



THE US FIJI TIMES

World's Largest Fiji Newspaper Out Of Republic of Fiji

October 2023 Monthly Publication - Subscription Available Pages 60 Volume: 228

Fiji Born Director Of Rugby Development at Georgia

Rama Chand is the Director Of Rugby Development at Georgia Rugby Union



Rugby is in our Blood, Rama you make us all Fijians Very Proud. Fiji Born Rama Chand is the Director Of Rugby Development at Georgia Rugby Union, Georgia came so close to beating Rama Chand Rama, previously Rugby Australia's Coach and Training advisor is about to start a role as Director of Rugby Development for the Georgian Rugby Union. His unique background and experience allows him to have insight as a player and coach of the game. About Rama Chand Having moved to New Zealand from Fiji at a young age, Rama took up the game in South Auckland and ended up playing representative rugby for his province Counties Manukau through various age grades. He then travelled the globe playing in multiple locations before finishing up his playing days in The Netherlands where he also started to transition into coaching. After his move to Australia

in 2015, he began working within the Queensland Reds development and community team and progressed to being the Head of Game Development for one of Australia's finest super rugby franchises. Currently he is Rugby Australia's Coach, Training and Education Advisor. Prior to that he was the National Pathway Manager. In his role he has had the opportunity to present, lead and facilitate at numerous forums, workshops and symposiums around coach and player development as well as build workforces to deliver formal coach accreditations. He is passionate about coaching and continual learning and this has allowed him to assist coaches in their own development in Australia and the Pacific particularly in Fiji of late through his work with Oceania Rugby. He also has thorough experience coaching within the rugby pathways in Australia for both XV's and 7s.

Rama is about to start a role with the Georgian rugby union as their Director of Rugby Development. His unique background and experience allows him to have insight as a player, coach and administrator of the game. Statistics World Rugby Master Trainer Rugby Australia Performance Coach (Level 4) Queensland Reds Super W and Academy head coach Queensland Reds Junior Gold head coach Queensland Premier Rugby Colts head coach Souths and GPS rugby clubs GPS 1st XV school boy rugby programs assistant coach – Brisbane State High School, Nudgee College, Anglican Church Grammar Queensland U18s 7s head coach Queensland Youth 7s head coach Premier 7s head coach Souths and GPS rugby clubs Other various coaching roles in Dubai, Netherlands and Australia predominantly with mens and youth boys programs.



SOME TRADITIONS SHOULD BE KEPT INTACT

FIJI DAY

FROM **POPS** SINCE THE SEVENTIES

AYESHA HALAL CERTIFICATION

2023 Fiji Day (Santa Rosa California)

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DENTAL OFFICE OF DR. VISHNU SHANKAR



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FIJIAN GOVERNMENT



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PRESIDENT OF FIJI
WILIAME KATONIVERE



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SIROMI TURAGA



DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
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DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
MANOA KAMIKAMICA



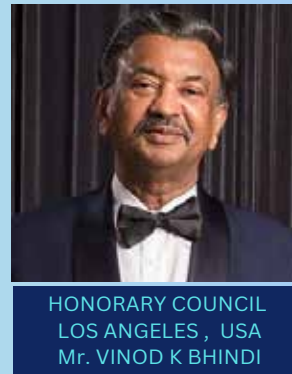
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THE US FIJI TIMES PROUD OF ITS SERVICE

The US Fiji Times is ranked as the top newspaper being published outside of Fiji for the Fiji American community and all over the world. The paper's popularity has grown immensely in recent years due to its critical approach in impressing the need for charitable organizations to rise up in all occasions to help Fiji and the people back home. Visitors from around the world have commended the paper on its stand to serve the community. The US Fiji Times understands that like in any other field, there is competition and competing with "The largest newspaper out of Fiji" has been a difficult task for newer publications. This is not because of its magnitude and coverage, but because of its stability and growth capabilities. The writers of the paper comprise some of Fiji's best. Even though they are not too visible in social functions, they are taking up their challenges very effectively. The marketing strategy handles by our CEO/Publisher Mr. Rocky Ali is the hallmark of the papers current strength. Despite lacking the front line journalist experience, he makes up for the deficiency with the sheer ability to jeep the media wagon rolling. His insatiable love to be involved with the community to cherish in this very noble cause is worthy of higher recommendation. We have a very vibrant community, so despite the paper being issued free, the expectation of the community is very high. The coverage of all the major events is a mist for the paper and we feel very proud to be associated with major organizations to see that their events are properly covered with pictures, stories and awareness via our social media platforms. The paper is being also sent to countries like Fiji, NZ, Australia, Canada, England and Sweden for Fijians abroad to also get the feel of the luxuries of USA. The feedback has been overwhelming in this regard and it has become a trend for many organizations to rely on US Fiji Times in reaching the desired success with adequate coverage. The paper will strive to serve the community with the best of its ability and assures the community that there will be quality reporting at all times.

Vinaka – Rocky Buksh

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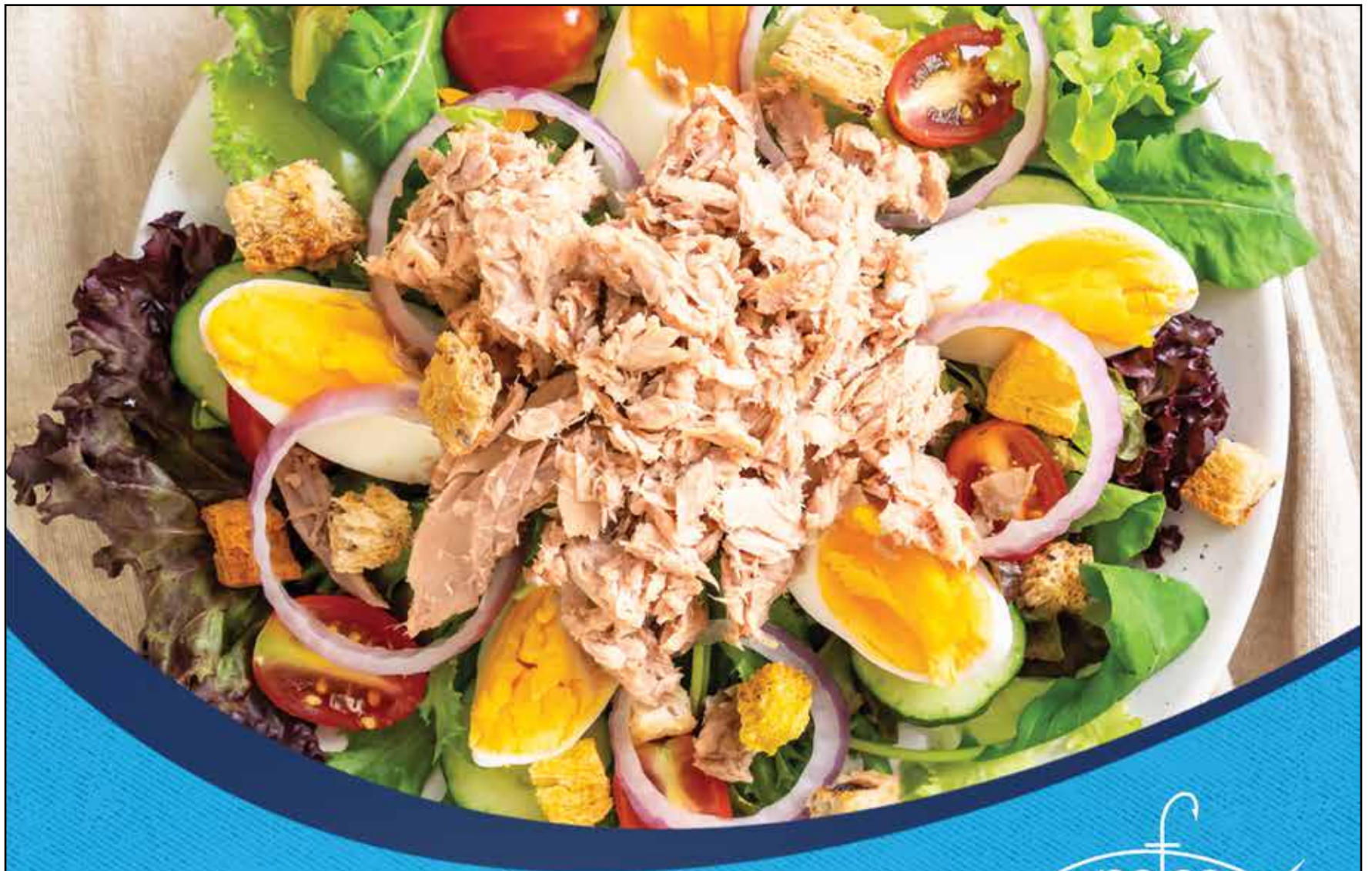
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News

2023 Fiji Day (Santa Rosa California)



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God Bless. 2023 Fiji Day Celebration Santa Rosa California First year in America & first Fiji Day Asena Tale Paeaifisini from Namotomoto Village ,Nadi

From Santa Rosa California Drink Fiji pops In America @ the taste Of Fiji foods.



News

2023 Fiji Day (Santa Rosa California)

2023 Fiji Day Celebration Santa Rosa California, Information for the Fiji Diaspora in the Bay Area:
A team from the Fiji National Provident Fund, the Ministry of Justice (Births, Deaths and Marriages Registry) and Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources will be providing services at the Fiji Day celebrations in Santa Rosa!

Cost of services provided by the BDM:

- 1. Birth certificate - FJD \$11.50
- 2. Death certificate - FJD \$11.50
- 3. Marriage certificate - FJD \$17.25

Venue: Southwest Community Park

Address: 1698 Hearn Ave, Santa Rosa, CA 95407

Date: 6 - 7 October, 2023

Time: 9am - 5pm



SEATTLE CELEBRATES FIJI DAY



Fiji Day commemorates two key events in the island nation's history, the ceding of Fiji to the United Kingdom in 1874 and Fiji gaining independence in 1970.

Fiji Day celebration in Seattle Washington with dinner was organized by a small group of Fijians in the South of Seattle. The group was formed by a few families that the organizers wanted to recognize. From the Board members and their assistance. It took them two months to prepare and come up with putting this Fiji Day dinner for 2023. The idea of coming together, sharing a meal, fellowship, and helping each other grow to achieve a successful Fijian. Events like this can usually remind them of their identity and also never forget their humble beginning.



Chief Guest: Bishop Aseri Kunawave.
Leading the Fijian Community in Seattle for 10-plus years.

Ledua Cinavilakeba
Chairman(Fijian Community South)

Leaders.

Cinavilakeba Family, Naigulevu family, Vakalalabure family, Vuli family, Lavenia Natuna, Rosi Bolatagici, Sam Otobeach Frankie, Krishan, Semesa.

Without them, this may not have been possible. Vinaka to Seattle



SEATTLE CELEBRATES FIJI DAY



Fiji News

DENMARK AIMS TO STRENGTHEN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH FIJI

Denmark is committed to strengthen support for Fiji in the areas of climate change, renewable energy and issues that matter to Small Islands Developing States. This was articulated by Denmark's Special Representative for its candidacy to the United Nations (UN) Security Council Mr Holger K. Nielsen during a courtesy call paid to the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hon. Lenora Qereqeretabua. Mr. Nielsen's visit was an opportunity to elevate Denmark's cooperation with Fiji by seeing how best they can realign their support with Fiji's development priorities. Assistant Minister Qereqeretabua welcomed Mr. Nielsen to Fiji for his first official visit and acknowledged Denmark's support to Fiji over

the years and highlighted the potential to further enhance our cooperation, particularly through initiatives such as Green Climate Fund.

On the same note, the Assistant Minister spoke on the challenges faced by the Small Island Developing States like Fiji due to climate change and the need for 2023 Conference of the Parties, COP28, to deliver concrete results for Fiji and the region. She said Fiji looks forward to working closely with Denmark to further deepen our diplomatic relations in advancing sustainable development. In support of this, Mr. Nielsen assured of Denmark's commitment to see how best they can support Fiji through initiatives such as Green Climate Fund accessibility, Loss and Damage,



climate adaptation in the lead up to, and beyond, COP28; a global event to take place from 30 November to 12 December 2023 at Expo City, Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

Special Envoy applauded Fiji's leadership at global and regional fronts on issues such as climate change, economic

sustainability and regional solidarity. He reaffirmed Denmark's commitment to work closely with Fiji to deepen cooperation in important areas of development such as economy, trade and tourism. Mr. Nielsen's visit to Fiji was preceded by the visit to Vanuatu and Fiji of Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary

of Denmark and the Minister for Development Cooperation and Global Climate Policy, Mr. Dan Jorgensen in April this year. Following his visit to Fiji, Mr. Nielsen travels to Tonga and Samoa to further build on Denmark's engagement with the Pacific.

