



THE US FIJI TIMES

World's Largest Fiji Newspaper Out Of Republic of Fiji

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47th North American Fijian Soccer Tournament Highlights Bay Area Labour Day Weekend

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Fiji Women's U20 Team's Inspirational Journey in the USA: A New Era of Fijian Football

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THE US FIJI TIMES

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FIJIAN GOVERNMENT



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PROF. BIMAN PRASAD



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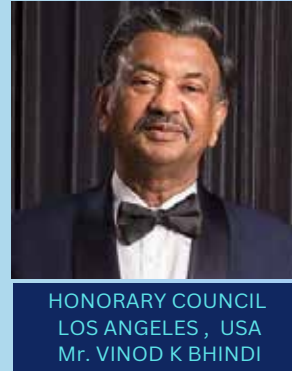
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THE US FIJI TIMES PROUD OF ITS SERVICE

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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From Neelam Supermarket of San Bruno California Happy Raksha Bandhan To All.

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As this occasion is such a blissful and a happier one, below are affectionate heartstouching messages, wishes and quotes which you can send to your brother with Rakhi online on Raksha Bandhan 2023.



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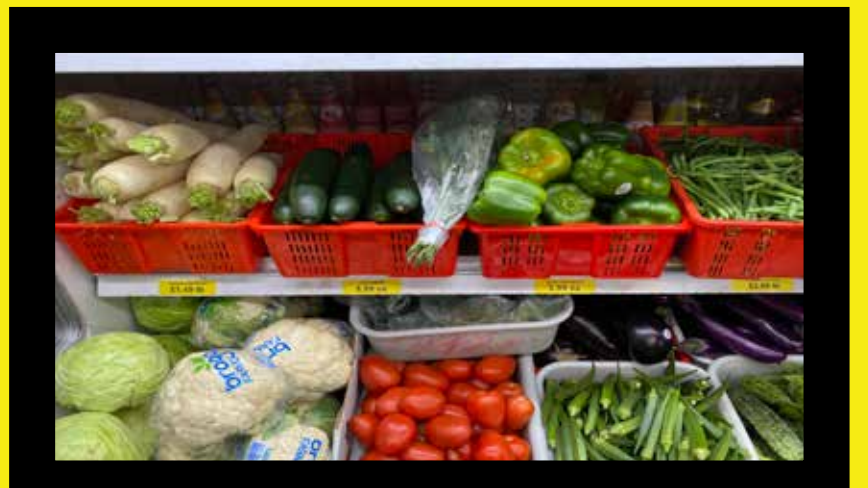
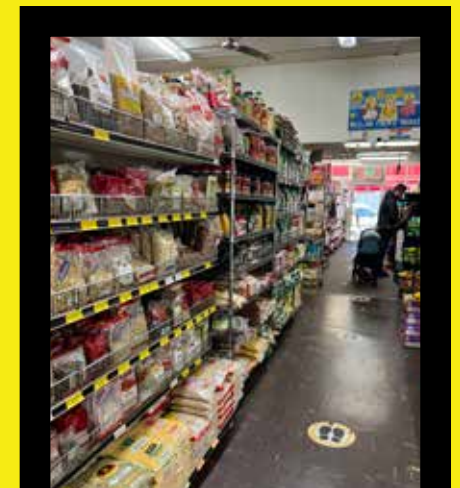
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Natasha Syed from San Bruno spots desserts as she shops at Neelam Pacific





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Fiji News

Appreciation Night For The South Pacific Relief Fund INC Supporters & Sponsors. Media Partner THE USFIJITIMES Based in San Francisco.

South Pacific Relief Fund Inc -USA held an Appreciation celebration evening to honor its supporters, donors and volunteers , friends and families. Huge thanks to our Media. Partners US Fiji times Sitaarre TV Joshi Production Guest of Honors San Mateo Board of Supervisors Mr. David Canepa San Bruno City Council Mr.Marty Medina San Bruno City council Mr.Tom Hamilton Fiji Trade commissioner Alika Cooper Ms.Tesprit Kaur



Fiji News

Miss Universe Fiji Crown Controversy: Roberts to Represent Fiji



Nadi, Fiji – In a stunning turn of events, Nadine Roberts has been crowned Miss Universe Fiji 2024, following a controversial decision made during the pageant's finale.

The initial announcement at the Pearl Resort in Pacific Harbour mistakenly awarded the crown to Manshika Prasad. However, a subsequent review revealed that a miscalculation by the event's organizers had led to the incorrect crowning.

The Miss Universe Fiji organization expressed its deep regret for the error, acknowledging the heartbreak and disappointment it caused for the finalists. They attributed the mistake to the contracted organizer's failure to follow proper

procedures, including the oversight of the licensee vote.

An internal investigation revealed that a tie had occurred between Roberts and Prasad, with both receiving four votes each. The inclusion of the licensee vote would have resulted in Roberts securing the victory.

The MUF licensee representative expressed their concern over the rushed announcement, emphasizing the importance of transparency and accuracy in such events. The representative noted that the error tainted an otherwise successful pageant with talented contestants.

Nadine Roberts will now have the honor of representing Fiji at the Miss Universe competition later this year in Mexico.



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WHO IS THE REAL MISS UNIVERSE FIJI WINNER?



Dolphin Island, the Definition of Exclusivity, Fiji

Viti Levu 147/148 Naisoso Island, Fiji

Alex van Heeren, of Huka Lodge fame, designed Dolphin Island to be like no other. A concept of luxury in deliberate isolation, complemented by unspoiled natural beauty and true privacy, surrounded by gin clear waters. The large main bure enjoys an elevated position above the infinity pool, and the four guest bure suites featuring heart timber floors, plaster walls, stone tiles, wooden shutters, high ceilings and the latest in air-conditioned comfort. A hilltop honeymoon bure, private beach, jetty and substantial back-of-house facilities complete the picture. There is ample room to increase the accommodation inventory. Dolphin Island can be purchased in its entirety, by negotiation, OR Register interest to purchase one or more of only 12 shares in a yet to be formed NewZealand, company which will own the island outright, for US\$1 million per 1/12 th share and secure exclusive use of freehold Dolphin Island for a month each year of ownership. Dolphin Island, is just 20 minutes by boat from shore, on the tip of Viti Levu, Fiji, 2.5 hours by private car from Nadi International Airport. Float planes and helicopters offer an alternative connection.

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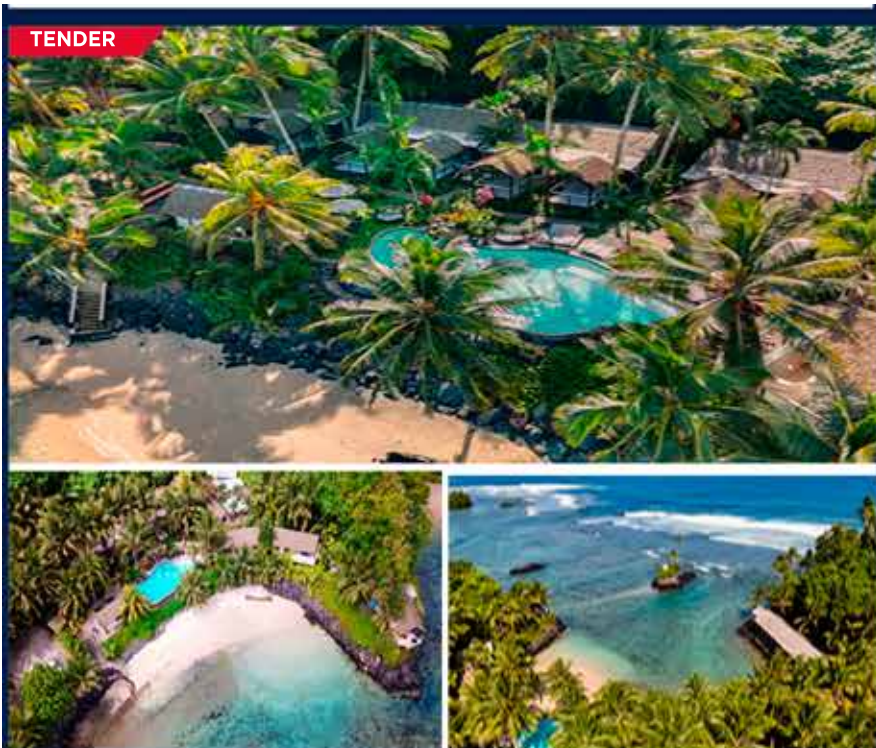
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The Canadian Fiji Open Golf Tournament Set to Create Milestone



The Canadian Fiji Open Golf tournament will be held at Eagle point GC in Kamloops , Canada. The tournament was first held at Northview Country Club in Surrey BC and the organizers have the kept the tradition with great enthusiasm and momentum to cater for our Fiji Golfers across the globe. This year's tournament is expected to cater for 60 players from Fiji, US and Canada. The

significant inclusion to the event with the presence of two-time Fiji Open Champ and South Pacific Games gold medalist Jalen Raman. Together with Fiji Golf President Amitesh Chandra and golfer Shalendra Naidu the stage is set for a competitive event for our prime international golfers. The tournament organizers have been the growing interest in this event and under Sponsor-

ship of Arun Deo the CEO of Wingate Kamloops. The organizer has extended their great appreciation Deo to step up a big way to show support to see our Fiji community thrive thru sporting events like these. To hold such tournament there is need of good coordination and organizational abilities and the hard-working team of Tournament Director Pramesh .P.Sharma and Assistant Direc-

tor Anusheel Deo will ensure a very successful event to unfold at Eaglepoint. The event is divided in two division as follows:
OPEN DIVISION
 Players are between +2 to 11.9 Handicap Index. Open Champion and Net open Champion will be decided. Within the Division there two flights Viti Levu and Vanua LevuFlights.

DIVISION II
 Players with handicap 12+ will be in this division. Open champion and Net Open Champion will be decided. Within the Division there will be three flights Kadavu, Lau and Yasawa. It is expected that our Fiji fans on the ground will see some-classy golf and get to meet the best of the best of our own Golfers.

Fiji News

Hibiscus Queen contestants hosted to lunch by Zam Zam Restaurant

The 2024 Miss Hibiscus contestants were hosted to lunch by Zam Zam Restaurant today in Samabula as part of their day 2 community tour. The 9 contestants enjoyed the variety of food prepared and served by the restaurant.

During an interview with fivillage News, restaurant owner Rashida Dean says they are so fortunate to have hosted these contestants and they were excited to get this opportunity. Dean says this is something new for the restaurant and having the contestants over really helped in the exposure of the company. She says this is the second time that the restaurant has hosted people like the queen contestants as the first was world-renowned travel and food vlogger, YouTube personality and television host Mark Weins who visited her restaurant during his visit to Fiji last year. Dean acknowledged Creative Director



Miss Hibiscus Festival Andhy Blake for organising this visit by the contestants to the restaurant. Day 2 of the Hibiscus Festival is currently underway at the Suva Foreshore. Tonight will be the Hindi Night which will be hosted by the Navtarang and Radio Sargam team from 6pm to 8pm. The Yuva band will perform from 8pm to 10pm tonight on the main stage.

Our internal reconciliation efforts will continue in parallel with National Reconciliation Commission process - Commander

Given the peculiar nature of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces and its internal dynamics and organizational structure, we sincerely believe that a united front within the RFMF is not only a strategic imperative but a moral obligation towards the broader national healing process. Those are the comments of RFMF Commander, Major General Ro Jone Kalouniwai after concerns raised by Fiji Labour Party Leader, Mahendra Chaudhry about the RFMF's current internal reconciliation process. The Commander also says transparency is key in revealing the true orchestrators behind the scenes who manipulated the RFMF for their own agenda. He says the soldiers implicated from Labasa found themselves in unfortunate circumstances but displayed courage and nobility by admitting guilt and serving prison terms ranging from 6 to 8 years. The Commander says while the RFMF fully endorses and supports the National Truth and Reconciliation process, their in-

ternal reconciliation efforts will continue in parallel. He says it is essential for the unity and cohesion of the RFMF, including its wider Territorial and Reserve Forces families, to mend the divides stemming from the 2000 mutiny. The Army Commander stresses that a unified RFMF is indispensable for the success of the National Truth and Reconciliation Process. Major General Kalouniwai says they appreciate and acknowledge the concerns raised by the Fiji Labour Party regarding the integration of soldiers involved in the 2000 mutiny at Sukanaivalu Barracks in Labasa. He stresses that it is crucial to address these matters with sensitivity and a commitment to truth and reconciliation. The Commander says the RFMF wishes to clarify that the intention of the RFMF reconciliation process is not to undermine the important work of the National Truth and Reconciliation Commission, rather, their internal reconciliation efforts aim to provide a pathway for the soldiers to navigate their

past experiences and feel empowered to share their stories openly. He says the question posed by the FLP whether the potential reinstatement of these soldiers raises valid concerns. Major General Kalouniwai says indeed, it would be a departure from military tradition to reintegrate them however, it is equally important to consider whether continued isolation from society serves any purpose, even more importantly from a security perspective. He says over the

past 24 years, there has been a lack of concerted efforts by any entity to facilitate the reintegration of these individuals back into society. The Army Commander says during their talanoa sessions with the soldiers and their families, it became evident that together with their families they have endured significant ostracization and lived under the shadow of fear and uncertainty. Major General Kalouniwai says their suffering should not be prolonged for political mo-

tivations, and the RFMF's goal is to support these individuals and their families in transitioning back into normalcy, as they have already served their time. He says it is imperative for the people of Fiji to understand the truth surrounding the events and how they impacted the social standing of these individuals. He adds together, we must overcome past differences and prioritize reconciliation for the greater good of our nation.



