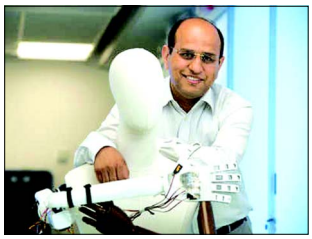
Meenakshi Choudhary, the first runner-up of fbb Colors Femina Miss India 2018 taking selfie with Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal when she called on him, in Chandigarh on Tuesday

Indian-origin scientist wins funding for futuristic 'brainy skin' project in UK

LONDON, JULY 3 /--/ An Indian-origin scientist working on creating a robotic hand covered in so-called brainy skin that mimics the human sense of touch has won 1.5 million pounds in funding for the project. Professor Ravinder Dahiya, Professor of Electronics and Nanoengineering at the University of Glasgow's School of Engineering, said the futuristic thinking skin concept is inspired by the incredibly complex elements of real skin. The super-flexible, hypersensitive skin may one day be used to make more responsive prosthetics for amputees, or to build robots with a sense of touch. Brainy Skin is critical for the autonomy of robots and for a safe human-robot interaction to meet emerging societal needs such as helping the elderly, said Dahiya. Along with his Bendable Electronics and Sensing Technologies (BEST) team, the scientist has plans to develop ultra-flexible, synthetic "Brainy Skin" that thinks for itself. Brainy Skin reacts like human skin, which has its own neurons that respond immediately to touch rather than having to relay the whole message to the brain.



Professor Ravinder Dahiya

This electronic thinking skin is made from silicon-based printed neural transistors and graphene an ultra-thin form of carbon that is only an atom thick, but stronger than steel. The new version in the making is said to be more powerful, less cumbersome and would work better than earlier prototypes. Dahiya explains, Human skin is an incredibly complex system capable of detecting pressure, temperature and texture through an array of neural sensors that carry signals from the skin to the brain. Inspired by real skin, this project will harness the technological advances in electronic engineering to mimic some features of human skin, such as softness, bendability and now, also sense of touch. This skin will not just mimic the morphology of the skin but also its functionality. The research, dubbed neuPRINTSKIN (Neuromorphic Printed Tactile Skin), received the latest 1.5 million pounds in funding from the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC). The team's work means tactile data is gathered over large areas by the synthetic skins computing system rather than sent to the brain for interpretation. With additional EPSRC funding, which extends Dahiyas fellowship by another three years, he plans to introduce tactile skin with neuron-like processing. This breakthrough in the tactile sensing research will lead to the first neuromorphic tactile skin, or brainy skin.

To achieve this, Dahiya will add a new neural layer to the e-skin that he has already been developed using printing silicon nanowires. Dahiya said that by adding a neural layer underneath the current tactile skin, neuPRINTSKIN will add significant new perspective to the e-skin research, and trigger transformations in several areas such as robotics, prosthetics, artificial intelligence, wearable systems, next-generation computing, and flexible and printed electronics. (PTI)

CREATIVE WORLD

'Mental Hai Kya' to arrive in cinemas on February 22

MUMBAI, JULY 3 /--/ Rajkummar Rao and Kangana Ranaut-starrer "Mental Hai Kya" will release on February 22 next year. The film, to be directed by Prakash Kovelamudi, will see Rao reunite with his "Queen" co-star, Ranaut. "Mental..." is being produced by Balaji Motion Pictures and Karma media and entertainment. "In a day and age where sanity is overrated, the film is a celebration of the crazy within us all. With Kangana and Rajkummar top-lining this film, we're set to ask audiences -'Mental Hai Kya', in theatres on 22nd February," producer Ekta Kapoor said in a statement. Karma's Shailesh R Singh added, "'Mental...' is a story about two beautifully chaotic characters and I am certain no one else could fit in the shoes except Kangana and Rajkumar. "I am looking forward to their madness and excited to bring the two Mentals to the audiences." Written by Kanika Dhillon, the film also stars Amyra Dastur. (PTI)

John Malkovich to star in 'The New Pope'

LOS ANGELES, JULY 3 /--/ Veteran actor John Malkovich is all set to star with Jude Law in the series "The New Pope". The new show is a follow-up to Paolo Sorrentino's critically applauded "The Young Pope" limited series that featured Law as American pontiff Lenny Belardo, an outrageously conservative figurehead who seems determined on turning the world of the Vatican upside down. "The New Pope" will be set in in the world of modern papacy and Law is expected to reprise his role. According to Deadline, the details of Malkovich's character are under wraps as of now. Sorrentino, Umberto Contarello and Stefano Bises are currently writing the teleplay for the series, which will be produced by Lorenzo Mieli and Mario Gianani. The show is expected to start production in Italy in November this year. (PTI)

Italy, Singapore, US top 'foodie' hotspots for Indian millenials

MUMBAI, JULY 3 /--/ Food plays a major role while deciding holidays for Indian millennials, and Italy, Singapore and United States has topped the list of foodie destinations, according to a report. Two-thirds of Indian millennials (67 per cent) admitted a destination's cuisine is the biggest deciding factor when picking where to holiday, accoring to 'Tasty Travels' research from Hotels.com. Italy (27 per cent), Singapore (26 per cent) and the US (26 per cent) have topped a list of the hottest spots on earth for foodie millennials in India, the report added. The 'Tasty Travels' survey was conducted by One Poll in March 2018, among 9,000 respondents across 29 countries, including in India.

