



What the Chinese Army is Buying ?



is investing heavily in "intelligentized warfare" - a strategy based on making weapons systems and military operations more networked and autonomous - and that artificial intelligence may be "changing the future of warfare faster than expected."

The so-called arms race for AI has come to define debates about the competition between the United States and China. The idea that the two nations are racing to dominate in AI - and, in particular, that China is surging ahead in this race - has garnered high-profile supporters as well as skeptics. But while much discussion, including the DoD report, has focused on China's longer-term grand plans to become an AI superpower, it has been less clear what the country is doing in the short

(SAI Bureau)- Last week, the "artificial intelligence" 20 separate U.S. Department of Defense times. The report echoed released its annual report on longstanding concerns that the Chinese military power, mentioning Chinese People's Liberation Army

(Contd on page 31)

New York governor's race heats up, 1,600 miles away



(SAI Bureau)- The most intense jockeying yet around New York's race for governor is playing out right now - in Puerto Rico.

Hours after Democrat Eric Adams clinched the open seat to succeed Bill de Blasio as New York mayor, the state's political class descended on

(Contd on page 31)

Canadian woman first in the world to be diagnosed as suffering from 'climate change'



(SAI Bureau)-A Canadian woman in her 70s could be the first patient to be ever diagnosed as

suffering from 'climate change' as doctors blame her health condition on the deadly heatwaves earlier this year. Dr Kyle Merritt of Kootenay Lake Hospital, who diagnosed the patient, told Times Colonist about the aggravated toll of the heatwaves on patients battling multiple health problems at once.

"All of her health problems have worsened and she's really struggling to stay hydrated. We had to figure out how to cool someone

(Contd on page 32)

COP26 Won't Keep the World to 1.5°C. Have the Talks Failed?



(SAI Bureau) -During the first week here on the ground in Glasgow, it was easy for COP26 attendees to feel like they were suffering from announcement overload. One hour, a country would commit to cutting its methane emissions. Another hour, a head of government would promise to expedite its renewable energy generation. And so on and so forth. On Tuesday, more than a week after the official launch of the conference, COP26 delegates got a sense of how all those commitments have added up-and it isn't pretty.

(Contd on page 32)

Did demonetisation fail or was it defeated?

(SAI Bureau) On the afternoon of November 8, watching a Youth Congress demonstration outside the Reserve Bank of India office in New Delhi, from a distance, I wondered what RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, sitting in his 18th floor office in the central bank's Mumbai headquarters, would be thinking about the protest on November 8, 2016, the day Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes were declared illegal currency.

(Contd on page 29)

Diwali Celebrated at the Brooklyn Borough Hall Steps in New York

Story
Page 2

Dilip Chauhan, Executive Director of SouthEast/Asian Affairs



Solid like a Rock

Insurance

Tel : 516 NLIGHT 8 (516 654 4488)

Diwali Celebrated at the memorable landmark Brooklyn Borough Hall Steps in New York



Hon. Eric Adams addressing the audience for Diwali celebration.



(Left to right) Ms Shalini Samlal & Mr Neil Murgai from Brooklyn Raaga Massiv performing



(Left to right) Arti Majethia, Dr sheetal Desai, Pinki Jaggi LILC, Jesse nagpal



Hon. Eric Adams with Sunil Hali receiving an honored citation on behalf of Dr Nirmal Mattoo of Indo American Arts Council with Mr Dilip Chauhan.

(By our staff reporter) Diwali, also called Deepavali is celebration of Festival of Lights. The purpose of the event is to celebrate this auspicious colorful Hindu holiday at the great monumental steps of Borough hall with leaders of the community and esteemed guests. 1With the Support

of the Brooklyn Borough President's office, Milan Cultural Association Inc & ISKCON organized a spectacular event, celebrating the festival with Devotion and love.

The event was attended by community leaders, Musically talented vocal and instrumental artists and Dancer and

general audiences including attendees who were attracted by colorful and musical performances of rich cultural exhibitions of Indian Tradition.