Fiji News

Suva Sangam Maha Mariamman Temple celebrates 100 years of anniversary

The Suva Sangam Sri Raj Maha Mariamman Temple has celebrated its 100 years of anniversary. While speaking during the celebration, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance, Professor Biman Prasad says for Hindus no building is more sacred than a temple and for the last 100 years, the temple has not only been a place of worship but has also provided the benefits of coming together as a community. He says the founder of TISI Sangam, Sadhu Kuppuswamy has been described as an exceptional man of vision and of high moral and spiritual discipline, imbued with a spirit of service. Professor Prasad says the leader had a strong belief in two strategies to empower South Indians and others, build schools to provide education and temples to promote religion, language and culture. He says the work of Sadhu Kuppuswamy and the formation of TISI Sangam is



of huge historical significance to Fiji and great achievements of TISI Sangam in the last 98

years, the best is yet to come. He adds TISI Sangam temples are a source of inspiration and faith

for all Hindus, not just South Indians. He adds this will be a historic milestone for Fiji's

largest cultural organisation and a leader in facilitating education in the nation.

PRIME MINISTER RABUKA MEETS WITH PRIME MINISTER MANELE: FIJI AND SOLOMON ISLANDS RELATIONS ADVANCE

Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka held a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands Hon. Jeremiah Manele at the margins of the 53rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting (PIFLM) in Tonga. The meeting between the two leaders served an opportunity to reaffirm relations and discuss prospects for future cooperation. In his remarks, Prime Minister Rabuka congratulated Prime Minister Manele for the assumption of his office following the elections earlier this year. He reaffirmed Fiji's commitment to work closely with his fellow Pacific leaders in collaboratively addressing shared challenges and explore opportunities that would benefit both the nations and the broader Pacific community. Prime Minister Rabuka said Fiji looks forward to undertake the chairmanship of the Melane-

sian Spearhead Group (MSG) which will include hosting the MSG Leaders in Fiji, later this November. Notably, Fiji joined MSG in 1996, under the leadership of Prime Minister Rabuka.

The meeting also highlighted the positive contributions of the Fijian contingent in Solomon Islands from the first rotation in 2022 to the latest deployment. The ongoing consultations between the two countries regarding a proposed agreement to enhance the future deployment of Fiji security personnels to the Solomon Islands, was also among the key issues discussed at the meeting today. The meeting also outlined prospects for potential cooperation in areas such as air connectivity, justice, and legal affairs. Prime Minister Manele said Solomon Island looks forward to establishing their Chancery in Fiji and thanked Fiji for its support for this initiative.



As members Melanesian Spearhead Group [MSG], both the countries pledged their commitment to regional solidarity and prosperity. On this note, Prime Minister Manele com-

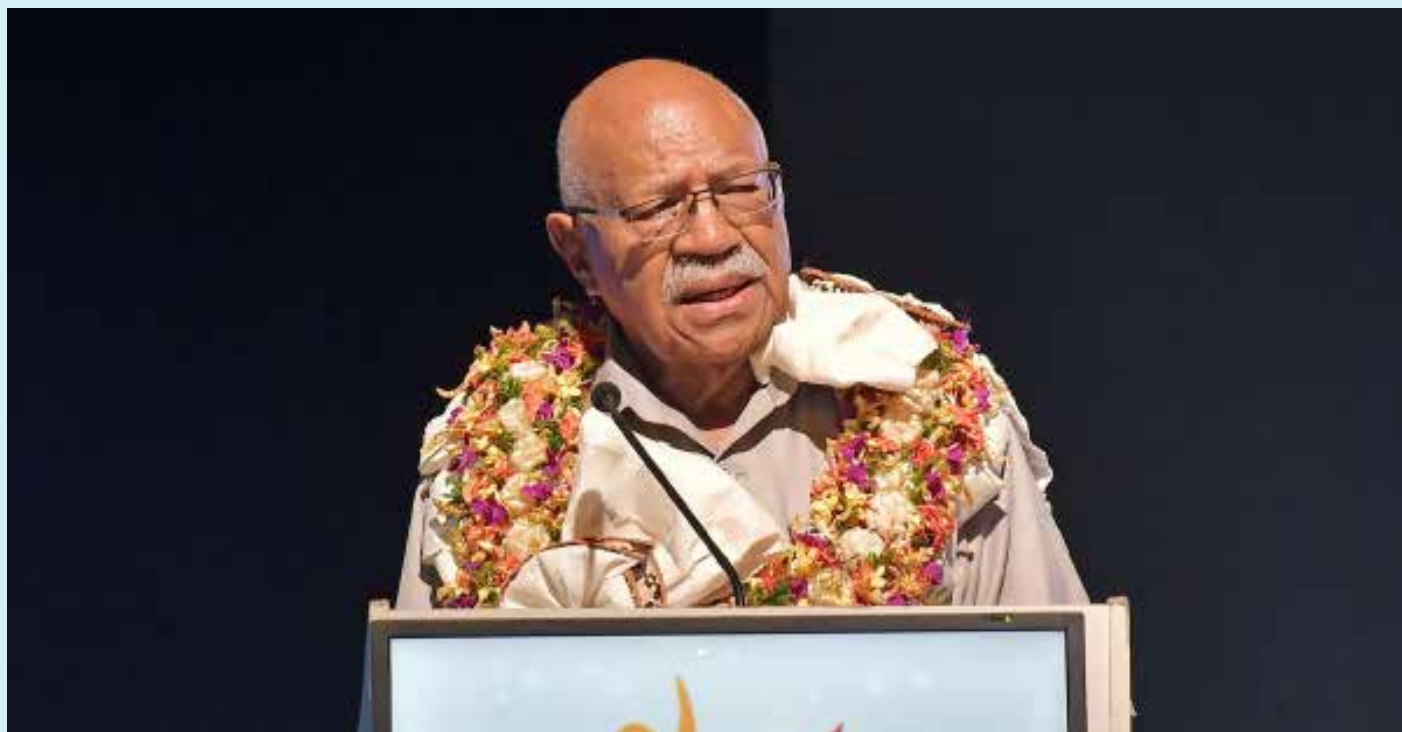
mended Prime Minister Rabuka for his vision on the Oceans of Peace Concept and his leadership on building a resilient and sustainable region. The two leaders also had the opportu-

nity to exchange their views on working collaboratively to navigate through the pertaining global and regional issues such as geopolitics, wars and conflicts.

Fiji News

Rabuka did not wear Sports Awards kalavata, and urges cabinet to avoid wearing matching outfits

Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka says he is encouraging his cabinet ministers to avoid wearing kalavata (matching traditional outfits) at various events while people are suffering from poverty. Rabuka made this statement while officiating at the 2023 Sports Awards that was held at the FMF Gymnasium. He did not wear the Sports Awards kalavata. He shared that during his visit to Tonga, he noticed that many people couldn't afford to change their clothes throughout the year. He recalled being given six shirts as part of his kalavata for the week, but while walking the streets of Tonga, he saw some people struggling and noticed that many cars were still old and worn out.



Chaudhry calls on RFMF to operate within Truth and Reconciliation National Process

Fiji Labour Party Leader and former Prime Minister, Mahendra Chaudhry is concerned about RFMF Commander, Major General Ro Jone Kalouniwai's comments on the reintegration into the military of young officers who were part of the turmoil in Vanua Levu during the 2000 coup. Chaudhry says the RFMF reconciliation process the Commander is running internally may potentially undermine the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He says it is the military that must face the sternest scrutiny under the Truth and Reconciliation process, and it is for this reason that the RFMF must work within the framework of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Chaudhry says he is also disturbed by Commander Kalouniwai's proposed reintegration of the recreant military officers as a form of compensation. He says these dismissed officers committed serious law and order offences causing great suffering to the mainly Indo Fijians living in Labasa and in the North generally. Chaudhry says they carried out a mutiny against the very institution they had taken an oath to serve. He asks would it not be a grave travesty of the military tradition to reinstate them. Chaudhry says he could hardly



see any logic in Commander Kalouniwai's comments that the reconciliation process within the military will build that image of trust and confidence for the general public to be able to understand that the RFMF has

completely reconciled. He says quite to the contrary, the reconciliation process mooted by the Commander will likely further erode public trust in the institution. The former Prime Minister says having these soldiers back

in the fold will not mend the RFMF's tattered image but will in fact lead to further instability within the institution, given that many loyal soldiers and their families were gravely affected by the actions of these disloyal

officers. Chaudhry calls on the Commander to revisit his reintegration and compensation comments and get the RFMF to submit to the Truth and Reconciliation process in a transparent and constructive manner.

Fiji News

Unleaded fuel, premix and gas prices to increase while kerosene and diesel to decrease from today

The prices of unleaded fuel, premix and gas will go up while kerosene and diesel will decrease from today. The price of unleaded fuel increases by 3 cents from \$2.87 to \$2.90 per litre, premix will increase from \$2.71 to \$2.72 per litre, while kerosene will now decrease from \$1.95 to \$1.93 per litre with diesel also decreasing by 2 cents from \$2.52 to \$2.50 per litre. Gas prices have increased with a 4.5kg cylinder costing \$14.86 while the 12kg cylinder has increased by 35 cents to \$39.63. FCCC says the Fuel & LPG product price review in Fiji follows a one-month lag period, therefore, the local Fuel and LPG prices for September 2024 are based on Refined Fuel and Butane imports made by Fuel and LPG companies in July 2024. They say fuel prices in Fiji are impacted by movements in the Means of Platts Singapore (MOPS), international freight rates and foreign exchange rates.