The report revealed that for 13 per cent Indian millennials consider nightlife scene as important, while 17 per cent stress on adventure activities and 24 per cent art and culture, it added. The younger generation are now even more focused on munching delicious local delicacies on holiday (59 per cent) than going to the beach or being by the pool (19 per cent) and exploring the outdoors (33 per cent), it said. The report said, it's food over friends these days, as 60 per cent respondents from India admitted that they prefer to snap their food than their friends' faces. It said, rise in food photography on social media, as on a week's holiday, Indian millennial travellers snap an average 172 photos, of which almost a quarter are of food.

"The passion that millennial travellers have for what we call #TastyTravels, comes from a universal truth that food is one of life's greatest pleasures.

What's more, as experiences have become the new social currency, travel opens a door to an amazing array of 'share worthy' dishes to try. So, it's no surprise that younger generation travellers are defining their holidays by what they eat," Nelson Allen, general manager, APAC of Hotels.com said. Research also revealed that it's no longer about the five-star dining experience, millennials now prefer street food (30 per cent) to star restaurants (23 per cent). Eating experiences are in fact now so high on the millennial travel tick-list, 69 per cent of Indian travellers said foodie experiences stand out the most in their holiday memories, it added.

Yamla Pagla Deewana 3 to be released on August 31

MUMBAI, JULY 3 /--/ Actor Sunny Deol today said that the release of "Yamla Pagla Deewana: Phir Se" has been delayed to avoid the clash with Akshay Kumar's "Gold" and John Abraham's "Satyamev Jayate". The film, which was earlier scheduled to hit the theatres on August 15, will now release on August 31. "Since August 15 has two patriotic films 'Gold' and 'Satyamev Jayate' which are topical for the day and on August 24 we have our family friend Anil Sharma's son being launched who has our blessings. Our film is a wholesome family entertainer hence we have decided to release our film 'Yamla Pagla Deewana: Phir Se' two weeks later on August 31, 2018," Sunny said in a statement. (PTI)

Competition between Ranveer and I pushes us to do better: Ranbir

MUMBAI, JULY 3 /--/ Actor Ranbir Kapoor says he views competition as a healthy and beneficial exercise, amid the buzz that the upcoming award season will be a face-off between his and Ranveer Singh's performances. The year began with Ranveer garnering critical acclaim for his portrayal of Sultan Alauddin Khilji in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's "Padmaavat", that released on January 25. Ranbir, who has been through a dull box office phase in the last couple of years, bounced back last Friday as his latest "Sanju", a biopic on actor Sanjay Dutt, has registered a strong opening at the ticket window. The Rajkumar Hirani-directed film has fetched immense praise for Ranbir slipping into the role of Dutt effortlessly.

Asked about the comparisons between him and Ranveer, Ranbir told PTI, "I've seen Ranveer in 'Padmaavat' and I was really blown away by his performance. I thought he was phenomenal. I've now been pitted against Ranveer as 'competition'. It's amazing to have that. It only pushes us to do better work." "He (Ranveer) inspires and excites me. There are times his films do better business than mine and hopefully there will be a time when my films will be doing better business. It will be an interesting pattern," he adds. Ranbir made his debut 11 years ago with Bhansali's "Saawariya", which bombed at the box office. However, the 35-year-old actor later cemented his identity as one of the best performers in the current generations with films such as "Rocket Singh: Salesman of the Year", "Wake Up! Sid", "Rajneeti", "Barfi!" and "Rockstar". Ranveer, on the other hand, had a breakthrough with his debut "Band Baaja Baarat" before finding his perfect mix of box office success and critical acclaim in Bhansali's "Ram Leela", "Bajirao Mastani" and "Padmaavat".

Ranbir says both Ranveer and him have received offers to co-star in films but they do not want to do a project which does injustice to either of their acting chops. "We are two actors who have their own sensibilities. We can't come together just as a project. It has to be liked by both of us, individually. I am really looking forward to working with him and also Varun and Tiger. When you do a two-hero film, you share the burden. It's also easier because you have a partner-in-crime and you can have a lot of fun on sets too," he says. (PTI)

Vineet Kumar Singh's sister writing a film for him

NEW DELH, JULY 3 /--/ Vineet Kumar Singh got his moment in the sun with "Mukkabaaz", which he co-wrote with his sister, and the actor says his partner-in-crime is currently penning a script for him. The 38-year-old actor, who starred as the lead in the Anurag Kashyap-directed film, says the success of the movie brought along a string of offers and writing has somewhat taken a back-seat. Vineet says, his sibling, Mukti Singh Srinet, has taken over writing and is currently working on a project with him in mind. "I am getting so many opportunities, offers and different scripts to read... I have lesser time to write, but I do try to devote whatever time I can to writing. I am happy with the way things are coming along. My sister, who was also my writing partner for 'Mukkabaaz', is writing for me.

