

THE DIASPORA



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Federation of Indian Associations - New England, 501(C)3.

BI-WEEKLY

Issue. 56

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NYC Mayor Adams selects Rohit Aggarwala to lead climate change fight



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The nation pays tribute to "Lata Mangeshkar," a musical legend



CONSUL GENERAL RANDHIR KUMAR JAISWAL ADMINISTERS OATH OF OFFICE TO FIA TRISTATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



The Oath ceremony for the new President of FIA, Mr. Kenny Desai was held on February 9, 2022, within the premises of the Indian Consulate General, New York.

Mr. Ankur Vaidya, the chairman, expressed gratitude to the outgoing immediate past president, Mr. Anil Bansal, for his unwavering support throughout his tenure at FIA during the challenging and unusual times of the COVID epidemic.

He said that in Mr. Anil Bansal we have a strong leader and was sure that in the future he would have a bigger and a better role to play in the organization.

Mr. Ankur Vaidya welcomed

the elected President, Mr. Kenny Desai, lauding him for his achievements, which include the prestigious Ellis Island Medal of Honor award, recognition by the United States' Congress for Philanthropy, amongst others. He thanked him for accepting a

challenging full-time voluntary job as the President of FIA, especially this year, which marks the 50th Anniversary of FIA and 75 years of Indian Independence- Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, wherein the calendar is lined up with back-to-back events. He also

profusely thanked the Consul General, Mr. Randhir Jaiswal, the DCG, Mr. Varun Jeph, and other Consulate officials for their support and cooperation.

The oath for the office of the President was administered by the Hon. CG Mr. Randhir Jaiswal who in his opening statement thanked FIA for their unwavering support to the Consulate and toward a better Indo-US relations.

Mr. Kenny Desai said that he is fully committed in exercising his duties and responsibilities as the President of FIA and will spare no efforts in reaching out to the mainstream. In order to take the organisation to bigger heights he asked for the help, assistance and guidance of all the FIA members.



The FIA 2022 committee takes the oath of office.

FIA, NE celebrated Valentine day by paying respect & honor to senior citizens

At Shri Lakshmi Temple in Ashland, MA, FIA-NE celebrated Valentine's Day by showing respect and honour to elderly people and hosting a group puja to celebrate marriage anniversaries, love, and bonding. Four seniors were honoured: Babulal Patel, Shardaben

Patel, Vijaya Laxmi Kavsari, and Kaushi Patel.

Rakesh Kavsari and Deepti Kavsari celebrated their tenth wedding anniversary, while Deepak Rathore and Anu Rathore celebrated their twenty-first wedding anniversary.

Shova Sharma (VP FIA, NE) Gautam Patel (FIA-Join Treasur-

er) greets everyone, and Anand Sharma (FIA-Chair Volunteer Committee) and Geena Virmani thank everyone.

The pooja archna was attended by Pankaj & Sunita Adaval, Abhishek & Jyoti Singh, Deepak & Chakshu Sharam, Gaurav & Kajal Dixit, Ashwani & Geena Virmani, Gautam & Yogeshwari Patel,

Anand & Meenu Sharma.

According to Kaushik Patel, this is a one-of-a-kind effort conducted by the FIA, NE team on Valentine's Day that would foster love and affection in families and assist generations form strong bonds. Shri Krishna Bhatta, the temple priest, officiated over all of the ceremonies.

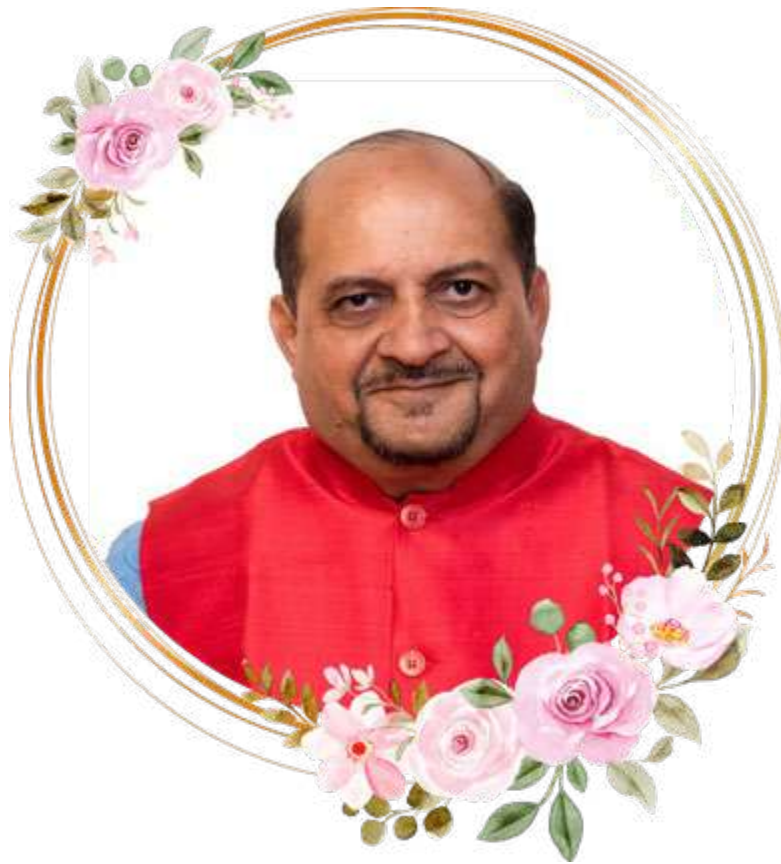


"Tribute to BSOU President & FIA Team Member Abhay Shukla"

Federation of Indian Associations fraternity and metropolitan New York, New Jersey Indian American community is terribly shocked by sudden untimely passing away of a very dynamic, dedicated and decent Community Leader and a long-time associate as chairperson of various committee Abhay Shukla at the young age of 64 on Sunday February 6-2022. He served FIA for over 25 years and contributed gallantly in the growth and success of FIA.

At the time of his death, he was the sitting President of Brahmin Samaj of the USA, a very adorable, active and outstanding association member of FIA. His bravery, honesty, and willingness to work on any community project had earned him a lot of respect and admiration.

As a resident of Jersey City, New Jersey, he contributed immensely to its various activities, helping Govinda Temple, Navratri, Senior Associations, and so forth. He was



ABHAY SHUKLA

BSOU President &
FIA Team Member

a great singer with his melodious voice.

He also helped Shree Vidya Foundation Trust, Morari Babu's Katha, and other religious activities. Social media was flooded with tributes from his coworkers, friends, and fans. His funeral services were held at Jorge Rivera Funeral Home in North Bergen, New Jersey on Tuesday, February 8, 2022. It was attended in large numbers by his family members, relatives, co-workers, and friends.

Originally from Bombay, he migrated to the USA in 1980. He is survived by his mother, Bharti Ben, wife Megha, two sons, Vinay and Harshal, sister Alka, daughter-in-law Jahnvi, brother Keyur, and a vast number of relatives and friends. He will be missed by FIA, BSOU, and other organizations.

We pray to Almighty God to rest his divine soul in peace and give strength to his family members to withstand this huge loss.

