana El Zein Khoury.

In a statement, the organization said that Ajjour was injured while fleeing an Israeli attack in March 2024.

"After he turned back to urge his family onward, an explosion severed one of his arms and mutilated the other,"



according to the World Press Photo citation.

"This young boy's life deserves to be understood, and this picture does what great photojournalism can do: provide a layered entry point into a complex story, and the incentive to prolong one's encounter with that story," said jury chair Lucy Conticello, who is Director of Photography for French newspaper Le Monde's weekend magazine.

Winning photographer Abu Elouf was

evacuated from Gaza in December 2023 and she now lives in the same apartment complex as Ajjour in Qatar's capital, Doha.

Israel's genocidal war on Gaza, which continues after it broke a ceasefire deal with Palestinian resistance group Hamas, has so far killed 51,000 Palestinians, most of them women and children, including at least 876 infants under the age of 1. Israel has also targeted and killed hundreds of healthcare workers, aid workers and journalists.

Competition organisers also named two World Press Photo finalists that highlighted the issues of migration and climate change.

A dark photo by John Moore for Getty Images shows Chinese migrants warming themselves after crossing the U.S.-Mexico border, and a picture by Musuk Nolte for Panos Pictures, Bertha Foundation, of a young man carrying food across a dried up river bed in Brazil's Amazon basin region.

In regional results announced earlier by the World Press Photo Foundation, The Associated Press was among winners in the Asia-Pacific and Oceania region. Photographer Jae C. Hong won in the Singles category with an image titled Korea Adoption Fraud and Noel Celis won in the Stories category for photos from the Philippines titled Four Storms, 12 Days. (AP)

Russia's top court lifts Taliban's designation as 'terrorist organisation'

17 APR 2025

MOSCOW (TIP): Russia's Supreme Court on Thursday removed the Taliban's designation as a "terrorist organisation", a symbolic gesture aimed at building friendly ties with Afghanistan's de facto rulers.

The Islamist group seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021, when American forces supporting the country's internationally recognised government pulled out.

Moscow, which called the US withdrawal a "failure", has taken steps to normalise relations with the Taliban authorities since then, seeing them as a potential economic partner and ally in fighting terrorism.

"The previously established ban on the activities of the Taliban -- included on the unified federal list of organisations recognised as terrorist -- has been suspended," Supreme Court Judge Oleg Nefedov said in a ruling, according to the TASS state news agency.

"The decision enters into legal force immediately," he added.

Russia's Prosecutor General asked the court to remove the group's "terrorist" designation last month, following several trips to Russia by top Taliban officials.

A Taliban delegation attended Russia's



flagship economic forum in Saint Petersburg in 2022 and in 2024, and the group's top diplomat met Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Moscow last October.

The decision to suspend the label does not amount to formal recognition for the Taliban authorities, which are seeking international legitimacy.

But it helps avoid embarrassment for

Russian officials meeting representatives from the militant group at high-profile events.

Moscow's attitude toward the Taliban has shifted drastically over the last two decades.

The group was formed in 1994 during the Afghan Civil War, largely by former Mujahideen fighters who battled the Soviet Union during the 1980s. (AFP)

Israeli strike kills 23, including a family of 10 in Gaza as UN raises alarm over food cutoff

17 APR 2025

GAZA STRIP (TIP): Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip overnight into Thursday killed at least 23 people, including a family of 10, local health officials said. The United Nations meanwhile raised alarm over the mounting impact of Israel's six-week-old blockade preventing all food and other supplies from entering the territory.

Israel ended its ceasefire with Hamas last month and renewed its bombardment, killing hundreds of people and seizing large parts of the territory to pressure the militants to accept changes to the agreement.

A strike in the southern city of Khan Younis killed five children, four women and a man from the same family, all of whom suffered severe burns, according to Nasser Hospital, which received the bodies.

Strikes in northern Gaza killed 13 people, including nine children, according to the Indonesian Hospital.

The Israeli military says it tries to avoid harming civilians and blames their deaths on Hamas because it operates in residential areas. There was no immediate comment on the latest strikes.

The U.N. humanitarian office, known as OCHA, said that almost all of Gaza's more than 2 million people now rely for food on the only 1 million prepared meals produced daily by charity kitchens supported by aid groups.

Other food distribution programs have shut down for lack of supplies, and the



U.N. and other aid groups have been sending their remaining stocks to the charity kitchens.

The only other way to get food in Gaza is from markets. But most cannot afford to buy there because of spiraling prices and widespread shortages, meaning humanitarian aid is the primary food source for 80% of the population, the World Food Program said in its monthly report for April on Gaza's markets.

"The Gaza Strip is now likely facing the worst humanitarian crisis in the 18 months since the escalation of hostilities in October 2023," OCHA said.

Most people in Gaza are now down to one meal a day, said Shaina Low, a spokesperson for the Norwegian Refugee Council. "It's far lower than what is needed," she said.

Water is also growing scarce, with Palestinians standing in long lines to fill jerry cans from trucks. Omar Shatat, an official with a local water utility, said people are down to six or seven liters per day, well below the amount the U.N. estimates is needed to meet basic needs.

Israeli Defense Minister Israel Katz said Wednesday that preventing humanitarian aid is one of the "central pressure tactics" used against Hamas, which Israel accuses of siphoning off aid to maintain its rule.

Israel is demanding that Hamas release more hostages at the start of any new ceasefire and ultimately agree to disarm and leave the territory. Katz said that even afterward Israel will continue to occupy large "security zones" inside Gaza. (AP)

CANADA ELECTION: PM CARNEY SAYS TRUMP KEY ISSUE; CONSERVATIVE RIVAL SAYS COUNTRY NEEDS CHANGE

17 APR 2025

TORONTO (TIP): Prime Minister Mark Carney said Wednesday the key question in Canada's election is who is best to deal with US President Donald Trump while his Conservative rival argued that Carney doesn't represent change after a decade of Liberal Party rule.

Opposition Conservative Pierre Poilievre said during the French-language leaders' debate Canada needs change and Carney is just like his predecessor Justin Trudeau.

"Mr. Poilievre is not Justin Trudeau. I'm not Justin Trudeau either. In this election the question is who is going to face Mr. Trump," Carney said.

Trump's trade war and threats to make Canada the 51st state have infuriated Canadians and led to a surge in Canadian nationalism that has bolstered Liberal Party poll numbers ahead of the April 28 vote.

Poilievre is imploring Canadians not to give the Liberals a fourth term. He hoped to make the election a referendum on Trudeau, whose popularity declined toward the end of his decade in power as food and housing prices rose and immigration surged. But Trump attacked, Trudeau resigned and Carney, a two-time central banker, became Liberal party leader and prime minister after a party leadership race. (AP)

Italy's Meloni will test her mettle as EU-US bridge when she meets Trump in Washington

17 APR 2025

MILAN (TIP): Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni will test her mettle as a bridge between the EU and the United States when she meets with US President Donald Trump in the White House on Thursday, the first European leader to have a face-to-face with Trump since he announced, and then suspended, 20% tariffs on European exports.

Meloni secured the meeting at a critical juncture in the trade war as Italy's leader, but she also has, in a sense, been "knighted" to represent the European Union.

She has been in close contact with EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen ahead of the trip, and "the outreach is... closely coordinated," a commission spokeswoman said this week.

"We know we are in a difficult moment," Meloni said this week in Rome.

"Most certainly, I am well aware of what I represent, and what I am defending."

The European Union is defending what it calls "the most important commercial relationship in the world," with annual trade reaching 1.6 trillion euros (\$1.8 trillion).

Trade negotiations fall under the European Commission's authority, which is pushing for a zero-for-zero tariff deal with the US. However, Trump administration officials in talks with the EU have yet to publicly show signs of relenting on Trump's insistence that a baseline 10% tariff be charged on all foreign imports. He paused for 90 days a retaliatory increase to 20%.

The pause has raised some hopes for negotiations, and



Meloni's margins for progress are more in gaining clarity on Trump's goals rather than outright concessions, experts say.

"It is a very delicate mission," said Fabian Zuleeg, chief economist at the European Policy Center think tank in Brussels.

"There is the whole trade agenda, and while she's not officially negotiating, we know that Trump likes to have this kind of informal exchange, which in a sense is a negotiation. So it's a lot on her plate."

As the leader of a far-right party, Meloni is ideologically aligned with Trump on issues including curbing migration, promoting traditional values and skepticism toward multilateral institutions. But stark differences have emerged in Meloni's unwavering support for Ukraine.

After being the only European leader to attend the Jan. 20 inauguration, Meloni has responded with studied restraint as abrupt shifts in US policy under Trump have frayed the trans-Atlantic alliance.

She has denounced the tariffs as "wrong" and warned that "dividing the West would be disastrous for everyone," after Trump's heated White House exchange with Ukraine's president.

"She has been very cautious," said Wolfango Piccoli, an analyst at the London-based Teneo consultancy. "It is what we need when we have a counterpart that is changing every day."

Italy maintains a 40 billion euro trade surplus with the United States, its largest with any country, fueled by Americans' appetite for Italian sparkling wine, foodstuffs like Parmigiano Reggiano hard cheese and Parma ham, and Italian luxury fashion. These are all sectors critical to the Italian economy, and mostly supported by small- and medium-sized producers who are core center-right voters.

"All in all, I think she will focus on the very strong economic and trade relations that Italy has with the United States, not just in terms of exports, but also services and energy," said Antonio Villafranca, vice president of the ISPI think tank in Milan. "For example, Italy could even consider importing more gas from the US."

The meeting comes against the backdrop of growing concerns over global uncertainty generated by the escalating tariff wars. Italy's growth forecast for this year has already been slashed from 1% to 0.5% as a result.

Meloni is also expected to address Trump's demand for NATO partners to increase military spending to 2% of gross domestic product. Italy's spending, at 1.49% of GDP, is among the lowest in Europe. (AP)

BANGLADESH COURT ISSUES ARREST WARRANT AGAINST OUSTED PM SHEIKH HASINA IN GRAFT CASES

13 APR 2025

DHAKA (TIP): Bangladesh issued arrest warrants against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana, British MP Tulip Rizwana Siddiq, and 50 others in connection with the alleged illegal acquisition of land by abusing political power.

Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge Zakir Hossain passed the order after considering three separate chargesheets filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported.

Judge Hossain fixed April 27 to review reports on the execution of the arrest orders, the newspaper quoted ACC Assistant Director (Prosecution) Aminul Islam as saying.

Citing court sources, Bengali newspaper Prothom Alo reported that the ACC recently submitted chargesheets to the court against 53 people in three separate cases on corruption charges in plot allocation.

As all 53 accused, including Hasina, were absconding, the court issued arrest warrants against them, the paper said.

On April 10, the same court issued arrest warrants against Hasina, her daughter Saima Wazed Putul, and 17 others in a separate corruption case related to Rajuk plot allotments.

Putul has been serving as the South East Asian regional director for the World Health Organisation (WHO) based in New Delhi since November 1, 2023.

On January 13, ACC filed a case against Rehana for allegedly acquiring a 10-katha plot in the Purbachal New Town Project through abuse of authority.

The case named 15 accused, including Hasina and Rehana's daughter British lawmaker Tulip Rizwana Siddiq. Rehana did not hold any official position in the past regime. After the investigation, ACC submitted a chargesheet on March 10 against 17 individuals, adding two more names. In a second case, ACC filed charges against Azmina Siddiq for similar irregularities in acquiring a 10-katha plot in Purbachal.

This case initially listed 16 accused, including Tulip Siddiq and Sheikh Hasina. The final chargesheet, submitted on March 10, named 18 people.

The ACC filed a third case the same day against Rehana's son Radwan Mujib Siddiq, accused of obtaining a plot using political influence.

Tulip Siddiq and Sheikh Hasina were among the 16 named in the initial complaint. The final chargesheet also included 18 accused.

Hasina is also accused of numerous charges like mass murders and crimes against humanity, enforced disappearances while these cases were being filed with Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal. (PTI)

Our ambitions, traditions, customs different from Hindus: Pakistan Army chief Munir replays Two-Nation Theory

17 APR 2025

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Repeating the military establishment's old ideological line, Pakistan Army chief General Asim Munir has said that Pakistanis must remind their children of the "stark differences between Hindus and Muslims" — calling it the very basis for the country's creation.

Speaking at a Convention for Overseas Pakistanis on Wednesday, Munir said: "Our forefathers believed that we were different from Hindus in every possible aspect of life. Our religion is different. Our customs are different. Our traditions are different. Our thoughts are different. Our ambitions are different... That was the foundation of the Two-Nation Theory. It was laid on the belief that we are two nations, not one."

"You must tell this to your children so that they never forget the story of Pakistan," he added, with Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif in attendance.

The Two-Nation Theory, advocated by Pakistan's founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah in the 1940s, held that Muslims and Hindus were two separate nations. It was on this basis that Jinnah demanded a separate homeland for Muslims, leading to the creation of Pakistan in 1947.

Munir, who is often referred to as a



'Hafiz e Quran' for having memorised the Islamic holy text, also stressed the country's Islamic foundations. "The basis of Pakistan was laid on the Kalima," he said, referring to the Islamic declaration of faith.

His remarks come days after a fresh diplomatic clash between India and Pakistan. During a United Nations debate on peacekeeping reforms, Pakistan once again brought up the Kashmir issue. India responded sharply, asking Islamabad to vacate parts of the region it "occupied illegally".

Speaking about Kashmir, General Asim Munir said, "Our stance is absolutely clear, it was our jugular vein, it will be our jugular vein, we will not

forget it. We will not leave our Kashmiri brothers in their heroic struggle."

Munir's comments also come at a time of internal unrest. Addressing the situation in Balochistan, where separatist groups continue to challenge state authority, the Army chief issued a warning. "Even ten generations of terrorists cannot harm Balochistan and Pakistan," he said, vowing action against what he called anti-state elements.

