

IN BRIEF



Auction of videotape of man's first steps on moon

NEW YORK
A former NASA intern who bought a truckload of videotapes to resell them may end up a millionaire next month when Sotheby's auctions what it says is the only surviving original recording of man's first steps on the moon 50 years ago. The tapes are expected to sell for as much as \$2 million when they hit the auction on July 20. REUTERS



40 tonnes of fishing nets removed from Pacific

SAN FRANCISCO
In a mission to clean up trash floating in the ocean, environmentalists pulled 40 tons (36 metric tonnes) of abandoned fishing nets this month from an area known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The group then collected nets entangled with plastic chairs, bottles and other trash in an effort that cost \$3,00,000. AP



Beer, wine bottles contain toxic substances

LONDON
Bottles of beer, wine and spirits contain potentially harmful levels of toxic elements, such as lead and cadmium, in their enamelled decorations, a study by Researchers at the University of Plymouth in the U.K. has found. PTI

Cosmic waves discovery could unlock the mysteries of space

In a first, the precise source of a powerful, one-off burst of such waves spotted

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

A team of international astronomers have determined for the first time the precise source of a powerful, one-off burst of cosmic radio waves.

They have pinpointed it to a massive galaxy billions of light years away, with properties that upend what scientists previously thought they knew about the formation of mysterious fast radio bursts (FRBs). "This result is highly anticipated within the astronomy community," Casey Law, an astronomer at UC Berkeley, who was not involved in the study, said.

The findings, published in the journal *Science*, are among the most significant since the discovery in 2007



Giant leap: The team pinpointed the location of FRB 180924 about 3.6 billion light years from earth. • AFP

of FRBs, which flash for only a micro-instant but can emit as much energy in a millisecond as the Sun does in 10,000 years.

Exactly what creates these high-energy surges of long waves at the far end of the electromagnetic spectrum

remains the subject of intense debate, though scientists now agree they originate in far away galaxies.

Since the first FRB was detected a little over a decade ago, a global hunt has found 85 bursts. Most have been "one-offs".

In 2017, astronomers were able to trace the source of a repeating burst, but locating a one-off FRB presented a much more difficult challenge.

Live replay

Without the benefit of knowing where to look, a team led by Keith Bannister had to devise a new methodology.

"You can think of it as live action replay mode, where we have a computer that's actually looking for the FRB, so it looked through about a billion measurements every second and I tried to find the one that contains an FRB," Mr. Bannister said. The team pinpointed the location of FRB 180924 about 3.6 billion light years from earth.

Indian-American teenager bags \$1,00,000 quiz prize

High school student Avi Gupta wins the '2019 Teen Jeopardy' contest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW YORK

An Indian-American teenager has won a whopping \$1,00,000 prize in the most-watched individual quiz show in the U.S.

Avi Gupta, a high school senior from Portland, U.S., won the show's latest Teen Tournament, taking home the \$1,00,000 grand prize, Jeopardy! said in a statement.

His victory on the '2019 Teen Jeopardy' contest was televised on Friday, in which he beat three other Indian-American teens.

"It still feels unreal, and I honestly can't express how grateful and fortunate I feel to have had this opportunity," Mr. Gupta said.



Avi Gupta

"As a mother, my heart was beating 100 miles per hour. I think the thing about Avi is his perseverance. For him, I could see the effort he has put in throughout the year. So, I wanted him to have a happy wholesome experience. And the win was

the cherry on top," Nandita Gupta, his mother, said.

Ryan Presler, an eighth grader from Sioux Falls, came in second place, grabbing the \$50,000 runner-up prize, while Lucas Miner, a high school junior from Miami, finished third and received \$25,000.

The 2018 College Jeopardy, which also carried a prize of \$100,000, was won by Dhruv Gaur.

Jeopardy!, which featured a total of 15 students, is an American television game show which features a quiz competition in which contestants are presented with general knowledge clues in the form of answers, and must phrase their responses in the form of questions.

Medical 'selfies' help patients feel satisfied

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
SYDNEY

Taking medical 'selfies' and sharing them with a doctor empowers and reassures patients and can improve their relationship with the medical practitioner, research has found.