Mr. Dilip Chauhan, Executive Director of South Asian Affairs of the Brooklyn Borough President's Office flagged off the start of the program. Hosts of the

event Dr. Sheetal Desai President of NY Chapter of Milan Cultural Association & Ms Jaya Radhe from ISKCON welcomed the gathering.

The event opened with a welcome note from Dr Sheetal Desai, President of Milan Cultural Association-NY chapter to invite the audience

Indian-Origin Partner At McKinsey Firm Arrested On Insider-Trading Charges

Puneet Dikshit, a partner at a global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, has been charged with "illegally trading in advance of a corporate acquisition by one of the firm's clients in September."



September 15, 2021, Puneet Dikshit used inside information to purchase out-of-the-money GreenSky call options that were set to expire just days after the announcement. Following the takeover, GreenSky share prices jumped 44 per cent,

CNBC reported. The SEC's \$450,000. US Attorney Damian Williams said, "As alleged, Puneet Dikshit, a consulting firm partner, exploited his access to material nonpublic information about a pending acquisition of GreenSky, Inc., to trade in GreenSky call options.

Indian-Origin Student Among 9 Killed In Travis Scott's Concert Tragedy

Houston: A 22-year-old Indian-origin student has succumbed to her injuries sustained during the deadly crowd surge at rapper Travis Scott's Astroworld Festival, taking the death toll in the tragedy to 9, her family has said. Bharati Shahani, who was about to graduate from Texas A&M University in the spring, died on Wednesday night after suffering a severe brain injury in the tragedy on November 5. She was on a ventilator, according to her family.

A stampede of fans during rap star Scott's Astroworld Festival on Friday night killed nine people between the ages of 14 and 27 and injured scores. An investigation continues into the tragedy.

Bharti's heartbroken family on Thursday confirmed she has been declared dead from injuries she suffered during the chaos at the Astroworld Festival. "She was like an angel to us," Bharti's father Sunny said as his wife and other family members sobbed and held hands

behind him. "Bharti is love," said mother Karishma, who was overcome by grief.

"Always thinking about everybody – friends, parents, family, her dog Blue. "They say Bharti was the backbone of the family, "the light of their lives" who was a gift from God. "She was everything to me," Bharti's younger sister Namrata said. "We did everything together... she was like a second mother to me."

The young Aggie was a first-generation American of Indian origin and a good student who would have graduated soon with a computer science degree. She also helped with the family business and took care of her sisters. An Aggie is a student at Texas A&M University. Bharti had never been to a concert before -- rarely did anything for herself, her mom said -- but she decided to go see Travis Scott with Namrata and a cousin. "She was looking forward to it, she had her outfits planned, she tried everything on, she showed me," Namrata said.

New York: Puneet Dikshit, a 40-year-old Indian-origin partner at management consulting giant, McKinsey & Company, has been arrested and charged with insider-trading and making illegal profits totalling over \$450,000 in the US. Puneet Dikshit, a partner at a global management consulting firm, has been charged with "illegally trading in advance of a corporate acquisition by one of the firm's clients in September," the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) said in a statement on Wednesday. He was arrested on Wednesday and charged with two counts of securities fraud - violating Section 10(b) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and Rule 10b-5 thereunder - and faces up to 20 years in prison on each count, the Department of Justice said in a press release. Representing McKinsey as partner, Puneet Dikshit learned highly confidential information concerning The Goldman Sachs Group's impending acquisition of the consumer loan fintech platform GreenSky Inc, the SEC statement said. The SEC's complaint, filed in Federal District Court of Manhattan, alleged that in the days leading up to the acquisition announcement on



LONG ISLAND LADIES CIRCLE OF NEW YORK



Keynote Speaker
HON. DONALD X. CLAVIN, Jr.
Supervisor, Town of Hempstead

LILC Cordially invites you
FIRST DIWALI CELEBRATION
Dinner and Culture Programme
Sunday, November 14th
5.00pm to 9.00pm



Guest Speaker
HON. KATE MURRAY
Town Clerck, Hempstead

CONTACT

President Pinky Jaggi: 516-330-7323 Sonia Anand
Arti Majithia : 516-413-9009 Mohinder S. Miglani : 516-690-1257
Beena Kothari : 631-988-1280 Varinder Khaas -516-849-8705