HISTORIC CONSULTATION MARKS MILESTONE FOR MELANESIAN COMMUNITIES IN FIJI

An emotional Paterisio Nunu couldn't hold back his tears while addressing a Government delegation during the "First-ever Consultation on the Formalization of Melanesian Settlements in Fiji." The former Civil Servant passionately addressed the plight of the descendants of the Melanesians who were brought to Fiji by blackbirders, highlighting their long-felt sense of being forgotten over the years. "We are a forgotten group of people, yet we played a major role in the development of Fiji in the early days," he emphasized. "Now that this Government has seen fit to address our plight, we are relieved. A burden that has been with us and our forefathers has been lightened." He expressed gratitude, saying, "I thank the Coalition Government for this initiative, and now that consultations have begun, we, the Melanesian descendants, look forward to a brighter future." In the latter half of the 1800s, our Melanesian compatriots first arrived in Fiji through the blackbirding system. Their unwavering determination led them to play a pivotal role in our nation's development, working diligently on cotton plantations and undertaking essential road construction. The enduring legacy of their contributions is

intricately interwoven into the very tapestry of Fiji's history. Despite their seamless integration into Fijian society, a significant majority of them currently reside in informal settlements. Government has undertaken the noble objective of formalizing these settlements, recognizing the incredible journey of these communities marked by unwavering strength and resilience—a journey that remains largely unfamiliar to many Fijians. Chairing the consultation on Thursday night (28/09/23) in Wailoku, the Assistant Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, Hon. Sakiusa Tubuna, said the Consultation on the Formalization of Melanesian Settlements in Fiji, unveiled a significant government initiative to rectify historical injustices and acknowledge the enduring contributions of Fiji's Melanesian descendants. Providing historical context, Hon Tubuna emphasized the challenging circumstances under which Melanesian ancestors arrived in Fiji. "Their arrival, dating back to July 5, 1865, predated that of many other communities. They were brought to Fiji as indentured laborers, enduring hardships that included the loss of cultural ties and family bonds," said Hon Tubuna. "This legacy deserved recog-

nitition and the restoration of their rights and Government is committed to formalizing Melanesian settlements representing a monumental step forward in Fiji's history, highlighting the indomitable strength and contributions of these communities to the nation's development. The Assistant Minister also shed light on the historical injustices faced by Melanesian communities, who were forcibly relocated from the Suva city area between 1920 and 1960. "In the era of Colonial rule, these individuals provided invaluable, yet often overlooked, cheap labor. Their sacrifices extended beyond the physical toil; many of them lost their cultural connections, severed from their roots, and tragically, were unable to reunite with their families." "Despite these adversities, Melanesian descendants continue to grapple with the consequences today, including land disputes and restricted access to their ancestral lands," he said. However, Hon. Tubuna's address celebrated the enduring spirit of the Melanesian communities and their significant contributions to Fiji's development. He acknowledged their strong bonds with indigenous Fijians, highlighting the unique journey of resilience that defines their history. Hon.



Tubuna emphasized Government's commitment to formalize informal settlements aimed at providing land security, addressing community disintegration, creating livelihood opportunities, and alleviating poverty. "This commitment goes beyond addressing past wrongs; it is a profound promise of a more equitable future for the Melanesian descendants," Hon. Tubuna elaborated. The Assistant Minister expressed deep gratitude to Prime Minister Honorable Sitiveni Rabuka for his leadership and dedication to inclusivity. "Hon. Rabuka's leadership ushered in the establishment of a task force committee, charged with overseeing the formalization project. This initiative aims to extend land tenancy rights to Melanesian settlements throughout Fiji while also exploring new

sites to accommodate the growing populations." Furthermore, Hon. Tubuna emphasized the necessity for authentic collaboration between the Government and Melanesian communities to collectively address shared challenges and pave the way for a brighter future for all. This call for collaboration came just before the official launch of the "Project for the Formalization of Melanesian Descent and Settlements in Fiji." The historic event laid the foundation for a more inclusive future in Fiji, where the contributions of Melanesian descendants would be celebrated and their rights fully reinstated. Consultations similar to this one will be conducted in all Melanesian settlements across the country. Also present at the consultation was the Permanent Secretary for iTaukei Affairs Mr. Pita Tagicakirewa.

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Fiji News

GOVERNMENT BOOSTS KOROLEVU SPORT FISHING BUSINESS WITH OUTBOARD MOTORS

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade Co-operatives SMEs and Communications, Hon. Manoa Kamikamica has reaffirmed the Coalition government's unwavering commitment to supporting grassroots individuals and the burgeoning Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector. Speaking at the handing over ceremony of two outboard motors at Naboutini Village, Serua to Captain Sireli Verebasaga, a prominent figure in sport fishing, charter, and water sports, Hon Kamikamica highlighted the critical role these enterprises play in Fiji's economy. Though inclement weather prevented a boat ride on this occasion, DPM Kamikamica expressed his eagerness to return for a charter trip in the Vatulele Passage, highlighting the significance of tourism as a major contributor to Fiji's GDP. "Tourism is the largest contributor to our country's economic pie or GDP," noted the Deputy Prime Minister. "It makes sense that some of our funds are set

aside for ventures like these." Hon. Kamikamica reiterated the government's dedication to supporting the MSME sector, stating that small and medium-sized businesses make up around 18% of Fiji's GDP. He pointed out that in other nations, the figure ranges from 60% to 80%, indicating significant growth potential in Fiji. The Deputy Prime Minister also highlighted the government's commitment to supporting MSMEs with a dedicated budget of around \$80 million. He stressed the importance of identifying impactful projects that can make a difference in the lives of Fijians, as well as diversification of income sources among small businesses. Captain Sireli's family exemplified such diversification, with Mrs. Verebasaga running a souvenir retail shop, and their daughter offering massages on Fiji's picturesque beaches. The Deputy Prime Minister commended this approach and expressed the Government's readiness to facilitate collaborations between small and large businesses to



stimulate economic activity. The outboard motors presented to Captain Sireli were the result of a joint effort between the Ministry under the Integrated Human Resources Program (IHRDP) and the Fiji Development Bank. "This program eases the initial debt burden for businesses by having the government contribute two-thirds of the project amount, with the applicant contributing one-third," said Hon

Kamikamica. Hon. Kamikamica encouraged the Yavusa Burenitu community to explore the potential eligibility of their ventures for this program, believing that targeted initiatives could significantly address Fiji's economic challenges. The Deputy Prime Minister further extended his best wishes to Captain Sireli and his family. He also thanked the Yavusa Burenitu for their warm welcome. He stressed

Government's commitment to supporting local communities and small businesses (MSMEs) and wished success to Captain Sireli's business and the whole community. "The delivery of the outboard motors today is a clear demonstration of the Government's dedication to aiding small businesses and driving economic growth, especially in the rural sector," stated the Deputy Prime Minister.

GOVERNMENT BOOSTS KOROLEVU SPORT FISHING BUSINESS WITH OUTBOARD MOTORS

Among the 24 nations currently implementing the Saemaul Undong program worldwide, Fiji recently received accolades from Mr. Kwak, Dae Hoon, President of the Korea Saemaul Undong Center, during his visit to Silana Village in Tailevu. Mr. Kwak and Hon. Sakiasi Ditoka, the Minister for Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management, visited Silana to evaluate the program's effects and express gratitude to the village residents for their dedication.

This visit showcases Fiji's dedication to rural development and disaster management through its participation in the Saemaul Undong program, highlighting its positive influence on the Silana community. Mr. Kwak, speaking to Silana villagers through an interpreter, commended Silana Village as an exemplary model that has garnered attention in Korea for its genuine eagerness to replicate the program's visionary approach. "What I have wit-

nessed here today stands as a testament to your unwavering dedication to the program. This initiative has united the people of Silana, enabling you to construct driveways and footpaths in the village through your collective efforts," he remarked. Mr. Kwak also acknowledged, "I've observed that you have initiated businesses to sustain the village, and some of you have even ventured into independent entrepreneurial endeavors, which is a positive development for Silana Village." Mr. Kwak added, "Based on the reports from our officers stationed in Fiji, we have determined that our projects here are performing exceptionally. This motivated me to visit in person. Only three and a half years into the implementation of the Saemaul Undong program in Fiji, we are further encouraged to continue our unwavering support to ensure its success." On the other hand, Hon. Ditoka expressed gratitude to the Republic of Korea for their financial assistance

and support, which has played a crucial role in promoting development within the village community. The Minister likened this program to raising a child, explaining that it begins with a conception phase, followed by a series of stages in its implementation, all aimed at fostering the village's growth and development until it reaches a point of self-sustainability and prosperity.

"It's essential to recognize that such support programs have a starting and ending point," the Minister emphasized. "Therefore, it's crucial for the three villages involved in the program, Mau, Naimasiasi, and Silana, to establish an interchangeable program. This would allow selected villagers to visit their sister villages, observing firsthand the projects being implemented there and gaining fresh ideas." "We are grateful that our visit today has unveiled your commitment to enter the tourism and homestay business, which has emerged as a result of the

Saemaul Undong program," the minister expressed.

"Government, on its part, is committed to complementing the finalization of the two accommodations by the beachside, ensuring that they meet the same standards as your pricing," Hon Ditoka affirmed. Silana Village Secretary, Ms. Marica Bole, shared that their initial project in 2016 was the beautification of the village, and it was two years later that the Government of the Republic of Korea stepped in to offer support. She explained, "This funding greatly strengthened our efforts. With it, we were able to construct an office for our Turaga ni Koro, complete our water project, and build a village dispensary, now accessible in all weather conditions." Ms. Bole also highlighted the improvements to the village infrastructure, saying, "You'll notice the paved paths and concrete driveway. These were designed with people with disabilities in mind." She proudly added, "The

opening of this bure today is a direct result of our motivation and the ideas inspired by the Saemaul Undong program, which promotes cooperation. It has also encouraged us to establish a cooperative business that is now successfully operating." The Saemaul Undong, also known as the New Community Movement was initiated by South Korean President Park Chung-hee on April 22, 1970. This movement drew inspiration from traditional Korean community values of collaboration and mutual support. It emerged in response to the significant disparity between the increasingly modern cities and the impoverished small villages. The movement encouraged community members to collaborate, work diligently, and assist one another. Initially, the focus was on improving living conditions and cleanliness. Over time, efforts expanded to include infrastructure development such as roads and initiatives to enhance the income of village residents.

Fiji News

Strengthening Bonds: Fiji and India's Enduring Partnership Celebrated on ITEC Day

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Hon. Professor Biman Prasad this evening officiated at the ITEC Day, a day that marked the 59th anniversary of India's ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) program—a day that symbolized the enduring bond between Fiji and India. Over the past eight months, Fiji's relationship with India had reached new heights, and this day was a testament to their deepening ties.

High-level visits had taken place, bridging the geographical gap between the two nations. "We were privileged to host the External Affairs Minister of India at one of the largest Hindi conferences held in Fiji earlier this year," Hon Prasad recounted, "Additionally, we welcomed esteemed guests like State Minister for External Affairs Dr. Raj Kumar Ranjan and Lieutenant Governor of Lakshadweep, Shri Praful Patel, who participated in the historic Girmit celebration, declared a national holiday in Fiji." Hon. Biman Prasad went on to recount the successful Pacific Power and Energy Conference (PPEC) summit in Papua New Guinea, where Fiji's Prime Minister had the honor of conferring Fiji's highest honor upon His Excellency the Prime Minister of India. During that



event, India announced several significant programs for Fiji and the broader Pacific region. "One noteworthy initiative," he continued, "is India's commitment to building a hundred-bed super specialty Pacific Hospital in Fiji. This project demonstrates India's dedication to strengthening healthcare infrastructure in the Pacific."

The Deputy Prime Minister also delved into history. He highlighted India's enduring support for education and training in Fiji, tracing it back to a time when Fiji lacked a university, and the prospects for Fijian citizens to study abroad were few. During this era, India

emerged as a crucial ally by extending scholarships and training initiatives like ITEC. This support played a pivotal role in shaping the future of Fiji's civil servants, teachers, doctors, and engineers. "Today, India's global leadership is an inspiration, and Fiji aimed to align itself with India's transformational agenda on the world stage. India's leadership during the G20 summit, he noted, was indicative of its pivotal role in global transformation, and Fiji sought to be part of that change." "Recognizing the changing geopolitics and economics, we understand the importance of staying at the forefront of technology, knowl-

edge, and entrepreneurship," declared Hon Prasad, emphasizing India's emergence as a global powerhouse for innovation.