Om Shanti!!



SAVE THE DATE



75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

THURSDAY

MAY

12

2022

11:30am to 4:30pm



*Join us to commemorate & celebrate
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Inaugural launch of NYC's World's Largest India Day Parade
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PROGRAM INCLUDES:

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FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS NY - NJ - NE





38TH ANNUAL DANCE PE CHANCE COMPETITION
CELEBRATING INDIA'S 73RD REPUBLIC DAY



75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

THE OLDEST DANCE COMPETITION DANCE PE CHANCE is BACK



BOLLYWOOD CELEBRITY JUDGES



<https://dancepechance.org/event-registration-2022/>

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A GLIMPSE OF DANCE PE CHANCE



THE FORTNIGHT THAT WAS

- *This year the Beating Retreat ceremony was held on a grand scale to commemorate 75 years of Independence – being celebrated as 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'. The spectacular laser and drone show enthralled the audience with 1000 drones lighting up the sky. The usual 'Abide by Me' hymn was replaced with 'Ae Mere Watson ke Logon' sung by Lata Mangeshkar, written by Kavi Pradeep, and composed by C. Ram Chandra. The song was written as a tribute to the soldiers who died during the Sino-Indian war in 1965.*
- *India is to debut its crypto currency by 2023, as per the budget speech of Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. She suggested that it would provide a big boost to the Indian digital economy and would be known as Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).*
- *India will tax income from profits on crypto currency at 30%. Income from the transfer of any virtual assets will be taxed at 30%, the nation's finance minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, said Tuesday. To capture details of all such crypto transactions, she also proposed a 1% tax deduction at source on payments made related to the purchase of virtual assets. This removes the uncertainty that surrounded such transactions.*
- *India wins the ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup, beating England by 4 wickets. The team lifted the title for the fifth time.*
- *With the addition of two new franchisees—Gujarat Titans and Lucknow Super Giants—the IPL 2022 will have a total of 10 teams playing this year.*
- *The IPL auction saw 294 players being sold. At Rs 15.25 crores, Ishan Kishan, a batter and wicket keeper, was the Mumbai Indians' most expensive pick.*
- *The Airtel Xstream Premium over-the-top (OTT) streaming service has been launched in India. The Indian telecom provider claims that its new OTT service will aggregate content from 15 Indian and global OTT platforms, including SonyLIV, Eros Now, Shorts TV, and more.*
- *Writing with Fire, a documentary based on Khabar Lahirya, a newspaper run by Dalits, has been nominated for the Oscars under the Best Documentary Feature.*
- *Indian Origin man Kishor Kumar Ragan, 41yrs, gets a death sentence in Singapore for drug trafficking.*
- *Indian Origin ex Amazon employee- Rohit Kadlimisetty of Northridge California gets a 10 month Jail sentence for stealing confidential data to manipulate the marketplace of the E Commerce giant*

United States lawmakers urge Biden to partner India on global vaccine supply

Members of the US Congress from both parties have encouraged President Joe Biden to deploy Corbevax, an Indo-US partnership, in the worldwide fight against Covid-1

Poornima Padmanabhan, an Indian American professor of chemical engineering at Rochester Institute of Technology, has been awarded a National Science Foundation Faculty Early Career Development award, according to a news statement from the institute.

Her CAREER award is from the NSF's division of Materials Research for her research, "Chirality and polymer thermodynamics: frustration and amplification."

According to the announcement, scientists are looking to space for the origins of the solar system, while chemical engineers like Padmanabhan are looking for the origins of life based on minute systems of molecules.

The \$478,476 funding was awarded to research how chiral structures—or mirror-image, entangled molecules—work, which is critical to understanding how different cell types are formed in biological development. The concepts can give information on how to further develop synthetic materials for use in the pharmaceutical business, agricultural or food analysis, and the creation of innovative materials to improve sens-



ing and imaging applications.

"We can think about how proteins fold, how life originated, we can think about how biology forms chiral structures and the reason the work is very exciting is we don't know how these phenomena happen," said Padmanabhan, an assistant professor of chemical engineering in RIT's Kate Gleason College of Engineering, in the release.

At RIT, she is co-director of the Computational Materials Re-

Photo: southasiamonitor
search Nucleus Lab with Patricia Taboada-Serrano and Obioma Uche, both faculty in the chemical engineering department. The team researches development of "extreme" strength polymers, electrochemistry, and alternative energy resources.

Prior to coming to RIT, she was a post-doctoral researcher at Cornell University and received its Alice H. Cook and Constance E. Cook Award, given by the Office of Faculty Development and Diversity for commitment to women's issues and improving the climate for women at the university. Padmanabhan continues to be an advocate for gender diversity and increasing the pipeline of students in STEM degree programs, the release noted.

Indians now travelling to the US can inquire, rack up current consular details

Indians who intend to go to the US may now inquire about travel regulations as well as receive updates and information on current consular services from Consular officials.

The US Embassy shared on Twitter, "We are committed to facilitate legitimate travel to the U.S. and take your inquiries and concerns seriously. Here are some of our Consular officers providing updates and information on current consular services. Have a safe 2022!"

Meanwhile, an international

coalition of travel-related organizations called on the US government to stop requiring vaccinated passengers to present a negative Covid test before boarding US-bound flights, livemint.com reported.

"Travel and aviation's recovery is dependent on the government taking steps to remove travel restrictions that are no longer justified by current circumstances," the group argued in a letter addressed to White House coronavirus response coordinator Jeffrey Zients.

Among the 29 signatories were

the main advocacy organizations representing Asian, European and US airlines, as well as the US Chamber of Commerce and the US Travel Association. The leader of the group, Airlines for America - which represents major US carriers including American Airlines, Delta Airlines and United Airlines posted the letter to its website. The Omicron type would prolong their recuperation by one to two months, according to the three businesses. "Clearly Covid is widespread throughout the US and attempts to control its importation via air travel un-

der today's circumstances are unlikely to change that fact," they argued in the letter.

Photo: connectedtoindia



NYC Mayor Adams selects Rohit Aggarwala to lead climate change fight

Mayor Adams named a group of environmental specialists to head his administration's fight against climate change, but conceded he hasn't yet devised a strategy for waging important areas of the struggle.

Adams named Rohit Aggarwala, a longstanding adviser to previous Mayor Michael Bloomberg, as his top climate officer, marking his administration's first environmental announcement. The newly formed position is intended to simplify the city's efforts to minimise the effects of global warming.

According to Adams, Aggarwala, who was also named commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, will work closely with Vincent Sapienza, the DEP's chief operations officer, and Kizzy Charles-Guzman, executive director of the newly founded Mayor's Office of Climate Change.

By the conclusion of Adams' four-year tenure, the trio will have hammered out plans for delivering on some of Adams' campaign pledges on climate, such as establishing power networks capable of generating 100 megawatts of solar energy atop schools, libraries, and other pub-

lic buildings.

The mayor affirmed time is of the essence. "Climate catastrophe isn't some far-off threat. It's here. It's happening," said Adams in a live-streamed speech at City Hall.