Munir also said that many fear that Pakistan won't get investment due to terrorist activity. "Do you think terrorists can take away the destiny of the country? The 1.3 million-strong Indian Army, with all its wherewithal, if they cannot intimidate us, do you think these terrorists can subdue the armed forces of Pakistan?" he said.

While Pakistan was founded as an Islamic republic, its early leadership had promised protection for religious minorities, including Hindus. Over the decades, however, the number of minorities in the country has steadily declined. Munir's speech, with its emphasis on religious identity and historical divisions, signals the military's continued reliance on the Two-Nation Theory to shape national identity and assert its position both at home and abroad. (TNIE)

India slams Bangladesh for remarks on Murshidabad violence: 'Protect rights of own minorities'

18 APR 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): India on Friday slammed Bangladeshi officials for their remarks on violence in West Bengal and asked Dhaka to focus on protecting the rights of its minorities instead of indulging in "virtue signalling".

"We reject the remarks made by the Bangladesh side with regard to the incidents in West Bengal," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

"THIS IS A BARELY DISGUISED AND DISINGENUOUS ATTEMPT TO DRAW A PARALLEL WITH INDIA'S CONCERNS OVER THE ONGOING PERSECUTION OF MINORITIES IN BANGLADESH WHERE THE CRIMINAL PERPETRATORS OF SUCH ACTS CONTINUE TO ROAM FREE," HE SAID.

Jaiswal was responding to media queries regarding comments made by Bangladesh officials on the developments in West Bengal.

"Instead of making unwarranted



comments and indulging in virtue signalling, Bangladesh would do better to focus on protecting the rights of its own minorities," he said.

Shafiqul Alam, the press secretary to Bangladesh Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus, on Thursday called on New Delhi and the West Bengal government to take "all steps to fully protect the minority Muslim population".

"We condemn attacks on Muslims causing loss of lives and properties," he had said.

"We urge the government of India and West Bengal to take all steps to fully protect the minority Muslim

population," Alam had added.

Some parts of West Bengal, including Murshidabad, witnessed sectarian violence in the past few days following protests by the Muslim community against the Waqf Amendment Act.

There has been a sharp downturn in India-Bangladesh relations after deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled Dhaka last August in the face of a massive anti-government protest.

The relations nosedived dramatically after the interim government headed by Yunus failed to contain attacks on minorities, especially Hindus, in that country. (PTI)



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HEALTH IS WEALTH

Home remedies for grey hair

Premature greying is one of the maladies of modern lifestyle. Those dreaded streaks of silver and white pop up even when you are in your 20s. They may say that greying is a sign of wisdom and maturity, but it also tells you that your body is not producing enough melamine, which is an early sign of ageing.

The first step is to learn to eat right. Yes! It does make a difference. Lots of greens, a beet a day, fresh fruits & veggies and lots of yoghurt are what you must eat regularly. Such a diet will not only make your skin smooth and soft but will also result in lustrous long hair. As far as greying of hair goes, don't open those harmful chemical bottles so soon. Help is right in your kitchen. Here are the top 8 remedies to darker greying hair.

Amla and methi seeds

Add 6-7 pieces to 3 tbsp of an oil of your choice (coconut, olive, almond) and boil for a few minutes. Add 1 tbsp of fenugreek powder. Cool, strain and apply generously all over the scalp at night. Use a mild herbal shampoo to wash off in the morning.

Indian gooseberry or Amla is a rich source of Vitamin C and has been used in Ayurveda for all kinds of hair problems. Fenugreek or Methi seeds are full of several nutrients and the combination of these super ingredients not only prevents premature greying but also promotes hair growth.

Black tea rinse

Boil a cup of water with 2 tbsps of black tea and a tsp of salt. Cool and apply generously on freshly washed hair. Allow to dry. Repeat regularly to darken grey strands.

Black Tea has caffeine which is loaded with antioxidants. While adding a natural dark hue to the hair, it stimulates hair growth and strengthens it giving it a shine.

Almond oil and lemon juice

Mix almond oil and lemon juice in the ration of 2:3. Massage well in the scalp and hair. Wash off after 30 minutes.

Almond oil has Vitamin E which is extremely beneficial for hair. It nourishes the roots and prevents premature greying.



Lemon juice not only adds gloss and volume to hair but also promotes healthy hair growth.

Henna and coffee

Add 1 tbsp of coffee powder to boiling hot water. Cool and make a paste with henna powder. Let it rest covered for a few hours. Mix in 1 tbsp of any oil of your choice and apply liberally covering the hair completely. Wash off after an hour.

Henna is a natural conditioner and a colorant and when combined with coffee, it gives excellent results.

Curry leaves and oil

Boil a cupful of curry leaves in a cup of oil till they turn black. Cool, strain and store. Massage into hair 2-3 times a week. Leave overnight.

Curry leaves are full of Vitamin B and help to restore the pigment melamine in the hair follicles and prevent further greying. It is a rich source of Beta-Keratin and also prevents hair fall.

Ridge-gourd oil

Place a cupful of sundried ridge-gourd pieces in coconut oil and leave to seep and mature for 3-4 days. Boil the oil for a few minutes. Strain and store. Massage into the scalp and hair at night and wash off with a herbal shampoo of your choice.

Stop comparing your relationship to everyone else's

When you look to outside relationships to define or validate your own, it can be a sign that you're lacking confidence in your current status. For instance, if you get the sense that everyone but you is suddenly coupled up, you may start to doubt your ability to find love, even when you're not currently looking for it. Similarly, if your friends are getting engaged and you and your partner are still dating, it can make you question the progress of your relationship.

To feel more confident, fight the urge to let other couples' romantic benchmarks dictate your own. Instead, remind yourself of the various desires you have besides romance, and celebrate the areas in which you're finding fulfillment, such as school, work, or time spent with friends and family.

AVOID THE BLAME GAME

When said aloud, feelings of inferiority often sound like "Why aren't we more like Kristen and Rob?" or "If

I was with someone like him or her, everything would be great!" But these sentiments place blame on your lover without taking any responsibility for yourself, which can chip away at the positives of—and trust in—

your bond. It's also unrealistic to believe that acting like or being with different people will suddenly solve your relationship problems.

Rather than employing blame or shame, focus on what you like about your connection: how much your mate makes you laugh or the way they care for you. Then, actively do more things to please each other (like playing golf, even if that's not your favorite), and voice your appreciation when they

do the same (as in, "I like doing this with you").

GET REAL WITH FRIENDS

Shatter the assumption that your friends are in ecstatic relationships by having more open and honest conversations with them. Share your own love challenges, and ask them if they've ever had a similar experience.



FOOD CORNER



Cheese Corn Balls

Ingredients

Potatoes - 100 gms, boiled, peeled
Cheese - 100 gms, grated + little extra
Sweet Corn Kernels - 50 gms
Green Chillies - 4 to 5, finely chopped
Corn Flour - 1 to 2 tbsps
Oil as required
Salt as per taste

Method

- Mix the corn, potatoes and cheese in a bowl.
- Add the green chillies and salt.
- Mix well and make small balls of the mixture.
- Heat oil in a deep frying pan over medium flame.
- Roll the prepared balls in corn flour and add them to the hot oil.
- Fry until golden brown and remove.
- Drain excess oil and transfer to a serving dish.
- Sprinkle the reserved cheese on top.
- Serve with sauce or mint chutney.

Chili Cheese Toast

Ingredients

■ Bread Slices - 8 to 10
■ Butter - 5 to 6 tsp
■ Onions - 2, finely chopped
■ Green Chillies - 2tbsps, finely chopped
■ Cheese - 1/3 cup, grated (you can also use cheese slices, see the end of the recipe for instructions)
■ Salt as per taste
■ Black Pepper Powder as per taste

Method

- Mix the cheese, onions, green chillies, pepper powder and little salt in a bowl.
- Spread butter on half of the bread slices.
- Spread some of the cheese-onion-green chillies mixture evenly on top.
- Cover with the remaining slices.
- Heat a toaster/sandwich maker for 45 seconds.
- Place the prepared bread slices and cook until set.
- Alternately, heat a tawa over medium flame.
- Add little butter and place the prepared bread on top.
- Cover with a lid and cook on both sides until lightly browned and cheese has melted.
- Serve with ketchup.





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wishes

THE SIKH COMMUNITY

Happy Vaisakhi!



Parveen Chopra
Founding Editor,
ALotusInTheMud.com



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Happy & Prosperous Vaisakhi
Lakh Lakh Vadhayai

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AMERICA RUNS ON DUNKIN'™

Signs that indicate your body has high cortisol levels

Stress is an inherent by-product of the contemporary grind. While it is normally effective in protecting you in risky situations by triggering the fight-or-flight response, chronic stress can be detrimental to your body. Stress triggers cortisol, the primary stress-response hormone. When stress becomes chronic, you may not realize it, as your body becomes used to it, but the high cortisol levels are evident through certain signs. It's also a reminder that physical and mental health are deeply intertwined, with each impacting the other.

These are the signs when your cortisol hormone is elevated for a prolonged period, affecting your gut, immunity and hormonal health:

Weight gain

Especially around the abdomen, face, and neck. This pattern is often linked to cortisol-related fat distribution.

Skin issues

Thinning skin, acne, easy bruising, and purple or red stretch marks (striae), particularly on the abdomen or thighs.

Digestive problems

Chronic stress and high cortisol can disrupt gut health, contributing to bloating, IBS, and irregular digestion.

Muscle and joint pain

High cortisol breaks down muscle tissue and can affect bone density, leading to weakness and discomfort.

Frequent cold and infection

While cortisol regulates the immune system, too much of it suppresses immunity, making you more prone to illness.

Irregular periods

In women, high cortisol can disrupt reproductive hormones and cause skipped or irregular cycles.



What to eat to manage cortisol?

Elevated cortisol levels, when prolonged, can weaken the immune system, promote weight gain, increase blood pressure, disrupt blood sugar levels, reduce bone density, and affect mental health, potentially leading to issues like anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances.

Foods rich in these nutrients can help.

Vitamin C

Strawberries, bell peppers, and broccoli

Omega-3 fatty acids

Spinach, almonds, cashews, and whole grains

Zinc

Oysters, beef, pumpkin seeds, and chickpeas

Probiotics

Yoghurt, kefir, sauerkraut, and kimchi

Complex carbohydrates

Whole grains like oats, quinoa, and brown rice

Source: HT

Feeling tired and hungry after meals? Things to do to avoid the sugar spike and crash

One of the concerning aftermaths of a meal is a blood sugar spike. After eating, glucose levels suddenly rise, especially if your meal is rich in carbs or sugary treats. The spike is quicker than.

Moreover, this spike is typically followed by a rapid crash. Your body responds by releasing insulin, sometimes too much, making your blood sugar level drop. This makes you feel tired, exhausted, and hungry again (no wonder you crave sweets after a heavy meal). It's a back-and-forth cycle, highs followed by lows.

But this isn't healthy in the long run, as if it happens frequently, it can mess with your mood, energy levels and even increase your chances of developing insulin resistance or diabetes. So how do you tackle the blood sugar rise after meals? There are a few effective ways that can help you regulate the situation adeptly.

Things to do after eating a meal.

Exercise snacking

30 minutes before meal, for 2-3 minutes, get into a form



of intense workout like jumping jacks, brisk walking. It can reduce blood sugar spikes for up to 24 hours.

Walking post-meal

Walking 15 minutes after eating reduces blood sugar spikes by 30%.

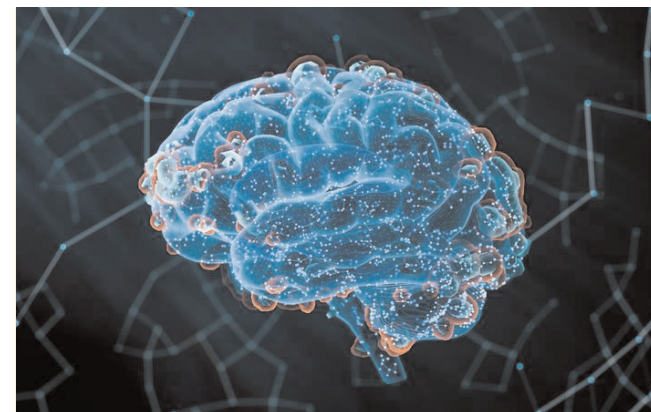
Calf raises

If you cannot walk and are seated, raise your calf to reduce your blood-sugar spikes by 20-30%.

How should you eat to reduce blood sugar spikes?

Fiber has been revealed to be a game-changer, naturally decreasing blood sugar. Fibre, which is found in plant-based foods, is classified into soluble and insoluble types, both contributing to better diabetes management. Soluble fibre dissolves in water to form a gel-like consistency that slows digestion, preventing rapid spikes in blood sugar after meals. Found in foods like oats, apples, pears, and legumes, it helps maintain steady energy levels throughout the day.

Source: HT



Researchers look at people with rare disease, find brain region involved in generosity

A new study has identified a specific region – the 'basolateral amygdala'—that plays a crucial role in regulating generous behaviour.

Driven by a concern for society, prosocial or altruistic behaviour involves performing actions that intentionally benefit others and include sharing and cooperating.

The basolateral amygdala helps process the emotional part of information received via senses.

Findings of the study, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, reveal a biological basis for compassionate behaviour.

The amygdala, located deep within the brain, is a small, almond-shaped structure and plays a central role in processing and regulating emotions.

The researchers from Heinrich Heine University, Germany, looked at a unique set of people in South Africa, suffering from an extremely rare condition—Urbach-Wiethe Disease. A few hundred cases of the disease are known worldwide, with a larger group in Namaqualand in northern South Africa.

People with Urbach-Wiethe Disease differ in their emotional and social behaviour. The condition is known to selectively damage the basolateral amygdala without affecting other brain regions.

Above all, the affected people find it difficult to interpret the emotional aspect of facial expressions, the researchers said.