New bus fare structure to take effect from today

The new bus fare structure announced earlier this month, will take effect from today. Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC) CEO Joel Abraham explained that under the new structure, while student fares have been adjusted to align with adult fares, the Government has stepped in to fully subsidise this increase. Abraham says to ensure that families are not burdened by the new fare structure, their assessment took into account that any changes have zero financial impact on students and parents. He says as such, the Government's subsidy ensures that any additional cost for students is completely covered, even during weekends and school holidays, and the adult fare remains unchanged. For the blue card users, the Government will fully subsidise 100% of the additional student fare while for the yellow card users, students will continue to pay the current fare, with the remaining portion fully covered by the Government, applicable at all times, including during weekends and school holidays. The FCCC says this fare adjustment follows a



comprehensive review conducted by them which transitioned to a per-seat fare allocation model. They say their review, which was conducted with close collaboration with bus industry operators, also ensures that bus operators receive fair compensa-

tion through a full cost allocation recovery model. They add that this is aimed at sustaining the industry while maintaining affordability for consumers. Abraham says with the new fare structure, bus operators must do their part to maintain

and enhance service quality. He says the FCCC will be closely monitoring the services provided by bus operators to ensure they meet the expected standards and provide value to passengers in line with the fare adjustments. FCCC says they will begin the

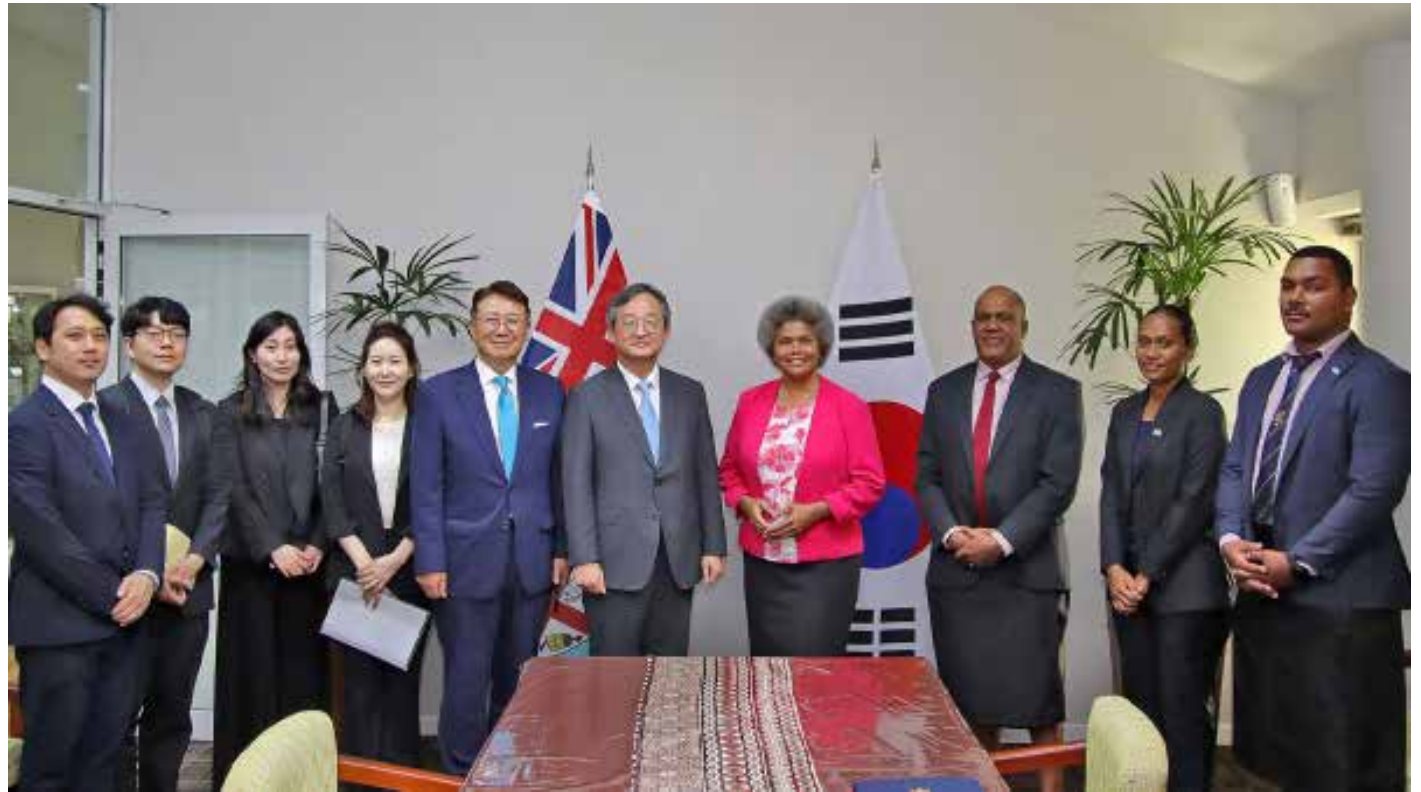
next bus fare review process in September 2024, starting with data gathering and comprehensive analysis to ensure that future fare adjustments continue to reflect current market conditions while balancing the interests of both consumers and the industry.

Fiji News

Korea continues support for Fiji in development priorities

Korea has reaffirmed its continuous support for Fiji's development priorities by enhancing cooperation in key sectors, including healthcare, renewable energy, fisheries, and climate resilience through the Korea International Cooperation Agency. During a bilateral meeting in Suva, Fiji's Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs Lenora Qereqeretabua and Korea's Deputy Foreign Minister Chung Byung-won emphasized the plans of both nations to boost collaboration in critical areas for Fiji's socio-economic progress. Qereqeretabua expressed Fiji's enthusiasm for Korea's commitment to establishing the Centre for Cooperation on Fisheries and Oceans, following the memorandum of understanding signed in 2023 where this initiative is expected to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the fisheries sector.

Korea reaffirmed its dedication to helping Fiji achieve broader goals, including Fiji's Ocean of Peace initiative led



by Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka. Chung noted Korea's intent to increase Official Development Assistance through its Indo-Pacific strategy, ensuring long-term support for Fiji's sus-

tainable development. Chung also demonstrated Korea's investment in Fiji's health sector with his visit to the Fiji National Rehabilitation Centre in Tamavua, a project supported by a

FJD\$22.2 million grant from Korea.

Korea acknowledged Fiji's regional importance and expressed interest in strengthening ties in trade, tourism, defence,

security, and other areas. Both countries also reaffirmed their shared values of peace, stability, and prosperity and looking forward to continued collaboration on multiple fronts.

China ready to assist Fiji in agriculture, tourism, aquaculture, education and fight against drugs

The People's Republic of China is ready to assist Fiji in agriculture, tourism, aquaculture, education and the fight against drugs. While speaking in a conference in Suva on Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka's recent visit to China, Chinese Ambassador to Fiji Zhou Jian says they have talked about direct flights from China to Fiji which can even result in about 1 million tourists coming here from China. He says talks are now underway with the Fiji government on the possibility of the direct flights. Jian says they are ready to take action on investments like going into hotel and tourism development projects, and hotel developers from China are ready to come in to increase the number of beds for Fiji tourism. He also highlighted that the blueprint has been set after Prime Minister Rabuka's visit, and China believes in action rather than just talking. Jian says they want to do more in getting Fijians to utilize their idle land and our seas to ensure people start earn-

ing income from the resources they have, which will eventually reduce the level of poverty. The Chinese Ambassador says they are ready to import more products from Fiji which include noni or kura, kava, wood, fish and other agricultural produce. Other areas being looked at include providing technical support for Fijians to get into com-

mercial agriculture, aquaculture and strengthening grassroots development. They are also looking at scholarships, vocational training, shipbuilding and modern port facilities. He highlighted China has seaports that are unmanned and everything is operated from the control rooms. When questioned by fiji-village News, Jian says they

are also ready to assist Fiji in the fight against drugs. He says China has always continued the hard fight against drugs in their country, and has been assisting the Fiji Police through some targeted training. Jian says they can do more in supporting the set up of rehabilitation centres, awareness campaigns, and ensure the young people acquire

the skills and knowledge to get meaningful revenue opportunities with the resources available to get out of poverty. Jian stresses that there is no hidden agenda by China, and they have had 49 years of strong bilateral relations with Fiji. He says they genuinely want to build on the friendship, and assist Fiji in comprehensive strategic plans.



Fiji News

Miss Hibiscus Festival contestants urging people to have civic pride

Miss Hibiscus Festival 2024 contestants are urging people to have civic pride and not to litter our beautiful environment, keeping it bright and clean. This was highlighted by the contestants during fjiivillage Straight Talk with Vijay Narayan when asked about two things they would like to change in Suva City. Miss Apco Rowena Acraman says people throw their litter anyhow and there is a need for more education on civic pride so people know how to keep their City and Towns clean. Miss Fiji Fashion Week Pepe Malani says we also need to keep our oceans clean as it is one the things that beautifies Fiji and attracts tourists. When asked how can Suva serve tourists in an efficient way, 19-year-old Malani responded that there should be more companies providing tour guide services to tourists. Adding to that Acraman says having more tourist guides



will not only help tourists but also boost the local economy by creating more jobs. Miss Good-

man Fielder Shannon Patrick says there should be more lights around and parks to be clean

so that families can enjoy with their loved ones while Miss Sigatoka River Safari Siteri Qa-

libau says there should be easy access for tourist who come to Suva for holidays.

\$22.3 million investment set to empower Fiji's youngest learners - Kuruleca

Early Childhood Education students in Fiji are set to benefit from a \$22.3 million investment for the 2024-2025 financial year, underscoring the government's commitment to nurturing the nation's youngest learners. Permanent Secretary for Education

Selina Kuruleca says the investment is crucial for shaping the future of Fiji, as she addressed educators at the 2024 Fiji Early Childhood Teachers Association Conference at FNU Lautoka Campus. Kuruleca highlights the Ministry of Education's ongoing

review of the ECE policy in collaboration with UNICEF and the planned revision of the 2009 'Na Noda Mataniciva' curriculum. She adds that these efforts will culminate in a dedicated ECE Teachers Forum where the revised policy will be launched,

focusing on professional development. She further emphasizes the importance of educators being proactive and reminded them of the significant impact they have during the early years when children absorb everything around them. Kuruleca

urges teachers to instill values of hope, creativity, and respect, contributing to a brighter future for Fiji's youngest learners. She reaffirmed the government's commitment to improving early childhood education through ongoing investments.



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Fiji News

Miss Universe Fiji Manshika Prasad to use platform to advocate against domestic violence

2024 Miss Universe Fiji winner Manshika Prasad aims to use the Miss Universe platform to amplify the voices of those silenced by domestic violence. While speaking after the Miss Universe Fiji crowning, Prasad says this cause is deeply personal to her as she has witnessed the devastating impact it has on individuals and families. The 24-year-old says she does not seek this title for the glitz, glamour, or personal gain but instead to advocate against domestic violence.

She says her goal is to raise awareness, inspire change, and help create a society where women feel safe, supported, and empowered. Prasad was born and raised in Lakena, Nausori and studied at Saraswati Primary Manoca before completing her education at Bhawani Dayal Arya College.

She is currently pursuing an MBA in Australia. Prasad will fly to Mexico City to represent Fiji in the Miss Universe In-



ternational Final in November. 23-year-old Susan Ranadi and 30-year-old Nadine Roberts were named co-runners up. The event marked the country's long-awaited return to the Miss

Universe global stage after 43 years since it's last participation. Meanwhile, in other Miss Universe Fiji 2024 Category Awards, Manshika Prasad won the Miss Swimwear, Kathleen

Mason won the Miss Congeniality, Salanieta Galo scooped the Best Smile Award, Susana Ranadi won the Best Catwalk, Nicole Matavesi was named Miss Fitness, Nadine Roberts

won the Best Evening Gown and also named Miss Social Media, Narishma Sharma was named Miss Rising Star and Prashantika Prasad was named Miss Photogenic.

KOICA and Ministry of Health to open new National Rehabilitation Centre soon

The Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health will be opening the new National Rehabilitation Centre as part of their ongoing partnership with Fiji's health sector to address Fiji's health needs. Minister for Health Dr Ratu Atonio Lalabalavu expressed the Ministry's appreciation for KOICA's significant contributions to Fiji's health infrastructure and capacity development programs. Dr Lalabalavu also expressed his appreciation for KOICA's commitment of over \$22 million towards the construction of the new National Rehabilitation Center. In a statement, the Ministry of Health says with Korea's general support, they eagerly await the completion of the new Rehabilitation Center based on the approved design and drawings. They say the new centre will offer health education, support group therapy, counselling, and occupational therapy services. They add it will serve



as a formal training centre for counselling, occupational therapy, and mental health/health education. Meanwhile, other KOICA projects progressing

around the country include the SHAPE project, a collaboration with WHO to strengthen health adaptation to climate change in Fiji, with a commitment of over

\$14 million, the renovation of the Labasa Hospital Emergency Department, with an estimated cost of over \$3 million and the Education Capacity Building

for the College of Medicine, Nursing, and Health Sciences (CMNHS) at the Fiji National University with a total cost of over \$21 million.

Health News

WHO Chief urges protection for health teams amid Polio vaccination rollout

World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has issued an appeal for the protection of health teams preparing for the polio vaccination campaign in Gaza. Mr. Tedros stressed that it is imperative for all parties involved to ensure the safety of health workers, medical facilities, and children during the rollout of this vital public health initiative, reported Al Jazeera. In a social media post, Mr. Tedros stated, "We urge all parties to ensure their protection, and that of health facilities and children," as the campaign is set to begin on Sunday (September 1). This call for safety comes amidst a backdrop of increasing violence in the region. Earlier the WHO Director-General also appealed for a lasting peace which he said was the only way to protect the children of Gaza. "The polio vaccination teams must be protected and allowed to conduct the upcoming campaigns in Gaza safely. We urge all parties to ensure their protection and that of health facilities and children. Humanitarian pauses are welcome, but ultimately, the



only solution to safeguard the health of the children of Gaza is a ceasefire," the WHO chief said. The WHO also highlighted the case of 10-month-old Abdul Rahman who was diagnosed as Gaza's first polio case in 25 years. The WHO said the case was a stark reminder of how war steals futures. WHO said it was planning a two-round

vaccination campaign to protect 6,40,000 kids in the war-affected region. Recent events have heightened concerns over the safety of humanitarian efforts in Gaza.