But in a press conference following the speech, Adams was light on details when asked what he had in mind for upgrading the

Photo: nydailynews



Rohit Aggarwala speaks at the podium after his appointment as chief climate officer was announced.

city's decades-old sewer systems. The sewers were rapidly overwhelmed on Sept. 1, 2021, when remnants of Hurricane Ida barreled through New York, killing more than a dozen residents.

"Of course, we can't lay out everything that we're going to do because we are inundated with problems with our environment and things we've done wrongly in the past," Adams said. "Retro-

fitting and building on our sewer systems is not a four-year plan, let's be honest about that. What we need to do is we need to look at whatever projects we're doing now should not be built for what was in the past. We should be hitting pause right now, do an analysis." Since Ida, climate change experts and lawmakers have named improving the durability of the city's infrastructure — from streets and subways to sewers and buildings — as a major priority.

Former Council member Antonio Reynoso urged that old sewers must be renovated fast, especially since extreme weather events are anticipated to become more damaging as a result of climate change, before being elected Brooklyn borough president in November.

"Why is (the Department of Environmental Protection) concerned about money, when, if not handled and taken care of, we have a loss of life for residents and significant long-term structural damage to homes, to businesses and to our local city infrastructure?" Reynoso said at the Sept. 14 hearing.

At Monday's press conference, Aggarwala said there's "a variety of things that we're going to have to do" to address resiliency. But, like Adams, he conceded the pie-

es aren't there yet.

"The plan is not exactly there. We're going to be developing the Adams administration plan on resiliency. It's going to be extraordinary, and it's going to be really good because it's really important," he said. During last year's campaign, Adams, on the other hand, produced a climate policy roadmap that emphasised the need of resiliency initiatives.

"It's only a matter of time until the next superstorm overwhelms our coastal communities, threatening the homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure of countless NYCers. We need to move boldly on resiliency projects across NYC," stated the blueprint, released last April.

Aside from resiliency, Adams and Aggarwala both pledged to work on mitigating the effects of climate change on communities of colour, who have traditionally been disproportionately affected by pollution.

Adams, who is vegan, said he will include food in his climate change agenda, maybe by serving less meat in public schools.

"No one wants to talk about that — the global consumption of meat and dairy, how that impacts the environment," he said. "We are going to dig into this area as well. We are leaving no stone unturned."

NEW FEATURE ANNOUNCEMENT

In a first-of-its-kind initiative, we are excited to provide our readers with a platform to share their stories.

Our subscribers are invited to submit their short fiction, poetry, prose, or memoir on any topic.

Submissions, not exceeding 500 words, can be done at editor@fianynjct.org

Stories submitted will be reviewed and published accordingly.

Non-subscribers can also submit by subscribing to our newsletter at <https://fianynjct.org/subscribe-newsletter/>

Eric Adams pledges to strengthen relationships with Indian-Americans

After their meeting on January 30, Indian Ambassador to the United States Taranjit Singh Sandhu praised New York City Mayor Eric Adams for highlighting the various successes and influences in the Diaspora.

Photo: usatvnews

"Delighted to meet @NYC Mayor Eric Adams, and his team at NY City Hall. We look forward to furthering close cooperation b/w India and NYC in healthcare, energy, new & emerging tech & education," Sandhu tweeted after the meeting. Ambassador Sandhu was accompanied by, India's Consul General in New York, Randhir Jaiswal, and Deputy Consul General Dr. Varun Jeph.

Mayor Eric Adams, during the meeting, promised a stronger partnership with India, and the diaspora. "Honored to welcome my friend Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu of India to City Hall

today. We're a global city and our global connections are vital to a strong New York," Adams tweeted.

Ambassador Sandhu sought the support and participation of Mayor Adams in the Consulate's programs to commemorate 75 years of India's independence, Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. "Look forward to your participation in #AmritMahotsav & other celebrations including Diwali!" Sandhu tweeted. Singh thanked Adams for recognising and honouring key cultural festivals in America, such as Diwali.



Mahatma Gandhi Life-sized statue vandalised in New York

Photo: freepressjournal

A life-sized bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi was vandalised at Union Square near Manhattan, an act severely condemned as 'despicable' by the Consulate General of India, causing shock and sadness among the Indian-American community. The incident occurred early Saturday, when the monument was vandalised by unknown individuals, according to the Consulate General of In-

dia in New York. "The Consulate condemns this act of vandalism in the strongest terms," it said, adding that the matter has been taken up with local authorities.

"The matter has also been taken up with the US State Department for immediate investigation and urged appropriate action against those responsible for this despicable act," it said.

The Gandhi Memorial International Foundation donated the 8-foot-high statue, which was

dedicated on October 2, 1986, to commemorate Gandhi's 117th birthday. The celebration featured a keynote lecture by American civil rights icon Bayard Rustin.

The 6-foot-tall, 294-pound bronze statue in Davis, California's Central Park was also vandalized last year and caused a huge uproar in the Indian American community who demanded that the incident should be thoroughly investigated a hate crime.



American Malayalee Law Enforcement United (AMLEU)

AMLEU functions as a law enforcement fraternal organisation for the benefit of its members. AMLEU's mission is to act as a link between law enforcement and the community it serves, especially the

Malayalee American population. AMLEU urges Malayalee Americans to seek a career of service to their country and community by joining the United States Armed Forces or working in law enforcement. AMLEU wishes to instill and maintain in its members an

awareness of, and pride in, Malayalam language, Malayalee origin, culture, customs, and food.

Active and former law enforcement officers make up the organization's membership. Individuals and corporations that support the organisation can also become

associate members.

Membership consists of Active Law Enforcement, Retired Law Enforcement and Associate Members.

Further details can be taken from their website

<https://amleu.org/>

The nation pays tribute to "Lata Mangeshkar," a musical legend

On February 6, a plethora of leaders from politics, cricket, and the entertainment industry gathered at Mumbai's Shivaji Park to pay their tributes to Lata Mangeshkar.

Lata Mangeshkar, the legendary singer adored by countless Indians for four generations or more, was cremated with full state honours at 7.14 p.m. in the presence of her family, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, and tens of thousands of Mumbai residents who flocked to Shivaji Park to pay their last respects.

Mangeshkar, 92, died in Mumbai's Breach Candy hospital on Sunday, February 6, at 8:12 a.m. after complications with COVID.

Dr Prateet Samdani, Internal Medicine specialist at Breach Candy, who had been treating Mangeshkar, said in a statement, "It is with profound grief that we announce the sad demise of Lata Mangeshkar this morning at 8.12 am. She died because of multiple organ failure after around 28 days of hospitalisation post-COVID."

The Centre announced two days of national mourning as condolences flooded in from throughout the country and overseas. On Monday, the Maharashtra government proclaimed a public holiday.

In a tweet, President Ram Nath Kovind said: "Lata-ji's demise is heart-breaking for me, as it is for millions the world over. In her vast range of songs, rendering the essence and beauty of India, generations found expression of their inner-most emotions. A Bharat Ratna, Lata-ji's accomplishments will remain incomparable."

The President added: "An artist born but once in centuries, Lata-didi was an exceptional human being, full of warmth, as I found whenever I met her..."