ADMISSION BY INVITATION ONLY

Venue

LEVITTOWN HALL
201 Levittown Pkwy Hicksville, NY 11801

SPONSERS



ROYAL, LOTUS, MINT, ARTI MAJITHIA & SONIA SODHI (BADSHAH CAFÉ), RITA B, BEENA KOTHARI, SUSHIL KHANNA & MANJU
RAKHA CHICHARA, SONIA NARANG, BINA SABAPATHY, KIRAN ARORA, NEETU CHABRA, RAJA SINGH
LILY SONI, DEVINDER SINGH, NITIN, HARJEET KAUR, NISHI BEHL, PRIYANKA SHARMA, PINKI KISHOR, RACHNA
VIJAY KHANNA, PAMMY KUAR, SONIA ANAND, VARINDER KHAAS, SARDANA FAMILY, ARUNA SAXENA



MEDIA PARTNERS



www.PrintbyW.com
"Your Printing Partner"



Mukesh Berry resigns as Punjab's AAG, Congress MP Manish Tewari says time for Bar to 'stand up'

Less than 48 hours after he was appointed additional advocate general of Punjab, advocate Mukesh Chander Berry has resigned from the post. Reacting to the news, Congress MP Manish Tewari wrote on Twitter that it is time for the Bar Associations to 'stand up' and be counted.

Advocate Mukesh Chander Berry has resigned as the additional advocate general (AAG) of Punjab, less than 48 hours after being appointed to the post.

Berry was appointed as AAG on Monday, along with advocates Tarun Vir Singh Lehal and Aadil Singh Boparai. Lehal is the son-in-law of deputy chief minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa.

The Punjab government also appointed Sumeet Mahajan as senior additional advocate general.

In a letter to Principal Secretary Anurag Verma, Mukesh Chander Berry wrote that he has decided to step down from the post "without commenting upon the decision of the Punjab Government" to accept the resignation of APS Deol as the state's Advocate General (AG).

"Having remained elected representative of the Advocates as Member of the Bar Council of Pb. & Hr. (Punjab and Haryana), Chd. (Chandigarh) for 27 years and also the Chairman of the same and in continuous service as Law Officer in the office of Advocate General

Punjab for 28 years, I would request the Government not to ridicule and diminish the status and dignity of the Senior Advocates of this High Court," Berry wrote. The Punjab government had on Tuesday accepted the resignation of advocate general APS Deol. Appointed to the top post by CM Charanjit Singh Channi, Deol's appointment was opposed by state Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu. Moreover, the appointment of Deputy CM Randhawa's son-in-law Tarun Vir Singh Lehal as additional advocate general also triggered an uproar with Opposition leaders accusing the state government of 'nepotism'.

Reacting to Berry's resignation, Congress MP Manish Tewari wrote on Twitter, "Addl Advocate General Mukesh Berry's resignation very eloquently sums up the disgust that a lot of us Lawyers across the country feel at repeated subversion of Constitutional offices by some members of the political class."

"Targeting lawyers based upon clients they represents

a new nadir. I do not blame or envy Sardar @CHARANJITCHANNI who is being magnanimous & statesmanlike trying to carry everyone along. However Lawyers are also very important opinion makers in every Tehsil of Punjab. Time for Bar Associations stand up and be counted," Tewari wrote.

He went on to add, "I wish such politicians who perceive apolitical Constitutional functionaries as 'soft targets' to wage their proxy Warfare find a better way to do their politics. I sincerely pray next AG will bring Bargari accused, Drug/Sand/ Transport Mafia Barons to Justice." "My legal Services to fight the good fight and bring the accused to a speedy legal process would always remain at the disposal of the @PunjabGovtIndia and Chief Minister Sardar @CHARANJITCHANNI Pro-Bono. They can call upon them at any time and any place. Long Live Punjab, Punjabi, Punjabiya," wrote the legislator representing Sri Anandpur Sahib in Lok Sabha.

Crude bomb detected along Assam-Mizoram border defused safely

(News Agencies) - The crude bomb which was detected by the Cachar district police nearby an under-construction site along the Assam-Mizoram border five days back was defused on Wednesday.