"Our Prime Minister has reiterated our commitment to this partnership on multiple occasions," he assured, "As we celebrate the 75th year of our relationship, we anticipate more celebrations to mark this historical bond." The Deputy Prime Minister stressed that the Fiji-India relationship extended beyond diplomacy; it was deeply rooted in shared culture and tradition. Fiji's commitment to establishing a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was a significant step toward unity

and prosperity, a step that would redefine Fiji and lay the foundation for progress. The Deputy Prime Minister further extended heartfelt congratulations to His Excellency and the High Commission for the ITEC Day celebration and expressed eagerness for deeper cooperation, particularly in technology and education. ITEC Day is not just an anniversary; it's a celebration of a remarkable partnership between Fiji and India. This partnership holds the promise of a brighter and more prosperous future for both nations. It is a testament to the enduring story of friendship, cooperation, and shared aspirations.

PRIME MINISTER SITIVENI RABUKA ENGAGES IN BILATERAL WORKING LUNCH WITH GERMANY

Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka participated in a significant bilateral event today, a working lunch hosted by the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Olaf Scholz, along with the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany, H.E. Annalena Baerbock. The objective of this event was to facilitate an open roundtable discussion among Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to address subjects of mutual interest. The topics of focus included international climate policy, the upcoming COP28, financing challenges faced by SIDS, and the impending SIDS4 conference scheduled for 2024. During the roundtable discussion, several key talking points were

highlighted: Climate Change and COP28: Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka underscored the importance of international collaboration on climate change and expressed gratitude for Germany's commitment to climate action. Germany's climate action policy includes ambitious targets, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030, phasing out coal for electricity generation, and promoting electric transportation. SIDS Challenges and Climate Finance: The Prime Minister concurred with Germany's call for reform within the United Nations, G-20, and international financial institutions, emphasizing the vital role of international climate finance for

communities and countries on the frontlines of climate change. He highlighted the shortfall in meeting the \$100 billion per year commitment by developed countries and the need for accelerated climate action. Accessibility to Climate Finance: Prime Minister Rabuka raised concerns about the accessibility and effectiveness of climate finance, citing issues such as excessive loans, insufficient grants, inadequate funding for adaptation, and a lack of gender equality and locally led climate action initiatives. He stressed the urgency of accelerating climate finance through innovative finance sources and affordable borrowing to fund adaptation and mitigation efforts without

increasing debt burdens. Pacific SIDS Initiatives: Prime Minister Rabuka showcased innovative global actions undertaken by Pacific SIDS, including support for Vanuatu's request for an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on climate change-related obli-

gations, advocacy for sea level rise and maritime boundaries, and efforts toward a 'Fossil Fuel Free Pacific.' He also highlighted investments in disaster risk reduction, early warning systems, climate mobility, and the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.



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Fiji News

FIJI ATTENDS OPENING OF UNGA HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON SDGS

Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka attended the opening of the United Nations General Assembly's high-level meeting on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) this morning, marking a significant milestone as the world assesses progress at the mid-point of the SDGs. The SDG Summit, held annually at the UN General Assembly, is a pivotal event for global leaders to evaluate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which encompass a broad range of critical issues, from poverty eradication and environmental sustainability to healthcare access and education. This year's summit is especially significant as it represents a comprehensive year-in-review of SDG progress worldwide. Prime Minister Rabuka's presence at the summit underscores Fiji's unwavering commitment to the SDGs and its dedication to ensuring that no one is left behind in their pursuit. Fiji is working towards strengthening implementation, addressing data gaps, and transforming its development program by placing its people's needs and aspirations at the core of policy-making. Fiji, a Pacific Island nation, faces unique challenges and opportu-



nities in its SDG journey. Prime Minister Rabuka's participation at the summit will shed light on Fiji's experiences, strategies, and innovative solutions in the context of sustainable development. His insights will contribute to the global dialogue on how nations can accelerate progress toward achieving the SDGs while adapting to their specific circumstances. Prime

Minister Sitiveni Rabuka remarked, "Fiji recognises the urgency of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. We have made significant strides in various areas, but we also acknowledge the work that lies ahead. Our commitment to putting people first is not just a slogan; it is a guiding principle in our national development agenda." During the SDG

Summit, Prime Minister Rabuka is expected to highlight Fiji's successes, share challenges, and present initiatives aimed at building a more sustainable and equitable future for all Fijians. Fiji's focus on data-driven decision-making, environmental conservation, and social inclusivity will be integral to the discussions. The world will keenly follow Prime Minister

Sitiveni Rabuka's address at the SDG Summit, anticipating the valuable insights and contributions Fiji can provide to the global community's pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals. His participation reaffirms Fiji's commitment to being a proactive player in the global effort to create a better and more sustainable world.

FIJI COUNTRY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN SIGNED



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, National Development, and Statistics, Hon. Biman Prasad, and the United Nations Resident Coordinator to Fiji, Mr. Dirk Wagener, signed the Fiji Country Implementation Plan in Suva today. As part of the plan, UN contributions will be examined in relation to Fiji's national development priorities and ways

in which the Government and UN can better align their programmes in order to ensure that Fiji stays on track to achieve its sustainable development objectives. DPM Prasad emphasised the importance of working with the United Nations and Fiji's development partners in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The UN Resident Coordinator in Fiji,

Dirk Wagener, stressed the importance of providing innovative, cross-sectoral technology support, access to global advocacy platforms and networks, and cost-effective solutions to

Small Island States. There were also discussions on Fiji's national priorities across a range of areas, such as climate change, health, environmental protection, gender equality, human

rights and economic empowerment. Present at the discussions were senior government officials and representatives from the various United Nations agencies.



BOLD TRANSFORMATION IN APPROACH TO FINANCING

"In pursuit of a more equitable and prosperous future for a 'New Fiji' we envision a bold transformation in our approach to financing – a financial ecosystem that is inclusive, diverse, and equitable where our women and girls take control of their resources, enhance their economic participation and make their dreams a reality", said the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Co-operatives, SMEs and Communications Hon. Manoa Kamikamica whilst delivering his vision statement on behalf of the Fiji Government at the SDG Action Weekend 2023. "Our vision is clear -- economic empowerment of our women is part of our economic diversification plans", added DPM Kamikamica whilst speaking on the future of Gender-Lens Financing for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals in Fiji.



PM RABUKA ACCORDED FIJIAN WELCOME AHEAD OF UNGA



Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka has touched down in the vibrant metropolis of New York City, marking his arrival for the highly anticipated United Na-

tions General Assembly. The Prime Minister's visit to the city that never sleeps commenced with a gracious traditional Fijian welcome at the residence of

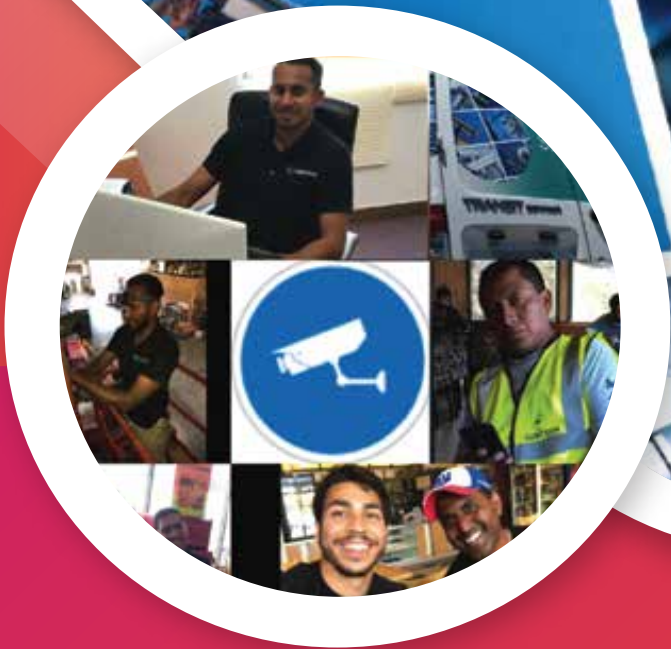
Fiji's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Colonel Filipo Tarakinikini. Amidst the rich tapestry of Fijian customs and traditions, PM Rabuka ex-

pressed his heartfelt gratitude to those in attendance for their unwavering support to their families back home through remittances. He recognised the

significant role played by Fijian expatriates, acknowledging them as outstanding ambassadors for Fiji on the global stage. In a poignant moment, PM Rabuka extended his deep appreciation to the Fijian community in New York City for their dedication to preserving their culture.

He said their commitment to carrying out the traditional Fijian welcome demonstrated their unyielding commitment to keeping the spirit of Fiji alive, even in a foreign land. As PM Rabuka joins the global leaders gathering at the United Nations General Assembly, his message of unity, appreciation, and cultural preservation resonates not only with the Fijian community but also with the international community at large. The Prime Minister looks forward to representing Fiji with pride and honour during his participation in the United Nations General Assembly and engaging in meaningful discussions for the betterment of our global community.

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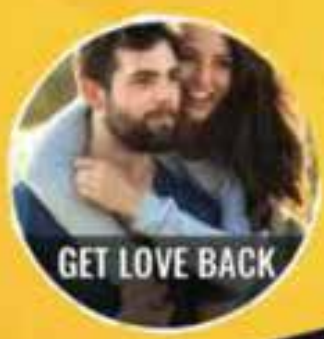
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Fiji News

FIJI AND INDIA FORGE STRONGER TIES IN YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Representatives of Fiji's three resident universities, the University of the South Pacific, the University of Fiji, and the Fiji National University today took part Youth Leadership Contest, organized by the India Fiji Friendship Forum and the High Commission of India in Fiji. While academic achievement remains a cornerstone of personal growth, the event's organizers emphasized the importance of real-world skills beyond the classroom. To this end, a dynamic and interactive quiz competition was introduced, offering participants the opportunity to answer questions in real-time showcasing a commitment to evolving and improving each year, with enhancements evident throughout the day. The organizers also accentuated the importance of teamwork and leadership in the professional world emphasizing that while learning and collaboration are essential, developing leadership skills is equally vital. The Youth Leadership Contest aims to instill these values by highlighting the significance of teamwork, individual strengths, and leadership abilities. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Hon Professor Biman Prasad, officiated at the

event held at the University of the South Pacific's (USP) ICT Centre in Suva, emphasizing the importance of nurturing youth leadership. Since 2017, the India-Fiji Friendship Forum has played an instrumental role in actively promoting and strengthening the relationship between Fiji and India. In the last nine months, under a new government, Fiji has accelerated its efforts to reestablish and deepen its ties with India and the broader Pacific Islands region. Hon. Prasad, during his speech, highlighted the incredible growth and dynamism of India as a global leader in various sectors, including economics, politics, democracy, innovation, and entrepreneurship. He commended India's role as a leader of the south, particularly acknowledging Prime Minister Narendra Modi's influence in global forums. "We want to engage much more deeply and meaningfully to ensure that we not only experience what we have had over so many years in terms of our relationship but also take it to the next level," stated Deputy Prime Minister Prasad. Recognizing the aspirations of Fiji's youth, he emphasized that Fiji's young generation is also dreaming,



achieving, and inspiring others. "Government's focus on youth development is evident through various initiatives, including a \$50 million allocation to support children from preschool to high school, the write-off of \$650 million in Tertiary Education Loans (TEL) debt benefiting nearly 53,000 students, and the establishment of a merit-based scholarship scheme," said the Deputy Prime Minister. "Furthermore, Fiji has faced challenges in its labor market, with approximately 10% of the workforce lost in the last 18 months. To address this issue,

the government aims to provide opportunities for young Fijians worldwide and encourages their return with fresh ideas, innovations, and new perspectives," said Hon Prasad. The Youth Leadership Contest, hosted by the India-Fiji Friendship Forum, is seen as a significant step in engaging the youth. The contest covers a wide range of subjects, including mathematics, logic, business, politics, economics, geopolitics, and international relations. Deputy Prime Minister Prasad commended the initiative as a platform for young Fijians to showcase their leader-

ship skills. DPM Prasad thanked the Indian High Commission for their political engagement and support for such initiatives. He expressed his belief in the wealth of wisdom and knowledge residing in the nation's youth and encouraged learning from their answers and questions during the contest. The Youth Leadership Contest is poised to play a vital role in fostering the leadership capabilities of Fiji's young generation, ultimately contributing to the nation's growth and development.