In a series of tweets, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was "anguished beyond words". "The kind and caring Lata Didi has left us. She leaves a void in our nation that cannot be filled. The coming generations will remember her as a stalwart of Indian culture, whose melodious voice had an unparalleled ability



Lata Mangeshkar

1929-2022

to mesmerise people," Modi said.

Mangeshkar's songs brought out a variety of emotions, the

Prime Minister said. "Beyond films, she was always passionate about India's growth. She always

Photo: thehindu



Lata Mangeshkar's last rites at Shivaji Park, Mumbai.

wanted to see a strong and developed India," he said.

In a statement, the Ministry of Home Affairs said, "Government of India has decided that as a mark of respect, two days of State Mourning will be observed from February 6 to 7. During State Mourning, National Flag will be flown at half-mast from February 6 to 7 throughout India and there will be no official entertainment. It has also been decided that State Funeral will be accorded to Kumari Lata Mangeshkar."

Rajya Sabha will adjourn for an hour on Monday after reading her obituary as a show of respect to the legend.

On January 9, Mangeshkar was hospitalised to Breach Candy after testing positive for Covid. Despite the fact that she had recovered from the sickness over a week ago, doctors claimed her health had deteriorated due to multiple organ failure.

Thousands had gathered to pay their respects to their beloved 'Didi,' as she was affectionately known, at her Prabhu Kunj apartment on Pedder Road.

Mangeshkar's body arrived at Shivaji Park in a funeral procession from Prabhu Kunj about 5.40 p.m.

The whole Mangeshkar family was there at her house, including sister Asha Bhosle, who is a legend in her own way. Amitabh Bachchan and politicians Aaditya Thackeray, Raj Thackeray, and Sushil Kumar Shinde were among those who contacted the family to offer their condolences.

Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, state Cabinet Minister Aaditya Thackeray, and Opposition leader Devendra Fadnavis, among others, accompanied Modi to the site about 6.20p.m. Adinath Mangeshkar, Lata's nephew, greeted the Prime Minister. He met Asha Bhosle's siblings, Usha Mangeshkar, Hridaynath Mangeshkar, and other family members. Hridaynath lighted the fire at 7.14 p.m.

The Indian Government to launch e-passport soon: What is it and how does it work?

Sanjay Bhattacharyya, India's Secretary to the Government in the Ministry of External Affairs, has announced that Indians would soon be able to obtain an e-passport. In a tweet, he stated that next-generation passports will protect the security of biometric data as well as seamless passing through immigration checkpoints throughout the world. He further stated that these passports will be created at India Security Press in Nashik, Maharashtra, and will be ICAO-compliant.

The concept of an e-passport is not new; it was initially proposed by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar some time ago. Former President Pratibha Patil received India's first passport with biometric information in 2008. Biometric passports are now being issued in Germany, the United Kingdom, and Bangladesh.

An e-passport seems to be identical to a normal passport at first glance. An e. passport, on the other hand, is equipped with a tiny electronic chip, similar to that found on a driver's licence. The microchip saves all of the information on your passport, including your name, date of birth, address, and other personal information. The microchip will aid immigration counters in promptly verifying a traveller's information. The action will also

aid in the reduction of counterfeit passports on the market. The chip is said to have improved security mechanisms that make it impossible for fraudsters to tamper with the data saved.

Currently, travellers may spend a significant amount of time at immigration desks to

Photo: sundayguardianlive



complete the necessary procedures, since authorities must personally check through each item on the passport. The time spent at an immigration counter

is predicted to be cut in half with an e-passport. The microchip is also reported to hold biometric information as well as other information, making it easier to digitally identify a passenger. The chip can save information about your prior journeys.

of-a-kind, and it might include your eyes, fingerprints, face, and other attributes. The fingerprint and facial recognition features on smartphones are two of the most prevalent instances of biometric technology that most of us use on a daily basis. These security elements validate your identification by using your unique physical attributes.

This biometric data can be your fingerprints in the event of an e-passport. Before obtaining a new passport, the government already records your fingerprints. It will be easy to compare and authenticate your identify at any immigration counter with this information saved in the microchip.

What will change and not with e-passports

The method for applying for a new passport will not change, and the application form will not be altered. According to reports, the Ministry of External Affairs would distribute e-passports to all 36 passport offices in India. The issuing procedure will likewise not change.

Until today, the government's e-passports were only available in the form of personalised printed booklets. The chip in the new passports will be on the front, and it will be labelled with an internationally recognised e-passport insignia. These chips will be strong and difficult to break.

What is a biometric data?

Biometrics, to put it simply, are measurements that are connected to physical characteristics. This information must be one-

Community News

FIA Upcoming Events and Updates

A meeting of the FIA executive committee was held on February 2 at Akbar Restaurant.

The action plans for the upcoming events, which include International Day for Women, Dance pe Chance, Yoga Day, and the India Day New York parade commemorating the Azadi Ka Mahotsav -celebrating the 75 years of Indian Independence, were discussed in detail with emphasis on the implementation and execution.

In attendance were the President, Mr. Kenny Desai, the Chairman, Mr. Ankur Vaidya, Vice President, Mr. Saurin Parikh, the Secretary, Mr. Pravin Bansal, and Jt Secretary, Ms. Smita Miki Patel, to name just a few.

India Joins Diplomatic Boycott Against China's Winter Olympics

India announced on February 3 that it will join the US-led diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympics in Beijing. An enraged India made the declaration after China included a soldier in the torch relay who battled with Indian jawans in the Galwan Valley in June 2020. At the time, India said that 20 of its soldiers had perished in battles with the Chinese.

China state-affiliated media tweeted a picture of the soldier stating, "Qi Fabao, a PLA regiment commander who sustained head injury while fighting bravely in the #Galwan Valley border skirmish with #India, is a torchbear-

er during Wed's #Beijing2022 Winter Olympic Torch Relay."

India has said that it would not participate in the Olympics in any official form. Acquino Vimal, the charge d'affaires of the Indian Embassy in China, would not be attending the event's traditional opening or closing ceremonies, according to the Ministry of External Affairs. The opening and closing ceremonies of the Beijing Winter Olympics will not be broadcast on Doordarshan.

Meanwhile, a ranking member of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Jim Risch of Idaho tweeted, "It's shameful that #Beijing chose a torchbearer for

the #Olympics2022 who's part of the military command that attacked #India in 2020 and is implementing #genocide against

the #Uyghurs. The U.S. will continue to support #Uyghur freedoms & the sovereignty of India."

Photo: deccanherald



UA Little Rock receives a DoD grant to study covert information campaigns, led by Indian American Dr. Nitin Agarwal

A Department of Defense initiative has awarded the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Collaboratorium for social media and Online Behavioural Studies (COSMOS) a multi-year funding to examine covert online information campaigns in the Indo-Pacific area.

With Carnegie Mellon University, University of Regina, and The Atlantic Council, UA Little Rock is working on a five-year project called "Multi-Level Mod-

Photo: americanbazaaronline



els of Covert Online Information Campaigns." Dr. Kathleen Carley of Carnegie Mellon University is leading the initiative, which has a total budget of around \$5 million.