This week, four security staff accompanying an aid convoy were tragically killed in an Israeli airstrike. In another incident, a vehicle from the UN's

World Food Programme was struck by Israeli gunfire near a checkpoint, underscoring the volatile environment in which aid organizations are operating. The director of American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), in an interview with Al Jazeera, disclosed that Israeli forces had provided no prior warning or communication before target-

ing their convoy. The assault resulted in the deaths of four Palestinians and has raised alarms about the risks faced by those delivering essential aid in conflict zones. The WHO's appeal highlights the urgent need for a secure environment for health workers, who play a crucial role in combating diseases like polio.

Is it safe to consume petroleum jelly? Expert weighs in

Did you know Robert Augustus Chesebrough, founder of Vaseline, consumed a spoonful of petroleum jelly every day? He claimed the "wonder jelly" had medicinal properties and could cure various ailments, stated Britannica. You might be surprised, but according to the Food Distribution Authority (FDA), petroleum jelly surpasses safety checks and complies consumption guidelines.

But, does that mean you should go about ingesting petroleum jelly straight out of the tub? Before you begin to shake your head, find out whether consuming this product can come with any health risks or promises any particularly unsuspecting rewards. "It is not safe to consume, even though it isn't toxic," said Dr Prashant, Consultant Pediatrician at Ya-

arth Super Specialty Hospital, Greater Noida. He explained that ingesting petroleum jelly can lead to abdominal pain, nausea, diarrhea, and potentially serious complications like intestinal obstruction.

"This happens because petroleum jelly is thick, greasy, and difficult to digest," he said. Dr Prashant said that petroleum jelly is primarily used in skincare to add moisture to the skin and protect against external bacteria and irritants. It's effective for healing minor cuts, abrasions, cracked heels, lips, and diaper rashes.

When asked about common mistakes people make with petroleum jelly, Dr Prashant noted that applying it to an infected wound can prevent proper healing. According to him, some people like to apply it all over

their face, often in an attempt to heal their skin barrier. But he shared that doing so is a recipe for disaster and clogs up pores and leads to acne, or in certain

cases aggravates acne already present on the skin. The doctor warned against applying it all over the face, as it can clog pores and lead to or worsen

acne. He also advised against using petroleum jelly as a sexual lubricant, recommending products specifically designed for that purpose instead.





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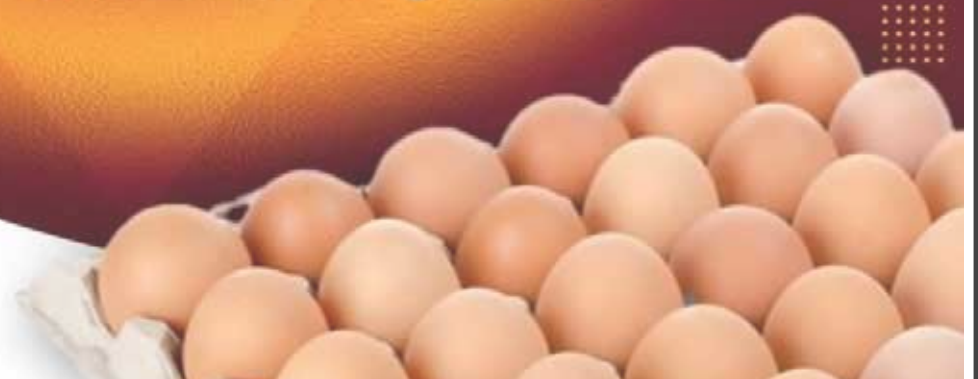
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Health News

New mpox strain mutating faster than expected, and other top health stories

1. Mpox strain's rapid changes create 'numerous unknowns', experts say The new mpox strain spreading from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is mutating faster than expected, particularly in regions lacking the resources for proper tracking, scientists report. This has led to "numerous unknowns" about the virus's severity and transmission, complicating the global response, experts in Africa, Europe and the United States told Reuters. Mpox, formerly known as monkeypox, has been a public health concern in parts of Africa for more than 50 years, but re-emerged as a global concern in 2022. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared a new health emergency on 14 August due to the 'clade 1b' strain of the virus, which has caused over 18,000 suspected cases and 615 deaths in Congo this year, with additional cases reported in Africa, Sweden and Thailand. The WHO has since launched a Global strategic preparedness and response plan, based on its existing recommendations. The key areas of focus include: comprehensive surveillance, prevention and response strategies advancing research and equitable access to diag-

nostics and vaccines reducing animal-to-human transmission engaging communities in outbreak control. Children in eastern DRC are worst affected by the current mpox outbreak due to their less-developed immune systems and overcrowded living conditions, the BBC reports. Approximately 75% of treated cases in the region involve children under 10. However, mpox is "not the new COVID-19", a WHO official stressed at a UN press briefing on 20 August, as health authorities have the knowledge and tools to control its spread.

2. Lung cancer vaccine A lung cancer patient at University College London Hospitals has become the first in the UK to receive a ground-breaking mRNA cancer vaccine, using the same mRNA technology pivotal in creating COVID-19 vaccines. Developed by BioNTech, BNT116 is designed to train the immune system to recognize and fight cancer cells, and is being tested in a clinical trial for non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). "Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer deaths worldwide, with an estimated 1.8 million deaths in 2020," said Professor Siow

Ming Lee, who led the study. "We hope this will provide an opportunity to further improve outcomes for our NSCLC patients, whether in the early or advanced stages." The trial will evaluate the safety and effectiveness of BNT116 across multiple sites in the UK and other countries.

3. News in brief: Health stories from around the world Researchers have vastly underestimated how many people lack access to potable water, according to a recent study published in Science. 'Mapping safe drinking water use in low- and middle-income countries' reveals that approximately 4.4 billion people - double previous estimates - are without safe drinking water. Microplastics, known to be environmental and health hazards, are increasingly present in the human body, with notably higher concentrations found in the brain than other organs, finds a new study awaiting peer review and posted online by the National Library of Medicine. In an unprecedented show of support, 14 African countries and key partners have pledged over \$45 million to the WHO Investment Round, a first-of-its-kind initiative to secure sustain-

able funding for the organization. Record heat this summer has led to an emergency blood shortage in the US, with the American Red Cross reporting a 25% drop in the national blood supply due to weather-related and other seasonal factors, The Guardian reports. Playing video games for a few hours daily can enhance mental health, according to research published in Nature Human Behaviour. Conducted in Japan during the COVID-19 pandemic, the study found that owning a game console boosted life satisfaction and reduced psychological distress. Researchers at Washington State University, US, have discovered a new code within DNA that could transform our understanding of gene regulation. This "spatial grammar" could clarify how genetic variations influence gene expression in development or disease, Science Daily reports. Eating processed or red meat, such as two slices of ham daily, increases the risk of type 2 diabetes by 15%, according to a Cambridge University study involving 2 million people in 20 countries. But other experts have argued that the research cannot prove meat causes diabetes due to the

difficulty of ruling out other risk factors like diet and lifestyle. 5. More on health from our blog Antimicrobial resistance is rendering antibiotics increasingly ineffective, potentially leading to 10 million annual deaths by 2050. A World Economic Forum paper links this to antibiotic misuse, pollution, climate change and poor sanitation. Read more on this crisis and how initiatives like Defeating Antibiotic Resistance through Transformative Solutions are working to address it. Over half of the world's population lacks full healthcare access. This article examines how generative AI could help alleviate medical staff shortages, and highlights initiatives aimed at closing the women's health gap and expanding access to treatments for diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. Women spend 25% more of their lives in debilitating health than men, according to a report from the World Economic Forum and the McKinsey Health Institute. The women's health gap includes a data disparity, leading to underdiagnosis of certain conditions. Here's what you need to know about this issue and six key health conditions it highlights.



Health News

COVID-19 vaccination mandates boosted uptake among health care workers

At the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, governments and health care centers across the country faced a difficult but important question: Should health care workers be required to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine? It was an economic quandary as much as an ethical one. Vaccine mandates could cause reductions in staff, either from workers missing time due to recovery from the vaccine or from opting to seek employment elsewhere. Additionally, health care workers are highly educated on the value of vaccines and had seen firsthand the perils of COVID-19, reasons to think them capable of making the best decisions for themselves and their patients.

Now, a new study from researchers at Tulane University has found that state-level COVID-19 vaccination mandates successfully increased vaccine rates among health care workers, a finding that, while perhaps unsurprising, provides evidence that the policy can boost vaccination rates even among a highly vaccinated, highly educated population. The study,

published in JAMA Network Open, examined vaccination rates among more than 30,000 health care workers in 45 states, 16 of which issued COVID vaccination mandates. Researchers found a 3-4% increase in vaccinations among the group, an improvement on an already lofty baseline vaccination rate of 86%. The study only found increases in vaccination rates in states that required vaccinations and provided no option to opt-out. "It's great from a government perspective to see this policy increase vaccination rates in an already very highly vaccinated population," said corresponding author Charles Stoecker, a health economist with Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. "These results also show that how we craft these regulations matters. States that provided an option to take a regular COVID test in lieu of getting vaccinated didn't see the same impacts as the strict mandate states." The findings provide valuable insight on the role vaccine mandates can play in the event of a fu-



ture pandemic and why such mandates may be justified. "The federal government has shown that it will defer to the states on this issue, and states have rolled back their mandates, but now we know we have this toolkit," Stoecker said. "In the event of a new pandemic, this shows we're leaving some vaccination coverage on the table if we let even highly educated

health care workers decide for themselves." The vaccination increases were primarily seen in health care workers between the ages of 25-49 years. The 16 states which passed and upheld vaccine mandates without opt-outs were California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylva-

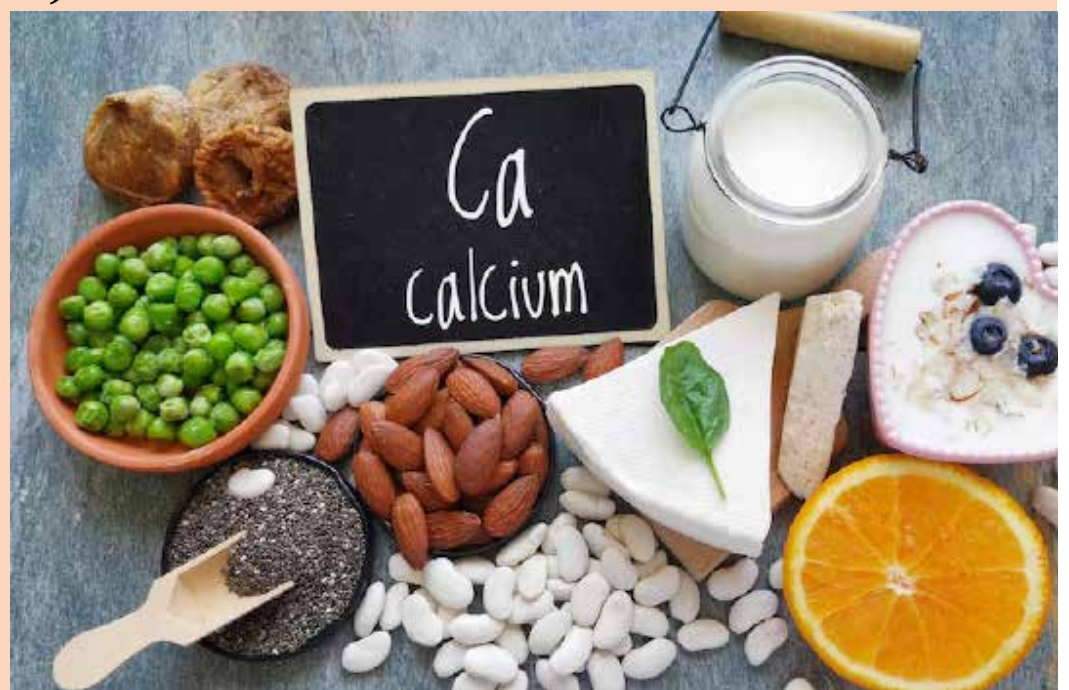
nia, Rhode Island, Washington, and Washington, DC. Stoecker said the next step would be to examine how these mandates affected disease transmission, which could help quantify the economic impact such policies have. "The ultimate goal would be to be able to assign economic benefits to the vaccinations that happened because of the mandates," Stoecker said.