Century's longest total lunar eclipse to be seen in Dubai on July 27

DUBAI, JULY 3 /--/ Dubai is all set to witness a total lunar eclipse on the night of July 27, an observatory here has announced. During the eclipse, the moon will enter the shadow of the earth for about four hours, and the event will be seen clearly across at least three continents, officials said. According to the Dubai Astronomy Group, the eclipse will last for about one hour and 43 minutes, the longest in the century, and will also feature a "blood moon". "Blood moon" is a non-scientific term used to refer to the red tinge on a fully eclipsed moon. The total duration of the partial phases is 2 hours and 12 minute (22:24 pm to 02:19 am). The duration of the full eclipse is 1 hour and 43 minute (23:30 pm to 01:13 am). Mars appearance will be the second brightest in the last 60,000 years, the observatory said. The Dubai Astronomy Group will set up an integrated event for both lunar and mars events. (PTI)

Century's longest lunar eclipse to be visible from India

KOLKATA, JULY 3 /--/ The longest total lunar eclipse of this century would be visible from all parts of the country on July 27. The celestial body would also be tinged with a reddish hue, a phenomenon popularly referred to as a 'blood moon'. Director, Research and Academic, MP Birla Institute of Fundamental Research, MP Birla Planetarium, Debiprosad Duari told PTI, "Viewers in India are lucky since the eclipse, both partial and the total, will be entirely visible from all parts of the country." The eclipse would also be visible in parts of South America, much of Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, he said. The total lunar eclipse would last for one hour and 43 minutes while partial eclipses, which would precede and follow the total eclipse, would last more than an hour, he said.

The partial eclipse of the moon would start at 11:54 pm Indian Standard Time on July 27 and the total eclipse would begin at 1 am on July 28, Duari said. The scientist said that at 1.52 am on July 28, the moon would look the darkest and it would continue till 2:43 am.

"After this period, the moon will remain partially eclipsed till 3:49 am of July 28. It will be a golden opportunity for celestial enthusiasts in India as the eclipse will be visible almost throughout the night," he said. During the July 27 total lunar eclipse, the moon has to pass through the central part of the Earth's shadow. But on July 27 late night, the Full Moon would be near its apogee, the farthest point from the Earth in its orbit around the Earth, and it would be the smallest full moon of the year.

"This smaller and slower-moving full moon takes more time to cross the Earth's shadow than does a full moon that is closer to Earth and moving faster in orbit. That is why a full moon at or near lunar apogee adds to the duration of a total lunar eclipse," Duari said. The full moon would plunge deeply into the Earth's shadow on the night of July 27-28 when the distance of the Moon from the Earth's shadow it would be passing through. This was the reason a totally eclipsed Moon, at times, was called as Blood Moon. Explaining the celestial phenomenon, Duari said a lunar eclipse takes place only at full moon. "Whenever, the Sun, Earth and Moon come in a perfect straight line, as the Sun's rays falls on the Earth, the Earth's shadow falls onto a patch of space, and only when, the Moon enters that patch of shadow, we see a lunar eclipse," he said. Describing 2018, as an year of lunar eclipses, Duari said the last total lunar eclipse took place earlier this year on January 31.

Earth just before the eclipse would be around 406,223 kilometre, he said. During a total lunar eclipse, the Moon's disk can take on a dramatically colourful appearance from bright orange to blood red and more rarely dark brown to very dark gray, depending upon the part of the

"It was widely known as Super Blue Blood Moon as it was a so-called supermoon, when a Moon appears extra big and bright being closest to the Earth in its elliptical orbit. A Blue Moon is the second full moon during a calendar month," he said. "The next total lunar eclipse on January 21, 2019, will be only for one hour and two minutes because it will pass to the north of the shadow's centre," Duari added. On whether, it will be safe to view the lunar eclipses with naked eyes, Duari said, "No special filters are required to protect our eyes like those used for watching solar eclipses. One does not need a telescope to watch the eclipse, though a good pair of binoculars will enhance the experience.(PTI)

Akshaya Patra Foundation announces fellowship for young leaders, social entrepreneurs

NEW DELHI, JULY 3 /--/ The Akshaya Patra Foundation, an NGO which helps in implementation of the central government's mid-day meal scheme in schools, today announced an eight-month fellowship to encourage young leaders and future social entrepreneurs to participate in the organisation's initiatives. "The objective of this programme is to train aspirants and successfully implement our initiatives in the areas of education, hygiene and sanitation, soft-skill training, health and nutrition. The organisation will award fellowships to 12 selected aspirants," said Shridhar Venkat, CEO of the Akshaya Patra Foundation.