NAKINI VILLAGE EMPOWERED WITH SOLAR-POWERED WATER PROJECT

The residents of Nakini Village, situated in the province of Naitasiri, are expressing profound gratitude for the Government's timely intervention after the commissioning of their water project today. The village was chosen as the pilot site for a water project that incorporates a solar-powered water pump and an Ecological Purification System (EPS), which will furnish the villagers with a reliable source of potable water. The initiative aims to tackle water source challenges and introduce solar pump technology to improve water accessibility and reduce environmental impact. The project comes with a significant government investment of \$171,000.00 with the main focus on enhancing

the availability of clean water in remote communities while harnessing renewable energy solutions. "This approach is crucial to improving water accessibility, particularly in areas where communities either lack access to water or face issues with outdated infrastructure, such as aging dams and reliance on gravity-based systems," said the Minister. "Over the coming months, the Water Authority will conduct a comprehensive assessment of the pilot project here in Nakini and, if proven successful, the government intends to replicate this solar-powered water extraction system across Fiji to significantly improve water access for all citizens," emphasized Hon Tuisawau. The system currently in

place combines water extraction through solar-powered pumps, water purification processes, and finally, the distribution of clean water to the taps in the community. This integrated approach is seen as a promising model for tackling water challenges in remote areas. In addition to the pilot project, the government is also working with the Water Authority of Fiji (WAF) to explore climate financing opportunities for solar-powered water solutions in similar remote communities. Many communities, like the one under consideration, require the use of power to extract groundwater when the water source is at a lower level. During his speech, Minister Tuisawau also addressed

concerns raised by villagers regarding taxi permits for rural communities. The Minister noted that while the permits are currently under a freeze period, the government is actively reviewing legislation related to permit sales, which has been a contentious issue. "Stakeholder engagement is underway to find resolutions, and discussions will resume once these issues are adequately addressed," the Minister clarifies. Furthermore, the government is encouraging village-based taxi services to consider adopting a cooperative model as part of broader efforts to develop the transport sector. "This initiative aligns with the government's strategy to diversify livelihoods and income sources for communities."

The Minister stated that the goal is to enhance the well-being of the community by not only granting market access but also by providing essential infrastructure support such as better roads and access to water. Meanwhile, Village elder Eroni Koroiwaca thanked the Government for the timely assistance. "We are thankful Minister for the Government intervention and rest assured that this is the beginning of a new era for our village." Mr. Koroiwaca said that the villagers no longer have to use river water for daily needs and they look forward to a brighter future for our village through continued collaboration for future development.

Fiji News



I am pleased to see our own people doing well wherever they go. Photographed here with Vinod Bhindi outside his business in Los Angeles. He will be our new Honorary Consul in Los Angeles where we have a substantial Fiji diaspora. He hosted us to a lovely lunch which included the security personnel assigned to me by the U.S. Federal Government over the two weeks I spent in the U.S. attending the UN in New York and Washington D.C. Vinaka vakalevu incoming HC Vinod Bhindi!

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Health News

Thousands of cases of cantaloupe recalled due to possible salmonella contamination

Eagle Produce announced a voluntary recall of more than 6,500 cases of cantaloupes in 19 states and Washington D.C. due to potential salmonella contamination. The company initiated the recall after the Food and Drug Administration conducted a test on cantaloupe in a distribution center, according to the FDA.

The Kandy brand whole cantaloupe involved in the recall have the UPC number code 4050 and lot codes 797901, 797900 and 804918, according to the FDA. They were distributed between Sept. 5 and Sept. 16 in various supermarkets in California, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Washington, D.C. Salmonella is a bacteria that can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, people with weakened immune systems and frail or older adults, according to the Mayo Clinic. Symptoms of salmonellosis, an infection



with the salmonella bacteria, include diarrhea (which may be bloody), nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and fever. Symptoms typically begin between six hours and six days after infection, per the CDC,

but some may not experience symptoms for weeks. children under five, adults over 65, people with weakened immune systems, and pregnant women are at the highest risk for severe infection. There have

been no reported illnesses as of Wednesday, the FDA said. The FDA asks that customers who purchased the affected fruit should not eat it and dispose of them. Consumers with concerns about illness should contact a

health care provider. No other products or lot codes were said to be affected by the recall, according to the FDA, and the company is cooperating with the FDA.

Insurance hurdles for new Covid vaccines have largely been resolved, Biden administration says

Last week, as the updated Covid vaccines rolled out to pharmacies across the U.S., some people eager to get their doses were met with unexpected insurance issues — even though the shots are supposed to be covered. On Wednesday, the Department of Health and Human Services said the issue has been "largely, if not completely," resolved. HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra met earlier in the day with leading insurance companies, including CVS Health, UnitedHealth Group, Anthem and Cigna, to review the progress of the Biden administration's fall Covid vaccination campaign, agency spokesperson Jeff Nesbit said in an email. The insurance companies made it clear that they are "fully covering the new vaccine shots," according to a

rundown of the meeting shared by HHS. They described the problem of some people being denied coverage as "systemic technical issues." One insurer, Aetna, said that going forward it would treat the new shot as a seasonal vaccination, meaning members can get Covid vaccinations wherever they get their annual flu shots. The Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention signed off on the updated Covid vaccines this month. For the first time since the first vaccines became available, the government is not covering the cost of the shots. Federal health officials had previously assured that the new shots would be provided at no cost for most people with insurance. However, reports quickly surfaced that some people were



being told their insurance would not cover it. The insurance companies said they would continue to closely monitor reports of

any "technical or coding barriers to vaccine coverage," according to a letter shared with NBC News from AHIP, the

industry's trade group. More than 2 million people had gotten the updated vaccines as of Wednesday, HHS said.

Health News

More Women Are Using Cannabis to Ease Menopause Symptoms, a Study Suggests

If you're a woman managing menopause symptoms, you may be no stranger to experimenting with purported remedies and complementary treatments. Research cites survey results that note about half of women turn to supplements and yoga during this transition. Now a study presented this week at the 2023 annual meeting of the Menopause Society suggests another approach — cannabis, or marijuana — may be increasingly popular for mitigating symptoms such as sleep difficulties and mood issues, despite a lack of research on the efficacy of marijuana for these purposes. The current study has not been published in a peer-reviewed medical journal. "We know that cannabis use is becoming more common with normalization and with legalization in adults over the age of 50, and women are the fastest-growing populations for those who use cannabis," says the lead author, Carolyn Gibson, PhD, an assistant professor of psychiatry and a health services researcher at the University of California in San Francisco. Marijuana is now legal for recreational use in adults 21 and older in 23 states, along with Washington, DC, and two U.S. territories, and medical-use marijuana is legal in 38 states, three territories, and Washington, DC, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. It contains the psychoactive compound tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), which causes a "high" or mind-altered state. On the other hand, cannabidiol (CBD), another active component of cannabis, is not impairing, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). CBD is legal in the United States, with restrictions varying by state, Harvard Health Publishing notes. Increased access and acceptance has driven cannabis use to an all-time high. According to a Gallup poll released in August 2023, 50 percent of U.S. adults reported experimenting with marijuana. Although women are using cannabis at a higher rate than ever, "most studies have focused on men and younger adults — not many have looked

closely at women in midlife, so there's a gap in what we know," says Dr. Gibson. Many Middle-Aged Women Use Cannabis Daily To further explore how and why middle-aged women are using cannabis, researchers used data from 5,174 women ages 45 to 64 with an average age of 55. The majority of the women had already gone through menopause, 63 percent were white, and two-thirds were working full- or part-time. Highlights from the survey included: 42 percent of the women reported lifetime cannabis use in any form, most commonly smoking marijuana or using edible products. Of the women who said they had smoked, 30 percent reported smoking daily or near daily for a year or longer. Of the women who used cannabis, 62 percent used it recreationally, 25 percent reported both recreational and medical use, and 13 percent solely used it to medically manage symptoms and chronic health conditions. More than 10 percent of participants had used cannabis in the previous 30 days; most reported smoking or consuming edibles. Among the women who had used cannabis in the prior 30 days, about 3 in 10 reported smoking cannabis on a daily or near-daily basis, while close to 2 in 10 reported daily or near-daily use of edible cannabis products. In those women who used marijuana medically, the most common reasons were for chronic pain (28 percent), anxiety (24 percent), and sleep and stress (both 22 percent). An estimated 6 percent of women used cannabis to manage menopause symptoms, primarily to target menopause-related mood and sleep difficulties. Findings also show that middle-aged women appear to be using cannabis for many of the same reasons as adults in general: anxiety, sleep, and stress, but also menopause symptoms, says Gibson. "But we still do not know if use is actually helping for those symptoms, or if it may be contributing to other challenges," she says. Anecdotally, Cannabis May Help With Menopause-Related Sleep Issues Karen

Adams, MD, a clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology and the director of the menopause and healthy aging program at Stanford Health Care in California, says that her patients report turning to CBD or THC-containing marijuana to help them sleep. "My menopausal patients tell me they are incredibly bothered by their sleep difficulties. They used to be good sleepers, and if they got up at 2 a.m. to go to the bathroom, they could still fall back to sleep pretty quickly. But after menopause, once they were up, they were up for hours — so much so that the next day they experienced brain fog and fuzziness," says Dr. Adams, who was not involved with this study. Adams has observed that taking these products before bed has been a game changer for her patients, helping them get to sleep and stay asleep. "Anecdotally it seems to work. However, we need more science investigating the risks, side effects, and long-term outcomes in women using cannabis for sleep issues in menopause," says Adams. Using Cannabis for Menopause Symptoms? Talk With Your Provider "It's unclear why women are turning to cannabis, a product not thoroughly evaluated as it relates to efficacy and safety, and if they are also talking to their healthcare practitioners about these symptoms," says Juliana (Jewel) Kling, MD, MPH, a professor of medicine and the chair of women's health internal medicine and dean of the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine in Scottsdale, Arizona, and who was not involved in this study. These findings highlight that middle-aged women are having significant

quality-of-life symptoms and are looking for options to treat these symptoms, says Dr. Kling. "There are many products available to treat menopause symptoms, but it may be that women aren't aware of them, aren't offered them, or are not associating their symptoms with menopause," she says. In addition to discussing menopause symptom treatment options, practitioners should ask patients about cannabis given that it is likely widely used, says Kling. Gibson agrees, saying, "We need to normalize talking about cannabis in the healthcare setting." What Are the Health Risks of Smoking or Consuming Edible Cannabis? The results indicate that smoked and edible forms of cannabis are the most popular ways of using marijuana, and each may be concerning in their own way, says Gibson. "Obviously, when we think about smoking anything, it brings up concern for cardiovascular health and respiratory health, especially if people are smoking on a daily basis," she says. Smoking marijuana "clearly damages the human lung," has been linked to chronic bronchitis, and may negatively impact the body's immune system, according to the American Lung Association. Consuming cannabis via edibles may be safer, but there are concerns about products that have a really high potency, or aren't labeled (typically in states where marijuana may not be legal and thus regulated), and the potency isn't known at all, says Gibson. "Higher potency brings risks for increased tolerance, which brings risks for dependence, and also acute risks such as acute anxiety, fall risk,

maybe psychosis, the things that send people to the emergency room," she says. THC levels of cannabis have increased, with today's THC levels about 10 times higher than in the 1970s and '80s, says Bonnie Halpern-Felsher, PhD, a professor of pediatrics and psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Stanford Medicine in California, who was not involved with this study. More Research Is Needed to Explore the Benefits and Risks of Cannabis Gibson and her team concluded that given the "relatively common use" of marijuana, more research is needed to evaluate how cannabis may benefit or harm women during the menopause transition and beyond. Historically, that's been difficult given that cannabis is illegal at the federal level, but there's been some recent progress. In December 2022, President Biden signed into law a bill that streamlines access to marijuana for clinical trials and expedites applications for universities and producers to grow and distribute cannabis for research. There's also a move to reclassify cannabis from the highly regulated Schedule 1 class to Schedule 3, which would also make it easier for researchers to conduct studies, according to PBS News Hour. If you're thinking about using cannabis for menopause symptoms, talk to your doctor first, says Gibson. "Your provider can give you information on how using it may not be affecting other medications you're taking. They may also offer other menopause treatment approaches that may have some more evidence," she says.



Health News

Short bursts of activity, totaling less than 10 minutes, linked to lower risk of death



Even short bursts of physical activity — the kind that come from simple, daily tasks — can benefit people’s health, according to a large study published Thursday in the journal *The Lancet Public Health*. The research found that engaging in a few minutes of physical activity, such as walking, gardening or household chores, each day was linked to lower risks of heart attack, stroke and early death. People who made it a habit to move for 5 to 10 minutes a day enjoyed the most health benefits, but even those who got as little as 1 to 3 minutes of activity experienced some positive effects. “Every minute counts,” said senior author Emmanuel Stamatakis, a professor of physical activity, lifestyle and population health at the University of Sydney, “even if that minute of physi-

cal activity is part of our daily routine.” The findings were based on data from more than 25,000 adults ages 42 to 78 in the United Kingdom who wore fitness trackers, similar to an Apple Watch or a Fitbit, every day for two years. Researchers also monitored participants’ health records for almost eight years to find links between their physical activity and health outcomes. People included in the analysis did not exercise or play a sport, and almost all the physical activity happened in periods lasting less than 10 minutes. The researchers found that these short bursts of physical activity throughout the day, lasting less than 10 minutes total, were linked to a 52% decrease in the risk of premature death, as well as a 41% decrease in the risks of heart attack and stroke, compared to getting

no physical activity. While the total amount of activity to help health came in at under 10 minutes, the duration and the intensity of the activity still mattered: People who moved for a minimum of 2 minutes at a moderate or vigorous intensity, for example, saw more health benefits than those who moved for just 30 seconds at a low intensity. Moderate intensity was defined as any activity during which a person found it challenging to sing but could still speak comfortably, Stamatakis said; vigorous intensity meant the person couldn’t speak more than a few words.