Indians across all age groups deficient in iron, calcium, folate: Lancet

People across all age groups in India, both men and women, are consuming inadequate amounts of micronutrients critical for health, including iron, calcium and folate, as estimated in a study published in The Lancet Global Health journal. The study is the first to provide estimates of insufficient consumption of 15 micronutrients across 185 countries, taken through diets without the use of supplements, according to an international team, including researchers from Harvard University, US. The findings suggested that around the world, almost 70 per cent, or over five billion, people do not consume enough iodine, vitamin E, and calcium. The researchers also found that within a country and an age group, more women were consuming inadequate amounts of iodine, vitamin B12 and iron, compared to men, whereas more

men were consuming inadequate amounts of magnesium, vitamin B6, zinc and vitamin C, compared to women. In India, while more women consumed insufficient amounts of iodine, compared to men, more men consumed inadequate amounts of zinc and magnesium, compared to women, the team found.

While analyses over the past 10 years have looked at micronutrient deficiencies, the researchers said large data gaps remain for many micronutrients and population groups. In this study, the authors used publicly available data from the Global Dietary Database to estimate the prevalence of insufficient nutrient intakes for 99.3 per cent of the global population. Men and women aged 10-30 years were most prone to low-levels of calcium intake, especially in South Asia, Southeast Asia and



sub-Saharan Africa, the team said.

The authors said that the findings could be used by public health professionals to target

populations in need of dietary interventions. They added that since they did not account for intake of fortified foods or supplements, the results could

possibly be an overestimate for some key nutrients in particular locations where people consume high amounts of fortified foods and supplements.

Health News

Fourteen African countries, key partners unite to provide critical resources for health in WHO's first-ever Investment Round

In an unprecedented show of unity in support of the World Health Organization, 14 African countries and many partners pledged over US\$ 45 million to the WHO Investment Round, a three-month-old initiative aimed at generating sustainable financing for the organization at the center of the global health architecture. The commitments were made during the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for Africa, with heads of state and government from across the continent underscoring the importance of investing in global health and ensuring a strong WHO. "I thank our African Region Member States for actively supporting WHO's first Investment Round to mobilize predictable and flexible resources needed for our core work over the next four years," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. "Full, sustainable funding will enable WHO to support countries better in their work to build healthier, more resilient, and

more prosperous populations." The countries and partners came together for the historic event aimed at sustainably funding WHO and thus enabling it to more effectively fulfil its mandate and advance key objectives to promote, provide and protect health and well-being for all. The countries included Botswana, Cabo Verde, Chad, Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, and the United Republic of Tanzania. Many partners joined Members States in making commitments of support to WHO and committing to providing pledges later in the year, including Helmsley Charitable Trust, World Diabetes Foundation, Roche, Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, African Development Bank and the WHO Foundation. "A strong, predictable and sustainably financed WHO is essential for our region and the world to meet the multiple health threats we face; and sup-



port the prevention of disease based on the vast evidence at our disposal," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa. "Every pledge and every partnership counts. Together, we can achieve a future where health and well-being are accessible to all."

The WHO Investment Round will continue in the coming months and feature key pledging moments around the world. Launched at the World Health Assembly in May 2024, the Investment Round aims to generate contributions that are flexible and thereby aligned with

WHO's strategy as approved by its Member States; predictably provided at the start of the four-year budget cycle to enable strategic decision-making; and resilient in that they will derive from a larger, more diverse set of donors.

Mosquito-Borne Illnesses: Tips to Protect Yourself from West Nile Virus, Dengue, and EEE

Mosquitoes are more than just a summertime annoyance; they can also spread disease. When mosquitoes bite a person or animal, they may pick up a virus or parasite and pass it on to others through subsequent bites. The recent rise in mosquito-borne illnesses across the U.S. has raised concerns. "Minimizing mosquito exposure is probably the best way to protect yourself," said Dr. Marc Siegel from the George Washington School of Medicine.

He recommends avoiding peak mosquito feeding times, dusk to dawn, and wearing protective clothing and mosquito repellent if you need to be outside, especially in wooded or swampy areas. However, not all mosquitoes carry harmful viruses. Of the over 200 mosquito species in the U.S., only about 12 can spread diseases that affect humans. Still, climate change is expanding the reach of mosquito-borne illnesses globally,

increasing the risk of exposure. The four most common mosquito-borne illnesses in the U.S. include West Nile virus, eastern equine encephalitis, malaria, and dengue. Each poses different risks, and experts recommend various preventive measures to

protect yourself. For example: West Nile virus:

The most common mosquito-borne illness in the U.S., affecting thousands each year, though only a small percentage of those infected develop severe symptoms.

Eastern equine encephalitis: Rare but potentially deadly, this disease is more likely to affect young children and older adults. Malaria: Although largely eradicated in the U.S., recent cases in Florida and Texas have raised concerns.

Dengue: Primarily found in tropical areas, but some cases have been reported in the U.S. While there are no specific treatments or vaccines for most of these diseases, protective measures can help reduce the risk of infection.





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Bollywood News

Paris Paralympic Games 2024: Kareena Kapoor & Other Bollywood Celebs Celebrate Avani Lekhara's Gold Win

Indian para-athletes Avani Lekhara, Mona Agarwal, Manish Narwal, and Pre Pal have made the nation proud by winning medals at the Paris Paralympic Games 2024. Bollywood celebrities took to social media to celebrate their achievements and extend their best wishes. Avani Lekhara led the charge by clinching the gold medal in the Women's m Air Rifle Standing SH1 final. This victory marks her second Paralympic gold, making her the first Indian woman to achieve this feat. Mona Agarwal also brought home a bronze in the same event.

Kareena Kapoor Khan was among the first to congratulate the athletes. She shared her excitement on Instagram with a collage of the winners. In her story, she tagged Avani, Mona, Manish, and Preethi, writing "Huge congratulations," accompanied by heart and tricolor emojis.

Ayushmann Khurrana also expressed his pride on Instagram. He posted photos of the medalists with a caption that read, "What an amazing day for India at the Paralympics. Feel-

ing super proud," and individually congratulated each athlete in his post.

Sonali Bendre joined in on the celebrations by sharing a collage of Avani and Mona proudly displaying their medals. She wrote, "Medals are home again," using heart and tricolor emojis to express her joy. Producer Jackky Bhagnani

and actress Rakul Preet Singh also celebrated the athletes' success. Jackky shared a heartfelt note calling Avani and Mona's achievements "phenomenal" and commending their extraordinary efforts. Rakul Preet posted a collage of Avani and Mona, lauding their hard work and calling the moment "inspiring." Adding to India's medal tally,

Manish Narwal secured silver in the men's air rifle category. Meanwhile, Preethi Pal made history by winning a bronze in the Women's T25-100m event, becoming the first Indian para-athlete to achieve this feat. Actor Sonu Sood, known for his support of various social causes, took to X (formerly Twitter) to congratulate Avani and Mona.

He shared a picture of them flashing victory signs with the caption, "Proud of you both." The achievements of these para-athletes have not only brought glory to India but have also inspired many across the nation. Their dedication and hard work serve as a beacon of hope and motivation for aspiring athletes everywhere.



YouTuber exposes Alia Bhatt, Samantha, Hrithik for endorsing unhealthy snacks while being health-conscious themselves

YouTuber Nitin Maurya recently lashed out at several Bollywood celebrities for promoting unhealthy diet in spite of having a disciplined diet for themselves. Bollywood celebrities are frequently praised for their commitment to health and fitness. Although they often speak about adopting a healthy lifestyle in interviews and public appearances, they have also endorsed certain unhealthy brands. Now, a video by fitness influencer and YouTuber Nitin Maurya slamming celebrities promoting unhealthy diets despite being health-conscious has gone viral. Stars called out for promoting unhealthy brands Nitin's YouTube video was reshared on Twitter as it exposed the food brands endorsed by Bollywood actors. The video begins with Kartik Aaryan discussing in various interviews the importance of

staying away from junk food like burgers, pizza, and sugar. However, it then shows him appearing in an advertisement for a burger outlet and consuming a soft drink. In a podcast, Samantha Ruth Prabhu emphasises the significance of avoiding sugar, chocolates, and processed food while promoting the consumption of coconut oil. Nevertheless, she is later seen endorsing chocolate brands, sunflower oil, and processed snacks. Similarly, Alia Bhatt and Hrithik Roshan are shown admitting to not consuming sugar while they promote chocolate brands. Sara Ali Khan is shown eating pizza and drinking a soft drink in a commercial, but in an interview, she confesses that she avoids junk food. There's also a clip of Ananya Panday saying she can't light a cigarette, but then another clip shows her smoking at a public function. The video

ends with celebrities endorsing a tobacco brand. The YouTuber later pointed out that the celebrities don't actually consume the products they endorse, so people shouldn't look to them for fitness and nutrition tips. Internet reacts to actors promoting unhealthy brands. Reacting to the video, a user commented,

"This should be shared with every single Indian." Another user wrote, "They need to stop all this totally." A user also pointed out, "Bollywood always promotes harmful foods to all." Another user commented, "No moral values for these actors." YouTuber slams celebrities' unusual dinner schedule. In another

video, Nitin advises not to follow celebrities' unusual dinner habits. The video includes clips of Shradha Kapoor, Shilpa Shetty, and others mentioning that they have dinner between 5:30 and 8:30. The YouTuber then explains that most people don't have the privilege to have dinner at such an early time.



Bollywood News

With The Massive Success Of Stree 2, Animal Fame Rashmika Mandanna Joins Bollywood's Expanding Horror Universe Alongside Ayushmann Khurrana

Renowned South Indian actress Rashmika Mandanna, celebrated for her performances in blockbuster films such as *Animal*, the *Pushpa* franchise, and *Geetha Govindam*, is set to make her entry into Bollywood's expanding horror universe. Directed by Aditya Sarpotdar, known for his eerie and thrilling ventures like *Munjya*, *Kakuda*, and *Zombivli*, the upcoming film, *Vampires of Vijayanagara*, promises to be a chilling addition to the genre. Joining Rashmika in the lead is the versatile Ayushmann Khurrana, acclaimed for his remarkable roles in *Andhadhun*, the *Dream Girl* series, *Vicky Donor*, and *Article 15*. With two powerhouse talents at the helm, the film is sure to captivate audiences. Shooting is scheduled to commence this October. This big-budget venture is set to showcase Rashmika Mandanna in a complex and multi-layered role. The film's intriguing narrative will unfold across two distinct timelines, blending history and horror with a touch of comedy. One storyline is rooted in the grandeur of Hampi during the era of the Vijayanagara Empire, immersing viewers in the rich cultural tapestry of an-



cient India. The second timeline transports audiences to a remote village in northern India, where eerie and comedic elements intertwine in the present day. Bollywood's horror genre has seen a major resurgence this year, starting with the success of *Shaitaan*, starring Ajay Devgn, Madhavan, and Jyothika. With a budget of approximately INR 60 crore, the film went on to collect an impressive INR 213.55

crore worldwide in just 66 days, establishing itself as a certified superhit and revitalizing interest in horror films within the industry. Next came the era of horror-comedy duos, starting with *Munjya*. The film grossed INR 125 crore worldwide, marking a significant moment for the genre by showcasing the potential of blending horror with humor to appeal to a broader audience. Following *Munjya*'s

success, the highly anticipated sequel to the beloved *Stree* franchise, *Stree 2*, hit theaters with an all-star cast, including Rajkumar Rao, Shraddha Kapoor, Abhishek Banerjee, and Pankaj Tripathi. The film quickly became a box office sensation, amassing an impressive worldwide collection of INR 630.15 crore in just 16 days. This remarkable performance solidified the *Stree* franchise as

one of Bollywood's most successful horror-comedy series to date. The box office figures, all sourced from *Sacnilk*, reflect the tremendous popularity of both films, though these numbers have not been independently verified by *Koimoi*. Nonetheless, the staggering earnings underscore the growing dominance of horror-comedy in Indian cinema, propelling the genre to new heights.