Dr. Nitin Agarwal, Jerry L. Maulden-Entergy endowed chair, distinguished professor of information science, and the founding director of COSMOS, will serve as principal investigator for UA Little Rock, which will receive \$456,657 to study online information campaigns during elections, protests, and other major events in the Indo-Pacific region.

Influence campaigns are growing more complex as they are more highly managed, distributed across various social media platforms, and coordinated in a flash-mob style by people, bots, and cyborg-like actors. Influence campaigns, according to Agarwal, are information prepared and transmitted in order to alter public opinion or control people's views and behaviour.

"Advanced tactics and maneuvers are used to amplify the messages," Agarwal said. "For instance, narratives are framed in

blogs and YouTube videos, which are then shared on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and other such platforms. Links to blog posts and YouTube videos are massively amplified using bots, which drive traffic to respective blog posts or YouTube videos. Traffic amplification further leads to the content being recommended more, which creates a feeding frenzy. Such a tactic is known as algorithmic manipulation."

COSMOS is researching comparable strategies used in online covert influence efforts in the Indo-Pacific area for this project. COSMOS will collect data from YouTube and blogs using its VTracker and BTracker systems. The information will be used to track a video's or a blog post's distribution and influence across multiple media platforms.

To identify coordination and measure the power of online influence campaigns, COSMOS researchers will employ a collective action theory-based model, social network theories, and social influence theory.

"This will help in identifying

key actors, key groups, coordination strategies, and tactics indicating coordinated content engagement boosting, such as 'spiked' views, likes, commenter mobs, etc.," Agarwal said. "Aside from the social network theory-based analysis, we will study the content captured from YouTube, blogs, Reddit, and other social media platforms to assess inflammatory speech and text that evoke certain emotions using tonality/toxicity assessment."

These social media sites will be used to map coordination behaviours and tactics to a framework created by Dr. Carley at CMU. This will aid in the identification of such approaches in covert internet influence efforts and allow for further countermeasure testing.

"Such a comparison would help develop a characterization of information maneuvers and media platforms, which maneuvers are more prevalent on a particular social media platform, or which platforms are more suited for a particular information maneuver," Agarwal said.

Rahul Bajaj, former Chairman of the Bajaj Group, died at the age of 83

Rahul Bajaj, the founder of Bajaj Auto, died on February 12th in Pune after a long illness. He was 83 years old when he died. He was elected to the Rajya Sabha from 2006 to 2010.

Photo: thetealmango

A statement from the Bajaj Group said that the industrialist died in the "presence of his closest family members".

According to an official, the industry veteran had been ill for some time and died at 14:30 hours on the 12th afternoon. His funeral was conducted on February 13th.

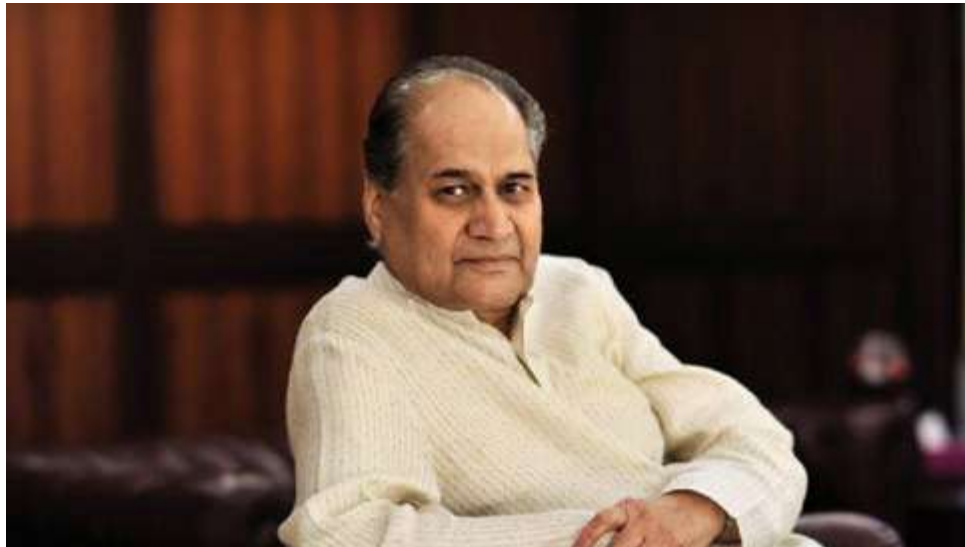
Mr Bajaj had pneumonia and also a heart problem. He was admitted to hospital for the last one month, said Dr Purvez Grant, the managing trustee at Ruby Hall Clinic.

Rahul Bajaj's death rites were held in Pune on Sunday with full state honours in the presence of officials of India Inc, politicians, and Bajaj Group workers who gave a final farewell to the legendary businessman.

Rahul Bajaj's sons Rajiv and Sanjiv performed the last rituals at the electric crematorium at Vaikunth Smashanbhoomi in Pune city. The icon of Indian industry was cremated with full state honours at 5.30 p.m.

Rahul Bajaj resigned as

Photo: indianexpress



Chairman of Bajaj Auto in April of last year. He was, however, named Chairman Emeritus of the business for a five-year term.

"You just can't beat a Bajaj" and the "Hamara Bajaj" for the company's iconic two-wheeler are two of the most recognised taglines in the Indian corporate ad business.

He was the CEO of the Bajaj Group, which includes enterprises in vehicles, general and life insurance, investment and consumer financing, home appliances, electric lighting, wind energy, special alloy and stainless steel, material handling equipment, and tourism.

The Bajaj Chetak scooter became an aspirational emblem for middle-class Indian families, and the 'Humara Bajaj' music became linked with their dreams of a brighter future.

In November 2019, during an Economic Times event in Mumbai attended by Home Minister Amit Shah, the senior entrepreneur talked against the government's 'stifling of criticism,' among other things. "This environment of fear, it's definitely on our minds. "You (the government) are doing good work; and despite that, we don't have the confidence that you'll appreciate criticism," he had said.

In 2005, the industrialist had

started passing the baton of the company to son Rajiv Bajaj, who became the managing director of Bajaj Auto.

In 2001, Rahul Bajaj was awarded the Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian honour. The entrepreneur is survived by his two sons, Rajiv and Sanjiv Bajaj, as well as his daughter, Sunaina Kejriwal.

President Ram Nath Kovind and Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the tributes as corporates and political figures mourned the passing of Rahul Bajaj.

"Saddened to learn of Shri Rahul Bajaj's demise. A doyen of Indian industry, he was passionate about its priorities," read a tweet from the president's official Twitter handle.

Prime minister Narendra Modi said in a tweet that "Shri Rahul Bajaj Ji will be remembered for his noteworthy contributions to the world of commerce and industry. Beyond business, he was passionate about community service and was a great conversationalist. Pained by his demise. Condolences to his family and friends. Om Shanti".



The mortal remains of businessman Rahul Bajaj were kept at the company's Akurdi facility for people to pay their respects.