"These patients represent a quasi-natural experimental environment for questions about prosocial behaviour. In the case of these individuals, exactly those areas of the brain are affected, which are believed to play a key role in compassionate behaviour toward others," lead author Tobias Kalenscher, head of comparative psychology research team, Heinrich Heine University.

The study's participants were involved in 'dictator games', in which they were asked to share money with close friends, acquaintances, neighbours or strangers.

Source: PTI

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Happy Vaisakhi

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Opposition Leader Shri. Rahul Gandhi with officials of the IOCUSA, New York, November 4, 2003 @ Javits Center, New York

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Netflix will soon allow users to search movies and shows using AI

Do you always feel confused about what to watch on Netflix? With its vast library across genres, it can sometimes be confusing to decide. Starting a new show or movie can also depend on your mood, and the basic suggestions often don't seem to help. However, Netflix is now working on a solution—or rather, taking the help of AI—to assist users in deciding what they want to search and watch.

The streaming platform is reportedly integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into its search functionality. It is currently testing an AI-powered search tool that allows users to find movies and TV shows using natural language, moods, and highly specific queries. Netflix's AI-powered search is built on OpenAI's models. It is currently available to a limited number of iOS users in Australia and New Zealand, with plans to expand to the U.S. and other markets soon.

This upgrade is said to improve the way Netflix subscribers navigate its vast content library, making it easier to find the perfect show or movie for any mood or occasion.

Unlike the current search system, which relies on titles, genres, or actor names to find shows or movies on Netflix, the new AI-powered search reportedly understands contextual and conversational queries. For example, users could type or say:

- "Show me dark comedy series like The Office but with a twist."
- "Find me a romantic movie set in Paris."
- "Recommend a thriller that will keep me guessing until the end."

Netflix's AI search then analyses these requests and generates personalised recommendations from its catalogue. The technology reportedly builds on the platform's existing recommendation algorithm, which suggests content based on viewing history—but with more flexibility.

For now, the AI search is exclusive to iOS and available only to select users in Australia and New Zealand. Netflix plans to expand testing to the U.S. and other regions in the coming weeks or months.

A Netflix spokesperson, MoMo Zhou, confirmed to The Verge that there are no immediate plans to bring the feature to Android or web users, as the company is focusing on refining the iOS version first.

While for India availability we need to wait a bit, The feature looks interesting and helpful by finding something to watch by eliminating the hours of endless scrolling on the platform.

Meanwhile, Netflix has not confirmed whether the feature will eventually support voice search, but given the natural language capabilities, we might see that feature in the near future.

Apple will soon use your on-device data to train Apple Intelligence

Apple is changing how it trains its artificial intelligence (AI) models, with a new approach that aims to improve performance while keeping user privacy protected. According to a report by Bloomberg, the company is preparing to roll out a new technique in upcoming beta versions of iOS 18.5 and macOS 15.5. The shift has also been detailed by Apple in an official blog post that was published on Apple's Machine Learning Research website.

The post explains how Apple currently relies on synthetic data – or data that is artificially generated rather than collected from real users – to train AI features like writing tools and email summaries. While this helps protect privacy, Apple admits that synthetic data has its limits, especially when trying to understand trends in how people write or summarise longer messages. To solve this, Apple is introducing a method that compares synthetic emails to real ones – without ever accessing the content of user emails. Here's how it works. Apple says it first creates thousands of fake emails that cover a range of everyday topics. For instance, Apple gives the example of a random email that reads: "Would you like to play tennis tomorrow at 11:30AM?" Each message is turned into an embedding – a type of data that represents its content, like topic and length.

These embeddings are then sent to a small number of user devices that have opted into Apple's Device Analytics programme. The participating devices compare the synthetic embeddings with a small sample of the user's recent emails, and choose which synthetic message is the most similar. However, Apple says the actual emails and matching results never leave the device.

Apple says that it uses a privacy method called differential privacy, wherein the devices send back only anonymous signals. Apple then analyses which synthetic messages were selected most often – without ever knowing which device



picked what. These popular messages are used to improve Apple's AI features by better reflecting the types of content people write, while maintaining complete privacy.

Apple says this process helps refine its training data for features like email summaries, making AI outputs more accurate and useful without compromising on user trust.

The same method is already in use for features like Genmoji, which is Apple's custom emoji tool. Apple explains that by anonymously tracking which prompts (like an elephant in a chef's hat) are common, the company can fine-tune its AI model to respond better to real-world requests. Rare or unique prompts remain hidden, and Apple never links data to specific devices or users.

Apple confirmed that similar privacy-focused techniques will soon be applied to other AI tools such as Image Playground, Image Wand, Memories creation, and Visual Intelligence features.

Source: India Today

Sunbird, a nuclear fusion powered rocket could help reach Pluto in just 4 years: Report

Elon Musk's SpaceX wants to push the boundaries of space exploration, but a British startup named Pulsar Fusion is working on an ambitious nuclear fusion powered rocket called Sunbird.

The world's brightest minds have been trying their hands on nuclear fusion technology for decades now, but despite several attempts and breakthroughs, haven't been able to replicate the inner workings of stars anywhere on Earth.

In a statement to CNN, Richard Dinan, the CEO and founder of Pulsar Fusion said that "it's very unnatural to do fusion on Earth. Fusion doesn't want to work in an atmosphere, Space is a far more logical, sensible place to do fusion, because that's where it wants to happen anyway."

And while Sunbird is still in early stages of construction and has numerous challenges ahead, Pulsar Fusion says it has planned an orbital demonstration for 2027.

Also, the nuclear fusion powered rocket could help spacecrafts reach speeds of up to 805,000 kms per hour, which is much faster than the Parker Solar Probe, the fastest object ever built that peaks out at 692,000 kms per hour. If



the nuclear fusion powered rocket becomes operational, it would cut the time required to reach Mars by half and reach Pluto in just four years.

Unlike traditional chemical rockets like Starship, Sunbird won't be operating independently but will attach to larger spacecraft to help them cover interplanetary distances. "We launch them into space, and we would have a charging station where they could sit and then meet your ship. Ideally, you'd have a station somewhere near Mars, and you'd have a station in low Earth orbit, and the (Sunbirds) would go back and forth", Dinan told CNN.

He went on to say that the first

Sunbird(s) will be used to shuttle satellites in orbit, but they can also be used to deliver heavy payloads (up to 2,000 kgs) to Mars in just six months.

However, there are several significant technical challenges in making nuclear fusion powered rockets a reality. Since these systems are large and heavy, companies like Sunbird may have a hard time making lightweight and miniaturising them.

Like Pulsar Fusion, companies like Helicity Space and General Atomics, which are backed by Lockheed Martin and NASA are also working on nuclear fusion reactors, which they plan to test sometime in 2027.

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Arish K. Sahani
646-644-2139

Everyone thinks of how to become a better son or daughter, mother or father, brother or sister, husband or wife, and man or woman. But no one puts actual thoughts on that they are all Human and how to become a better Human. WHAT CAN WE DO TO LEARN HOW TO BECOME A BETTER HUMAN?



BEST WISHES FOR

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DAVE MAKKAR, RASHMI MAKKER,
SURYA MAKKAR, PRACHI MAKKAR

US-China tariff war: Why Trump thinks Xi Jinping will blink first

US President Donald Trump on April 16 ratcheted up his tariff offensive up to 245% on China. He also declared it's up to China to return to the negotiating table after Beijing backed out of a high-stakes Boeing aircraft deal. "The ball is in China's court," Trump said in a statement delivered by White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt. "China needs to make a deal with us. We don't have to make a deal with them."

In reaction, China said it was "not afraid" of engaging in a trade war with the United States, while repeating its call for dialogue. "If the US really wants to resolve the issue through dialogue and negotiation, it should stop exerting extreme pressure, stop threatening and blackmailing, and talk to China on the basis of equality, respect and mutual benefit," foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian said.

Why it matters

Despite China's tough talk, it faces deeper economic vulnerabilities than the US, and a prolonged trade war could inflict lasting damage on its export-reliant economy. While both nations are absorbing shocks, the pain may be far more acute for Beijing — not least because of how much it still depends on American consumers.

"They'll run out of bullets first," Trump reportedly told aides during his first administration.

That sentiment is now being stress-tested as China grapples with a triple blow: Plunging exports, sluggish consumer demand, and a weak job market.

Why China is at a disadvantage

Despite its rhetoric, Beijing is boxed in—economically, politically, and strategically. Here's why:

Exports still power China's economy

Despite its attempts to diversify exports, China still remains deeply reliant on US markets. Exports account



for nearly a third of its GDP, and up to 20% of that goes to the US when indirect trade routes are factored in. Goldman Sachs estimates that up to 20 million Chinese jobs depend on these exports. Beijing has talked for years about pivoting toward domestic consumption, but the reality is that its economy is still built to sell to the world—especially to America. A sudden collapse in US-bound trade will hit employment, growth, and local government revenue hard.

China is fighting from a weaker economic position

China's economy is already under stress—from deflation, a property market crisis, and weak private sector investment. Tariffs only deepen those vulnerabilities. While Q1 growth was 5.4%, much of that came from front-loading shipments to beat the tariff clock. Forecasts are already falling: Nomura cut its 2025 GDP estimate to 4%, UBS to 3.4%. China can't afford another economic shock, especially one it didn't initiate. Yet that's exactly what this trade war is becoming. As per estimates, China's GDP growth may get a hit of about 2% if the trade war continues.

The domestic market can't absorb the shock

Officials tout China's 1.4 billion consumers as a buffer against trade shocks. But household confidence is fragile. Property prices are falling, youth unemployment is high, and consumer sentiment has yet to rebound post-Covid. People are saving, not spending. Many middle-class households already saw their wealth eroded through the real estate slump, and stimulus has only provided short-term relief. Domestic demand is not yet strong or stable enough to replace the loss of US market access.

The Communist Party's legitimacy is at stake

Unlike Washington, where economic pain can be chalked up to politics, China's ruling party has no opposition to blame. The social contract in China hinges on stability and rising living standards. A prolonged trade war that drives unemployment up and incomes down could create unrest—and that's politically dangerous for the leadership. Beijing may talk tough, but it knows that economic discontent can turn volatile fast, especially in urban centers where jobs are drying up.



Trade recalibrations worrisome; India will focus on long-term policy agility: FM

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday, April 17, said India will focus on policy agility and long-term vision to navigate the global challenges amid ongoing trade recalibrations worldwide.

The intensification of tariff wars and the rise of protectionist policies have the potential to disrupt global supply chains, increase production costs and create uncertainty in investment decisions across borders, she said while speaking at an event to mark stock bourse BSE's 150th anniversary.

"India is confident...we will navigate these global disruptions with policy agility and long-term vision.

"The recalibration efforts on trade are very challenging...it is worrisome, but also very challenging," she said.

The world is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, she said, pointing out that India stands firm in this environment with its strong macroeconomic fundamentals.

The country offers investors policy stability, growth, prudent macroeconomic policies and democratic institutions, she noted.

"The most effective path" for building economic resilience is to foster domestic efficiencies and competitiveness, Sitharaman said.

Fitch Cuts India's Growth Forecast To 6.4% For FY 2026

While highlighting that the world growth is projected to fall below two per cent this year, Fitch Ratings has cut India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth estimate by 10 basis points (bps) to 6.4 per cent for the current financial year, citing concerns over escalating global trade war. It has retained the growth at 6.3 per cent for the fiscal year 2026-27, as per its special report on Global economic outlook, April 2025 update.

In its report, Fitch Ratings stated that the United States (US) annual growth is expected to remain positive at 1.2 per cent for 2025 but will slow to a crawl



through the year at just 0.4 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in Q425. China's growth is expected to fall below four per cent both this year and next, while growth in the eurozone will remain stuck well below one per cent.

"Fitch Ratings' forecasts for world

growth have been sharply lowered in response to the recent severe escalation in the global trade war. This special update to our quarterly Global Economic Outlook (GEO) cuts world growth in 2025 by 0.4 percentage points (pp) and China and US growth by 0.5pp from our March GEO," the special report highlighted.

Tariff escalation will hit US-China trade flows dramatically. With limited scope for import substitution or trade diversion in the near term, the report added that the adverse supply shock in the US could be marked. Fitch Ratings stated that its US inflation forecast has been revised up to over four per cent,

implying a stagnation in real wages.

"China's economy has grown faster than expected over the past year, but net trade has accounted for a third of GDP growth. This will slow sharply as exporters struggle to redirect sales in the near term. China's housebuilding slump and deflationary pressures are continuing, but we expect fiscal and monetary policy easing to be stepped up," it added.

The report added that World growth is projected to fall below two per cent this year, which would be the weakest global growth rate since 2009, excluding the pandemic.



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Sikh History This Week

APRIL 18 TO APRIL 24

18th April

1908 1st Sikh Educational Conference by Chief Khalsa Diwan held.

1924 4th Shahidi Jatha of 500 valiant Akali Satyagrahies, led by Jathaedar Puran Singh Bahawal (Hoshiarpur), courted arrest on reaching Jaito.

1661 Ninth Patshah, Guru Tegh Bahadur visited Arayag.

1717 Bhai mani Singh assumed control of Amritsar and wrote a letter to Matta Sundar Kaur and Matta Sahib Kaur describing the painful tales at the hands of the barbarians. As a result Bandiai Khalsa was removed.

1758 Sikhs gather in huge numbers for Baisakhi in Amritsar and performed cleanings and kar-sewa. Maratha Sardar Ragunath Rao and Malhaar Rao donated Rs. 25,000.

19th April



Prakash Utsav, Fifth Patshah, Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

GURU ARJAN DEV (1563-1606) Guru Arjan, the 'Prince of Martyrs' and the 'Prophet of Peace', proffered his precious life to nurture the glory that was to be the Sikh Panth. The Fifth Master's life was marked by divine bliss and sublime sacrifices, born of a sweet acceptance of God's Will. Gifted with a quintessential poetic afflatus, and immeasurable imaginative sympathies, the Guru gave the movement of Sikhism a definite direction, perspective and program. He made the new faith coeval or coextensive with the whole gamut of existence and raised its exquisite edifice on values for which there is neither death nor change.