Ajay Devgn's sports biopic Maidaan drops on OTT

Ajay Devgn's latest film, *Maidaan*, is now streaming on OTT as Amazon Prime Video has added the biographical sports drama to its growing list of Bollywood films. Released in April this year, the movie chronicles the life of legendary Indian football coach Syed Abdul Rahim, who shaped modern Indian football and coached the national team for over a decade. On Wednesday, the streaming platform announced the news on social media, describing it as the "ground maidaan breaking story of India's finest hour in football." The streaming giant's subscribers in India and across 240 countries and territories can watch *Maidaan* on their devices for free. Currently, the movie is available only in Hindi with English subtitles, with no information yet on versions in other languages. In

a statement, it said, "*Maidaan* has been appreciated for its powerful storytelling and its depiction of the golden era of Indian football, striking a chord with audiences. The film's compelling storyline, anchored by exceptional performances from Ajay Devgn and the talented ensemble, alongside its meticulous attention to historical moments have all contributed to its critical success. *Maidaan* exemplifies our ongoing commitment to delivering compelling and inspiring Indian stories, and we are very excited to share this critically acclaimed film with a global audience." Alongside Ajay Devgn, *Maidaan* features Priyamani as Rahim's wife, with notable performances by Gajraj Rao and Rudranil Ghosh. Produced by Boney Kapoor in association with Zee Studios, the film's music is composed by

Oscar-winner A R Rahman. Richa Sharma made a significant return to playback singing with the hit song *Mirzaa*. Despite its cinematic merits, *Maidaan* underperformed at the box office due to competition from other releases. The *Indian Express*'

film critic Shubhra Gupta, in her review, said, "The three-hour-long film feels like a stretch in places where the drama amped-up-just-for-effect and the blaring background music threatens to overpower the action. Not all the musical stretches are

terrible, though: the one which accompanies the discovery of a player in an unexpected quarter early in the film, for example, is lovely. But after a point, it becomes too loud, too much, and you feel like clapping your hands over your ears."





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World News

47 Indian 'Cyber Slaves' In Laos, Forced To Run Dating Apps Scam, Rescued

At least 47 Indians, who were being held against their will in Laos and being forced to scam Indians back home online, were rescued today by officials. The government has been cautioning citizens against accepting job offers in Laos and Cambodia, some of which are fake and aimed at finding cyber slaves. The Indian mission has so far rescued 635 Indians from the country and ensured their safe return to India.

In the latest case, the embassy rescued 47 Indians trapped in cyber scam centres at the Golden Triangle

Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Bokeo province, a statement from the Indian Embassy in Laos said. "Of these, 29 were handed over to the Embassy by Laos authorities after their crackdown on illegal activities in Golden Triangle SEZ, while other 18 had approached the Embassy in distress, seeking help," the statement, which was posted on X (formerly Twitter), said. Modus Operandi External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar last month discussed the issue of trafficking of Indian nationals with Laos Prime Minister

Sonexay Siphandone during his visit to the Southeast Asian nation.

Indians are lured with a job offer to Laos, where the fraudsters seize their passport, making it impossible for them to leave. They are then forced to

pose as women with fake social media profiles and fake photos, given daily targets, and punished for not meeting them. This is how the recruits would spend their days in a country they went to with the "promise" of a better life.

The scammers would pose as women on dating apps and chat with the potential targets. "After some time, they would convince the target to invest in cryptocurrency trading.

Many were duped in India this way," one rescued Indian

said. The "cyber slaves" go without food and rest if they failed to meet their daily targets. Last month, the Indian embassy in Laos rescued 13 Indians, who were lured into certain cyber-scramming centres in the country and sent them back home.



Trump makes fresh personal attacks against Harris, calls her defective

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has launched a fresh personal attack on his Democratic rival Kamala Harris, calling her defective". His latest attacks come after Harris sat for her first major interview with CNN as her party's presidential nominee on Thursday. Fifty-nine-year-old Harris, who is of Indian and African descent, is the Democratic Party candidate in the November 5 presidential election in which she will contest against Trump, 78. I think she would've been better off if she just did interviews, even if they weren't great it would have been better because now everyone's watching and now we see, she's defective, Trump said on Friday at the annual gathering of Moms for Liberty, a conservative non-profit. She's a defective person. And we don't need another de-

fective person as president of the United States, Trump said, likely referring to President Joe Biden who dropped out of the race last month and endorsed Harris. He also said Biden was sharp as a tack, during the presidential debate in June and complained that it was unfair he had to spend millions going after the wrong person during the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee (RNC) last month. Trump has unleashed personal attacks on Vice President Harris as her political star has risen since she rose to the top of the Democratic ticket in recent weeks.

Earlier, Trump disparaged Harris' physical appearance and insisted that he was much better looking than her. Trump earlier this month said he was entitled to personally attack Harris because he doesn't have



a lot of respect for her. He has also questioned her racial identity. Harris in the interview with CNN on Thursday brushed off Trump's remarks questioning her race. Same old, tired playbook. Next question, please,

Harris responded. During an election campaign in Pennsylvania earlier Friday, Trump briefly commented on the interview. Did you see her on television last night? This is gonna be the president of our country?

I don't think so, he said. While the outlet aired the interview in its entirety, Trump and his allies criticised CNN for pre-taping the interview instead of airing it live as a way to cover up potential Harris slipups.



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World News

7 killed by Russian attacks as Moscow pushes ahead in Ukraine's east

Russian shelling in the town of Chasiv Yar on Saturday killed five people, as Moscow's troops pushed ahead in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region. The attack struck a high-rise building and a private home, said regional Gov. Vadym Filashkin, who said the victims were men aged 24 to 38. He urged the last remaining residents to leave the front-line town, which had a pre-war population of 12,000. Normal life has been impossible in Chasiv Yar for more than two years, Filashkin wrote on social media. Do not become a Russian target evacuate. A further two people were killed by Russian shelling in the Kharkiv region. One victim was pulled from the rubble of a house in the village of Cherkaska Lozova, said Gov. Oleh Syniehubov, while a second woman died of her wounds while being transported to a hospital. Meanwhile, Russia's Ministry of Defense said it captured the town of Pivnichne, also in Ukraine's Donetsk region. The Associated Press could not independently verify the claim. Russian forces have been driving deeper into the partly oc-

cupied eastern region, the total capture of which is one of the Kremlin's primary ambitions. Russia's army is closing in on Pokrovsk, a critical logistics hub for the Ukrainian defense in the area. At the same time, Ukraine has sent its forces into Russia's Kursk region in recent weeks in the largest incursion onto Russian soil since World War II. The move is partly an effort to force Russia to draw troops away from the Donetsk front. Elsewhere, the number of wounded following a Russian attack on the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv on Friday continued to rise. Six people were killed, including a 14-year-old girl, when glide bombs struck five locations across the city, said regional Gov. Oleh Syniehubov. Writing on social media Saturday, he said that the number of injured had risen from 47 to 96. Syniehubov also confirmed that the 12-story apartment block that was hit by one bomb strike, setting the building ablaze and trapping at least one person on an upper floor, would be partly demolished. Ukrainian officials have previously pointed



to the Kharkiv strikes as further evidence that Western partners should scrap restrictions on what the Ukrainian military can target with donated weapons. In an interview with CNN on Friday, Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov said that Kyiv had presented Washington with a list of potential long-range targets within Russia for its approval. I hope we were heard, he said. He also denied speculation that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy

's decision to dismiss the commander of the country's air force Friday was directly linked to the destruction of an F-16 warplane that Ukraine received from its Western partners four days earlier. The order to dismiss Lt. Gen. Mykola Oleshchuk was published on the presidential website minutes before an address which saw Zelenskyy stress the need to take care of all our soldiers. This is two separate issues, said Umerov. At this stage, I would not connect

them. The number of injured also continued to rise in the Russian border region of Belgorod, where five people were killed Friday by Ukrainian shelling, said Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov. He said Sunday that 46 people had been injured, of whom 37 were in the hospital, including seven children. Writing on social media, Gladkov also said that two others had been injured in Ukrainian shelling across the region.

Doctor charged in actor Matthew Perry's death expected to plead guilty

One of the two California doctors involved in the investigation into the overdose death of actor Matthew Perry is expected to plead guilty to charges related to the surgical anaesthetic ketamine, as per the Hollywood Reporter. The information was confirmed by a Department of Justice official on Friday, according to The Hollywood Reporter. Mark Chavez, 54, appeared in a Los Angeles federal court on Friday for a bond hearing and arraignment. According to Ciaran McEvoy from the United States Attorneys' Office, Chavez is expected to enter a guilty plea in the coming weeks. His plea will be the third in the ongoing investigation into Perry's death. The 'Friends' actor was found dead in October in the hot tub at his Pacific Palisades home. According to The Hollywood

Reporter, the investigation into Perry's death has led to the arrest of five people. These include Chavez, Perry's assistant Kenneth Iwamasa, another doctor named Salvador Plasencia, a drug dealer, and a woman known as the "ketamine queen." Jasveen Sangha, the woman dubbed the "ketamine queen," and Salvador were identified as the lead defendants in this case. The Los Angeles County Medical Examiner's Office reported that Perry died from the acute effects of ketamine, which led to cardiovascular overstimulation and respiratory depression. The amount of ketamine found in Perry's blood was comparable to what is used during general anaesthesia. The medical examiner also noted that drowning, coronary artery disease, and the effects of buprenorphine, a drug used to treat opioid ad-

diction, were contributing factors in Perry's death. Chavez

is also accused of using a fake prescription and making false

statements to a wholesale ketamine distributor.



Food

Mango Chilli Chicken Recipe

Mango Chilli Chicken

Total Time: 35 min

Prep Time : 15 min

Cook Time : 20 min

Serves: 2 Servings

Ingredients

1. 500 gms Boneless chicken (cubed)
2. 1/2 cup Mango Pulp
3. 1/2 cup Bell Pepper (Cubed)
4. 1/2 cup Onion (Cubed)
5. 1/4 cup Zucchini (Chopped)
6. 1/2 cup Broccoli (Chopped)
7. 1/4 cup Carrot Chopped
8. 2 Green Chillies (Slit)
9. to taste Salt
10. to taste Black Pepper
11. 1 cup All Purpose Flour
12. 1/2 cup Cornflour
13. 1 tbsp Ginger-Garlic Paste
14. 1/2 tsp Chopped Garlic
15. 1 tsp Corn starch
16. 2 tbsp Soya Sauce
17. 1 tbsp Green Chilli Sauce
18. to taste Red Chilli Sauce
19. to taste Vinegar

20. 1 tbsp Tomato ketchup

How to

1. To begin with the recipe, you first need to coat the boneless chicken chunks. For this, take a bowl, add all-purpose flour, corn flour, salt, black pepper and ginger-garlic paste and mix well. Add the cubed chicken to the bowl and coat them nicely with the flour mixture. Keep aside.
2. Meanwhile, take a frying pan, add oil and heat it. Once done, drop the chicken pieces and fry until golden brown and crisp. Please Note: If you want extra crispy chicken, then you can double fry the chicken pieces.
3. Now for the sauce, take a separate pan, add 2 tbsp oil and let it heat. Add chopped green chillies and chopped garlic and fry for a few sec-



onds.

4. Add onion (cubed) and cubed mixed bell peppers and fry on high heat for a minute.

5. Now is the time to add soya sauce, sweet chili sauce (optional), red chili

sauce, tomato ketchup, vinegar, salt to taste, and 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper to the wok.

6. Mix cornstarch in 1/2 cup water to make a slurry and add it to the wok. Cook for a minute or till the sauce

thicken and the cornstarch is cooked. Add more water if required.

7. Add the fried chicken and mango pulp and give it a mix.

8. Cook for 2-3 minutes.

9. Serve and enjoy!

Garlic Soya Chicken Recipe

Garlic Soya Chicken Recipe

Total Time: 35 min

Prep Time : 15 min

Cook Time : 20 min

Serves: 2 Servings

Ingredients

1. 450 Gram Chicken Thigh/ Breast (cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-thin strips)
2. 1 tsp Sesame Oil (toasted)
3. 1/4 tsp White Pepper (finely ground)
4. 1 tsp Ginger Juice
5. 2 tbsp Peanut Oil or Vegetable oil (divided)
6. 5-6 Garlic cloves (minced)
7. 1 tsp Ginger, grated
8. 1 tsp Red Chilli Flakes
9. 1/2 cup Red Onion, chopped
10. A handful Snow Peas (trimmed)
11. 1/2 Red Bell Pepper (cut into thin strips)

For the sauce:

12. 1 tbsp Rice Vinegar
13. 2 tbsp Soy Sauce
14. 2 tsp Dark Soy Sauce
15. 2 tsp Chinese Rice Wine
16. 1/2 tsp Brown Sugar
17. 1 tsp Cornflour

How to

1. In a large bowl, toss chicken strips with toasted sesame oil and white pepper. Marinate for 10-15 minutes. Keep aside.