Most people engaged in low to moderate physical activity, he said. However, there was a sweet spot to how much vigorous intensity was beneficial: about 10 seconds per minute. “Vigorous intensity is extreme-

ly powerful,” Stamatakis said. The study adds to evidence that regular physical activity can improve health and help prevent diseases. Pankaj Kapahi, a researcher at the Buck Institute for Research on Aging in California, said the findings make sense, noting that most centenarians are not “super athletes” who exercise for several hours a day. “So an active lifestyle with short bursts of activity seems like a better recipe for a longer and healthier life,” said Kapahi, who was not involved in the study. High-intensity interval training, or HIIT, a popular exercise routine that involves short bursts of intense exercise with breaks in between, is rooted in the same principle, said Marc Roig, a physical and occupational therapy professor at McGill University in Montreal. “Find the right spot between

intensity and duration,” he said. “Bouts of 10 minutes are ideal because they tap into all these pathways” that the body uses to store and burn energy. Dr. Susan Spratt, an endocrinologist and senior medical director for the Population Health Management Office at Duke Health in North Carolina, said the findings are important to keep in mind for people who work desk jobs, who often find themselves sitting for long stretches without interruption. “But a better approach may be to work on tasks for a period of time interrupted with dedicated periods of activity,” she said. Stamatakis said engaging in short bouts of physical activity could be helpful to people who are unwilling or unable to take part in structured exercise. “This is very, very promising,” he said.

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Health News

Weight Gain in Middle Age: Why It Happens, How to Stop It

One thing women should know about midlife weight gain: The struggle is real. As women age, they are likely to burn fewer calories because of a reduction in physical activity and a decrease in lean body mass and muscle mass. On top of that, the drop in estrogen levels that happens during perimenopause and the menopause transition can redistribute fat that was previously stored in the hips or buttocks, moving it to the waistline and belly. Research shows that most midlife women (between the ages of 40 and 65) gain weight. In the study of women across the nation (SWAN), women added an average of 1.5 pounds per year during midlife. Similarly, in the Nurses' Health Study, midlife women gained an average of 7 pounds over 8 years of follow-up. But there are interventions, both lifestyle and pharmaceutical, that can help women manage weight during midlife, says Maria Daniela Hurtado, MD, PhD, an endocrinologist who is part of the Mayo Clinic Precision Medicine for Obesity program in Jacksonville, Florida. Dr. Hurtado outlined strategies for preventing weight gain and shedding excess pounds in a presentation, "The Skinny on Weight Management in Midlife," at the 2023 annual meeting of the Menopause Society, in Philadelphia. Hormone Changes Around Menopause Are Just 1 Factor in Weight Gain Midlife comes with physical, psychological, and social changes that can be related to aging, menopause, or both, says Hurtado. "It can be challenging to discern the effects of aging from the effects of menopause on weight gain in midlife women, as these two life events overlap," she says. The abrupt change in hormone levels that occurs during the menopause transition can predispose women to quicker weight gain, says Rekha Kumar, MD, an endocrinologist at Weill Cornell Medicine and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. "Although we mostly focus on the decline in estrogen, other hormones are impacted as well, such as progesterone

and testosterone," Dr. Kumar explains. "It is not always the absolute level of hormones that might lead to a change in body composition but the balance between certain hormones." External factors can contribute to weight gain, too, says Hurtado. "People are likely to engage in less physical activity as they age. This, coupled with the decrease in lean mass or muscle mass, can potentially decrease energy expenditure and predispose women to weight gain," she says. **Weight Gain Is Not Just About Appearance: There Are Health Consequences Accumulating excess fat tissue has multiple consequences for health.** "The most important health risks associated with midlife weight gain, especially gaining abdominal fat, would be the risk of insulin resistance, diabetes, and heart disease," says Kumar. Excess fat, especially in the belly area, is linked to several types of cancer, including breast, endometrial, ovarian, esophageal, gastric, colorectal, liver, gallbladder, pancreas, and kidney cancers, says Hurtado. Additionally, carrying extra pounds can lead to mechanical complications that can include obstructive sleep apnea and joint pain and damage, such as osteoarthritis, and acid reflux, she explains. "Finally, excess adiposity [fat] has been linked to worse hot flashes and night sweats early in the menopause transition; increased vaginal, genital, and urinary symptoms of menopause; and sexual dysfunction," Hurtado adds. **Work Out to Combat Muscle Loss and Belly Fat** It should come as no surprise that experts recommend exercise to prevent changes in weight. "Activity is considered of moderate intensity when people are working hard enough that they are able to talk but cannot sing a song," Hurtado says. If women are already getting that kind of exercise but are still gaining weight, they may need to change up the type of activity. Kumar recommends trying a new (but safe) fitness challenge. "If my patients are not following an exercise routine at all, I

consideration their fitness level and other health problems that may affect their capability of exercising," says Hurtado. Women should aim for 20 to 30 minutes of aerobic exercise most days, plus resistance or strength training, such as lifting weights, yoga, and Pilates, two or three times a week, advises Karen Adams, MD, a professor of obstetrics and gynecology and the director of the menopause and healthy aging center at Stanford Medicine in California. "Women who do both strength training and cut back on calorie intake will lose more fat than those who only cut back on calories," she says. The experts agree that women who do resistance training and aerobic exercise before menopause hits will reap the advantages later. "The more muscle you have going into menopause, the better you'll be able to withstand the natural loss that happens during the menopausal transition. And exercise is good for so many reasons: It improves mood, helps sleep, benefits sexual functioning, and decreases fall risk," says Dr. Adams. **Keep Track of Your Calories and Try the Mediterranean Diet** To prevent weight gain during menopause, Hurtado recommends monitoring and decreasing caloric intake by about 10 to 20 percent from the amount you consumed before the transition. So, if you ate 2,000 calories per day in your premenopausal world, that means trimming it down to 1,800. Adams recommends a

Mediterranean-style diet. "It's mostly fruit, veggies, whole grains, plus legumes, nuts and seeds, and olive oil. It's best to minimize all types of meat, but if we do eat meat, make it mostly chicken or fish — red meat is pro-inflammatory and associated with higher rates of heart disease and cancer," she says. If you want to consume more protein, remember there are many great plant-based protein sources such as nuts, legumes, and whole grains like quinoa, adds Adams. "I'm not saying you can never have a burger! If you want it, have it and enjoy it. But if you have a burger three times a week, you'll be increasing your risk for chronic illness, plus making it harder to lose weight," she says. And whenever possible, Adams advises women to focus on eating whole foods, not "foods where you have to tear open the package or open the box. Those are highly processed foods, and they typically have loads of sugar, salt, and fat," she adds. **Make Sure Your Medications Aren't Causing Weight Gain** Hurtado reviews health records to make sure her patients aren't using weight-promoting medications. "Unfortunately, this is a common side effect to frequently used medications. When possible, I discontinue these medications or try switching to weight-neutral (or even weight loss-promoting) medications to treat the underlying disease," she says. **Manage Menopause Symptoms to Support Your Efforts to Maintain a**

Healthy Weight Although menopause hormone therapy isn't indicated for weight loss, it can help support efforts to shed pounds, says Hurtado. "Untreated vasomotor symptoms like hot flashes and night sweats can have negative consequences in quality of life and health. The use of hormone therapy to treat vasomotor symptoms has been shown to improve sleep, activity, and quality of life, all factors that can mitigate weight gain in midlife women," she says. In a small study presented at ENDO 2021, the yearly meeting of the Endocrine Society, the authors concluded that helping women sleep better during menopause may prevent weight gain. If there are medical or other reasons not to use hormone therapy, alternative treatment options may help, including nonhormonal treatment options (avoiding those that promote weight gain) and cognitive behavioral therapy, notes Hurtado. **Make Sleep a Priority** "Poor sleep is associated with weight gain, mood disturbance, and brain fog, Adams says. "Managing sleep disturbance is the first thing I would advise if someone is having difficulty maintaining a healthy weight." Her advice on sleep hygiene: Get up at the same time every day, go to bed only when you're sleepy, and no naps. Keep the bedroom dark and cool and get treatment for any conditions that can interrupt sleep, such as sleep apnea or restless legs.





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Bollywood News

Deol legacy continues: Meet Rajveer Deol, third generation, set to make Bollywood debut in 'Dono'

This year has indeed been a remarkably successful year for the Deol family. Sunny Deol garnered immense love for his recent release, 'Gadar 2,' while his father and veteran actor, Dharmendra Deol, received praise for his performance in 'Rocky or Rani Kii Prem Kahani.' Now, the third generation of the Deol dynasty is poised to carry forward their father and grandfather's legacy. Rajveer Deol, the grandson of Dharmendra and the son of superstar Sunny Deol and his wife Pooja Deol, is all set to make his Bollywood debut with Rajshri Productions' film 'Dono.' The film stars Paloma Thakeria in the lead role opposite Rajveer.

Interestingly, this film also marks Paloma's debut in the Bollywood industry, and she happens to be the daughter of actress Pooja Dhillon. If you think this film only has two debutants, you are mistaken, as this film also marks the directorial debut of Sooraj Barjatya's son, Avnish Barjatya. This movie involves star kids in every sense. It will be exciting to see what these 'nepo' kids have in store



for the audience and whether they can leave their mark on viewers' hearts. It will also be interesting to watch whether the veteran parents of these three debutants have successfully groomed their offspring to carry forward their legacy. For the un-

versed, the trailer was released by the makers on Monday, Au-

gust 4, over a month before its release date. *Dono* is a love drama that takes place during a destination wedding. Dev and Meghna, as played by Rajveer and Paloma, meet for the first time at a wedding of their friends and fall in love. The trailer reveals the plot of the film, which follows the

story of two heartbroken youngsters seeking closure.

Dev is attending the wedding of his best friend, whom he has loved for almost eleven years. At the wedding, he meets Meghna, who has recently ended a six-year relationship. Shankar Mahadevan, Ehsaan Noorani, and Loy Mendonsa wrote the

film's soundtrack. Avnish S. Barjatya and Manu Sharma wrote the script. What's more interesting is that Rajshri Productions is directing a true-blue love drama post 'Maine Pyaar Kiya', starring Salman Khan and Bhagyashree, after a 33-year break.

Sonam Kapoor Opens Up About Web Series Debut: It Is A Lot Easier...

Sonam Kapoor recently opened up about how she would like to dabble in long-form content - namely mini-series that give her more time with her character. "I'm ready and raring to go again," says Sonam Kapoor and one of the items on her agenda is to explore the long-form storytelling on OTT. The actor, who took a break from work after the birth of son Vayu in August 2022, said she is inspired by her father Anil Kapoor's work on popular series "The Night Manager". "I got pregnant at the tail end of COVID-19 and I've always said that I will take time off (from work). It was maternity leave, which every woman and man should get. I spent time with my baby. Now, I'm ready and raring to go again, Sonam told PTI in an interview. "I would love to do

a mini-series or OTT shows. I saw my father's show and I was very excited to see what it was like. It was at the level of any film that you will see. I would love to do something like that. I feel you can have more time playing a character, the actor said. Kapoor, 38, known for "Delhi-6", "Aisha", "Raanjhanaa", "Bhaag Milkha Bhaag" and "Neerja", was recently seen in Sujoy Ghosh-produced crime thriller *Blind*, which was filmed in 2021 and released on OTT in July this year. Her last theatrical outing was the 2019 release *The Zoya Factor*. The actor, who recently promoted Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival's market initiative *Word to Screen*, said she likes to be part of book adaptations as her character is already well-established on paper. She has featured in two

films with literary inspirations -- 2010's *Aisha*, an adaptation of Jane Austen's famed novel "Emma", and *The Zoya Factor*, the 2019 film which was based on Anuja Chauhan's 2008 book of the same name. "For an actor, it is a lot easier to play a character that is already written because there's so much description and a back story, etc. "But sometimes, if it is a beloved character, then you might falter in the audience's expectations and the way they look at that character because a lot of people already know the story and they love the character." She believes another Austen's classic "Sense and Sensibility" would make for a fantastic book-to-screen adaptation. Kapoor praised Rajshree Ojha, the director of "Aisha", and Abhishek Sharma of "The Zoya Factor" for the way they



handled the book adaptations. For *The Zoya Factor*, it was controlled and all about the director. Everything I did, he had directed me. I had no control over my creative process. Every director works differently. "With *Aisha*, I was given the

freedom to create something that I wanted to create in terms of the character. We did many workshops. Even though we were bound by the book, we had the freedom to explore our characters, Kapoor said.