Guru Arjan Dev adorned the sacred throne of Guru Nanak from Sept. 1, 1581 to May 30, 1606. Born at Goindwal on April 15, 1563, he was the youngest and noblest son of Guru Ram Das and Mata Bibi Bhani. On 23 Hadh sunmat 1636, he married Ganga Devi, daughter of Krishan Chand of Mau village. He had an innate poetic sensibility which was exquisitely displayed in the epistles that he sent to his father from Lahore. They are deeply expressive of the pangs of separation and the exuberance of Love. The Fourth Master's decision to make Guru Arjan his spiritual heir was bitterly opposed by Prithvi Chand who contended that being the eldest son, he alone was entitled to the Guruship. Thus, he could never reconcile himself to his younger brother's installation as Guru.

Under Guru Arjan Dev the Sikh movement registered great progress. In sunmat 1645, he cemented the Santokhsar sarovar. Further, the Guru not only completed the construction of the Sarovars started at 'Guru Ka Chak' by his predecessor but also constructed two more Sarovars. He had the Harmandir built in the middle of Amritsar Sarovar and invited a celebrated Muslim divine, Mian Mir, to lay its foundation stone in sunmat 1645. Remarkable for its architectural and aesthetic beauty and unique in its conception, the temple with its four doors symbolizes the inborn

equality of all mankind.



1621 Patshahi Ninth, Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Sahib, enlightened this planet with his birth.

In the galaxy of immortal martyrs who laid down their precious lives to keep ablaze the flame of faith and freedom, the name of the Ninth Master, Guru Tegh Bahadur stands out radiantly prominent. Doubtless, there have been prophets who sacrificed themselves at the altar of their own religion, but the uniqueness of the Ninth Master's martyrdom lies in the fact that he courted death in defending the religion of the persecuted Hindus who had sought his shelter when they were forced to choose between death and Islam. Guru Tegh Bahadur, the second martyr Guru, who was born at Amritsar in 1621, was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind Sahib, the Sixth Master (1595-1645). Guru Har Rai, the Seventh Master (1630-61), and Guru Hari Krishna, the Eight Master (1656-1964): however, preceded him as Gurus. He adorned the sacred throne of Guru Nanak from 1664 to 1675. His installation as Guru enraged Dhirmal and the masands, who were the most contentious claimants to the Guruship.

1758 Sikhs gather in huge numbers for Baisakhi in Amritsar and performed cleanings and kar-sewa. Maratha Sardar Ragunath Rao and Malhaar Rao donated Rs. 25,000. They were honored on Panth's behalf.

1854 Maharaja Dalip Singh, the last ruler of Punjab, was sent to England.



20th April

1613 Guru Hargobind had to marry Nanaki despite his refusal. This was an unfortunate upshot of the jubilation in Sikh community caused by Guru Sahib's release from seven years of incarceration. Within a few months two brides were pledged to him by their parents. Under the customs prevalent at that time, on Guru Hargobind's refusal, those girls would have remained unmarried throughout their life. So he had to marry Nanaki on March 28, 1613, and Mehrai also called Marwahi on July 26, 1615. The first incident occurred

too close to his release. Taken aback at the second incident, he announced that no one should pledge his daughter to him in future.

1816 Khalsa Forces march towards Kashmir which was annexed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

1923 Second attempt to murder Lambardars and Chaukidars of Pindori Nijjaran also fails.

1998 Sri Akal Takht today issued a hukamnama banning serving of langar on tables and chairs.

21st April

1913 Ghadar Party was organised. GHADAR PARTY, a revolutionary group, founded in United States of America (USA) for the independence of India. Its members were Indian residents, primarily Sikhs, settled in USA. Their prime objective was to actively cause rebellion among members of the British forces, thereby forcing the fall of the British empire and hasten their departure from India.

22nd April

1922 A police party raids Birring to arrest Kishan Singh Gargaj and Master Mota Singh. This marks the beginning of arrests of Babbar Akalis.

1978 Akand Path of Sri Guru Granth Sahib was concluded and Bhog ceremony by Guru Khalsa Panth for the 13 GurSikhs killed in the Amritsar Massacre were completed uninterrupted.

23rd April



1624 Foundation of Kiratpur laid by Guru Hargobind Ji.

1923 The government of Punjab takes steps to release the Akalis arrested in connection with the Guru Ka Bagh morcha.

1924 2 GurSikhs of the 3rd Shahidi Jatha of 500 Akalis for Jaito Morcha tortured to death in Nabha Jail.

1984 15 Sikhs killed and several injured in Ferozepore, while the water, power, and other supplies of 20 Sikh shrines was cut-off.

1984 Eight Sikhs Killed by India's Central Reserve Police Force.

24th April

1923 SGPC declares its dissociation with the Babbar Akalis.

1955 Akali Dal decided to launch a peaceful agitation for Punjabi Suba.

1980 Gurbachan Singh, Chief of fake Nirankaris, murdered.



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Own Your Color: Shikha Bajaj's Blueprint for Bold, Inclusive Leadership

In conversation with The Indian Panorama



AUTHOR: SHIKHA BAJAJ

OWN YOUR COLOR

www.ownyourcolor.com

A globally recognized transformation expert, Award-winning author, and Mentor : Shikha Bajaj is redefining what it means to lead with purpose and authenticity. Recently honored as one of America's Top 20 Women of Excellence by the GSA in Chicago and honored at Capitol Hill and the Embassy of China, Shikha continues to inspire through her book *Own Your Color*, her global speaking engagements, and her work with the Own Your Color Academy. We sat down with her to discuss the rationale behind her movement, the power of mentorship, and what's next.

Q: WHY DID YOU WRITE OWN YOUR COLOR, AND WHY NOW?

I wrote *Own Your Color* to provide a transformative blueprint for individuals to embrace their authenticity, build confidence, and pursue bold dreams. As a first-generation immigrant and a corporate leader in the digital transformation space, I've seen firsthand how owning your story can unlock immense power. The book introduces the M.E.N.T.O.R. framework, a practical tool to help anyone-especially women-turn adversity into opportunity and impact. The timing felt right because the world is calling for authentic, inclusive leadership now more than ever.

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Q: HOW IS OWN YOUR COLOR BEING RECEIVED?

With open arms, full hearts, and a resounding "we need this." The response has been both humbling and energizing-from corporate leaders to students, from community advocates to global changemakers. The message of authenticity, purpose, and rising together is resonating across the world.

I was deeply honored to recently be named one of America's Top 20 Women of Excellence by the Global Strategic Alliance. Receiving this recognition at the U.S. Capitol from Representatives Danny K. Davis, Jonathan Jackson, Raja Krishnamoorthi, President Toni

Preckwinkle, and Mayor Nathaniel Booker was both humbling and empowering. Also, getting honored at Capitol Hill and the Embassy of China was energizing. These recognitions are a tribute not just to me, but to all the women who lead with authenticity, purpose, and impact.

A special thank-you to AMEC's Dr. VGP and Mr. Mustafa Ajmeri for their vision and leadership in amplifying diverse voices and fostering global unity.

Yet, the greatest award is hearing someone say:

"I'm ready to own my color."

"Mentorship matters."

"Thank you for your message and academy-we need it. We all rise together."

That's what makes it all worth it.



(Top Left to Right): Dr. VGP, President AMEC, Shikha Bajaj, Awardee

(Bottom Left to Right) : Mayor Nathaniel Booker of Maywood, IL, Congressman Danny K. Davis, President of Cook County Board of Commissioners Tony Preckwinkle, Congressman Jonathan Jackson

Q: WHY DOES GENDER EQUITY AND WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP MATTER?

Gender equity isn't a nice-to-have-it's a business and societal imperative. When women lead, organizations perform better. But mentorship is a key part of that equation. Despite its benefits, 63% of women say they've never had a formal mentor. That's a huge gap, especially when 71% of women who have mentors say it was critical to their career growth. Mentorship doesn't just elevate individual careers-it fosters cultures of confidence, retention, and innovation.

Q: CAN YOU SHARE SOME RECENT INITIATIVES YOU'VE BEEN INVOLVED IN?

Absolutely! We're thrilled to be hosting the upcoming "Women in the Workforce: Own Your Color" workshop in collaboration with the Princeton Mercer Regional Chamber. This experience is all about helping women tap into their unique strengths while navigating an ever-evolving workplace with confidence and clarity.

Recently, I've had the privilege of partnering with Henry Schein and the Boys and Girls Club of Mercer County, delivering leadership development sessions rooted in purpose, confidence, and authentic connection. Whether in boardrooms or community centers, these programs are designed to bridge the gap between potential and action, equipping individuals with the tools to rise as impactful, purpose-driven leaders.

What fuels me most is seeing people light up-when they gain the courage to rewrite their story, lead with authenticity, and own their destiny.

"Shikha brought so much wisdom and authenticity to the conversation, challenging us all to move from awareness to action. It was a reminder that celebrating women's voices isn't just for one month-it's an ongoing commitment to elevate, empower, and evolve."

- Henry Schein, Women's Leadership Network

"Shikha is a rare blend of warmth, wisdom, and strategic insight. Her mentorship helped me and so many others unlock their full potential-professionally and personally. This was the most impactful session in women conference today!"

- Participant, Own Your Color Workshop at Boys and Girls Club, Mercer County



Shikha has in the backdrop Congressional Awards

Q: WHAT IS THE OWN YOUR COLOR ACADEMY, AND HOW CAN PEOPLE SEEK MENTORSHIP?

The Own Your Color Academy is a platform for transformation. We offer tailored programs-from leadership coaching and goal-setting workshops to group mentoring and interactive community conversations. Our work spans corporate, academic, and nonprofit sectors. People can reach out via our website or social media to explore mentorship or partnership opportunities. Whether you're an individual looking for guidance or an organization seeking to create inclusive cultures, we're here for it: www.ownyourcolor.com

Q: ANY MESSAGE FOR OUR READERS?

Own your voice, your vision, your value. Mentorship is the key to unlocking true power.

Corporate leaders, invest in your teams-empower them through training and mentorship to fuel authentic leadership.

You were never meant to shrink. You were born to shine. Own your color, light the way, and inspire others to rise.



BEST WISHES FOR
Happy
Vaisakhi


Satnam Singh Parhar,
Dalgit Kaur Parhar,
Manpreet Kaur Parhar,
Noor Parhar




SHIV DASS
President, Jackson Heights Indian Merchant's Association
Member, Queens Community Board
Member, Advisory Board, Elmhurst Hospital
Recipient of Ellis Island Medal of Honor

LAVANYA
37-08, Kalpana Chawla Way (74th Street)
Jackson Heights, Ny11372
718-565-5404, 347-254-0730

HAPPY
Vaisakhi



WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - APRIL 21, 2025 TO APRIL 27, 2025

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA



ARIES

Ganesha says, this week you will be motivated to achieve new goals with your energy and confidence. You are likely to get some new and exciting projects on the work front. Keep your ideology open, as it can open the doors of new possibilities for you. Increase communication with your colleagues, this will prove helpful in your work. This week is good to spend with family and friends. Take some special time to strengthen mutual relationships. In terms of health, there is a need to focus on meditation and exercise. This will help maintain your mental and physical strength. This week will be balanced from the financial point of view, but it would be better to stay away from unnecessary expenses. Focus on your budgeting, so that there is no difficulty in the coming time. Overall, this week will be full of positivity and opportunities for you, just maintain your inner motivation and keep moving forward.



TAURUS

Ganesha says, this week will be full of happiness and new possibilities for you. This week you can take some important decisions in your workplace, which can change the direction of your career. Your hard work and dedication will increase the trust of colleagues and superiors. This time can also be beneficial from the financial point of view, but it will be important to control expenses. This is a good time to spend time with your loved ones. Focus on increasing mutual communication, this will bring sweetness to relationships. In terms of health, yoga and meditation will improve your mental health. Remember that it is also important to take care of a balanced diet. Keep moving towards your goals this week, maintain positivity, and see every situation as an opportunity.



GEMINI

Ganesha says this week, situations are likely to remain positive for Gemini natives. Your communication skills will increase, allowing you to express your ideas effectively. This time will be favorable for networking and making new connections. You will perform your personal and professional responsibilities with full confidence. Your mental energy level will increase, allowing you to learn new information quickly. There may be an inclination towards education and knowledge. Good relations will be established with colleagues at the workplace, and your

role in group projects will be important. This week will be mixed from an economic point of view. Be careful while making financial decisions. Think well before making any big purchases or investments. You may be able to find sources of additional income using your creativity, so don't hesitate to share your ideas. Finally, take care of your mental and physical well-being as well. Take time to give yourself a little break, so that you can reduce stress and keep your life balanced in a better way. This week is indicating new opportunities and positive changes for you.



CANCER

Ganesha says your guidance for this week is very positive. This week your relationships are likely to increase intimacy and harmony. Time spent with family members will bring you happiness and a new energy will come to your heart. In work life, your efforts will be appreciated and good relations will be established with colleagues. Take care of your emotions and stay balanced while working on important projects. For personal health, this week will inspire you to exercise and meditation. Practice a little time of solitude for mental peace, it will give peace to your mind. Your creativity is at its peak this week, so don't miss the chance to fulfill your artistic aspirations. Be prepared to engage in social activities, which may allow you to make new friends and discover new opportunities. Overall, this week will be full of self-reliance and self-commitment, which will help you move towards your goals. Recognize the power within you and move forward!



LEO

Ganesha says this time of the week indicates special opportunities for you. Your energy and confidence will be at a high level, which can help you achieve success in your tasks. You will get an opportunity to spend time with friends and family, which will further strengthen your relationships. On the work front, maintain harmony with colleagues. Some challenges will come, but your leadership skills and positive attitude will help you face them. If you are starting a new project, then this time is very favorable. In your personal life, be ready to share your heart with others. This will not only strengthen your relationships but will also give you inner satisfaction. Be careful about health; focus on regular exercise and a balanced diet, so that you can stay fit and energetic. Take advantage of indulging in a new beginning or planning this week. Believe in your dreams and work hard to make them come true. Be open to all kinds of positivity.