2. In a small bowl, stir together rice vinegar, soy sauce, dark soy sauce, Chinese rice wine, brown sugar and cornstarch. Set aside.

3. Heat a wok or large frying pan over high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of oil. When the oil is hot, add the chicken pieces, spreading it out as much as possible.

4. Sear for 1 minute without stirring until the edges are

lightly browned, then stir to cook all sides until just cooked through, about 2-3 minutes more. Transfer chicken to a bowl and set aside.

5. Reheat the same wok, Put in another tablespoon of oil, add in garlic, ginger, and red chili flakes. Stir-fry over low heat for about 10-15 seconds, or until aromatic, taking care not to

burn the garlic.

6. Turn up the heat to high, add in snow peas and red onion, and stir-fry for another 30 seconds.

7. Add in red bell pepper, and cook for one minute - making sure to stir and toss the ingredients well.

8. When the vegetables are bright and almost crisp-tender, stir in the cooked chicken.

9. Take the prepared sauce, give it a stir, and quickly pour it into the wok, cooking until the sauce thickens.

10. Add in one or two tablespoon of water if needed, toss well, and cook for a further 30 seconds or the mixture is hot and bubbly.

11. Turn heat off, and transfer to a serving plate.

12. Serve hot with steamed rice.





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Food

Greek Salad with Lemon Dressing

Greek Salad with Lemon Dressing Recipe

Total Time: 25 min

Prep Time : 05 min

Cook Time : 20 min

Serves: 4 Servings

Ingredients

1. 1 medium cucumber, peeled and cut into triangles
 2. 2 medium tomatoes, cut into triangles
 3. 2 medium onions, cut into quarters and layers separated
 4. 1 small green capsicum, cut into triangles
 5. 1 small yellow bell pepper, cut into triangles
 6. 1 small red bell pepper, cut into triangles
 7. 6-8 black olives, seeded
 8. 20 gm feta cheese, cut into cubes
 9. 5-6 lollo rosso lettuce, torn
- For the dressing:
10. 2 Tbsp lemon juice

11. 1 tsp chopped fresh oregano
12. 1/2 Tbsp white wine vinegar
13. 1 tsp chopped garlic
14. Salt to taste
15. 1 tsp black pepper powder
16. 1 Tbsp olive oil
17. 2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley

How to

1. Combine lemon juice, oregano, vinegar, garlic, salt, pepper powder, olive oil and parsley in a bowl and mix well.
2. Mix together cucumber, tomatoes, onions, capsicum, yellow and red bell pepper and olives in a bowl and toss well.
3. Pour the dressing on top, add lettuce and toss well.
4. Add feta cheese and mix gently.
5. Serve chilled.



Coconut Rabri

Coconut Rabri Recipe

Total Time: 40 min

Prep Time : 10 min

Cook Time : 30 min

Serves: 2 Servings

Ingredients

1. 1 Litre full cream milk
2. 1/2 cup grated coconut
3. 1/2 cup khoya
4. Sugar (as per desired levels)
5. Cashews

6. Cardamom
7. Chopped almonds and pistachios
8. 10 saffron strands (kesar)
9. Rose petals (for garnish)

How to

1. In a small bowl, soak 10-15 cashews in hot water. Leave it aside for 15 minutes.
2. In the meantime, take a pan and pour full cream milk

in it. Keep heating it until it starts boiling. When it does, reduce the flame and keep cooking the milk till it's 3/4th in quantity. Make sure to keep stirring it so that it does not stick to the pan.

3. At this point, add saffron strands and khoya to the milk. Keep stirring it for a few minutes and scrap

whatever gets stuck to the side of the pan. Take a mixer and blend the soaked cashews till they become a fine paste.

4. Now add sugar and grated coconut to the mixture. Mix it well and keep stirring till the milk starts to thicken. To this add the cashew paste and keep cooking till it loses its rawness.

5. To this mixture, add crushed cardamom and stir it well. Remove from flame and let it cool.

6. Transfer the coconut rabri to serving bowls and garnish with rose petals and chopped nuts. And voila! Your coconut rabri is ready to dig in! You can serve it with jalebi or gulab jamun!



Sports News

Manchester United midfielder Mason Mount is injured and sidelined

Manchester United midfielder Mason Mount is injured and will be sidelined for a few games due to a minor muscle injury, according to the Premier League club says on Thursday. Forward Rasmus Hojlund and defenders Luke Shaw, Leny Yoro, Tyrell Malacia, and Victor Lindelof are also sidelined out with injuries ahead of Sunday's league game against Liverpool at Old Trafford. Mount started both of United's league games this season. The 25-year-old, who was substituted at halftime in last weekend's 2-1 defeat at Brighton and Hove Albion, says he sustained the injury during the match. The former Chelsea player signed with United in July 2023 for 55 million pounds but was limited to just 20 appearances last season due to multiple injuries. The England player was not named in interim manager Lee Carsley's squad, who play Ireland in Dublin on September 7 and Finland at Wembley three days later in the Nations League.



FIJI Water Flying Fijians Coach Mick Byrne Impressed with Young Team

FIJI Water Flying Fijians Coach Mick Byrne expressed his admiration for the team's performance following their impressive 42-16 victory over Samoa in their first Asahi Super Dry Pacific Nations Cup match of 2024, held in Suva last Friday. Despite having only three days of training before the match, the Flying Fijians showcased a dynamic and exhilarating brand of rugby that had the home fans on their feet. The victory was significantly bolstered by Kitione Salawa's remarkable hat-trick of tries, which played a pivotal role in securing the win. Byrne was elated for the young squad, guided by experienced veterans, who adapted quickly to the challenge. "I think they did well straight off the bat," Byrne said. "They only had three training sessions through the week. There was some discipline during the first half, and we came in at half-time well led. The coaches did a great job." The match saw an electric start with Salawa scor-

ing a superb try in the 4th minute. Samoa responded with a try from Pisi Leilua, converted in the 16th minute. Samoa added a penalty in the 26th minute, but Fiji's Iosefo Masi brought fans to their feet with a powerful try in the 29th minute. Samoa scored another penalty in the 35th minute before Fiji regained momentum with Salawa's second try in the 54th minute. Frank Lomani added another try in the 59th minute. On debut, Vuate Karawalevu dazzled with a try in the 72nd minute, and Salawa sealed the game with his third try in the 78th minute.

Byrne also highlighted the commendable performance of the debutants, noting their nerves but praising their ability to rise to the occasion in front of home supporters. "Deep down, you know they're going to be nervous, and they will try and play well. I thought they did well when they got their hands on the ball," he remarked. With the Flying Fijians now on a bye



week in Pool A of the Pacific Nations Cup, attention turns to Tonga and Samoa, who will face off this weekend. The national team will use this time to prepare

for their next challenge against Tonga, a formidable opponent known for their tough play on home ground.

The Flying Fijians' victory

has set a positive tone for their campaign, and fans are eager to see how the team builds on this momentum in their upcoming matches.

Sports News

Erling Haaland scores hat trick to thrash Ipswich 4-1

Manchester City dominated Ipswich Town this morning in the English Premier League as they defeated them 4-1 at Etihad Stadium. Erling Haaland was the star of the match as he scored a hat trick. City led 3-1 at halftime. Ipswich are back in the Premier League tournament after 22 years and are still searching for their first points. In other matches, Brighton edged Manchester United 2-1, West Ham beat Crystal Palace 2-1, Fulham edged Leicester City 2-1, Nottingham Forest beat Southampton 1-0, Tottenham Hotspur thrashed Everton 4-0, while Arsenal beat Aston Villa 2-0. Manchester City is currently leading the table with 6 points followed by Brighton and Arsenal with 6 points.



Fiji Sec. School Football: Labasa College beat Tavua College 4-1 to win U15 final

Labasa College has claimed the under-15 title after thrashing Tavua College 4-1 in a penalty shootout at the Fiji Secondary School Football Competition this afternoon. Both teams drew 1-1 at extra time. Labasa College were down to 10 players after one of their players was shown a red card in the second half. Tavua College was awarded a penalty through which they scored, however, Labasa College didn't give up and equalised after a few minutes. Meanwhile, Ba Sanatan College edged Xavier College 2-1 in extra time to claim the girls' open grade final.



Fiji thrashes Tonga 4-0 in OFC Futsal Women's Nations Cup

The Digicel Fiji Women's Futsal side has secured their second win of the OFC Futsal Women's Nations Cup in the Solomon Islands after thrashing Tonga 4-nil this afternoon. Sofi Diyalowai was the star of the match as she scored two tries. Fiji lead 1-nil at half time through a goal by Diyalowai. She doubled Fiji's lead in the 21st minute while Koleta Likuculacula scored the third goal. Captain Unaisi Tuberi put the nail in Tonga's coffin with her first goal of the tournament. Fiji now takes on New Zealand at 4pm on Tuesday.



Sports News

American Football-U.S. win flag football golds in Finland but gap is narrowing

The United States men's and women's teams won the world flag football championships in Finland on Friday to extend their dominance but other countries are catching up as the fast-growing sport prepares to make its Olympic debut in 2028. The U.S. men won their fifth straight title and the women their third in a row by beating Austria and Mexico respectively in the finals of the sport's biggest world championships to date, featuring 54 teams from 30 different countries. Flag football, a non-contact format of American football played by teams of five, was added to the programme for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics in October last year. American football last featured as a demonstration sport in the 1932 LA Games. "It's amazing and not only the number of teams but also the talent and the level of the sport so I was just really proud and super happy to be part of this experience," Mexico quarterback Diana Flores told Reuters after they lost the final in Lahti. "I'm super proud of them (teammates), and I know this is just the beginning for us." Flores is one of the faces of the game, appearing in a TV commercial showcasing the sport which was

aired at halftime during the 2023 Super Bowl, and she is driven by the dream of leading her nation to the Olympics. "That's one thing I'm thinking on every day. I wake up, I dream of it and, for sure, it's a goal," she said. "I want to be there to represent my country, having the opportunity to go with my team. And can you imagine bringing home an Olympic medal? That would be amazing." The Americans may have invented the sport but flag football has gone global and the simpler more scaled-back nature of the game compared to the tackle football played in the NFL is proving easier for other countries to adapt to. "One team I have to say I admire is Team Japan, just the way they have grown in the past year. The way they played, it was amazing, they are super fast, they are super smart, and I know they're going to keep just growing from there," Flores said. Japan reached the semi-finals where they lost to Mexico. TREMENDOUS GROWTH Played on a pitch measuring 70x25 yards, there is no blocking, kicking or tackling in flag football. Each down ends either when a player goes out of bounds with the ball or a defender removes the flag,



which is worn on a belt around the waist, from the ball carrier. "Globally, since long before the Olympic inclusion and the beginning of this great adventure, the growth of the game has been tremendous," Pierre Trochet, president of the International Federation Of American Football (IFAF) told Reuters. "And in the light of Los Angeles, it definitely highlights all of those efforts that all of the 74 nations (in the IFAF) have been doing for years in the domestic countries." The IFAF estimates

that over 20 million people in more than 100 countries play the game and it continues to grow. "The huge growth we had was definitely on the women's side of it - some girls have been denied (the chance) to play, or they didn't have the opportunity to play tackle football, they could never be a professional," Trochet explained. "(But) there is a new ambition for little girls, being like, 'I want to be Diana Flores, I want to be one of those global flag ambassadors. I can play the game. I can be on the big stage

and one day I could be an Olympian' - that's definitely creating a huge new appeal to an entire new target audience," he added. However, any woman looking to make a name for herself in the game will likely have to help her team overcome the Americans if they want to win Olympic gold in Los Angeles. "It's a dream come true to possibly play in the Olympics and keep fighting for the roster spot and keep representing the red, white and blue," U.S. quarterback Vanita Crouch said.

De Minaur cheers Aussie talent in run to US Open fourth round

Alex de Minaur leads a strong Australian charge into the U.S. Open round of 16, after he overcame worrisome injury issues early in the tournament to beat Briton Dan Evans in the third round on Saturday. The 10th seed is the first Australian man in two decades to reach the fourth round at all four Grand Slams in one year, after he got into the fourth round at the Australian Open and the quarter-finals at Roland Garros and Wimbledon. He is joined in the second week by compatriots Alexei Popyrin, who executed a stunning upset of defending champion Novak Djokovic on Friday, and Jordan Thompson, whom he will play next. "Aussie tennis is showing what we can do with putting ourselves in the deep end of the tournament. And look,

it's a good problem to have the fact that (Thompson and I are) playing each other in the fourth round," he told reporters.