A bomb squad team of Assam police had safely defused the bomb at a place near the interstate border.

The crude bomb was found nearby an under-construction site at Khulicherra Singha Basti area in Assam's Cachar district along the interstate



border on November 6.

Cachar district Superintendent of Police (SP) Ramandeep Kaur said that the bomb was defused by the squad team by following

standard operating procedures. After detection of the bomb, there was a package of gelatin sticks connected with detonators, Cachar district

police had kept it in a pit for security reasons. On October 30, a low-intensity blast occurred at the Bhaicherra area under Ramnathpur police station

in Assam's Hailakandi district near the inter-state border.

Six Assam police personnel were killed and 50 others wounded in a violent clash between the police forces of Assam and Mizoram in the disputed area between Lailapur in Assam's Cachar district and Vairengte in Mizoram's Kolasib district on July 26. Meanwhile, Cachar district police have deployed additional security personnel along the Assam-Mizoram border to maintain law and order and to prevent any untoward incident.



Women's Commission issues notice to Delhi Police in acid attack case

(News Agencies) -Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) has issued a notice to police seeking a copy of the FIR and details of the accused arrested in an acid attack case. DCW chairperson Swati Maliwal along with Promila Gupta visited the hospital in Delhi where the acid attack survivor is battling for her life. The 23-year-old girl was attacked by acid in the Bawana area of Delhi on November 3. The accused allegedly threw acid on the victim when she

refused to leave her husband and marry him. DCW Chief Swati Maliwal and member Promila Gupta interacted with the survivor who continues to be in a critical condition. The Commission has issued a notice to Delhi Police seeking a copy of the FIR and details of the accused arrested. The Commission noted that while the girl is critical, she is able to interact. That's why the Commission has urged Delhi Police to ensure that the statement of the survivor under section 164 is recorded

immediately in front of a Magistrate at the hospital itself. The Commission has also asked the police to trace the location from where the acid was bought by the accused and details of the action taken against the seller. Taking note of the severity of the matter, the Commission has sought a detailed action taken report from Delhi Police within 48 Hours. DCW chief Swati Maliwal also met with the husband of the survivor and offered every possible support from the

Commission. The Commission shall assist the family in getting interim compensation from the court and with all their medical and legal needs. DCW chief Swati Maliwal said, "I have no words to describe the condition of the girl. She has been terribly burnt and has lost her vision as well. She is extremely critical. We have issued a notice to Delhi Police. Strongest action should be taken in the matter, and it's high time the retail sale of acid is banned in India".

CBI seeks Centre's approval to invoke Official Secrets Act in submarine data leak case



(News Agencies) -The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has sought the approval of the Centre to invoke the Official Secrets Act (OSA) in the Naval data leak pertaining to the leak of sensitive classified information of a kilo-class submarine to unauthorised persons, sources told India Today.

The move came after the CBI filed two chargesheets against seven accused including a serving commander and two retired officers of the Indian Navy for allegedly leaking the the classified details.

Sources said, the CBI request will be examined by the Law Ministry and Defence Ministry, and after approval, OSA will be invoked in the case.

Last week, the CBI had filed two chargesheets against seven accused, including a serving naval commander and two retired officers of the Indian Navy.

According to sources, serving Navy commander Ajit Kumar Pandey along with two retired commanders SJ Singh and R Singh have been named as accused in the first chargesheet for allegedly leaking and passing the information.

India Today has learnt that a senior Indian Navy officer was questioned by the CBI along with a defence dealer in the case.

Earlier, the CBI allegedly recovered Rs 2.40 crore in cash from the residence of ex-Navy officer R Singh on conducting searches.

In September, the CBI had arrested a serving Indian Navy commander, two ex-officials of the Navy and two private persons in connection with this case.

According to details of the CBI operation accessed by India Today, it has emerged that a serving commander-rank officer in Navy was leaking information to two retired officers, which included a commodore-rank officer.

Uttar Pradesh youth dies in custody, police claim he hanged himself from 2-foot high pipe

(News Agencies) -A youth lodged in the lockup of Sadar Kotwali of Kasganj in Uttar Pradesh was found dead under suspicious circumstances on Tuesday, November 9. The youth was accused of eloping with a girl and had been detained for interrogation. The police have called his death a suicide. The family of the youth, however, are alleging murder.