VIRGO

Ganesha says your week may symbolize a lot of new possibilities and self-analysis. This week,

you will move forward with more organization and clarity in your tasks. You may get the fruits of your efforts, so maintain consistency. Some new opportunities may come in your professional life, which will be beneficial for you. Focusing on a new project can bring you success. It is important to maintain coordination with team members at work; their cooperation will further improve your work. In personal life, this is the time to spend time with your close friends and family. Share your feelings and maintain openness. There will be mutual understanding and prosperity in your relationship. In terms of health, you are advised not to be a little careless. You will be able to maintain your energy through regular exercise and a balanced diet. Keep your goals clear this week and believe in your abilities. You can succeed on all fronts if you are determined.



LIBRA

Ganesha says this week many important opportunities and experiences are coming up for the people of Libra. New possibilities will arise in your social and professional life. Your thoughts and ideology will get support, which will also help you establish harmony in your relationships. At work, working together with colleagues will be beneficial for you. Your intelligence and thoughtfulness will be your strength during this time. Trust your intuition while taking any important decision. A little sensitivity is required in personal relationships. Spend more time with your loved ones, this will not only strengthen your relationship but will also infuse new positive energy. In terms of health, focus on meditation and a balanced diet. Prioritize mental health and use stress management techniques. From a financial point of view, the time is right to invest, but take steps wisely. Consider new plans, which will prove beneficial to you in the long run. This week you will also get an opportunity to pursue your creativity, whether it is art, writing, or any other hobby. Follow your passion and make it a part of your life. Overall, this week is indicating balance, prosperity, and new beginnings for you. Move forward towards your goals and stay connected to your spiritual nature.



SCORPIO

Ganesha says this week may bring many opportunities and challenges for you. You will be able to handle any situation with your energy and confidence. Express your ideas clearly, as your communication can have a profound impact on those around you. Some new possibilities are visible in your career, so focus on your work and do not ignore any offers. If you are doing independent business, then this is the right time to focus on partnerships. In personal relationships, maintain mutual understanding and honesty. Try to spend time with your loved ones, this will

strengthen your relationship. In terms of health, pay attention to mental health. Practice meditation and yoga techniques to reduce stress. This week is a golden opportunity to move forward towards your goals, so move forward with positivity and be firm on your intentions.



SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says this week will be full of excitement and possibilities for Sagittarius natives. You will get the opportunity to focus on your goals and your hard work will pay off. There will be a lot of activity in your social life at this time. It is possible to meet new friends and spend memorable moments by meeting old friends. Some new opportunities may come up in the field of career this week. It will be beneficial to be a part of some new learning or workshops to enhance your skills. This time is also positive from the financial point of view, there is a possibility of some unexpected gains. However, it is important to pay attention to expenses, so that the financial situation remains balanced. There will be an atmosphere of love and cooperation in personal relationships. You will want to spend more time with your loved ones, and this will strengthen the relationship further. Do not hesitate to express your feelings openly, it can take your relationships to new heights. In terms of health, follow regular exercise and a balanced diet. Do not forget to take time out for relaxation, which will also keep your mental health better. This week, the most important thing for you is to move forward with positivity and see every challenge as an opportunity.



CAPRICORN

Ganesha says this week will bring many possibilities and challenges for Capricorn natives. This week, you may get a chance to achieve new achievements in your career. Trust your efforts, and face difficulties with confidence. There will be positive changes in your relationships as well. Spending time with family and friends will give you mental happiness. Love relationships will deepen, but it is necessary to maintain transparency. In terms of health, you need to include some activity in your routine. Spend some time in exercise or meditation, this will improve your mental and physical health. Be cautious in financial matters. Consider all aspects before making any big investment. Focus this week on your abilities, and set new goals for yourself. This is the time to take your hard work and dedication to new heights.



AQUARIUS

Ganesha says this week, new possibilities and opportunities may open up for Aquarius natives. You will feel a new flow of

**BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : APRIL 21 TO APRIL 27
BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA**



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

APRIL 21

Ganesha says you will notice that you're overly excited today. Your extrovert behavior and cheerful disposition are highly appreciated in the social circle. Your strong leadership qualities will make you confident enough that you will be able to do all the work very well. Success will come your way if you work hard. Today will bring in some good fortune as the planets align in your favor.

APRIL 22

Ganesha says today your day will be very kind. Today you will be able to complete the remaining tasks in projects. You may complete your work early, which will allow you to enjoy your time with your family. You may plan for a trip with your partner. Your business will go great today. Today things will turn out the way you want as you have a lot of luck. One new opportunity will arise which will come immediately today itself and make you a lot of profits. Stars are in your favor which will help you navigate through any problems easily regarding this new opportunity.

APRIL 23

Ganesha says you will notice that things are working out for you without much effort. Little good things will keep happening throughout the day. It is great that everything will work out for you today but do not get lazy and focus on the things you need to get done today. You are very lucky today because you will get what you wish for, make sure you use the luck you have today to benefit yourself and not others because only then it will remain a positive thing for you.

APRIL 24

Ganesha says to wake up and meditate the first thing in the morning; it will be beneficial for your personal as well as professional life. You will make great profits in your business hence you will have a good day today. You will lean more towards altruism today considering the spiritual awakening in your sign. Ensure that you do not drift away from your dreams & ambitions as you might come across a few distractions today. Ensure that you're ethical both in your personal & professional life.

APRIL 25

Ganesha says you will feel a lot of love and care coming towards you from family friends as well as your partner. Your day will be a tough one today but you will feel supported and cared for in all ways, at the end of the day you will feel very satisfied with where you are in your life currently. Your partner's loving and caring nature will make you fall in love with your partner a lot today. You will experience firsthand how beautiful it is to be loved and cared for by someone you trust and love with all your heart.

APRIL 26

Ganesha says your love life has been on a roller coaster, but you will experience stability for today. Try to say what you have been thinking. Expressing your feelings will help you better your love life. Venus will bring love and the moon will bring fortune in your face today. You are entering a new phase that marks the start of a lane named success. Along with your old commitments, you will be taking on additional responsibilities today, but it won't seem like hard work as you will enjoy doing it thoroughly.

APRIL 27

Ganesha says you are very lucky today because you will get what you wish for; make sure you use the luck you have today to benefit yourself and not others because only then it will remain a positive thing for you. You will tend to focus more on your financial issues hence your love life will be on a back seat. Immense support from your partner might surprise you a little bit. Try to have patience and understanding.

Nastur Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at www.bejandaruwala.com info@bejandaruwala.com | +91 81412 34275

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novelty and freedom in your thoughts. Activity will increase in social life, due to which you will be seen making new friends or strengthening old relationships. In the workplace, your creativity and unique thinking will set you apart from the competition. You will get an opportunity to experience something new while collaborating with colleagues, which can lead to advancement in your career. In your personal life, it will be important to maintain communication with your partner. Expressing your thoughts and feelings clearly will strengthen the relationship. Unmarried Aquarius people can enter into new love relationships. In terms of health, it will be beneficial to stay active and engage in meditation or yoga activities to reduce mental stress. This is the time to focus on your mental health. This week, move towards your goals with a positive attitude and maintain balance in every area of life. This is an auspicious time to move forward.



PISCES

Ganesha says this week's horoscope is pointing towards changes and new possibilities in your life. This is the time to self-analyze and understand the emotional side within you. You will feel inspired to awaken your creativity this week, which will infuse new energy and ideas into your work. There may be some stressful moments in your personal life, but your sensitivity and understanding will help you overcome these challenges. Spending time with family and friends will bring you mental peace. It is important to be cautious in financial matters. Pay attention to small expenses so that you can avoid major financial problems. Trust your intuition

to make the right decisions this week. In terms of health, you need to take special care of your health. Regular exercise and a balanced diet will improve your physical and mental health. This week is a golden opportunity to make new connections and strengthen old ones. Small social activities you do will bring happiness in your life. Do not hesitate to express your feelings, as this will strengthen your relationships. Your

inner strength will help you face every challenge this week. Move forward with positivity and affection, and this week

will prove to be pleasant and successful for you.

AUTHOR BIO

Chirag Daruwalla is the best astrologer and one of the most famous names in the astrology world. He has more than 18 years of experience. Readers may seek his advice related to career, health, finance, business, money, love and marriage. He has complete knowledge, solutions, and guidance to all the problems related to life. Visit his website chiragdaruwalla.com. He is available for consultations on WhatsApp number +91 8141566266 or by email: info@chiragdaruwalla.com

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Trump says he's in 'no rush' to end tariffs as he holds talks with Italy's Meloni

face-to-face talks with the president since he announced and then partially suspended 20 per cent tariffs on European exports.

Meloni secured the meeting as Italy's leader, but she also has, in a sense, been "knighted" to represent the EU at a critical juncture in the fast-evolving trade war that has stoked recession fears.

The Trump administration has belittled its European counterparts for not doing enough on national security while threatening their economies with tariffs, sparking deep uncertainty about the future of the trans-Atlantic alliance.

"We know we are in a difficult moment," Meloni said this week in Rome. "Most certainly, I am well aware of what I represent, and what I am defending." The EU is defending what it calls "the most important commercial relationship in the world," with annual trade with the US totaling 1.6 trillion euros (USD 1.8 trillion). The Trump administration has said its tariffs would enable trade negotiations that would box out China, the world's dominant manufacturer. But Trump maintains that rivals and allies alike have taken advantage of the US on trade.

Instead of being the responsibility of individual member states, trade negotiations fall under the authority of the EU Commission, which is pushing for a zero-for-zero tariff deal with Washington.

Administration officials, in talks with the EU, have yet to publicly relent on the president's baseline 10 per cent tariff. Trump paused for 90 days his initial 20 per cent tax on EU products so that talks could occur.

The EU has already engaged with Trump administration officials in Washington. Maroš Šefcovic, the European Commissioner for trade and economic security, said he met on Monday with Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer.

Šefcovic said afterward on X that it would "require a significant joint effort on both sides" to get to zero tariffs and work on non-tariff trade barriers, with Trump's team specifically objecting to Europe's use of value added taxes.

Meloni's margins for progress are more in gaining clarity on the Republican president's goals rather than outright concessions, experts say.

"It is a very delicate mission," said Fabian Zuleeg, chief economist at the European Policy Center think tank in Brussels. "There is the whole trade agenda, and while she's not officially negotiating, we know that Trump likes to have this kind of informal exchange, which in a sense is a negotiation. So it's a lot on her plate." As the leader of a far-right party, Meloni is ideologically aligned with Trump on issues including curbing migration, promoting traditional values and skepticism toward multilateral institutions. But stark differences have emerged in Meloni's unwavering support for Ukraine after Russia's invasion in February 2022.

The two leaders are expected to discuss the war and Italy's role in an eventual postwar reconstruction of Ukraine. Trump is expected to press Meloni to increase Italy's defense spending, which last year fell well below the 2 per cent of gross domestic product target for countries in the NATO military alliance. Italy's spending, at 1.49 per cent of GDP, is among the lowest in Europe.

Despite the differences on Ukraine and defense spending, Meloni is seen by some in the US administration as a vital bridge to Europe at a difficult moment for trans-Atlantic relations.

Trump is looking not only to discuss with Meloni how "Italy's marketplace can be opened up, but also how they can help us with the rest of Europe," according to a senior administration official who briefed reporters before the visit. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the White House.

After being the only European leader to attend Trump's January 20 inauguration, Meloni has responded with studied restraint as abrupt shifts in US policy under Trump have frayed the US-European

alliance. She has denounced the tariffs as "wrong" and warned that "dividing the West would be disastrous for everyone," after Trump's heated White House exchange with Ukraine's president.

Italy maintains a 40 billion euro (USD 45 billion) trade surplus with the US, its largest with any country, fueled by Americans' appetite for Italian sparkling wine, foodstuffs like Parmigiano Reggiano hard cheese and Parma ham, and Italian luxury fashion. These are all sectors critical to the Italian economy, and mostly supported by small- and medium-sized producers who are core center-right voters.

"All in all, I think she will focus on the very strong economic and trade relations that Italy has with the United States, not just in terms of exports, but also services and energy," said Antonio Villafranca, vice president of the ISPI think tank in Milan. "For example, Italy could even consider importing more gas from the US." The meeting comes against the backdrop of growing concerns over global uncertainty generated by the escalating tariff wars. Italy's growth forecast for this year has already been slashed from 1% to 0.5% as a result.

The Trump administration has imposed tariffs on much of the world, arguing that other countries have taken advantage of the US, as evidenced by its trade deficits. But with the 90-day pause, the White House has increased Trump's tariffs on China to 145 per cent while keep separate tariffs of as much as 25 per cent on Canada, Mexico, autos, steel and aluminum.

On Wednesday, April 16, Trump met with Japan's chief trade negotiator, Ryosei Akazawa. Trump, on social media, summarized the meeting as achieving "Big progress!" but he did not offer any specifics.

China is simultaneously seeking to strike deals that could possibly undercut claims made by Trump that his tariffs will ultimately lead to more domestic factory jobs and stronger growth. (Agencies)

US will drop Ukraine-Russia peace efforts if no progress is made within days, suggests Rubio

officials, Rubio said the discussions had been constructive and produced an outline for steps towards peace.

French officials said a new meeting in the same format is expected in London in the coming days. Rubio said he could join that meeting, and it's expected early in the week.

"We are now reaching a point where we need to decide whether this is even possible or not," Rubio told reporters upon departure.

After weeks of efforts by the Trump administration to broker a ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine have failed to bring an end to the fighting, Rubio said the US administration wants to decide "in a matter of days whether or not this is doable in the next few weeks".

Four decades after Rakesh Sharma, Indian astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla set for space travel in May

Singh made the remarks after reviewing the work of the Department of Space and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) here.