Bollywood News

Salman Khan, Shah Rukh Khan responsible for Govinda's failed career? Pahlaj Nihalani makes shocking claims

Govinda is one of the most adored 90s stars of Bollywood. But the actor had to face a downfall in the industry. Govinda was one of the top stars in the country but today, the actor has not much work in his kitty. His statements about camps in Bollywood ruining and Salman Khan, Shah Rukh Khan his career left everyone in shock. Indian film producer Pahlaj Nihalani claims the statement has badly impacted the once-popular star.

Pahlaj Nihalani talks about how David Dhawan created a rift between him and Govinda. Pahlaj Nihalani blames David Dhawan for creating differences between him and Govinda. When the producer started working with Anil Kapoor and other celebs, David started bad-mouthing him, claims Nihalani in an interview with Bollywood Thikana. Pahlaj recalls David would solely take credit for the success of his movies. And when he started working in other films, Dhawan would go

and talk behind his back. The same thing happened with Govinda. As per Pahlaj's claims, Govinda abandoned a movie they were supposed to work on because David said something to him. Govinda and Pahlaj's reunion and how it was ruined Pahlaj reunited with Govinda after many years for Rangeela Raja. Nihalani was producing the movie which had Govinda in the lead. But it was badly impacted. Nihalani claimed Govinda started his rona-dhona about Bollywood camps ruining his career just before the release affected the movie's release. Pahlaj talked about Govinda taking the names of Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan while sharing his reason for his downfall. His comments backfired and led to the cancellation of the shows of Rangeela Raja. "He said Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan were responsible. At the last minute, my shows were cancelled. And look at him now, ghar pe baitha hai," the producer tells the en-



tertainment news portal in an interview.

When Govinda opened up about the existence of camps in Bollywood a couple of years ago, Govinda opened up on his success and failure in the industry and while sharing his thoughts, Govinda talked about

the existence of camps in Bollywood. Govinda claimed that he never belonged to or was a part of any camp in the industry. He confessed that perhaps he should have been to remain successful. Citing the example of Amitabh Bachchan, Govinda talked about the downfall of his

career. He never thought what happened with the superstar could happen to him. He talked about financial downfall and how people misbehave and stop writing for them. While he had friends, Govinda claimed that friends are not Gods and one has to do things on their own.

Shilpa Shetty's husband Raj Kundra will not star in movie about his time in jail; THIS Lock Upp star to make an appearance

Shilpa Shetty's husband Raj Kundra was arrested for allegedly making and distributing adult content through apps and websites. Though Raj claimed innocence he was arrested and placed in Arthur Road Jail for about two months. Severe allegations were made against Raj Kundra while he was locked up. And it is said that Raj will be sharing his side of the story from the case through a film. But that's not going to happen. Raj Kundra to not talk about the pornography case or the aftermath of his arrest? There has been a lot of curiosity around Raj Kundra's arrest in the pornography case that shook Shilpa Shetty and her family in 2021. There were reports about Raj starring in his own biopic about the incident. However, a source close to the development of the project has denied all the reports as rumours and nothing more. While a movie about Raj Kundra is in the works, it will

not talk about the controversy or what led to it. The movie will only trace his time in Arthur Road Jail. It will talk about the interactions he had with the inmates and will be focused on his takeaways. Raj Kundra will not star in his movie. The source further says that Raj will not be starring in the movie, contrary to the reports. But he might make a special appearance in the movie. Raj will not act as the lead. He doesn't know anything about acting and will not even try it, claims the source, as per a report in an online entertainment news portal. Raj will, however, be involved in all the other aspects of the movie. That is, right from production to script to shooting as it is about his life. The makers of the movie have not yet zeroed in on the cast or the director yet. However, the source mentions that Munawar Faruqui of Lock Upp fame might make an appearance in the movie. Munawar will not



be the lead though. Hindustan Times mentions another source talking about Raj Kundra wearing masks all the time when in public. Raj also wore a mask

during Ganesh Chaturthi. The source wonders why people are thinking that Raj will star in the movie. Raj is not interested in acting but just telling his story.

Shilpa Shetty will not be a part of the project either. The Raj Kundra movie is likely to go on floors early next year, the source claims.

World News

India-China feud keeps international planes out of Nepal airport

The bright orange hotel sticks out as far as the eye can see - but unfortunately for its owner Bishnu Sharma, there is hardly anyone there to see it. His hotel offers breath-taking mountain views from the town of Lumbini in Nepal - Buddha's birthplace. But a hoped-for surge in tourist numbers has failed to materialise, blamed in part on tensions between Nepal's giant neighbours India and China. Lumbini saw close to a million visitors in 2022, according to the Lumbini Development Trust - and it was this number the government was betting on when it spent \$76m (£61m) to build the Gautam Buddha International Airport, which opened in May last year. Domestic tourists make up most of the visitors, with just less than a third travelling from neighbouring India. The terminal, also known as Bhairahawa Airport, lets tourists fly directly to Lumbini instead of travelling 250km (155 miles) by land from the capital, Kathmandu. Yet the anticipated travel boom never materialised, something travel industry experts attribute to a lack of early promotion and incentives to international airlines. "The government asked us to expand tourism infrastructure saying more international flights would come. But my hotel is two-thirds empty. I am now struggling to repay my loan," Mr Sharma tells the BBC, adding that he is millions of rupees in debt. Travel industry experts argue tourist arrivals, particularly from overseas, will go up if there are regular scheduled international flights operating



out of Bhairahawa airport. But Nepali officials say Delhi has refused to allow big passenger planes to fly west through its airspace - meaning planes cannot fly over India to reach the Gautam Buddha airport. Access to Indian airspace would mean shorter flights at lower cost. Some in Nepal also believe that Delhi is wary of the fact that the Gautam Buddha airport was constructed by China's Northwest Civil Aviation Airport. The airport is also located near Nepal's border with India - west of where the two Asian giants' troops clashed last December in the Arunachal Pradesh region, just seven months after the terminal opened to international traffic. In 2020, a major encounter between India and

China killed at least 20 troops. At the centre of their dispute is an ill-defined, poorly-demarcated 3,440km (2,100-mile)-long border - called the Line of Actual Control, or LAC. The presence of rivers, lakes and snowcaps means the line can shift. The soldiers on either side - representing two of the world's largest armies - come face to face at many points. The situation at the border is mirrored by growing political tension, with strained ties between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping. Observers say talks are the only way forward because both nuclear-armed countries have much to lose. The two countries have fought only one war, in 1962, when India suffered a

humiliating defeat. The Gautam Buddha airport was meant to be the key to Nepal's plan to grow traffic by easing the load of Kathmandu - which has been for years its only international gateway. Kathmandu Airport is heavily congested and was briefly shut down by a powerful earthquake in 2015. A third international airport located in Pokhara - a town with stunning views of the Annapurna mountains and known for adventure sports - is facing a familiar problem to Bhairahawa. Since it opened last January, the airport - built with a \$215m loan from China - has not welcomed any international flights, save for a charter flight from Chengdu that brought in Chinese officials and tourists. Currently,

Gautama Buddha and Pokhara have a combined traffic of 80-85 domestic flights per day. But experts say the terminals need substantial international traffic to sustain operations. "I don't think only domestic flights will make these two airports commercially viable. It may be difficult to repay the loan without regular international flights," says Tri Ratna Manandhar, the former director general of the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal. Pokhara International Airport chief Bikram Raj Gautam says Nepal needs "proactive diplomacy" to convince countries like India to open their airspace to commercial flights that will land in Nepal. Experts say Nepal can also look at attracting tourists from the east like Thailand, Japan and Cambodia, while Delhi's restrictions choke traffic from the west. Nepal Airlines has just started a weekly flight from Bhairahawa to Kuala Lumpur - something that should send a positive message to other airlines, Dipak Bajracharya, director of the Gautam Buddha International Airport tells. But Nepal's minister for tourism and civil aviation, Sudan Kiranti, remains optimistic that there will be a resolution with Delhi - and soon. "We are in constant touch and dialogue with Indian officials and diplomats," he tells. "They are very positive."





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World News

2030 World Cup: Tournament to be held across six countries in three continents

The 2030 World Cup will be held across six countries in three continents, Fifa has confirmed. Spain, Portugal and Morocco have been named as the co-hosts, with the opening three matches taking place in Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay. The opening matches in South America are to mark the World Cup's centenary as it will be 100 years since the inaugural tournament in Montevideo. The decision is set to be ratified at a Fifa congress next year. Fifa also confirmed only bids from countries from the Asian Football Confederation and the Oceania Football Confederation will be considered for the 2034 finals. Following that decision, Saudi Arabia announced it would be bidding to host the tournament in 2034 for the first time. Fifa's decision to host the tournament across multiple continents has drawn criticism, with one supporter's body accusing football's world governing body of engaging in a "cycle of destruction against the greatest tournament on Earth". "[It's] horrendous for supporters, disregards the environment and rolls the red carpet out to a host for 2034 with an appalling human rights record. It's the end of the World Cup as we know it," said Football Supporters Europe. Fifa president Gianni Infantino said: "In a divided world, Fifa and football are uniting. The Fifa Council, representing the entire world of football, unanimously agreed to

celebrate the centenary of the Fifa World Cup, whose first edition was played in Uruguay in 1930, in the most appropriate way. "In 2030, we will have a unique global footprint, three continents - Africa, Europe and South America - six countries - Argentina, Morocco, Paraguay, Portugal, Spain and Uruguay - welcoming and uniting the world while celebrating together the beautiful game, the centenary and the Fifa World Cup." Montevideo in Uruguay, the city which hosted the first World Cup match in 1930, is poised to stage the opening game in 2030 with matches in Argentina and Paraguay to follow. The rest of the 48-team tournament will then move to north Africa and Europe. The change of hemispheres means World Cup teams could find themselves playing in two different seasons at the same tournament. If the 2030 proposal is approved, Morocco would become only the second African nation to host a World Cup, after South Africa in 2010. Spain has been named as joint-host weeks after former football federation chief Luis Rubiales resigned following criticism for kissing Jenni Hermoso at the Women's World Cup. Appearing in court, Rubiales was given a restraining order by a Spanish judge, but denied sexually assaulting Hermoso. Spain last hosted the World Cup in 1982, with Italy winning the tournament for the third time.

Portugal has never hosted the tournament, but Euro 2004 was held there. As in previous World Cups, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Spain, Portugal and Morocco will all qualify automatically as co-hosts. Fifa's decision to host the tournament across multiple continents comes after the governing body 'made false statements' about the reduced environmental impact of the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. Fifa said the tournament would be the first "fully carbon-neutral World Cup" but could not provide proof the claims were accurate. In November, BBC Sport reported how environmentalists called Fifa's carbon-neutral claim "dangerous and misleading" and warned the tournament could have had a carbon footprint three times greater than stated. Freddie Daley, a researcher for Global Economy Policy at the University of Sussex, says Fifa's decision to expand the World Cup across three continents is "concerning" after its false promises on reducing carbon footprint. "A World Cup of this size and scale will involve a lot of air travel, a lot of fan travel, a lot of athlete travel and I am very unsure whether Fifa will be able to deliver this in a sustainable and climate friendly way," said Daley. "I think Fifa's actions so far point towards them not being very credible on what they have promised to do in regards to climate and climate action.

"Fifa as an organisation has huge responsibility to citizens around the world to help educate on climate, raise awareness and also bring them on that journey to net zero as part of the energy transition." Announcements like this today make me question their integrity on climate and their support for the energy transition." Frank Huisingsh, founder of Fossil Free Football, a group aiming to stop the use of fossil fuels in the sport, said the move was "outrageous but also not surprising". "We know Fifa's track record and we know they want to go for big tournaments with a lot of fan travel and a lot of emissions," he said. "It is just a very bad idea." "This is Fifa showing complete disregard for fans as fans and fans as humans," said Katie Cross, CEO and founder of Pledgeball, a fan charity which campaigns for greater sustainability in football. Saudi bid 'natural step for country passionate about football' Saudi Arabia's decision to bid for the 2034 World Cup is in line with its initiative to become a global leader in sport after hosting a number of events in the country since 2018, involving football, Formula 1, golf and boxing. But the Gulf kingdom has been accused of investing in sport and using high-profile events to improve its international reputation - a process known as sportswashing. In a recent interview with Fox News, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince

Mohammed bin Salman said he does not care about the accusations. "If sportswashing is going to increase my GDP by 1%, then we'll continue doing sportswashing," Bin Salman said. Prince Abdulaziz bin Turki bin Faisal, Saudi Arabia's Olympic and Paralympic chief, says the World Cup bid "constitutes an important and natural step in our journey as a country passionate about football". Fifa follows Uefa in readmitting Russia to under-17 competitions Fifa also announced Russia will be readmitted to its under-17 competitions for the first time since the country's invasion of Ukraine 19 months ago. The move follows Uefa's decision last week to allow Russian sides to compete at U17 level in European competitions after they were suspended when the invasion began in February 2022. Fifa said the decision will be conditional on teams playing as the "Football Union of Russia" rather than Russia, without the country's flag or anthem, and wearing a neutral kit. Uefa's move drew criticism from the English Football Association which said it "did not support" the decision, adding "our position remains that England teams won't play against Russia". But Uefa said boys and girls should not be punished for the actions of adults, adding in a statement: "Football should never give up sending messages of peace and hope."