"Healthcare consumers feel this data is valuable. It helps them have a sense of autonomy in their care, improves their view of the service they are being provided and it enhances the relationship between doctor and patient because there is a sense of mutual respect and communication," said Kara Burns from the Queensland University of Technology in Australia.

To gauge experiences with and attitudes to con-

sumer-generated health photographs, the researchers conducted a two-part study published in the *Journal of Medical Internet Research*. They first interviewed 30 patients, clinicians and caregivers. In the second part, parents were asked to take photos of their children's surgical wounds at the hospital and send it to the surgeon so that he could review healing.

Parents said it improved their confidence and satisfaction with the medical service. Taking photos was a useful reminder for them to check how the surgical sites were healing. The findings from the photographic trial supported conclusions drawn from the study.

Assam's first superhero is a commoner and ready to fly

Advitya, unlike his counterparts elsewhere, does not hide his real identity and wears no costume, mask

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

It was with a romantic film that he wanted to make his directorial debut. But the yearning to "do something different" led Arindam Sharma to direct the first superhero film in Assamese cinema's 84-year-old history.

Mr. Sharma has almost completed the shooting of his directorial venture *Advitya*, a Sanskrit word for the Sun. *Advitya* is the name given by the people to the film's superhero who has no time to wear a fancy costume and a face mask.

A common man seeking job security and stability in life, the superhero is not ready to manage his suddenly-acquired superpowers to take on a supervillain who is



A still from the film *Advitya*. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

equally powerful.

"*Advitya* is a superhero film that has bits of romance, family drama and action besides computer-generated special effects. The lead character is an ordinary person with an understanding girlfriend and a brother who is

more like a friend. Something suddenly happens to him that gives him super strength and the ability to fly," Mr. Sharma told *The Hindu* from eastern Assam's Jorhat.

Declining to reveal the source of the superhero's superpowers, he said that the

film's supervillain is an evil scientist who derives strength from his laboratory experiments and the fury of nature.

"The underlying message of the film is that one should not go against time and nature, and that truth will always prevail over lies and good over evil," he said.

The supervillain, with powers similar to the superhero, meets his end in the film. "How he died is a mystery for the viewers to find out, since the superhero and his nemesis are not strong enough to kill each other," Mr. Sharma said.

The filmmaker, who did a course in direction from Mumbai Film Academy, is hoping that *Advitya*, who – unlike most of his Hollywood

or Bollywood counterparts – does not hide his real identity and wears formal clothes, would strike a chord with the viewers. Chiranjib Dutta, who starred in the 2017 action thriller *Gangs of North-east*, plays the superhero in *Advitya*.

Ajay Barman of Bengali TV serial *E. Amar Guru Dakkhina* plays the supervillain. Niha Rani Das makes her debut opposite Chiranjib and Assamese TV actor Bishal Borah, who plays his younger brother.

The film, which will have a song each by popular artistes Dikshu Sarma and Sanchita Sharma, is expected to be completed for an early 2020 release. The official teaser of the film was released on June 20.

Together we can



Happy moments: People posing during the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in front of the Stonewall Inn, a well-known gay bar in New York that faced repeated police raids in June 1969. The riots became a turning point in the LGBTQ community's struggle for civil rights in the city. •AFP

Facebook Libra may shine where banks lost their sheen

The digital currency is aimed at developing countries

ASSOCIATED PRESS
NEW YORK

Europeans and Americans have their Visa and Mastercards. For everyone else, here comes... Libra?

Facebook's new digital currency Libra is aimed at a huge potential market for financial services in the developing world, where billions of people don't use traditional banking accounts.

Whether or not these billions will want to make the switch is anyone's guess.

The U.S., Europe and most developed economies already have large and efficient payment systems.

These allow people to buy and sell goods in real time and send money person-to-person through services like Zelle, PayPal and Venmo. That's why the companies that joined Facebook's Libra



Libra can 'provide a universal and stable currency' which is easily transferable. •REUTERS

association, as well as non-profits involved with similar projects, say Libra's potential lies elsewhere.

In developing countries, tens of millions still live far from a bank or money transfer centre. Libra could address this issue by providing a universal and stable currency that is easily trans-

ferable between persons or businesses without the need of setting up an entire payment infrastructure. It also potentially could work at a lower cost.

In the last decade, citizens of developing countries have widely adopted cellphones as a way to store money, sending text message-based payments.