The deceased youth was identified as Altaf, son of Chand Mian, a resident of Nagla Sayyed Ahroli of the Sadar Kotwali area.

Altaf said: "I handed over my son to the police on Monday evening. Barely 24 hours later, I was informed that he had hanged himself."

HE HANGED HIMSELF FROM PIPE USING HOODIE STRING: POLICE

Police said that during interrogation, Altaf excused himself to go to the toilet. When he failed to come out after quite some time, police personnel went to investigate and found him hanging from a pipe in the toilet. Police said that Altaf was

wearing a jacket with a hood, which had a string. He made a noose with the string and hanged himself from the pipe, which was two feet off the floor, claimed police.

Soon after the incident, SP Rohan Pramod Botre suspended five police personnel, including the inspector. Botre said that the youth was rushed to the hospital where he died after being treated for some time. A primary probe revealed negligence on the part of five police personnel, following which they were suspended.

POLICE THEORY QUESTIONED
The police's theory that Altaf had hanged himself using the string of his hoodie is being questioned as the pipe, from which, the police say, Altaf hanged himself, is merely two feet from the ground.

An Aaj Tak team visited the police station to verify the police's claims. The team found that there was only one pipe (the water outlet) in the washroom. It was only two feet from the ground. There was no other pipe or latch in the washroom.

Suspected Dawood associate Riyaz Bhati to move court again for bail

NCP leader and Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik, in his latest attacks on BJP's Devendra Fadnavis, questioned the former CM's links with Riyaz Bhati.

(News Agencies) -Riyaz Bhati, a 53-year-old resident of Versova in Mumbai and a suspected aide of underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, who has been accused in an extortion case, will soon move the court for anticipatory bail, his advocate Tarak Sayyad said. Riyaz Bhati, who claims to be a businessman, has several cases pending against him. Bhati is an alleged gangster with suspected links to underworld don Dawood Ibrahim. NCP leader and Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik, in his latest attacks on BJP's Devendra Fadnavis, has questioned the former CM's links with Riyaz Bhati. Bhati has been booked in multiple cases of extortion, land grabbing, cheating, forgery, and firing. He has also been arrested on multiple occasions while he tried to flee the country using fake passports in 2015 and 2020. CASES AGAINST RIYAZ BHATI Bhati was also named as an



accused along with former Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh and dismissed Assistant Inspector Sachin Vaze in an FIR registered at Goregaon police station in July. Sources said that Bhati used to collect money from bars and restaurants on behalf of Vaze and then handed it over to him. His anticipatory bail application in the case was rejected in September this year and since then, he has been on the run

while police officials investigating the case have launched a manhunt to nab him. Riyaz Bhati had approached the Bombay High Court as well for the anticipatory bail. Refusing to hear the plea, Justice PD Naik had then said, "Not before me." The anticipatory bail plea is still pending in the high court. His advocate Tarak Sayyad said that they would move another bench again after the Diwali vacation gets over. The Esplanade

Magistrate's court had also issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against Bhati at the time when the same was issued against Singh in the Goregaon case. "Bhati had been summoned to which he did not respond. He was not found at the known addresses and that is why we moved for a non-bailable warrant to be issued against him," said Special Public Prosecutor Shekhar Jagtap, who has been appointed by

Mumbai police.

EXTORTION CASE INVOLVING PARAM BIR SINGH, SACHIN VAZE

According to the extortion case, Sachin Vaze, who was then heading the Crime Intelligence Unit of the Mumbai Crime Branch had pressured two businessmen to obtain two mobile phones for a total value of Rs 2,92,000. Further, since Singh was alleged to have given a target to Vaze to generate extortion money, and as the amount was not paid up, Vaze started raiding different restaurants and bars. Vaze, through his squad, conducted a raid at a restaurant cum bar and a case was registered at Goregaon Police Station. Vaze was then allegedly given an extortion amount of Rs 2,00,000 to "close the matter". The businessmen also allegedly paid Rs 2 lakh in December 2020 to Sumit Singh, alias Chintu, who used to collect the extortion money for Vaze.