Food

Paan Gulkand Modak Recipe

Paan Gulkand Modak

Total Time: 25 min

Prep Time : 05 min

Cook Time : 20 min

Serves: 4 Servings

Ingredients

- 1 Cup desiccated coconut
- 1/2 cup condensed milk
- 4 Betel leaves
- 4-5 tsp gulkand
- 1 tbsp dry fruits powder
- 1/2 tsp fennel seeds powder
- 2 tbsp tutti frutti
- 1 tbsp ghee
- green food color, optional.
- 1 cup desiccated coconut, for rolling, optional

How to

- Pulse 2 chopped paan leaves and condensed milk till both are well combined. Finely chop remaining 2 paan and add to the mixture. Mix well. Keep it aside.
- Heat ghee in a pan on medium heat. Add desiccated coconut and roast for 2-3 minutes on medium-low heat stirring continuously.
- Add the paan mixture to the pan and combine well. Add few drops of green food color at this point, if required
- Mix well, once the mixture is thick, remove from heat and allow to cool slightly
- For stuffing, mix gulkand, dry fruits powder, fennel seeds powder and tutti frutti well
- Grease palms with little ghee, take small portion of the paan mixture and place in modak mold. Fill gulkand mixture at centre and press the mold
- Open the mold and transfer it to serving plate. Do until paan mixture is completed
- Paan gulkand modak is ready to be served. Enjoy!



Sindhi Seyal Dabal Recipe

Sindhi Seyal Dabal Recipe

Total Time: 30 min

Prep Time : 10 min

Cook Time : 20 min

Serves: 4 Servings

Ingredients

- 4 pav or 6 bread slices
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1-inch ginger, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp coriander leaves, finely chopped
- 1 tomato, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp mustard seeds
- 1/2 tsp cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp kasuri methi
- 1/2 tsp haldi (turmeric powder)
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 cup water
- Salt to taste

How to

- Roughly chop each piece of bread into smaller, bite-size pieces. Set aside.
- In a kadhai, heat the oil and add cumin seeds, mustard seeds, ginger, garlic and

- onion.
- Saute until the onion turns translucent and then add the tomato along with 1 tsp salt
- Add the haldi, chilli powder and kasuri methi. Mix and cook until the tomato softens and the mixture begins to leave the oil.
- Pour in 1 cup of water and half the quantity of the coriander leaves. Cover the vessel and cook for 2 minutes. Heat should be on low flame.
- Later, uncover and add the bread pieces. Mix well, top with lemon juice and cover again for 1 minute.
- Garnish with the remaining chopped coriander leaves and serve hot.



Food

Chana Palak Rice Recipe

Chana Palak Rice Recipe

Total Time: 30 min

Prep Time : 05 min

Cook Time : 25 min

Serves: 2 Servings

Ingredients

1. 1 Cup Chickpea (boiled)
2. 1 cup palak puree
3. 1 cup Rice, soaked
4. 2 Green Chillies
5. 1 Onion, sliced
6. 2 tbsp Oil
7. 1/2 tsp Garam Masala
8. 1 Bay Leaf
9. 2 Green Cardamom
10. 2 Clove
11. 1 tsp Coriander Powder
12. to taste Salt
13. 1 tsp Ginger garlic paste
14. 1 tbsp Lemon Juice

How to

1. First of all boil the chickpeas. On the other hand, blanch the spinach and make its puree.
2. Now add oil in a deep pan, add cumin, cloves, cardamom and bay leaves. After this add onion and fry till it



3. turns translucent. Add ginger garlic paste and fry for a few seconds, now add spinach puree and fry for some time. After this
4. mix boiled chickpeas. Now add salt, coriander powder and garam masala and fry everything. Add soaked rice and mix with
5. everything. Add 3 cups of water to rice and add lemon juice to it and mix. Now cover the pan with lid and let it
6. cook for 15 to 20 minutes. If you want, you can cook it in a pressure cooker till two whistles. Pair the hot pulao with chutney and raita.

Kumaoni Jholi Recipe

Kumaoni Jholi Recipe

Total Time: 30 min

Prep Time : 10 min

Cook Time : 20 min

Serves: 3 Servings

Ingredients

1. 1/2 Cup besan
2. 2 cups dahi
3. 1 cup vegetables of your choice, diced
4. Salt as per taste
5. 1/2 tsp Kashmiri red chilli powder
6. 1/2 tsp haldi
7. 1/2 tsp hing 1 tsp jeera
8. 1 tsp dhania powder
9. 2 whole red chilli
10. 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
11. 1.5 tsp coriander leaves, chopped

How to

1. Beat besan in curd, with salt, red chilli, and turmeric. Keep aside.
2. Heat a pan and add ghee/oil.
3. Add vegetables and saute with dhania powder and salt.
4. Add besan-curd mix to it and cook on low flame.
5. Wait till the sabzi is done. Add some water (prefer-



6. ably whey water) if it turns thick. Heat a tadka pan and add
7. ghee to it.7.Add whole red chilli, garlic, cumin, and hing, and prepare a tadka.
7. Add to the kadhi and mix.
8. Garnish with freshly chopped coriander leaves
9. and close the lid. Let the flavours infuse and then, serve hot with rice.

Dianne Feinstein, longest-serving female US senator in history, dies at 90



Dianne Feinstein, whose three decades in the Senate made her the longest-serving female US senator in history, has died following months of declining health. She was 90. Feinstein, a Democrat, died Thursday night at her home in Washington, her office said in a statement.

Her death hands California Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom the power to appoint a lawmaker to serve out the rest of Feinstein's term, keeping the Democratic majority in the chamber through early January 2025. Newsom has publicly pledged to appoint a Black woman if Feinstein were to vacate her office and told NBC's

"Meet the Press" earlier this month that he would make an "interim appointment" who wouldn't be any of the candidates who are seeking the seat in next year's election.

Feinstein's death also comes as federal funding is set to expire and Congress at an impasse as to how to avoid a government shutdown, though Senate Democrats still retain a majority without her.

Feinstein, a former mayor of San Francisco, was a leading figure in California politics for decades and became a national face of the Democratic Party following her first election to the US Senate in 1992. She broke a series of glass ceil-

ings throughout her political career and her influence was felt strongly in some of Capitol Hill's most consequential works in recent history, including the since-lapsed federal assault weapons ban in 1994 and the 2014 CIA torture report. She also was a longtime force on the Senate Intelligence and Judiciary committees.

In her later years, Feinstein's health was the subject of increasing speculation, and the California Democrat was prominent among aging lawmakers whose decisions to remain in office drew scrutiny, especially in an age of narrow party margins in Congress.

A hospitalization for shingles

in February led to an extended absence from the Senate – stirring complaints from Democrats, as Feinstein's time away slowed the confirmation of Democratic-appointed judicial nominees – and when she returned to Capitol Hill three months later, it was revealed that she had suffered multiple complications during her recovery, including Ramsay Hunt syndrome and encephalitis. A fall in August briefly sent her to the hospital.

Feinstein, who was the Senate's oldest member at the time of her death, also faced questions about her mental acuity

and ability to lead. She dismissed the concerns, saying, "The real question is whether I'm still an effective representative for 40 million Californians, and the record shows that I am." But heavy speculation that Feinstein would retire instead of seek reelection in 2024 led several Democrats to announce their candidacies for her seat – even before she announced her plans. In February, she confirmed that she would not run for reelection, telling CNN, "The time has come."





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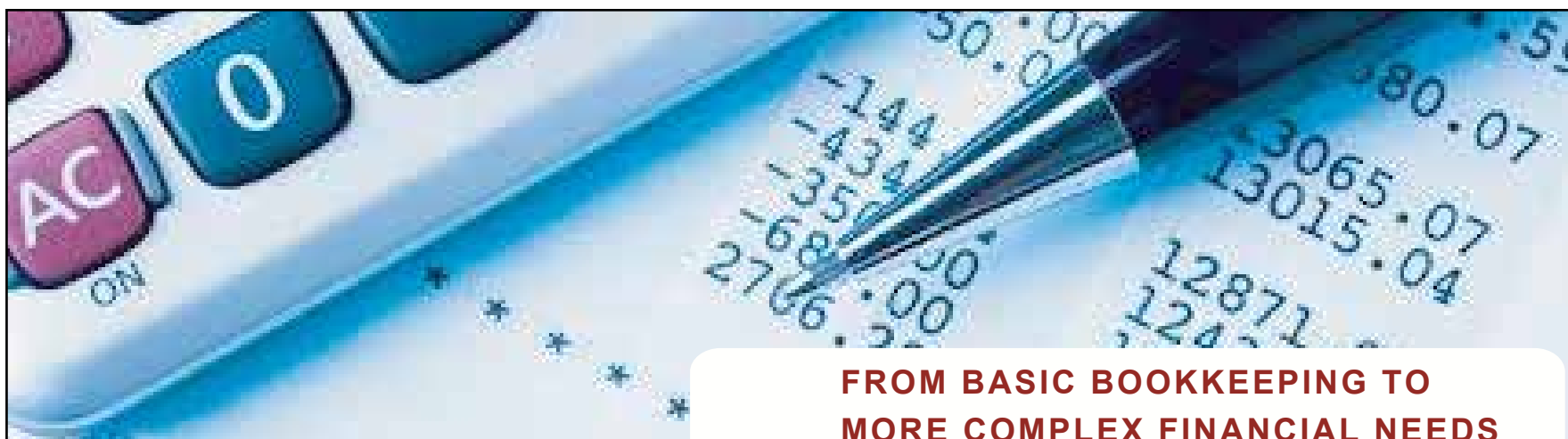
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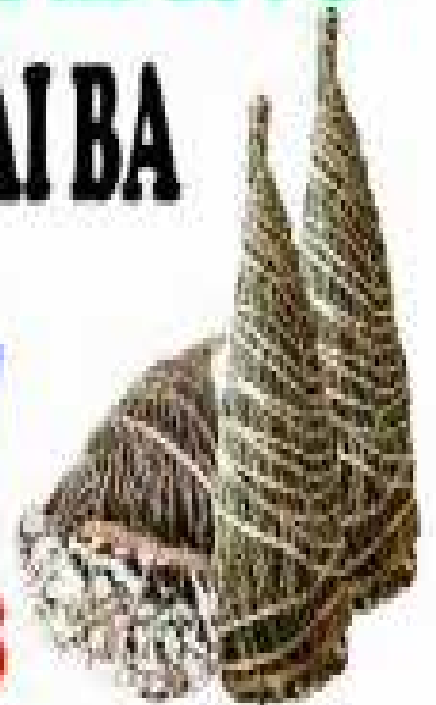
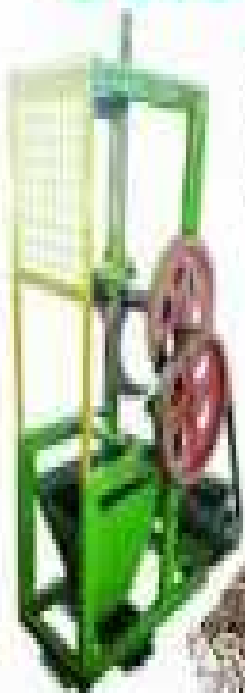
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INTER DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP 2023

OFFICIAL FIXTURES

HFC Bank Stadium, Suva

Tuesday 10 October 2023

10.30am Ba FC vs. Tailevu Naitasiri FC (GA)

12.30pm Rewa FC vs. Nadi FC (GB)

(International Friendly)

3.00pm Fiji Women vs. New Caledonia Women

5.00pm Official Opening

5.30pm Suva FC vs. Navua FC (GB)

7.30pm Lautoka FC vs. Labasa FC (GA)

Wednesday 11 October 2023

11.00am Nadroga FC vs. Savusavu FC (Premier-GB)

1.00pm Nadi FC vs. Navua FC (GB)

3.00pm Lautoka FC vs. Ba FC (GA)

5.00pm Labasa FC vs. Tailevu Naitasiri FC (GA)

7.00pm Suva FC vs. Rewa FC (GB)

Thursday 12 October 2023

11.00am Seaqqa FC vs. Rakiraki FC (Premier-GA)

1.00pm Lautoka FC vs. Tailevu Naitasiri FC (GA)

3.00pm Rewa FC vs. Navua FC (GB)

5.00pm Suva FC vs. Nadi FC (GB)

7.00pm Labasa FC vs. Ba FC (GA)

Saturday 14 October 2023 - Super Premier Semifinals

2.30pm Winner (GA) vs. Runner up (GB) (SPSF1)