"The entire continent of Africa skipped right over cards and went straight into mobile payments," said Sanjay Sakhrani, an industry analyst. But these payment systems are often constrained by the type of cellphone carrier each person is using. It's not uncommon in places like Africa to carry multiple cellphones in order to have the necessary access to the right money transfer system.

U.S. State to ban discrimination based on hair

LIAM STACK
CALIFORNIA

California is poised to become the first State to ban racial discrimination against people based on their natural hairstyle. The state Assembly voted unanimously on Thursday to approve the measure, which the State Senate approved in April. It now heads to the desk of Gov. Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, to be signed into law.

The Bill would update the definition of race used in existing law to be "inclusive of traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles." It points to the history of anti-black racism in the United States and the role it has played in shaping Eurocentric beauty standards and ideas of what constitutes a professional appearance. NY TIMES

Artist wields a paintbrush at Hong Kong protests

Perry Dino has painted many of Hong Kong's social movements, including the 2014 Umbrella Movement

REUTERS
HONG KONG

For 53-year-old Perry Dino, a paintbrush and canvas are weapons for opposing the Hong Kong government as it faces mass protests against a now-suspended Bill that would allow extraditions to mainland China.

Mr. Dino, who has painted many of Hong Kong's social movements including the pro-democracy Umbrella Movement in 2014, considers it important to record what is happening in the Chinese-ruled city.

"I am already one of those standing on the front line to defend Hong Kong," Mr. Dino said.

Hong Kong's government has indefinitely suspended the Bill that would allow cri-



Perry Dino painting at his studio in Hong Kong. •REUTERS

minal suspects to be sent to mainland China for trial in courts controlled by the Communist Party.

Braving tear gas, rubber bullets and beanbag rounds earlier this month when protests turned violent, Mr. Dino said he has drawn and

painted as much as he can about the mass rallies.

"I hope the future generation can understand what Hong Kong has gone through," he said.

Mr. Dino, a part-time teacher, said he hopes that when Hong Kong has true

democracy, he can donate his artwork to a "democracy progression museum".

None of his artwork is currently for sale.

"Making how much money doesn't matter to me. Only the future matters," he said.

Among his paintings, which feature colourful brushstrokes, are ones showing demonstrators' tents occupying major thoroughfares and a flower-etched tribute to a protester who fell to his death.

One painting depicts police firing tear gas, with thick plumes of smoke billowing across a mass of demonstrators.

An abstract canvas shows activists shielding their eyes as they flee while a police of-

ficer with a rifle grins.

Since he started doing protest artwork in 2012, Mr. Dino has joined the annual June 4 Tianamen vigil and he made 25 paintings during the 2014 umbrella movement, when protesters paralysed parts of the financial hub for 79 days.

Mr. Dino said that during protests, Hong Kong police have told him to paint somewhere else.

In the mainland, Chinese censors strive to erase or block news or depictions of the protests. Mr. Dino is confident he can keep doing what he is doing. "They can't hack into my computer and delete it like a photo, nor can they destroy it with a baton as I can always fix my painting," he said.

Grain-free food may be linked to dog heart disease

119 canine deaths from 2014 to 2018 likely due to DCM

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON

Recent years have seen a surge in grain-free dog and cat foods, as increasing numbers of pet owners cast aside kibble packed with cheap corn, wheat and barley fillers for what they believe is a healthier alternative.

The reality may be more complex, with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announcing it was continuing to investigate a potential link between grain-free diets that have a high legume content and dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM), a canine and feline heart disease that can be fatal.



A spike in cases among smaller breeds not prone to DCM was reported. •AFP

The FDA named 16 pet food brands most frequently identified in 560 cases of individual dogs reported to have the disease between January 1, 2014 and April 30, 2018, with 119 of them dying. Among these cases, more

than 90% were fed products that were "grain-free" and 93% of the reported products contained peas or lentils as a main ingredient.

"We know it can be devastating to suddenly learn that your previously healthy pet has a potentially life-threatening disease," Steven Solomon, director of the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine said.

The FDA did not recommend switching from grain-free foods but advised pet owners to consult their vet. While DCM is not considered rare, there was a spike in cases among smaller breeds not genetically prone to the disease.