Geeta Sexena
Bureau Chief (Punjab))

Gagandeep Singh
Deputy News Editor

Sharanjit Singh Thind
Editor in Chief

Susmita Ghosh
Deputy Managing Editor

Josh Josh
India WebTV India WebTV

The South Asian INSIDER
Published Weekly from New York

Josh India WebTV

Facebook Instagram Twitter YouTube WhatsApp



From beggar to Padma Shri awardee:

The long journey of Karnataka transgender dancer Manjamma Jogathi

Karnataka transgender dancer Manjamma Jogathi was conferred with the Padma Shri award for her contribution to folk dance by President Ram Nath Kovind on Tuesday. Before she received the award, she made a gesture with the 'pallu' of her sari to wish the President good luck, which soon went viral.

#WATCH | Transgender folk dancer of Jogamma heritage and the first transwoman President of Karnataka Janapada Academy, Matha B Manjamma Jogathi receives the Padma Shri award from President Ram Nath Kovind. pic.twitter.com/SNzp9aFkre

- ANI (@ANI) November 9, 2021

But if one were to look beyond the broad

smile on her face and full-of-life personality, her journey was tough - fraught with several challenges. Even now, there is a social stigma attached to those who identify as transgender and Manjamma Jogathi embraced her true identity long back.

Manjamma was born as Manjunatha Shetty in Karnataka's Ballari district. She studied till Class 10. At the age of 15, she started identifying herself as a woman. Her parents made her perform Jogappa - a ritual in which devotees are believed to get married to a god or goddess. This is when Manjunatha Shetty became Manjamma Jogathi.

As Manjamma, she could not enter her

own house. But an ever-resilient Manjamma draped a sari and took to the streets - to beg for a living. Her journey was met with sexual abuse which made her contemplate suicide. But every cloud has a silver lining, and for Manjamma, it was a father and son duo who taught her dance - thus giving her a new lease of life. Manjamma learnt a dance form known as Jogathi Nrithyaa after she was introduced to Kallava Jogathi. After Kallava's death, she performed across the state and made the dance form popular.

Manjamma also became the first transgender president of Karnataka Jaanapada Academy, a body of the state government for performing arts.

Am absolutely fine: Wrestler Nisha Dahiya releases video after reports of her death



National-level wrestler Nisha Dahiya on Wednesday released a video clarifying that she is absolutely fine after news reports said she was killed in a shooting in Haryana.

In the video, Nisha Dahiya said that she is absolutely fine and is in Gonda right now for a tournament. Nisha Dahiya released the video after reports said that she and her brother were shot dead at the Sushil Kumar Wrestling Academy in Sonapat's Halalpur, Haryana.

Here's what national-level wrestler Nisha Dahiya said in her video:

Wrestler Sakshi Malik, a close friend of Nisha Dahiya, also tweeted a photo with Nisha and said, "She is alive."

She is alive #nishadhaiya #fakenwes pic.twitter.com/6ohMK1bWxG

- Sakshi Malik (@SakshiMalik) November 10, 2021

However, it later emerged that the wrestler who was killed at a local academy was another Nisha Dahiya and not the national-level wrestler athlete as was reported earlier.

Only herbal tobacco was found on me: Accused in drugs case involving Nawab Malik's son-in-law



British national Karan Sajnani, an accused in a drugs case along with Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer Khan, said he never dealt in drugs and only herbal tobacco was found in his

possession.

Karan Sajnani was summoned by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) SIT in Mumbai on Wednesday. Sajnani, his assistant Rahila Furniturewala and Sameer Khan were arrested in January this year in connection with a 200 kg drug bust by the NCB. The case is one of the six cases transferred from Mumbai's NCB unit to the SIT.

Karan Sajnani and Furniturewala were also arrested by NCB as part of its probe into the drug

angle of actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

Speaking to India Today TV, Karan Sajnani said, "I don't know why they have called me. I am presently out on bail and following all the conditions as per the court order."

"The bail order clearly states that the majority of the samples had no narcotic substance. I have always said that it was herbal tobacco that is also sold on online websites," Sajnani said.