5.00pm Winner (GB) vs. Runner up (GA) (SPSF2)

Sunday 15 October 2023

9.30am Winner (SSF1) vs. Winner (SSF2) (Senior Final)

11.30am Winner (PSF1) vs. Winner (PSF2) (Premier Final)

1.30pm Fiji Women vs. New Caledonia Women

3.30pm Winner (SPSF1) vs. Winner (SPSF2) (Super Premier Final)

Fiji FA Academy Ground, Vatuwaqa

Tuesday 10 October 2023

10.30am Northland Tailevu FC vs. Bua FC (Senior-GA)

12.30pm Tavua FC vs. Rakiraki FC (Premier-GA)

3.00pm Nadroga FC vs. Nasinu FC (Premier-GB)

Wednesday 11 October 2023

11.00am Tavua FC vs. Seaqqa FC (Premier-GA)

1.00pm Bua FC vs. Taveuni FC (Senior-GA)

3.00pm Nadogo FC vs. Dreketi FC (Senior-GB)

Thursday 12 October 2023

11.00am Savusavu FC vs. Nasinu FC (Premier-GB)

1.00pm Northland Tailevu FC vs. Taveuni FC (Senior-GA)

3.00pm Lami FC vs. Nadogo FC (Senior-GB)

Saturday 14 October 2023 - Premier Semifinals

11.00am Winner (GA) vs. Runner up (GB) (PSF1)

1.00pm Winner (GB) vs. Runner (GA) (PSF2)

Bidesi Park, Suva

Tuesday 10 October 2023

10.30am Lami FC vs. Dreketi FC (Senior-GB)

Saturday 14 October 2023 - Senior Semifinals

11.00am Winner (GA) vs. Runner up (GB) (SSF1)

1.00pm Winner (GB) vs. Runner up (GA) (SSF2)



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Sports News

Neeraj Chopra on why he agreed to rethrow: ‘Other athletes were cooling down and it was getting unfair on them’



Neeraj Chopra retained his gold medal at the Asian Games at Hangzhou after a goof-up which forced him to retake his first throw. The incident happened because the officials had not measured his throw before the next thrower had launched his javelin. It was a bizarre moment, and after he initially protested, Neeraj agreed to throw his first attempt again. The javelin looked like it had crossed the 85m mark. His revised first attempt landed at the 82.38m mark. Neeraj eventually threw 88.88m with his fourth throw to seal the title. India's Kishore Kumar Jena also shrugged off a wrongly awarded red flag to claim the silver medal with a throw of 87.54m. He bettered his personal best twice in the competition and also made the cut for the Paris Olympics. After winning the gold, Neeraj said he was also flummoxed by having to throw seven times instead of six. But when asked why he had agreed to re-throw again he said: "I protested first. But the other athletes were waiting for me to throw again. I was apologising to them for making them wait. It was breezy and other athletes were cooling down. It

was getting unfair on them. So they offered me a re-throw and I accepted." He added: "The first throw looked good, I'll look at the video again to see how far it might have gone. It's surprising, they didn't measure it. I am still puzzled, apparently the second athlete threw before they could even measure my throw and they lost the mark then." It's the first time something like this has happened with me in a competition this big. It happened with Jyothi (Yarraji in the 100m women's hurdles), Jena and me. So there's something wrong. But still, we have shown how hard we've worked and won medals. I haven't seen anything like this in a big tournament. Athletes can get mentally down, even Jyothi was affected." Meanwhile, a livid Anju Bobby George, who is a Senior Vice President Athletics Federation of India, told journalists after the event, "Neeraj's first throw was a very good throw. But they weren't ready to measure it. Same thing also happened with Annu Rani (who won gold for India in women's javelin throw event) yesterday. I don't know why they are doing this with Indian athletes. They

are trying to cheat us, disturb our athletes.

Neeraj's first throw was a very good one." After the medal, Neeraj heaped praise on his compatriot who had pushed him in the javelin throw final and had briefly taken the lead. "Apna hi banda push kar raha hai (My compatriot is pushing me.) What can be better

than that," he said about being overtaken briefly by Jena before thanking him for boosting him with the throw. Talking to the official broadcasters, Sony LIV, Neeraj said: "Today I thought I would cross the 90m mark. But then the thing with the first throw happened. Acchi throw thi. Naapa nahi unhone. Kaafi officials ke saath behas bhi hui.

(It was a good throw, but they didn't measure it. So there was some argument with them also) "But today I'm very happy for Jena. He's also qualified for the Olympics. Bohot mazaa aa raha tha. Jena ne mazaa diya aaj. (It became very entertaining. Jena made it lot of fun for me)," he said.



Sports News

ICC World Cup 2023: England versus New Zealand in Ahmedabad, a soft launch at biggest cricket stadium in the world

It's a breezy morning at the city's most popular tourist spot, the Gandhi Ashram. Around 100-odd sightseers explore the epicentre of Indian freedom movement by the banks of Sabarmati river. A few kilometres away lies the epicentre of modern-day Indian cricket – the biggest cricket stadium in the world named after the Prime Minister Narendra Modi where the 2023 World Cup will begin and also end on November 19. Starting Thursday, when defending champion England play New Zealand in the opener, thousands will drive to the imposing venue, many stopping for Bapu's darshan on way to their cricketing pilgrimage. Be it the Ashram Road, or the city's other main arteries, there are no elaborate World Cup signages and fan-parks announcements on hoardings. There was a big model of the trophy at the airport; that's about it. Ahmedabad isn't shouting out from the rooftops, it is engulfed in a comfortable pre-tournament silence. In the streets, if there is any talk, it's still around the tickets for the India-Pakistan game. A few have landed up outside the stadium looking for black-market touts. "2000 rupees for 32,000," says one fan. Another says, "I heard it was a lakh!". Not too far from those willing to pay a Rs 1 lakh to witness India play Pakistan, on the other side of the giant gates of the stadium, sat 10 captains for the pre-World Cup conference. Indian captain Rohit Sharma was asked about the pressure of playing at home, Pakistan and the elusive ICC trophy. Sat closest to the trophy, which was on display, Rohit paused, swayed his head, smiled, and even as a light laughter began to go around the room, the seemingly confident captain would say, "I know what's at stake." Sitting next to Rohit was New Zealand captain Kane Williamson, who at one point was likely to miss the tournament due to a nasty knee injury he picked up in the IPL. After a remarkable recovery, though he will be missing the first match against England, the team that pipped his team the last time, he will soon start playing a role. Ironically, Eng-

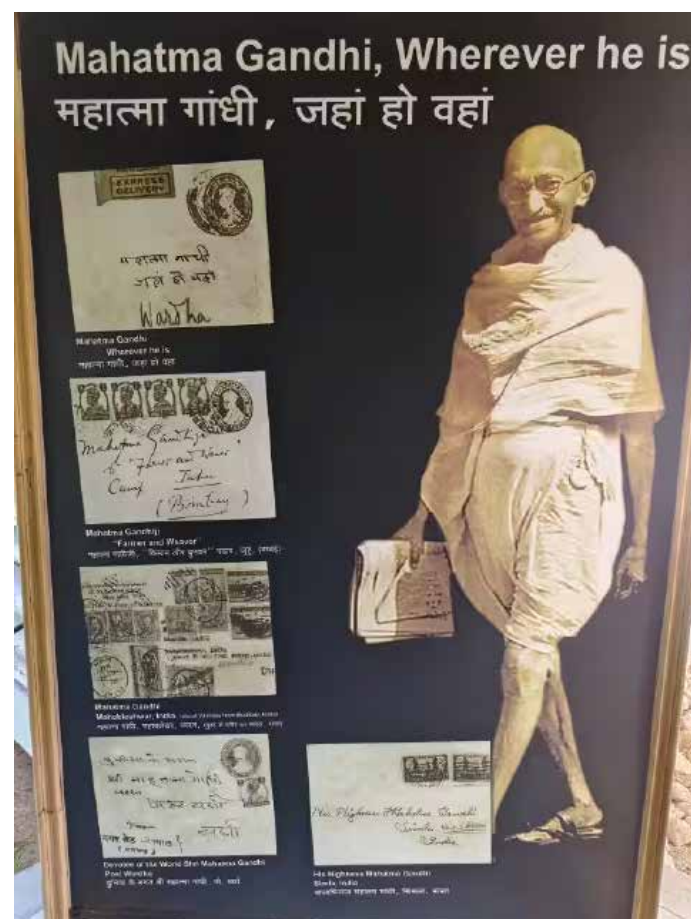
land which used to look down on the ODIs less than a decade back has been revived first by an Irishman Eoin Morgan, who was in attendance today in Ahmedabad, and then by Ben Stokes, who was born in New Zealand, and coached by the Kiwi Brendon McCullum. For some reason, it's the Kiwi-heads who seem to have cracked the ICC code; they are always in the final. Jos Buttler, however, is the England ODI captain, and he made a cautious line about every team starting equally. All captains parroted the line about how they had to take it one game at a time. If there was any bold statement, it came from the Afghanistan captain Hashmatullah Shahidi when asked by Ravi Shastri, Indian cricket event's DJ for ever and a day, about how bowling is their strength. "Our spinners are good, but in this world cup our batting will make a strong statement." Sitting next to him was Pat Cummins, one of the two clean-shaven captains along with Buttler amidst a beard-feast all around them; he turned and nodded his head at the Afghan. There was also a gentle remark that Pakistan's Babar Azam managed to slip in along with the homilies that triggered knowing nods in the room. Shastri again with a question about how the Hyderabad people have been showering the team with their hospitality, and Babar thanked the people before adding, "it would have been nice to have Pakistani people in the stands". The Visa issue has still proved unresolvable as yet. Politics and cricket go hand in hand at this venue. It's where Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah first wet their feet in cricket administration, with the Gujarat Cricket Association, reshaping an erstwhile-ravine-land-turned-to-stadium into the world's most populated cricket arena. Shah's son, Jay, is the powerful BCCI secretary and face of India's cricket administration. There is a buzz among the officials that the 'Sahib' might come for the first game. No one is willing to say anything more as no one knows for sure. "For sure, he will come for the India-Pakistan match," says an official who doesn't want to



be named. Unlike Modi, cricket was a source of pain for Gandhi in some ways. Just before the independence, he would launch a passionate plea to the countrymen to stop the "communal" Pentangular tournament, that was played along religious lines between teams of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and a team of Rest following other faiths. "I would like the public of Bombay to revise their sporting code and erase from it communal matches. I can understand matches between colleges and institutions, but I never understood the reasons for having Hindu, Parsi, Muslim and other communal Elevens. I should have thought that such unsportsmanlike divisions would be considered taboos in sporting language and sporting manners," wrote Gandhi. "Can we not have some field of life which cannot be touched by the communal spirit?" Back at the Ashram, a group of middle-aged women from Telangana are gasping and giggling; as they part, it emerges that they were staring at the photo of some of the actual postcards that Gandhi received. The reason for their gasp is on the postcard address – Mahatma Gandhi, New Delhi. Undoubtedly, they all reached the most famous man in India. It's a tastefully maintained ashram. It has history, humour, tragedy, pain, historical events, trivia strewn around every pillar. Like his letter to Hitler, that starts with "My friend", is a plea to stop the war. Though not at the Ashram, there is credible

historical reference of Gandhi indulging cricket. Ramachandra Guha, the foremost Gandhi scholar of our times, wrote about the occasion when Laxmi Merchant, the sister of Vijay Merchant, India's most famous opener before Sunil Gavaskar, sought Gandhi's autograph. Gandhi supposedly trawled through Laxmi's book, stopped at a page with the 1933-34 MCC team that toured India and was led by Douglas Jardine, of the bodyline fame. Gandhi scrolled down, added an extra member to the 16-men squad: "17. M.K. Gandhi". While cricket is in the

pink of health in these parts, the ODI format faces an identity crisis. One-day cricket's younger brother, T20 format, is furiously kicking a charming fuss around the world with mushrooming leagues. No one anywhere has started a 50-over league. Befittingly, India, whose 1983 triumph kickstarted an insatiable appetite for the 50-over format, would be voting on its future over the next two months: will the fans turn out in huge numbers even for the non-India matches? Rohit was sure they would.



Sports

Sanatan tournament gets huge response

The third Sanatan soccer tournament at the Bay Area in San Francisco attracted a lot of crowd and top level competition. Sacramento, Modesto, Stockton and San Francisco teams participated in the tournament which was held in a carnival with a great display of Fijian delicacies offered to patrons as well. People from all walks of life gathered and thorough enjoyed the games which proved to be an incident- free event. Sunday Boys prevailed in the final after beating Modesto 2-0 in a thrilling final and claimed the winner's trophy. US Fiji Times Publisher Rocky Ali Buksh congratulates the Sanatan Association and its President Sanjesh Narayan for a job well done and in bringing the Fijian diaspora in America together in unity.



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