"Group Captain Shukla's journey is more than just a flight - it's a signal that India is stepping boldly into a new era of space exploration," Singh said.

ISRO Chairman V Narayanan made a presentation on various upcoming space missions.

ISRO is set to launch the NISAR satellite - developed jointly with NASA - in June on board the GSLV-Mark 2 rocket, Singh said, adding that in July the space agency will put in orbit BlueBird Block-2 satellites of US-based AST SpaceMobile Inc. using the heavy-lift LVM-3 rocket.

Singh said Group Captain Shukla's mission, scheduled for May, marks a milestone in India's expanding international space collaborations.

A decorated test pilot with the Indian Air Force, Group Captain Shukla was shortlisted under ISRO's human spaceflight programme and is among the top contenders for the Gaganyaan mission.

His journey aboard the Axiom-4 mission is expected



to provide critical hands-on experience in spaceflight operations, launch protocols, microgravity adaptation, and emergency preparedness - all essential for India's crewed space ambitions, an official statement said.

"What sets Shukla's mission apart is its strategic importance. Unlike the symbolic undertones of India's first human spaceflight, this time the focus is on operational readiness and global integration," it said.

The statement said Shukla's participation underscores India's growing engagement with public-private international partnerships in space and its resolve to emerge as a serious contender in human space exploration.

Singh said the collaboration with international partners and the strategic momentum of projects like Gaganyaan reflect India's commitment to becoming a global leader in space technology.

The minister said these efforts were not only scientific in nature but also aligned with the vision of a developed and self-reliant India.

ISRO also plans to launch the PSLV-C61 mission carrying the EOS-09 satellite, which is equipped with a C-band synthetic aperture radar, capable of capturing high-resolution images of Earth's surface under all weather conditions, day or night.

Another significant milestone will be the Test Vehicle-D2 (TV-D2) mission, designed to simulate an abort scenario and demonstrate Gaganyaan Crew Escape System.

The mission includes sea recovery operations for the Crew Module, mimicking procedures planned for India's first human spaceflight, he said. (Source: PTI)

Best wishes for a
Happy Vaisakhi

Vikas
Indu
Harsahab
& Raunak Dhall

HAPPY VAISAKHI

The Festival of Joy and the Historic Day of Birth of the Khalsa

Dr. Hari K. Shukla, MD, Pediatrics

- Associate Professor of Pediatric, NYU School of Medicine
- President and Founder, South Asians of New York Inc.
- Established in 2004, Not for profit organization.
- President Children's Medical Center, Flushing.
- Chairman, NAVA (New American Voters Association), A not for Profit Organization.
- Former President, Queens pediatric society
- Former President, MSS, Flushing Hospital Medical Center.
- Former Governor, Rotaract, Rotary District 305

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Varuthini Ekadashi: A Day of Divine Protection and Spiritual Upliftment

Varuthini Ekadashi is one of the 24 sacred Ekadashis observed in the Hindu lunar calendar. Falling on the 11th day (Ekadashi) of the Krishna Paksha (waning phase of the moon) during the month of Vaishakha (April-May), this day holds immense religious significance for devotees of Lord Vishnu. The word 'Varuthini' means "armored" or "protected", signifying the protective blessings that are believed to be granted by observing this Ekadashi fast with devotion and discipline.

Significance of Varuthini Ekadashi

According to Hindu scriptures, especially the Bhavishya Purana, observing Varuthini Ekadashi grants spiritual purification, removal of sins, and protection from evil forces. This Ekadashi is said to:

- Free devotees from negative karma and past sins
- Help attain moksha (liberation from the cycle of rebirth)
- Grant material prosperity and spiritual upliftment
- Protect from accidents, misfortune, and evil eyes

The fast is considered especially auspicious for those seeking a righteous and peaceful life, and is often observed by devotees of Lord Vishnu, as He is the principal deity worshipped on this day.

Mythological Background

One of the most popular legends associated with Varuthini Ekadashi is from the Bhavishya Purana. It tells the story of a king named Mandata, a benevolent and virtuous ruler who lost one of his legs due to past karma. On the advice of the sage Lomash, King Mandata observed the Varuthini Ekadashi fast with great devotion. Pleased with his penance, Lord Vishnu restored his leg and blessed him with peace and prosperity.

Another legend recounts the story of a woman named Murutvati, who regained her beauty and status by observing this fast sincerely.

These stories emphasize the transformative power of faith, penance, and discipline that Varuthini Ekadashi brings.

The Legend of Varuthini Ekadashi

As told in the Bhavishya Purana and Padma Purana

The Core Legend: King Mandata and the Power of the Fast

Once upon a time in ancient Bharat, there lived a pious and noble king named Mandata. He was widely respected for his just rule, charity, and devotion to dharma. His kingdom flourished under his leadership, and he performed countless yajnas (sacrifices) and acts of virtue.

Despite his righteousness, the king suffered a mysterious misfortune - he



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Varuthini Ekadashi or Baruthani Ekadashi

Thursday, 24 April 2025

Varuthini Ekadashi Begins - 23 April 2025 at 04:43 pm

Varuthini Ekadashi Ends - 24 April 2025 at 02:32 pm

lost one of his legs in battle under strange and tragic circumstances. Though he accepted the fate humbly, he sought the true spiritual reason behind his suffering.

Sage Lomash Appears

While in deep contemplation and penance in the forest, Sage Lomash visited him. The sage, known for his wisdom and mystic insight, told the king:

"O King, your misfortune is the result of karma from a previous birth. But not all is lost. If you truly desire freedom from this suffering and restoration of your body and soul, you must observe the holy Varuthini Ekadashi. Fast with devotion and stay awake singing Lord Vishnu's glories. By doing so, you will be freed from your past sins."

The king humbly followed the sage's instructions. He performed the Ekadashi vrat with complete dedication - fasting, meditating, staying awake, and worshipping Lord Vamana (a form of Vishnu).

As a result, his sins were destroyed,

and his leg was miraculously restored. He regained his full strength and returned to his kingdom to rule with even greater wisdom and spiritual maturity.

Another Tale: King Dhundhumara's Redemption (Padma Purana)

In another era, a great king named Dhundhumara, despite being a devout ruler, accidentally killed a Brahmin during a hunting expedition. This act brought upon him a terrible curse of leprosy - his body began to decay, and he wandered in agony, rejected by society.

In his suffering, he met a forest sage who told him:

"You are cursed due to the grave sin of killing a Brahmin. However, if you observe the Varuthini Ekadashi with full sincerity, and offer prayers to Lord Vishnu, you shall be cleansed of all your sins."

King Dhundhumara took the vow, fasted according to strict rituals, meditated, and chanted Vishnu's names throughout the night.

After the completion of the fast and breaking it on Dwadashi with proper

charity and donations, he was freed from the curse, and his body was healed.

Rituals and Observances

1. Preparations (Dashami Night)

- Devotees consume a single, sattvic meal before sunset on Dashami (the 10th lunar day).
- Garlic, onion, grains, and non-vegetarian food are strictly avoided.

2. Fasting Rules on Ekadashi

- Nirjala (complete fast without water) is considered the most auspicious, though not mandatory.
- Many observe Phalahar Vrat - consuming only fruits, nuts, and milk.
- Avoidance of violence, anger, deceit, and sexual activity is emphasized.
- Devotees stay awake during the night, engaged in bhajans, kirtans, and reading sacred texts like the Vishnu Sahasranama or Bhagavad Gita.

3. Worship of Lord Vishnu

- Early morning bath, followed by cleaning of the prayer space.
- Idol or image of Lord Vishnu (especially in His Vamana or Krishna form) is adorned with flowers and sandal paste.
- Offerings of tulsi leaves, fruits, and sweets are made.
- Chanting of mantras like "Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya".

4. Parana (Breaking the Fast)

- The fast is broken on Dwadashi (12th day) after sunrise and after offering prayers.
- It is important to donate food, clothes, and money to Brahmins or the needy as part of the Parana ritual.

Do's and Don'ts of Varuthini Ekadashi

Do's:

- Maintain a pure and sattvic lifestyle
- Spend time in meditation and prayer
- Listen to and read sacred texts
- Be charitable and kind

? Don'ts:

- Avoid grains, alcohol, onions, garlic, and tamasic food
- Refrain from gossip, violence, lying, and indulgence in worldly pleasures
- Do not cut hair or nails, avoid travel unless essential

Scientific and Psychological Perspective

Though primarily religious, Ekadashi fasts also have physiological benefits. Fasting allows the digestive system to rest, promoting detoxification. It also helps instill discipline, mindfulness, and emotional control - qualities emphasized in yogic and meditative traditions.

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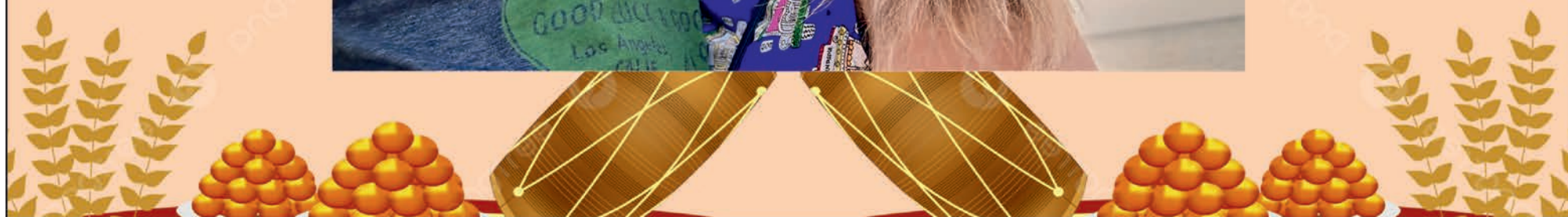
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Alicia, Harinder (Harry), Manjeet, Ajooni

WE WISH A JOYOUS AND HAPPY VAISAKHI
TO THE READERS OF THE INDIAN PANORAMA

Nick Rajpal- Kajol Bishnoi
New Jersey



History This Week APR 18 - APR 24

APRIL 18

April 18, 1775 - The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere and William Dawes occurred as the two men rode out of Boston about 10 p.m. to warn patriots at Lexington and Concord of the approaching British.

April 18, 1906 - The San Francisco Earthquake struck at 5:13 a.m., followed by a massive fire from overturned wood stoves and broken gas pipes. The fire raged uncontrollably for three days resulting in the destruction of over 10,000 acres of property and 4,000 lives lost.

April 18, 1942 - The first air raid on mainland Japan during World War II occurred as General James Doolittle led a squadron of B-25 bombers taking off from the carrier Hornet to bomb Tokyo and three other cities. Damage was minimal, but the raid boosted Allied morale following years of unchecked Japanese military advances.



April 18, 1982 - Queen Elizabeth II of England signed the Canada Constitution Act of 1982 replacing the British North America Act of 1867, providing Canada with a new set of fundamental laws and civil rights.

Birthdays - American attorney Clarence Darrow (1857-1938) was born in Kinsman, Ohio. He championed unpopular causes, and is best known for the Scopes 'monkey trial' in which he defended a teacher who taught the theory of evolution.

APRIL 19

April 19, 1775 - At dawn in Massachusetts, about 70 armed militiamen stood face to face on Lexington Green with a British advance guard unit. An unordered 'shot heard around the world' began the American Revolution. A volley of British rifle fire was followed by a charge with bayonets leaving eight Americans dead and ten wounded.



April 19, 1943 - Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto staged an armed revolt against Nazi SS troops attempting to forcibly deport them to death camps.

April 19, 1989 - Forty-seven U.S. sailors

were killed by an explosion in a gun turret on the USS Iowa during gunnery exercises in the waters off Puerto Rico.

April 19, 1993 - At Waco, Texas, the compound of the Branch Davidian religious cult burned to the ground with 82 persons inside, including 17 children. The fire erupted after federal agents battered buildings in the compound with armored vehicles following a 51-day standoff.



April 19, 1995 - At 9:02 a.m., a massive car-bomb explosion destroyed the entire side of a nine story federal building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 persons, including 19 children inside a day care center. A decorated Gulf War veteran was later convicted for the attack.

APRIL 20

April 20, 1914 - Miners in Ludlow, Colorado, were attacked by National Guardsmen paid by the mining company. The miners were seeking recognition of their United Mine Workers Union. Five men and a boy were killed by machine gun fire while 11 children and two women burned to death as the miners' tent colony was destroyed.

April 20, 1999 - The deadliest school shooting in U.S. history occurred in Littleton, Colorado, as two students armed with guns and explosives stormed into Columbine High School at lunch time then killed 12 classmates and a teacher and wounded more than 20 other persons before killing themselves.



Birthdays - Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) was born in Braunau am Inn, Austria. As leader of Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945, he waged a war of expansion in

Europe, precipitating the deaths of an estimated 50 million persons through military conflict and through the Holocaust in which the Nazis attempted to exterminate the entire Jewish population of Europe.

APRIL 21

April 21, 1836 - The Battle of San Jacinto between Texans led by Sam Houston and Mexican forces led by Santa Anna took place near present day Houston. The Texans decisively defeated the Mexican forces thereby achieving independence.

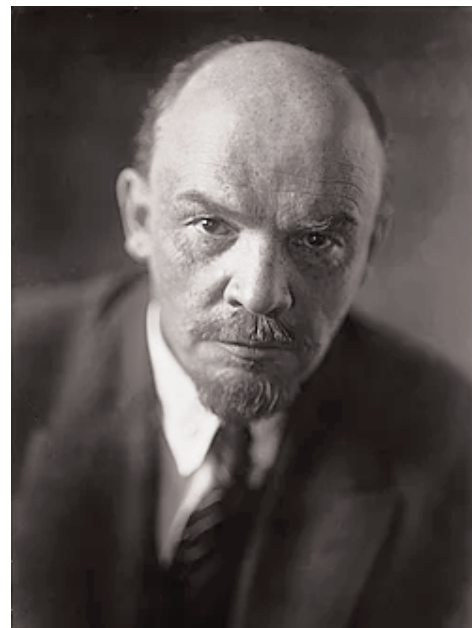


April 21, 1918 - During World War I, the Red Baron (Manfred von Richthofen) was shot down and killed during the Battle of the Somme. He was credited with 80 kills in less than two years, flying a red Fokker triplane. British pilots recovered his body and buried him with full military honors.