When asked about the 1 kg

marijuana found in the seized samples, he said, "The sample that has tested positive is vegetative, it doesn't have any active narcotic ingredient".

Karan Sajnani said he had also written to UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson seeking help. "I am in touch with the Home Secretary of the UK, Priti Patel. They have asked me to get in touch with the UK High Commission and are willing to provide help regarding the cases," he said.



Indian Army orders inquiry into alleged harassment of woman officer in Punjab

(News Agencies) -The Western Command of the Indian Army has ordered an inquiry after a case of alleged harassment of a serving woman officer was reported at a military station in Punjab on Tuesday. As per sources in the South

Army, an investigation into the case as per due procedure is in progress. "A case of alleged harassment of a serving women officer has been reported in one of the military stations in Punjab," a source said. "Investigations as per due procedure mandated by guidelines listed in various laws enacted by the Parliament as well as the Supreme Court to prevent sexual harassment of women soldiers are in progress," the sources added. "Indian Army is committed to providing a safe and secure working environment to all ranks. It is reiterated that the Army practices zero tolerance towards violation of established guidelines wherein all such allegations are promptly investigated and taken to a logical conclusion," sources stated.

3 top medical officials removed from posts after fire tragedy at Bhopal hospital



(News Agencies) -Three Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal on Monday. The fire broke out in the paediatric ward's intensive care unit where 40 children were admitted on Monday night. Four children died on the day of the incident and another eight lost their lives 36 hours later, head of the paediatrics department Dr

Jyotsna Srivastava said. As of now, short-circuiting is being blamed for the fire.

Now, dean of Gandhi Medical College Dr Jitendra Shukla, Hamidia Hospital superintendent Dr Lokendra Dave and Kamla Nehru Hospital director Dr KK Dubey have been removed from their posts, ANI news agency reported.

Additionally, a sub-engineer in the electricity wing, Awdhesh Bhadauria, has been suspended.

Kamla Nehru Children's Hospital is part of Hamidia Hospital and located within the campus of Gandhi Medical College.

NCPCR ISSUES NOTICE

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has taken suo-moto cognizance of the fire tragedy

and issued a notice to the state Chief Secretary on Tuesday.

In its notice, the NCPCR has asked the Chief Secretary to submit a preliminary action report within three days. The panel has also asked for adequate compensation for the families of the deceased infants.

CM ORDERS INQUIRY

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said on Monday that a high-level inquiry had been ordered into the incident.

He tweeted, "The incident of fire in the children's ward of Kamala Nehru Hospital, Bhopal is sad. The rescue operation was swift.

A high-level inquiry has been ordered into the incident. The investigation will be done by ACS Public Health and Medical Education Mohammad Suleman."



SRK's manager Pooja Dadlani skips Mumbai Police summon citing health reasons, cops to serve notice again

The Mumbai Police's special investigation team called Shah Rukh Khan's manager Pooja Dadlani thrice to ask her to record her statement in the extortion case being probed by it. However, she said she was not well and did not appear before the SIT.

The Mumbai Police's special investigation team (SIT) called Shah Rukh Khan's manager Pooja Dadlani thrice to ask her to record her statement in the extortion case being probed by it. She was earlier issued summons by the SIT. However, she said she was "not well" and did not appear before the team. If she does not approach the Mumbai Police herself, she is likely to be summoned by the SIT for the second time in the next few days. The Mumbai Police's SIT is probing the allegations of extortion that have been levelled against NCB zonal director Sameer Wankhede in the course of the investigation into the Mumbai cruise drugs case.

EXTORTION ALLEGATION

In an affidavit, independent witness Prabhakar Sail claimed that Rs 25 crore was demanded on behalf of Sameer Wankhede for the release of Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan in the Mumbai cruise drugs case. Aryan Khan was arrested on October 3 and granted bail on October 28. Sources in the Mumbai Police stated that Pooja Dadlani's statement is extremely important in the case. The legal aspects of the matter are being examined, they said.