Indian-American Society Requests US President Reject to Pakistan's Ambassador-Designate

The Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies (FIIDS), in a statement, urged Joe Biden to reject the appointment of the "Jihadi-terrorist-sympathizer" Masood Khan as Pakistani Ambassador to the United States.

"We also request Secretary of State Antony Blinken and members of the Senate and House committees on foreign relations to support this rejection," it said.

"Masood Khan has repeatedly demonstrated a soft spot for Jihadi-terrorists, including Aafia Siddiqui, a convicted terrorist operative known as 'Lady Al-Qaeda'. His support to designated terrorist organisations under the US law such as Hizbul Mujahideen, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), and Jamaat-e-Islami, is not only inimical to US Interests, but also to global peace," FIIDS said.

FIIDS is a US-based institute that conducts research and raises awareness about US-India policy

issues.

"Masood Khan's diplomatic role in the United States may open an avenue for access for terrorist organisations to US institutions. Furthermore, his former active role as president of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir will complicate US relations with its strategic partner India. His support to the Taliban will also adversely affect US interests in Afghanistan," it said.

In a detailed statement, FIIDS added that Masood Khan is a supporter of Aafia Siddiqui and had tweeted on May 7, 2020, "@AmbassadorJones: The US Government can find a way to free Aafia Siddiqui. Washington has negotiated a peace deal with the Taliban, once considered inveterate enemies. Room must now be created for Aafia's freedom. Long overdue."

The group further claimed that in 2019, Khan was on the same platform as Fazlur Rehman Khalil, a worldwide terrorist and

the founder of Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), a terrorist organisation under US law.

"Masood Khan is also a supporter of Jamaat-e-Islami, whose killing squads helped the Pakistani military carry out acts of genocide against Bangladeshis in 1971 when hundreds of thousands of minorities were raped, killed and millions were displaced," it said.

"On the fifth death anniversary of dreaded terrorist Burhan Wani, a former commander of Hizbul Mujahideen - a designated terrorist organisation under US law, Khan had called out Wani a 'role model for freedom fighters across the globe'," the statement said.

FIIDS added that Mr Khan served as president of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) until August 25, 2021, with Human Rights Watch reports stating that the Pakistani government represses democratic freedoms, muzzles press and practices rou-

tine torture in POK.

"During his rule, various press releases published by Khan's presidential office included support and praise for terrorists such as Junaid Sehrai and Tariq Ahmed Hizbul. Khan said they are martyrs and called their terrorist acts as sacrifices. His firm support of terrorists and separatists in Kashmir will create uneasiness and unwarranted complications in US-India relations when the US may need India's active involvement in the India Pacific region, Afghanistan and Eurasia," the group added.

Photo: swarajyamag



Apple buys AI based Music Start-up

The renowned 2022 Sarah Goddard Power Awards will be presented to University of Michigan faculty members Reshma Jagsi of the Medical School and Bhramar Mukherjee of the School of Public Health.

In recent weeks, AI Music, a London-based company launched in 2016, was purchased.

Apple Inc. acquired a start-up called AI Music that uses artificial intelligence to generate tailor-made music, according to a person with knowledge of the matter, adding technology that could be used across its slate of audio offerings. Prior to the acquisition, the firm had roughly a dozen workers.

According to a copy of AI Music's now-defunct website, technology created by the company can produce soundtracks utilising royalty-free music and artificial intelligence. The goal is to create dynamic soundtracks that

alter in response to user engagement. A song in a video game, for example, may vary to match the atmosphere, or music during a workout could adapt to the user's intensity.

On its LinkedIn page, AI Music said its goal is to "give consumers the power to choose the music they want, seamlessly edited to fit their needs or create dynamic solutions that adapt to fit their audiences."

Previously, the business had agreements with advertising firms to generate more engaging commercials that played changing music based on the audience. Apple's Cupertino, California-based spokesman declined to comment.

Despite its tiny size, the purchase is one of the IT giant's few in the last year. Apple's most recent announced acquisition was likewise for a music company: Primephonic. This firm provided a classical music streaming service, which Apple plans to develop into an app linked to Apple

Music later this year.

According to an October filing, Apple significantly reduced its acquisition spending in 2021, paying only \$33 million to transaction payments for the fiscal year. This compares to \$1.5 billion in 2020 and \$624 million in 2019.

Photo: nytimes



Maha Shivaratri Festival

Maha Shivaratri is the most auspicious and worldwide celebrated Hindu Festival in honour of God Shiva. Like Janmashtami, Ram Navami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Navaratri etc. Maha Shivaratri as the name suggest is exclusively celebrated with Lord Shiva as main idol in a various form of Lingam, Murthi, etc. According to Hindu Lunar calendar Maha Shivaratri every year celebrated on month of Maha (Magh) Krishna Paksha (vad) on 14th day with fasting, rudrabhishek, offering prayers, Shiv Stutis, Shiva Mahimna Stotra, OM Namh Shivay- Panchakshri Mantra. Mostly it is a full night 4 Prahars de-votional Pooja at Shiva Temple or in such religious environment. This year Maha Shivaratri is on Thursday March 11, 2021. It is believed that on this night Shiva performs heavenly dance. Mata Parvathi and God Shiva incredible couple symbolizes purity, selfless love and benedictory existence - Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.

Unlike most Hindu Festivals which include expression of cultural revelry, the Maha Shivaratri is a solemn event notable for its introspective focus, fasting meditation on Shiva, Self-study, Social harmony and all-night vigil at Shiva temples. It symbolizes as overcoming darkness and ignorance in One's life. Offerings of fruits, Billi Patras, sweets, milk to Shiva. Some offers vari-

ous juices, milk, Panchamrut and water while chanting Shiva Mashimna Stotra, Rudris, Mahamurtunjay Japs, Namah Shivay to Shiva Linga. After cleaning ling Bhasma, chandan, Akshat, Billi Patras, flowers offered to Lord Shiva. Some Temples carry out Nagaryatra in Palkhi with God Shiva in the Palkhi carried by devotees on a preselected traditional route. As a matter of fact, Shivaratri comes in every Hindu month on 14th day of Krishna Paksha but which comes in Month of Maha (Magh) is celebrated as Mahashivratri.

Piers of Radiance is called Jyotirling. Adi Shankar Acharya who revived Hinduism in 800 CE has mentioned 12 most Important Jyotirlings in his devotional Dwadasha Jyotirling Stotram Devotees feel great by visiting these auspicious pilgrimage places. They are

- Somnath Jyotirlinga, Gujarat
- Mallikarjuna Jyotirlinga in Srisa-
ilam, Andhra Pradesh
- Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga in
Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh
- Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga, Mad-
hya Pradesh
- Baidyanath Jyotir-linga in
Deoghar, Jharkhand
- Bhimashankar Jyotir-
linga in Pune, Maharash-
tra
- Rameshwaram, Tamil
Nadu

- Nageshwar Jyotirlinga in Dwar-
ka, Gujarat
- Kashi Vishwanath Jyotirlinga in
Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
- Trimbakeshwar Jyotirlinga in
Nasik, Maharashtra
- Kedarnath Jyotirlinga in, Uttara-
khand
- Ghrishneshwar Jyotirlinga in Au-
rangabad, Maharashtra

On the occasion of Mahashivratri thousands of devotees gathered at those places to offer puja and receive blessings. Besides Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu-Nepal only Hindu Nation and Amarnath in (J&K) also have great historical religious popularity.