APRIL 22

April 22, 1864 - "In God We Trust" was included on all newly minted U.S. coins by an Act of Congress.

April 22, 1889 - The Oklahoma land rush began at noon with a single gunshot signaling the start of a mad dash by thousands of settlers. They were seeking to claim part of nearly two million acres made available by the federal government. The land originally belonged to Creek and Seminole Indian tribes.



Birthdays - Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) was born in Simbirsk, Russia. He led the Russian Revolution of October 1917 which toppled Czar Nicholas and paved the way for a harsh Communist regime. Following his death in 1924, his body was embalmed and placed on display in Moscow's Red Square, becoming a shrine that was visited by millions during the years of the Soviet Union.

APRIL 23

April 23rd - Established by Israel's Knesset as Holocaust Day in

remembrance of the estimated six million Jews killed by Nazis.

Birthdays - William Shakespeare (1564-1616) was born at Stratford-on-Avon, England. Renowned as the most influential writer in the English language, he created 36 plays and 154 sonnets, including Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet and The Merchant of Venice.



Birthdays - James Buchanan (1791-1868) the 15th U.S. President was born in Cove Gap, Pennsylvania. He was the only life-long bachelor to occupy the White House, serving just one term from 1857 to 1861.

APRIL 24



April 24, 1800 - The Library of Congress was established in Washington, D.C. It is America's oldest federal cultural institution and the world's largest library. Among the 145 million items in its collections are more than 33 million books, 3 million recordings, 12.5 million photographs, 5.3 million maps, 6 million pieces of sheet music and 63 million manuscripts. About 10,000 new items are added each day.

April 24, 1915 - In Asia Minor during World War I, the first modern-era genocide began with the deportation of Armenian leaders from Constantinople and subsequent massacre by Young Turks. In May, deportations of all Armenians and mass murder by Turks began, resulting in the complete elimination of the Armenians from the Ottoman Empire and all of the historic Armenian homelands. Estimates vary from 800,000 to over 2,000,000 Armenians murdered.

Indian Filmmaker Jitendra Mishra Elected President of CIFEJ



By Murtaza Ali

The noted Indian filmmaker Jitendra Mishra has been elected President of the International Centre of Films for Children and Young People (CIFEJ) for the 2025-2027 term. The election, held earlier this week, saw Mishra win unopposed with unanimous support from more than 50 active members across 40 countries.

CIFEJ, founded in 1955 under the auspices of UNESCO, is a global network dedicated to promoting quality, culturally relevant, and educational audio-visual content for children and youth. The organization is currently headquartered in Athens, Greece, and is hosted by the Hellenic Film and Audiovisual Centre - Creative Greece S.A., under Creative Hub GR.

Mishra, who has previously served on the CIFEJ board, is also the Festival Director of the Smile International Film Festival for Children and Youth (SIFFCY), an initiative of Smile Foundation. SIFFCY aims to use meaningful cinema as a tool to educate and inspire young audiences, with a focus on social impact and cultural engagement.

Reacting to the appointment, Mishra expressed gratitude to his colleagues and reiterated his commitment to youth-focused cinema. "This unanimous success is not just a personal milestone but a shared recognition of our vision to empower young minds through



Jitendra Mishra has been elected President of the International Centre of Films for Children and Young People (CIFEJ) for the 2025-2027 term

meaningful films," he said.

The newly elected CIFEJ board includes representatives from several countries: Pamela Bisson (Canada), Doros Demetriou (Cyprus), Huang Jun (China), Anis Lassoued (Tunisia), Emma Pendiuc (Romania), Elham Shrivani (Iran), and Mitsuo Tahira (Japan). Vassilis Karamitsanis (Greece) has been appointed Secretary General, and Irene Andriopoulou (Greece) will serve as Executive Director.

Speaking on the occasion, Santanu Mishra, Chairman of SIFFCY and Co-Founder of Smile Foundation, said, "Cinema can play a significant role in shaping responsible and empathetic global citizens. We support CIFEJ in its efforts to drive positive societal change, beginning with young minds."

Vassilis Karamitsanis added that the transition of CIFEJ's headquarters to Athens marks a new era for the organization. "The newly elected board holds strong credentials to guide CIFEJ in promoting high-quality children's content globally," he said.

Jitendra Mishra is an established name in independent and socially driven cinema, with more than 100 films to his credit. His notable works include I Am Kalam, The Last Color, Buried Seeds, and Barefoot Empress. He has served as a jury member at over 50 international film festivals and is known for promoting innovative models in film production and distribution.

Mishra's election is seen as a significant moment for Indian cinema on the international stage, particularly in the domain of youth and children's content.

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Adventure & trekking destinations in Himachal

If you are looking for an adventurous getaway, now would be an ideal time for it. This time around, trek through the lesser travelled areas of the Himalayas, and experience the magic of clear skies, colourful landscapes, and uninterrupted views of the lofty peaks. Take your pick.

KHAJJJAR

At a distance of 21 km from Dalhousie and 20 km from Chamba, Khajjiar is a beautiful hill station located in the Chamba District of Himachal Pradesh. Often known as the Switzerland of India, it is situated at an altitude of 1,951 m in the foothills of the Dhauladhar ranges of the Western Himalayas and is part of the Kalatop Khajjiar Sanctuary. It is among the popular places to visit in Dalhousie and also one of the top Himachal tourist places.

Khajjiar was a part of the erstwhile state of the Rajput rulers of Chamba. It served as the capital of Chamba rulers. Thereafter, it was taken over by the Mughals, from which the rule passed over to various Sikh kingdoms. Subsequently, it was taken over by the British.

Khajjiar is a picturesque spot with an emerald saucer shaped meadow amidst a dense forest which has a lake with a floating island at its center and a temple with a golden spire. Khajjiar Lake is a small lake covering an area of about 5000 sq. yards. On the lake, some clusters of grasses and weeds have grown that appear like a floating island, and is the major attraction. A little away from the lake is the temple of Khajji Nag belonging to the 12th century AD. This temple is dedicated to the Lord of Serpents. The Nag that is worshipped here has a human form. The stone idol has a mace in one hand and a khanda, a double dagger in the other. In the mandapa of the temple one can see the images of the Pandavas and Kauravas near the roof of the circumambulatory path.

Khajjiar is also called the Gulmarg of Himachal Pradesh and serves as the starting point for treks to Chamba, Dalhousie and Kalatop Wildlife Sanctuary among others. Khajjiar to Dainkund is a 3.5 km easy to moderate trek. The trek starts 6 km from Khajjiar on the Dalhousie-Khajjiar road and ends at Pholani Devi Temple at Dainkund. This trek with a well-defined trail and moderate ascent is an excellent trek for beginners and children. The trek offers excellent views and a beautiful camping site. Zorbing is a popular recreational activity during April and May.

RAISON - RIVER RAFTING

At a distance of 13.5 km from Kullu, 14 km from Naggar and 27 km from Manali, Raison is a small cluster of villages on the banks of Beas River which has vast camping grounds maintained by Himachal Pradesh Tourism. It is one of the top adventure destination in Himachal and also a top rafting destination in the state of Himachal



Pradesh. Rafting in Raison is one of the top things to do in Kullu & Manali.

Situated at an altitude of 1433 m, Raison is well known for its camping sites and white-water river rafting. Numerous apple orchards and fruit gardens of plums and apricots add to the natural beauty of the place. Apart from the nature, Raison is famous for adventure activities like rafting, trekking, mountain climbing and river crossing etc.

By the end of the winter season, in the month of March, the whole region becomes colorful with blooming flowers. At the camping sites, there are about 14 tourist huts, which require advance booking through the Kullu Tourist Office. These wooden huts are built along the banks of the Beas River.

During winter the temperature falls down to 1-2°C and the summer weather is pleasant and enjoyable. Summer between March to June is the best season for outdoor activities like Rafting, Trekking and River Crossing. There are several rafting agencies along the Beas river between Khatrain and Kullu. These are approved agencies by HP Tourism and the prices are almost same at all the points. Rafting charges vary depending on the season and group size. The usual charges for 7 km rafting stretch cost between Rs. 500-800 per person. Additional price is charged for photos and videos. The cost can be bargained,

especially if you have a group participating in the activities.

TRIUND HILL

At a distance of 8 km from McLeod Ganj Bus Stand and 13 km from Dharamshala, Triund is a beautiful hill situated in Dhauladhar Mountains in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. It is located at an altitude of about 2842 m. Triund is popular trekking site in McLeod Ganj and attracts a lot of tourist every year. It is also one of the best trails of short treks in Himachal state. Triund offers the perfect view of the Dhauladhar Mountains on one side and Kangra Valley on the other.

Triund is an 8 km trek from the McLeod Ganj Bus Stand. This is a small and an easy trek, which can be done either from McLeodganj or Dharamkot, which is 2 km ahead of McLeodganj. The trail is 6 km from Dharamkot and passes through Galu Devi temple. From this temple, it takes around 3 hours to reach Triund. The initial half of the trek is a gradual incline and the last 2 km from Snowline Cafe involves a steep climb all the way till Triund. The last 1 km has 22 tiring curves before finally reaching Triund. Along the way there are many small Tea shops where one can refresh during the hike. Trek can also be started from Bhagsu Nag.

There is a Devi Temple located on the top of Triund Hill at the highest point.

From here one can have beautiful view of the Moon Peak and Indra Pass. Famous among trekkers and hikers, there is a snowline at Ilaka visited by adventurers which is a further trek from Triund Hill.

There is a Guest House operated by Himachal Pradesh Forest Department and is the only option for night stay at Triund. Advance booking is required and can be done at Dharamshala. The rooms cost around Rs.500 per day. There are plenty of places to camp and is advisable to carry your own tent and sleeping bag. Tourists could even get some provisions at the tea shops here. There is no water facility so one needs to carry enough drinking water.

GREAT HIMALAYAN NATIONAL PARK

At a distance of 75 km from Kullu, 63 km from Bhuntar, 113 km from Manali and 14 km from Gushaini, The Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP) is spread across Parvati valley, Thirthan valley, Sainj valley & Jiwa Nal valley of Kullu region. In June 2014, the Park was declared as UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Great Himalayan National Park is one of best national parks in India and also one of the best Places to visit in Himachal state. The park was established in 1984 and is spread over an area of 754 sq km at an altitude varying between 1500 to 6000 m. GHNP was formally declared a national park in 1999. The GHNP is situated adjacent Pin Valley National Park, Rupi-Bhaba Wildlife Sanctuary and the Tirthan and Sainj Wildlife Sanctuaries, making it one of the biggest areas for wildlife conservation in the whole Himalayan range. The Park is habitat to numerous flora and more than 375 fauna species including approximately 31 species of mammals and 181 species of birds. More than 15,000 residents of 160 villages in the buffer zone are dependent on GHNP's natural resources. The fauna of the park includes some of the most exotic species of animals like snow leopard, blue sheep, Himalayan brown bear, Himalayan tahr, musk deer, goral and many others. The bird species found in GHNP include golden eagles, Himalayan griffon vultures, lammergeyers, raptors, etc.

IPL 2025

Mumbai Indians beat Sunrisers Hyderabad by four wickets

MUMBAI (TIP)

A sprightly Mumbai Indians continued their ascent in the Indian Premier League with a four-wicket victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad in a one-sided contest on a tricky wicket here on April 17.

Led by Will Jacks who played a decisive role with a fine 36 (26 balls, 3x4s, 3x6s) after a crucial spell of 3-0-14-2, Mumbai Indians executed an all-round show to record their second consecutive win. The home side came on top for having assessed the Wankhede Stadium pitch accurately and adapting quickly to the conditions it presented, with each of the pieces falling in place for the five-time winners.

MI's fast bowlers used the short and slower balls well throughout the first innings and nailed their yorkers perfectly. In the run chase, the MI batters showed a clear plan to keep finding the boundaries which kept them on top.

Chasing 163 on a pitch which had grip and turn, MI were also benefited by SRH's reluctance to bring on spin in the powerplay, as the home side made 166/6 in 18.1 overs to record their third win of the season.

Even though Rohit Sharma endured another failure after a promising start in which he made 26 off 16 balls with three sixes, he gave MI the momentum with the bat and the others capitalised on it.

Opener Ryan Rickelton made a fluent 31 while Suryakumar Yadav hammered two sixes and as many fours to make 26 (off 15 balls) to provide a strong support to Jacks.

Captain Hardik Pandya played a crucial cameo of 21 off just nine balls to take MI to the threshold of victory. Tilak Varma (21 not out) then took MI over the line after a late minor hiccup as the home side reached 166 for 6 in 18.1 overs.

In the first half, Sunrisers Hyderabad found late momentum with the bat to fight their way through and post 162 for 5. With the surface at the Wankhede Stadium providing grip and turn for the spinners and slower deliveries giving dividends to the pace bowlers, Sunrisers Hyderabad batters struggled to adapt to the wicket for most part of the innings.

But a big finish -- 57 runs coming off the last five overs -- gave SRH some much-needed impetus towards the end.

MI bowlers were spot-on in formulating their plans and near-perfect in their execution with Jasprit Bumrah delivering a measly 4-0-21-1, Trent Boult nailing his yorkers again to return 4-0-29-1 and Will Jacks producing an impressive 3-0-14-2.



The SRH struggle was evident from the start even as Abhishek Sharma stroked his way to 40 off 28 balls with seven boundaries.

It all started with an eventful first over when the two SRH openers got a reprieve each off Deepak Chahar.

Abhishek went down the wicket, swinging his bat on the first delivery. The ball shaped away slightly to take the edge but Jacks failed to get hold of it.