"I'm expecting an absolute battle." De Minaur had looked in doubt for his second-round match in New York amid ongoing struggles with a hip injury, after he pulled out of his Wimbledon quarter-final against Djokovic in July with a cartilage tear. But the 10th seed found a way to carry on, beating Finnish qualifier Otto Virtanen in straight sets before knocking out Briton Dan Evans 6-3 6-7(4) 6-0 6-0 on Saturday at Louis Armstrong Stadium to reach the fourth round for the second year in a row. "There was stages there where I was sliding from the back of the court and even coming to the net and sliding



into volleys and moving quite fluidly, which is something that

I definitely haven't done as of yet in this tournament," he said.

"It's exactly the way I want to be trending now."

Sports News

Jordan Spieth focused on rest, rehab after wrist surgery

Jordan Spieth underwent successful surgery to repair a left wrist injury this past week, he announced over social media on Saturday. Spieth, 31, initially injured his wrist in 2023. He last competed in the FedEx St. Jude Classic at TPC Southwind in Memphis on Aug. 15-18. "I had a procedure on my left wrist last week, as I had mentioned was the plan," Spieth wrote on Twitter. "The operation went smoothly and I'm grateful for the exceptional medical team and support of (his wife) Annie and my family. "Focused on rest and rehab, and I look forward to returning to golf healthy and prepared for 2025!" Spieth has three major wins and 13 overall victories on the PGA Tour, but none since the RBC Heritage in April 2022. He began the 2024 season with a third-place showing at The Sentry and tied for sixth at the WM Phoenix Open, but he had only one more top-10 the rest of the year while missing seven cuts.



Ravens bring back QB Tyler Huntley, place him on practice squad

The Baltimore Ravens brought back quarterback Tyler Huntley, a Pro Bowl player for the team in 2022, and placed him on the practice squad on Saturday. Huntley, 26, spent the past four seasons as a backup to starter Lamar Jackson before signing a one-year, \$1.29 million contract with the Cleveland Browns in March. Cleveland released him on Thursday with three other quarterbacks on its roster. Baltimore has two-time NFL Most Valuable Player Jackson and veteran Josh Johnson on its 53-man roster, with Huntley and rookie Devin Leary, a sixth-round pick out of Kentucky, on the practice squad. Huntley was named to the Pro Bowl in 2022 after completing 67 percent of his passes for 658 yards and two touchdowns with three interceptions in six games (four starts). He has thrown for 1,957 yards with eight touchdowns and seven interceptions in 20 games (nine starts) with the Ravens. He signed with Baltimore in 2020 as an undrafted free agent out of Utah.



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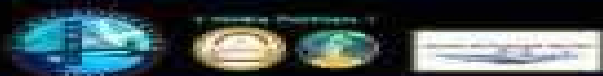
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Fiji Women's U20 Team's Inspirational Journey in the USA: A New Era of Fijian Football

The Fiji Women's Under-20 football team is making waves as they embark on their historic journey in the United States, playing a series of scrimmage matches organized by the America Fiji Sports Commission. Under the leadership of President Mr. Narend Narayan and Vice President Mr. Vinay Nair, also not forgetting our VPs from Sacramento California, Suresh Prakash, VJ Gounder, and Gyan Singh, these matches mark a significant chapter in Fijian football, showcasing the rising talent of the young women who have made Fiji proud. This monumental journey was made possible by the unwavering support from Fiji Football Association, with President Mr. Rajesh

Patel and CEO Mr. Mohammed Yusuf playing pivotal roles in bringing this opportunity to life. The team's presence in the U.S. is not just a testament to their hard work but also to the growing support and investment in women's sports in Fiji.

For these young athletes, this journey is just the beginning. The exposure to high-level football and the chance to compete on an international stage is invaluable. The experiences and lessons they gain here will significantly impact their growth as players and inspire future generations back home in Fiji to pursue their passion for sports.

Their first match in the FIFA U20 Women's World Cup in Co-

lombia, where they faced Brazil, was a challenging experience. Although the team suffered a heavy defeat, the match was a powerful learning opportunity. Head Coach Angeline Chua emphasized the immense value of playing against one of the world's top football nations. For many of the players, this was their first time competing against a team they had only seen on television, making the encounter even more significant.

"This was more than just a match; it was an eye-opener to the level of skill and organization that top football nations possess," Chua remarked. "Our players showed tremendous courage and determination, and

despite the overwhelming challenge, they gave their all. Brazil's performance highlighted the standards we aspire to reach, and this experience will drive us to work even harder."

Fiji's upcoming matches against Canada and France will further test the team's resolve. Both opponents are formidable, and these games will provide additional opportunities for growth and learning. The team remains optimistic, taking the lessons from their first game to heart, and they are determined to put up a strong fight in the remaining group-stage matches. Fiji will face Canada on Tuesday, September 3rd, in what promises to be another significant test for the young squad.

As these young athletes continue to gain experience, they will better understand the work required to compete at the highest levels of the sport. It is crucial for all of us to offer our unwavering support and positivity to these upcoming athletes. Their journey is not just about winning matches but about building a legacy for Fijian football and inspiring future generations.

The Fiji Women's U20 team is on a path that could change the face of football in Fiji, and their courage, resilience, and determination deserve our utmost admiration and encouragement.



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47th North American Fijian Soccer Tournament Highlights

Bay Area Labour Day Weekend



The Labour Day weekend brought excitement to Fremont, California, as the Bay Area played host to the 47th North American Fijian Soccer Tournament. This prestigious event saw teams from across California and Canada come together in a fierce competition that highlighted the best of Fijian soccer talent.

Defending champions Sabeto and the recent Dulari Cup winners, B.C. Eagles, who triumphed in Canada, faced off as finalists in this year's NAFSA tournament, setting the stage for an intense showdown. The tournament featured seven teams in both the Open and Masters divisions, showcasing a wide range of skills and competitive spirit.

While the event was marked by high energy, the first day was not without its challenges. Unprofessional behavior both on and off the field, coupled with some questionable decisions by referees, led to a chaotic atmosphere. However, by the second day, which featured the knockout stages, the tournament was more controlled, allowing the focus to return to the quality of play. The matches were intense, with fast-paced action keeping spectators on the edge of their seats. The Open Division final saw East Bay secure a thrilling victory over Elk Grove, winning 3-2 in extra time. In the Masters Division, Fiji Islanders outclassed Palo Alto with a 3-1 victory. The winners of the Open Division were awarded \$2,500 and a trophy donated by Rajesh Shankar, while the runners-up received \$1,250 and a trophy. The Masters Division champions took home \$2,000, with the runners-up earning \$1,000. The tournament drew a large crowd, with many Fijians taking advantage of the long weekend to enjoy a few days of sports, community, and camaraderie. The event not only highlighted the competitive spirit of the teams but also brought together the Fijian community in a celebration of their shared passion for soccer.



THE US FIJI TIMES CONGRATULATES ISLAND BOYS

Island Boys soccer club usa under leadership of hard working officials brothers Ashnil Prasad and Rajneel Prasad and with experienced former Fiji under 20 and Fiji national coach won NAFSA/CANAM 2024.

Winning a tournament for coach Gurjit Singh is nothing new as he has won various national championship in Fiji with premier and super premier teams like Tailevu Naitasiri, Nadi, Navua , Labasa and Suva .

He also helped former club southbay fc usa to winning Nafsa/ Canam twice.

To Gurjit winning a tournament is always a team work where players and officials work together to form a winning team.

Gurjit mentioned that hard work along with lot of sacrifice and discipline is key to his successful coaching career .

He thanked all the teams and their officials .

He also thanked the tournament directors and the Fiji soccer league for hosting a successful NAFSA/CANAM tournament

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Sports



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Sports News

The Canadian Fiji Open Golf Tournament Set to Create Milestone

The Canadian Fiji Open Golf tournament will be held at Eagle point GC in Kamloops, Canada. The tournament was first held at Northview Country Club in Surrey BC and the organizers have kept the tradition with great enthusiasm and momentum to cater for our Fiji Golfers across the globe. This year's tournament is expected to cater for 60 players from Fiji, US and Canada. The significant inclusion to the event with the presence of two-time Fiji Open Champ and South Pacific Games gold medalist Jalen Raman. Together with Fiji Golf President Amitesh Chandra and golfer Shalendra Naidu the stage is set for a competitive event for our prime international golfers.

The tournament organizers have been the growing interest in this event and under Sponsorship of Arun Deo the CEO of Wingate Kamloops. The organizer has extended their great

appreciation Deo to step up a big way to show support to see our Fiji community thrive thru sporting events like these. To hold such tournament there is need of good coordination and organizational abilities and the hard-working team of

Tournament Director Pramesh .P.Sharma and Assistant Director Anusheel Deo will ensure a very successful event to unfold at Eaglepoint.

The event is divided in two division as follows: OPEN DIVISION Players are between +2

to 11.9 Handicap Index. Open Champion and Net open Champion will be decided. Within the Division there two flights Viti Levu and Vanua Levu-Flights. DIVISION II Players with handicap 12+ will be in this division. Open champion

and Net Open Champion will be decided. Within the Division there will be three flights Kadavu, Lau and Yasawa. It is expected that our Fiji fans on the ground will see someclassy golf and get to meet the best of the best of our own Golfers.



Rewa thrashes Nasinu 4-0 to maintain lead on DPL table

Rewa has maintained its lead in the Digicel Fiji Premier League points table after thrashing Nasinu 4-nil in the round 13 of the competition this afternoon. Rewa led 1-nil at half-time. Rewa currently leads the DPL points table with 30 points. In other DPL matches today, Suva thrashed Tailevu/Naitasiri 5-nil, Nadi edged Nadroga 1-nil while Ba and Navua finished with a 2-all draw.



FIFA Under20 Womens World Cup 2024: Fiji suffers heavy 9-0 loss to Brazil

The Fiji Young Kulas had a rough start to their FIFA under 20 Women's World Cup campaign after they were thrashed 9-0 by Brazil. Brazil led 5-0 at halftime. Natalia Vendito and Victoria Amaral scored 2 goals each while Gisele Silva, Fernanda da Silva, Lara Dantas and Milena Leal and Priscilla scored 1 goal each for Brazil. In other matches this morning, Canada held France to a 3-all draw, Cameroon and Mexico drew 2-all and Columbia beat Australia 2-0.



Fiji News

8 schools to compete in Fiji Secondary School National Men's U19 Cricket Tournament

After a lapse of 18 years, the Fiji Secondary Schools National Men's U19 Cricket tournament kicked off today with four pool matches. Eight schools are competing in the tournament, including three maritime schools, Ratu Finau Secondary School from Lakeba, Moce Secondary School, and Ciccia Secondary School. They are joined by the Western Zone champion, Ba Provincial Freebird Institute, Southern Zone's top seed John Wesley College, Nabua Secondary School and Suva Grammar School. A Cricket Fiji U19 Invitational team is also participating, stepping in for Ratu Kadavulevu School which was unable to attend. In the first round of results, Ratu Finau defeated Ba Provincial Freebird by 103 runs, the Cricket Fiji Invitational side beat Nabua Secondary by 7 wickets, John Wesley tied with Suva Grammar School, and Moce Secondary School won against Ciccia Secondary School by 47 runs. The tournament ends this Friday.



Fiji Young Kulas set to make history in FIFA U20 Women's World Cup

The Fiji Young Kulas are set to make history as the first ever women's side to play in a FIFA Women's World Cup at any level when they take on Brazil tomorrow in their first match of pool B. The side is pooled alongside Brazil, France and Canada. Young Kulas assistant coach Annette Nainima says the team is both excited and nervous for the challenge ahead as for the majority of them just watch the Women Under-20 World Cup on TV and then they all choose their favourite teams and cheer for them. Nainima says now to play against a team like Brazil and Canada, it is something big for them. Fiji qualified for the U-20 Women's World Cup after finishing as runners up to New Zealand in the 2023 OFC U-19 Women's Championship. Nainima says this was an "eye-opening" education for the team, Nainima explained as they managed to see the different playing styles of all different types of teams in different areas around the world. She says the team normally stick to cer-



tain formations back at home, so going to a different country altogether and seeing the differ-

ent styles of play and probably see their coaches, their technical team, most of the players were

shocked. Fiji will play Brazil at 11am tomorrow, before meeting Canada at 1pm Wednesday,

and then take on France at 10am next Saturday in their final pool match.



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