As we all know Lord Shiva is regarded as the supreme God and creator of universe. Lord Ram and Lord Krishna were born as human and also met death but Lord Shiva is known as Ajanma (No Birth record) and Avinashi (Immortal)

In FIA region of Tri-State Mahashivratri is traditionally celebrated in many temples. Gayatri Chetna Center-Piscataway, Sanatan Mandir Parsippany, Hindu Temple at Garfield and Kearny Ved Mandir, Durga Mandir etc. Make special decorations and Shiv Pooja Archan programs. This year due to covid Pandemics certain restrictions may be applied. Let us pray Lord Shiva to bless whole world to attain peace, prosperity and Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam as well as corona free environment.

OM Namh Shivay.



Zighrana collaborates with Michelin-starred chef to produce a signature Made-in-India perfume

In New York, Vikas Khanna launched his own Made-in-India perfume. The "Vikas Khanna by Zighrana" collection was revealed at the Consulate General of India on February 14, Valentine's Day.

A traditional Indian essence and health products firm has collaborated with Michelin-starred chef Vikas Khanna to produce a trademark Made-in-India perfume in India, intending to herald in a "new dawn" for India's entry into the global fragrances sector.

Zighrana has teamed with Khanna to develop the flagship scent "'Vikas Khanna' by Zighrana," which will bear his name. A company press release said the launch of the 'Make in India' perfume, to be unveiled by Consul General of India in New York Randhir Jaiswal, "will usher in a new dawn for India's arrival in the global perfumes industry".

The new fragrance, which hails from Kannauj, India's perfume capital, is Zighrana's "humble attempt to capture the essence of Incredible India." The business expressed its joy at the opportunity to collaborate with Khanna, an Indian cultural icon and entrepreneur, on the ground-breaking enterprise. In line with the Michelin-starred chef's culinary expertise, Zighrana's new perfume 'Vikas Khanna' is a "special combination of spices like cloves,

cardamom, nutmeg, sandalwood, jasmine, and rose that have come to characterise the distinctive fragrances of India for over a millennium."

According to the firm, it has employed expensive components such as pure rose oil, which is both resource and labour demanding to produce, requiring approximately 100 kg of flowers to produce as little as 20 mg of

Photo: economictimes



rose oil.

The company's entrepreneur Swapnil Pathak Sharma stated that with this unusual relationship, she hopes to guarantee that India's age-old fragrance business receives its due worldwide respect.

Sharma hails from a family which has been in the field of traditional Indian essence and well-

ness products since 1911. "I have worked hard to ensure that our latest forte into the perfume industry is at par if not better than the global standards of excellence in the perfume industry," she told PTI. Khanna said in a tweet that since he moved to the US in 2000 his "mission is to bring Indian Culture, Cuisine, Arts & history with me. I'm completely dedicated to choose projects that represent those values. Proud to bring the legacy of #Kannauj India's perfume capital in form of #VikasKhannaByZighrana on Feb 14." Khanna, Jaiswal, Sharma, and her father, Akhilesh Pathak, all posed in a shot carrying his distinctive scent.

Regarding the cooperation with Khanna, Sharma stated that the world-renowned chef and entrepreneur is a cultural brand ambassador for wonderful India, and he knows both the country's rich past and its role in the modern world.

"Our discussions revealed that we have to come up with an aroma that is a reflection of the great Indian culinary, and given his background as a world-class chef there was nothing better but to develop a perfume inspired by our spices as his signature per-

fume," she said.

With the launch, Zighrana aims to make an entry into the global marketplace of perfumes with the brand-new product "which showcases the soul of India in the global cultural capital of New York," the release added. Through the flagship perfume, Sharma said she aims to bring forth the history and legacy of her family of being in the fragrance industry for 111 years.

"It's high time India should mark its strong presence in the fragrance market and reach out to the world. New York is an intersection of different cultural influences," which makes it the ideal platform to project the Indian heritage of perfumery.

"It is an honest attempt to bring the Indian fragrance to the world stage, given that I am the fourth generation in this industry," she said.

Going forward, Sharma said she plans to come out with more distinct fragrances representing India's history and culture.

"We will be coming up soon with perfume on 'Kannauj' and also a unique fragrance developed for celebrating India's 75 years of independence in the form of 'India at 75'."

In Hyderabad, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveils a 216-foot 'Statue of Equality.'

P rime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 216-foot tall 'Statue of Equality', honouring the 11th-century Hindu saint Ramanujacharya. "This statue of Ramanujacharya ji is a symbol of his knowledge, detachment, and ideals," he said.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, the Statue of Equality commemorates Ramanujacharya, who promoted the idea of equality in all aspects of living including faith, caste and creed.

"Today Ramanujacharya ji is giving us the message of equali-

ty in the form of a huge Statue of Equality," said the Prime Minister.

The statue is built of 'panchaloha,' a five-metal alloy consisting of gold, silver, copper, brass, and zinc, and is one of the world's tallest metallic sculptures in the sitting posture.

It is mounted on a 54-foot-high foundation building called 'Bhadra Vedi,' which contains levels dedicated to a Vedic digital library and research centre, ancient Indian scriptures, a theatre, and an educational exhibition featuring many of Sri Ramanujacharya's works.

Sri Chinna Jeeyar Swami of

Sri Ramanujacharya Ashram designed the statue, which is among the world's highest.

The Prime Minister also paid a visit to the 108 Divya Desams (ornately carved temples) that encircle the Statue of Equality as part of the occasion.

A 3D projection presentation on Ramanujacharya's life journey and teaching will also be shown.

According to an official release, the unveiling of the Statue of Equality is part of the 12-day Sri Ramanuja Sahasrabdi Samaroham, which is celebrating Sri Ramanujacharya's 1000th birth anniversary.

Photo: thenewsminute



83

Photo: timesofindia



- Cast -** Ranveer Singh, Deepika Padukone, Tahir Raj Bhasin, Saqib Saleem, Hardy Sandhu, Jiiva, Ammy Virk, Sahil Khattar, Chirag Patil, Adinath Kothare, Dhairya Karwa, Dinker Sharma, Jatin Sarna, Nishant Dahiya, R Badree, Boman Irani, Neena Gupta, Pankaj Tripathi, Parvatti Nair, Aditi Arya
- Creator -** Sumit Arora, Vasan Bala, Sanjay Singh
- Director -** Kabir Khan
- Streaming -** In theatres, yet to be released on an OTT platform
- Language -** Hindi
- Runtime -** 2h 42m



I had been planning to watch this movie, but you know what they say about best-laid plans. As soon as the theatres opened up, and the Omicron numbers went down, I decided that I couldn't wait anymore. Hence this long-winded explanation for a late review of this movie.

Two paramount things bind India as a nation: cinema and cricket. This movie verifies this indomitable fact. Kabir Khan, a standing ovation for you. You have made a brilliant film, a magnum opus where your sheer hard work, research, and resilience in the COVID times stand out. Making a film with a large budget, filming at out-

door locations, and waiting for the lockdown restrictions to finally release it is stressful.