On the fourth delivery, Travis Head played one straight to Karn Sharma at midwicket where he failed to pluck a low catch as the ball fell just short of him.

Abhishek looked to be hitting his strides when he smacked three fours off Chahar in the fifth over but there was just no momentum gained.

Raj Angad Bawa timed his dive to grab the ball to dismiss Abhishek off Pandya for the first breakthrough and by then it was evident that SRH would have to scrape their way through to a competitive total.

Jacks then had former MI player Ishan Kishan stumped for a mere two. Head was unable to open up even as he tried his best to cut loose. Despite having caught off a no-ball with Pandya overstepping, Head failed to capitalise as he fell for an ordinary 29-ball 28.

Such was the impact of MI's control that the first six of the game came as late as in the 18th over -- the best one of SRH's innings -- when Heinrich Klaasen (37 off 28 balls, 3x4s, 2x6s) took 21 runs to spoil Chahar's figures (4-0-47-0).

In the final over, Aniket Verma hit a couple of sixes and Pat Cummins smacked one to take vital 22 runs off Pandya.



No comeback for Real Madrid as Arsenal is back in Champions League semifinals

Arsenal defeated defending champion Real Madrid 2-1 on Wednesday to reach the Champions League semifinals for the first time since 2009 in a match where VAR played a key role in two penalty decisions.

Arsenal advanced 5-1 on aggregate after winning 3-0 in London last week, keeping alive its chances of winning Europe's top club competition for the first time. It will face Paris Saint-Germain in the semifinals.

Inter Milan advanced past Bayern Munich on Wednesday and will meet Barcelona in the semifinals.

There was no historic comeback for Madrid this time. No late goals, no high drama, no magic at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium.

The 15-time European champions fell short of the last four for the first time since 2020, ending its shot at a third Champions League title in four seasons.

"There was a lot of talk coming here about (Real Madrid) coming back, because they've done it so many times before, but we had so much belief and confidence from that first game to come here and win," Arsenal's Declan Rice said. "We had it in our minds and now we've done it in real life."

Madrid's hopes of staging another comeback took a big hit when a five-minute VAR review overturned a penalty for a hold on Kylian Mbappé in the first half with the game tied 0-0.

Rafael Nadal to be honored with a tribute at the French Open



PARIS (TIP)

Retired 14-time champion Rafael Nadal will receive a tribute at the French Open on Court Philippe-Chatrier on May 25, the tournament's opening day.

"Rafa has left his mark on the history of the French Open in so many ways, that's why a tribute ceremony will be held in his honor," French Open director Amélie Mauresmo said.

"We want the tribute to be special, exceptional. We want it to be a surprise for everyone."

Nadal, a 22-time Grand Slam champion who retired in November, already has a statue rising in the alleys of the clay court Grand Slam. He will also feature in an exhibition in the tournament museum and lend his voice to the official French Open trailer.

"We wanted to do the tribute last year, to be transparent, but he refused at the time," Mauresmo said. "He wasn't sure that it was his

last Roland Garros. Now that he is retired, he is happy to receive it."

Nadal holds the record for the most French Open titles with 14. His last appearance at the tournament was in 2024 when he lost to Alexander Zverev in the first round.

"Rafael Nadal and Roland Garros are inseparable. We have a strong history together," said Gilles Moretton, president of the French Tennis Federation.

"Amélie and I went to see him not long ago because we wanted to do something important for him. We still had some frustration from last year."

Organisers also plan to build on the success of the 2024 Paris Olympics by setting up a fan zone with giant screens showing matches. Located at Place de la Concorde in central Paris, the venue will be free and open to up to 5,000 fans.

"We saw an incredible atmosphere last summer in Paris. We plan on surfing on this success," Mauresmo said.

Source: AP

Passover: The Jewish festival of freedom

Passover, one of Judaism's most significant holidays, which commemorates the Hebrews' liberation from enslavement in Egypt and the "passing over" of God's forces of destruction, or the sparing of the firstborn of the Israelites, on the eve of the Exodus. Passover begins with the 15th and ends with either the 21st (in Israel and among Reform Jews) or the 22nd day of the month of Nisan in the Jewish calendar (March or April in the Gregorian calendar). On these seven (or eight) days, all leaven, whether in bread or other mixture, is prohibited, and the only grain product that can be eaten is unleavened bread, called matzo. The matzo symbolizes both the Hebrews' suffering while in bondage and the haste with which they left Egypt in the course of the Exodus. Passover is often celebrated with great ceremony and intention, especially on the first night or first two nights, when families hold a ritual meal called a seder.

The story of Passover is told in the Book of Exodus, but the narrative begins in Genesis when Joseph and his brothers, sons of Israel (Jacob), leave the land of Canaan for Egypt. Exodus opens with Pharaoh's enslavement of the Israelites and the oppression they endure. Moses arises as a leader of the Israelites and a prophet of God who is given divine assurance that his people will be freed. When his requests to Pharaoh—"Let my people go!" (Exodus 5:1)—are continually rebuffed, God sends 10 plagues to afflict the Egyptians.

Before the final plague—death of the firstborn—God instructs Moses and Aaron (Exodus 12) that all the Israelites should sacrifice a lamb and smear its blood on their lintels or doorposts and by that sign God would recognize and pass over their homes, sparing the firstborns. This notion of "passing over" is the origin of the holiday's name: Pesach, or Passover. It is in the same instructions to sacrifice a lamb that God institutes the holiday (Exodus 12:14–17):

When God then slaughters the firstborn in every household in Egypt, Pharaoh instructs Moses and Aaron to take their people and flee immediately. The Israelites do so before their bread dough has leavened, hence establishing the practice of eating unleavened bread, or matzo.

Early historical development

Passover was originally the New Year holiday in Judaism, and Exodus 12:2 explicitly describes Passover as marking the first day of the year. By the first centuries CE, however, Rosh Hashana ascended in popularity and took over the role of primary New Year festival. Passover became one of four new year festivals in Judaism—Rosh Hashana, Tu B'Shvat, and the first of Elul being the others—and was considered the new year for reckoning kings' reigns and for the Jewish festival cycle.

When the Temple of Jerusalem was first completed (957 BCE) it became a



pilgrimage destination, and Passover was one of Judaism's three pilgrimage holidays alongside Shavuot and Sukkot. A central focus of the Passover pilgrimage festival in the temple was the sacrifice and communal consumption of Paschal lambs, which took place on the 14th of Nisan and represented the lambs the Israelites sacrificed in Egypt to inform God to "pass over" their homes. After the Second Temple was destroyed by Rome in 70 CE, animal sacrifice was discontinued and the home and family shifted from a dimension of the Passover celebration to its primary focus.

Ritual observations

The centerpiece of Passover is the seder, but the preparations start in advance, as Jews are instructed to remove from their homes all leavened bread (chametz), even crumbs. The preparation can be a massive spring cleaning effort to root out all vestiges of leavened bread. During Passover, observant Jews can eat, or have in their homes, only food that is kosher (ritually approved) for Passover, and anything made from grain (wheat, rye, oats, barley, and spelt) must be replaced by matzo, unleavened bread. Food that is kosher for Passover must be without leaven anywhere in the vicinity even of its



production, in the home or in factories that produce the food.

There is a difference between what Ashkenazi (eastern European) and Sephardi (Iberian, North African, and Middle Eastern) Jews can consume for Passover. In addition to leaven, Ashkenazi Jews also avoid eating rice and foods that are labeled *qi'niyot*—beans, corn, and legumes—based on rabbis' considerations that these foods might be confused with the grains used to make bread. However, Sephardi Jews (excluding some groups from North

Africa) often do consume those foods, as long as they are not contaminated by leavened bread.

The seder (Hebrew: "order") meal is held on the first night of Passover among Reform Jews and Jews in Israel, and the first and second nights among other Jewish groups and congregations, although Jews. At the seder, participants read from the Haggadah (Hebrew: "telling"), which details the 14 parts of the ceremony, provides readings concerning the Exodus, and offers religious interpretations about the significance of the festival and the parts of the seder. There is also music, such as the lively song "Dayenu" ("It would have been enough"). Despite its origins in suffering, Passover is overall a joyful holiday as well as an open one: an important part of the ritual obligations is the invitation or welcoming of a stranger to join in the meal. A central focus of the ceremony, aside from eating matzo, is the seder plate, which displays symbolic food items relevant to the story of Exodus and the Jewish experience of escaping enslavement.

As a family-oriented celebration, teaching children about Passover is a central focus of the many parts of the seder. After a second cup of wine is poured, the youngest child at the seder asks, sometimes in recitation and sometimes in song, four standard questions—sometimes referred to as *Ma Nishtana* (Hebrew: "What is different?")—about what distinguishes the holiday from other nights:

Modern traditions

Some progressive congregations include a new symbolic item on the seder plate: an orange. This 20th-century addition began with Dartmouth Jewish studies professor Susanna Heschel, the daughter of the groundbreaking modern Jewish philosopher and civil rights activist Abraham Joshua Heschel. According to her account in a 2013 article for the *Forward*, the inclusion of an orange was intended to represent the inclusion of LGBTQ+ Jews and other marginalized people in the community, and Heschel's model for the ritual involves members of the seder each breaking off and consuming segments of the orange and spitting out the seeds, which represent homophobia. A popular legend about the orange addition attributes its origin to a sarcastic comment made by a rabbi at a lecture Heschel gave (or at a bat mitzvah, or when Heschel tried to join a minyan, in other variants) that a woman belongs on the bimah—the platform in the synagogue where the Torah is read—like an orange belongs on a seder plate. According to that invented origin story, the orange's inclusion symbolizes ritual acceptance of women. Some congregations include in the seder a cup of water for Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, to commemorate her role in the Exodus and her significance among women in the Jewish tradition.



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In 2018 Prasanth, Sushanth and Nisanth were diagnosed and treated for Prematurity Retinopathy. An illness in premature babies which can cause blindness.

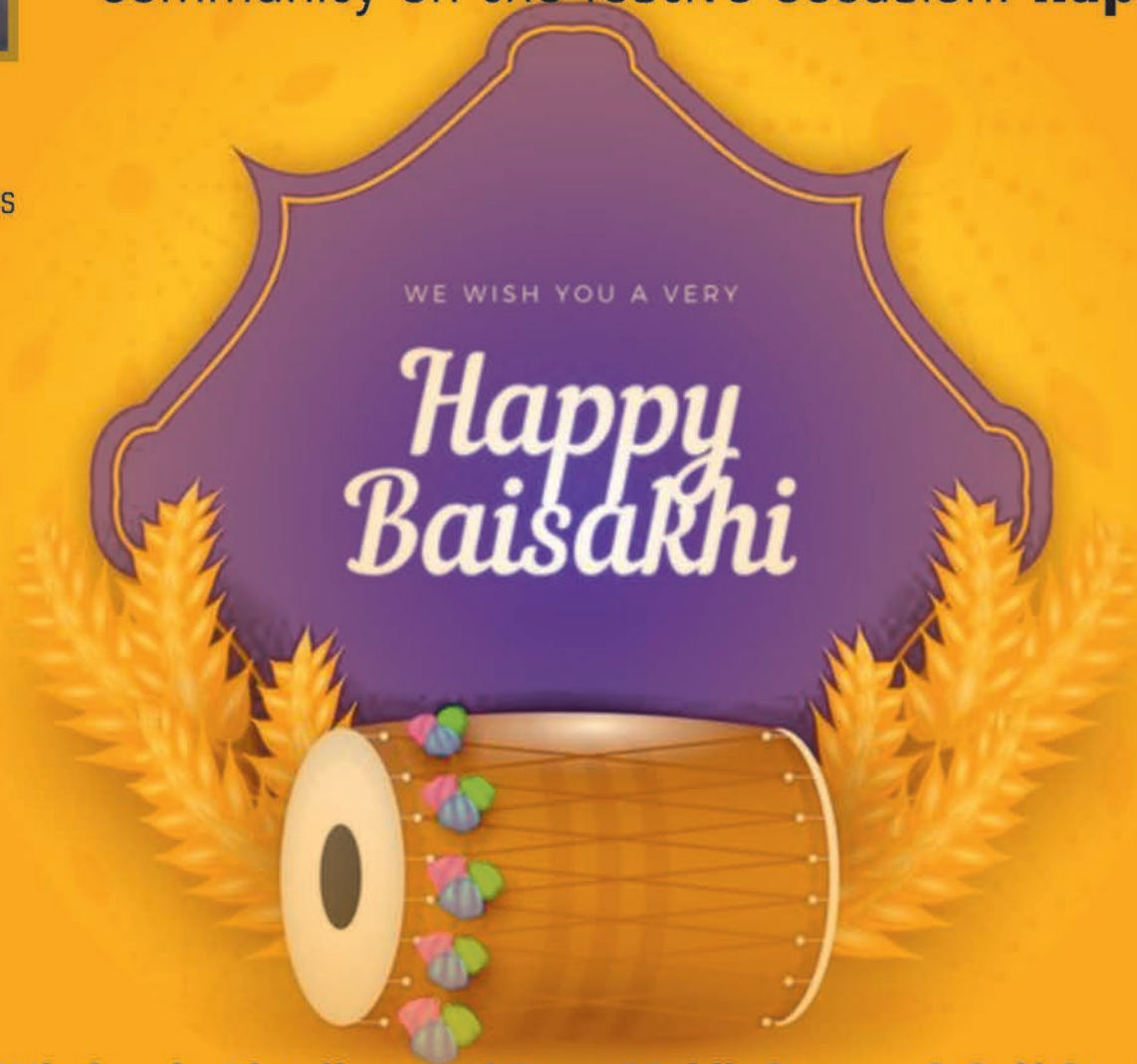
Luckily through GEMROP an initiative funded by EFA to screen premature babies throughout hospitals in India, the triplets were able to receive an expensive surgery free of charge. The boys are now the age of 4 with perfect vision.



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