83 steers away from melodrama and a few cliches. It celebrates the power of the underdog, the magic of teamwork, and the passion and fervor for the game. A simple film made straight from the heart. It is lengthy, 164 minutes, yet one doesn't realize its length because it is so engrossing. As each scene unfolds, you are caught up in a story that is well researched and executed. As the name of the movie suggests, the story is about India's historic win at the 1983 World Cup. So, one doesn't wait with

bated breath to watch the end. One lives the magical moments, going through the team's journey. Of facing the hurdles of limited funds, snide remarks, low expectations, disappointing dismissals, unambitious players, and epic moments.

Ranveer Singh dons the character of Kapil Dev effortlessly. His body language, dialogue delivery, and steely determination make you forget about the superstar playing him. His team ably supports him. Pankaj Tripathi, Saqib Saleem, Jiiva, Tahir Bhasin, and Jatin Sharma leave their mark. The team's camaraderie provides light moments and is well

enacted. Deepika isn't a great fit for Romi's role, but I suppose she was cast due to commercial reasons. Nina Gupta needs to go slow with 'Mother' roles. She is capable of much more. This is a feel-good film. One doesn't have to be a cricket enthusiast to watch it. All you have to do is enjoy movies. And that isn't a tall order.

The movie makes you feel patriotic and proud. The song "Lehra Do" by Arijit Singh rouses many emotions. The closing scene is a masterstroke, with great camera work and footage of the real heroes. And at the end of it, you leave the hall with a smile and a cheer.

Gehraiyaan

Cast - Deepika Padukone, Ananya Panday, Siddhant Chaturvedi, Dhairya Karwa, Naseeruddin Shah, Rajat Kapoor

Creator - Shakun Batra, Sumit Roy, Ayesha DeVitre, Yash Sahai

Director - Shakun Batra

Streaming - Amazon Prime

Language - Hindi

Runtime - 2h 28m



Shakun Batra's *Kapoor and Sons* left a lasting impact with its emotional appeal, wonderful storytelling, and great acting. It would be unfair to compare it with his latest movie, *Gehraiyaan*. What would be correct to state is that his skills as a director and writer are definitely laudable.

Gehraiyaan means depth, and in a nutshell, this is what the movie signifies. Shakun uses the ocean and its waves metaphorically to underlay the emotional depths the characters undergo. We have Alisha, played by Deepika Padukone, a yoga instructor grappling with a live-in relationship with Karan, her childhood friend (Dhairyaa Karwa). Karan is a struggling writer who is laidback and reluctant to get back to his boring job in advertising. After a long gap, Alisha meets her younger cousin, Tia (Ananya),

at her family home in Alibaug. Tia is with her fiancée, Zain, who has invested in a lucrative property development scheme with the help of Tia's millions. Sparks fly between Alisha and Zain, and the story begins. The first hour of the movie is utilized peeling the various layers of the characters. There are emotional undercurrents, questions brimming, and seething moods. There is

passion, but the scenes are sensitively shot and flow smoothly. Everything is somewhat connected to the past, and one tries to second guess the events that make Deepika what she is. Her vulnerability, raw sex appeal, and edginess endear her as an actor. That toned body and the soulful and luminous eyes definitely help. Ananya

Photo: cinemaexpress



is promising, considering that she is relatively new. Siddhant Chaturvedi is impressive as an ambitious and unscrupulous lover, but it is Deepika that steals the show.

Gehraiyaan is like 007's drink. It stirs but fails to shake you. The beginning is riveting, but it slows down and you get irritable. It's the last 30 minutes that become interesting. Don't worry, there are no spoiler alerts! The music is haunting and is a perfect accompaniment like hors d'oeuvres to the rising passions, or the plunging depths. The music composers Kabeer Katghpalia and Savera Mehta provide a fresh score, in sync with the movie. My take, it has its moments, but there is something missing. Scarred characters, lilting music, excellent acting, good cinematography, crisp editing, it's got everything going for it. Yet the movie fails to gain my empathy.

Review - Sonia Date

Jack Reacher

Cast - Alan Ritchson, Malcolm Goodwin, Willa Fitzgerald, Chris Webster, Bruce McGill, Maria Sten

Creator - Lee Child

Director - Christopher McQuarrie

Streaming - Amazon Prime

Language - English

Runtime - Eight nearly one-hour episodes

The famous character finally comes to the small screen, with the beefy Alan Ritchson playing the lead. Comparisons with Tom Cruise, who played the character in two movies,

are obvious.

The first season is an adaptation of Lee Child's novel *Killing Floor*. Jack Reacher, an ex-military policeman, gets involved in a conspiracy after be-

ing indicted for a crime he did not commit.

The series has an 88% critic rating on Rotten Tomatoes. All in all, it makes for a good watch.

Photo: imdb



Ayushmann Khurrana's 'Anek' is all about 'Hindustan ki Jeet'

Photo: Instagram/Ayushmann

Anubhav Sinha's films have shown to have a compelling plot that keeps fans and cinephiles on the edge of their seats. Having said that, the recent release of the poster for his new picture, 'Anek,' has had the internet buzzing. The poster has leading man Ayushmann Khurrana piercing into the viewers' eyes. The caption says, "It takes just ONE to make a difference. Time to unite as Ek! Jeetega Kaun? Hindustan..." The film's overarching theme is nation-building. The Anek's poster

has NE jutting out from the poster. Interestingly, the film was shot at exquisite locales of the North East.

It appears that the filmmakers have maintained the film's intrigue factor. Hard-hitting films with realism and social concerns are Anubhav Sinha's forte. This time, the story is told in a way that will appeal to a wide range of individuals of all ages. It's a hot national topic that, given Anubhav's style of art, has to be addressed with compassion and understanding. The film is set to be released on May 13th.



Taapsee Pannu Is Overjoyed with The Response To 'Loop Lapeta'

Actress Taapsee Pannu is overjoyed that her recent film, 'Loop Lapeta,' has been well appreciated. "I was so excited for this film to release, as the concept is something that Bollywood hasn't seen before! When I got the script, I knew it would be something so different and I couldn't wait for the audience to see it. To see the film trending in India and internationally and being loved by audiences everywhere is a proud moment indeed. I am very happy for all the love coming our way for the film," Taapsee said.

'Loop Lapeta,' directed by Aakash Bhatia, also stars Tahir Raj Bhasin. With a narrative

as tangled as time itself, the film follows Savi (played by Taapsee) as she tries to save her boyfriend, Satya (played by Tahir Raj Bhasin), from a series of fortunate and unfortunate events.

Tahir, too, expressed his

delight. "My second release on Netflix within a month only

adds to my happiness! I am so glad to see that "Loop Lapeta" is trending on #1 in Films in India on Netflix and in 10 countries around the world. The love for the film continues to grow and I couldn't be more grateful that

my work has been liked by people not just in India but around the world," he shared.



Photo: thequint

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PUBLISHED BY

Federation of Indian Associations (NY-NJ-CT-PA-MA-NH-VT-RI)

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