It has been claimed that independent witness KP Gosavi posed as an NCB officer and met Pooja Dadlani to take money from her for the release of Shah

Rukh Khan's son Aryan on the night of the raid. The SIT has claimed that it has CCTV footage in which Pooja Dadlani's car can be seen in Mumbai's Lower Parel at the spot mentioned by Prabhakar Sail.

MUMBAI POLICE MAY QUESTION KP GOSAVI

KP Gosavi, an independent witness in the Mumbai cruise drugs case, is also someone whose name has come up in the probe into extortion allegations. He is currently in judicial custody after he was arrested in a 2018 cheating case by the Pune Police. As per sources in the Mumbai Police, a legal opinion will be taken to determine if the police should approach the court for custody of KP Gosavi so he

can be interrogated in connection with the Mumbai cruise drugs case and related extortion charges.

MUMBAI POLICE SIT

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) was constituted by the Mumbai Police on October 27 to investigate the extortion allegations levelled by independent witness Prabhakar Sail against NCB's zonal director Sameer Wankhede and witness KP Gosavi.

The Mumbai Police has appointed four officers to the team and the probe is being supervised by Additional Commissioner of Police Dilip Sawant. The team is being led by ACP Milind Khetle.

Odisha: Cop's son steals gun to rob bank of Rs 15 lakh



A 23-year-old son of a police officer robbed Rs 15 lakh cash from a private bank by brandishing a service revolver of his father in Odisha's Sundergarh district. Later, the accused was arrested in an encounter with the police on Tuesday.

The incident took place at Axis Bank, Sundergarh town's main road branch. The accused, Jaydev Nayak, is the son of an Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) posted at Sundergarh Sadar Police station in the same district.

Nayak entered the bank at around 2:00 pm posing as a customer and headed straight towards the cashier and pointed the gun at his head. As the cashier shouted for help, manager Lankeswar Maharana and other bank staff rushed to the spot.

Nayak then pointed the gun at the manager, asking him to direct the cashier to fill the bag with cash. Taking the cash, he fled on his motorcycle.

As soon as the accused left the bank, bank officials immediately informed the police about the dacoity.

Sundergarh Police swung into action and traced the accused, and asked him to surrender.

However, Nayak opened fire on the police, following which the police retaliated. After a few rounds of firing from both sides, he was nabbed near Shankara Road, said Superintendent of Police, Sagarika Nath. The cash and firearm have been seized from Nayak, she added.

He was later admitted to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) for treatment.

Sagarika Nath told India Today Nayak's father would be probed to find out if he was complicit in the case.

Kerala top cop suspended for close links with YouTuber Monson Mavunkal

The Kerala Government has suspended Inspector General (IG) of Police G Lakshmana for his alleged close links with YouTuber Monson Mavunkal -- accused of selling fake artefacts. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan signed the Kerala IG's suspension due to his links with the accused. Last month, some pictures showed that Monson Mavunkal

was connected with the top police officials in the state, including Former Kerala Police Chief DGP Loknaath Behera and current state police chief DGP Anilkant. According to the Crime Branch, IG Lakshmana was involved in Monson's scam and tried to sabotage the ongoing investigation. With this, it became clear why Monson Mavunkal was

staying as a guest at the Thiruvananthapuram Police Club and with the help of police officers. It was found IG Lakshmana interacted with intermediaries from Andhra Pradesh as a business partner for Monson Mavunkal.

IG Lakshmana is the most senior IG in Kerala and was set to be promoted as the Additional

Director-General of Police (ADGP) on January 1.

The crime branch division had demanded strict departmental action against IG Lakshmana. While considering Monson Mavunkal's case, The Kerala High Court asked the state government about the actions that were taken against the top officials.

Punjab: Crackdown on transport mafia continues, govt's daily revenue crosses Rs 1 crore

As the crackdown on the transport mafia in Punjab continues, the government's daily revenue has surpassed Rs 1 crore.

Since the Punjab government launched a crackdown on the transport mafia last month, the transport department's daily revenue has crossed Rs 1 crore.

Punjab Transport Minister Amarinder Singh Raja said on Wednesday that the department's daily income has crossed Rs 1 crore after the crackdown on tax evaders, illegal activities and unlicensed bus operators.

Raja told a press conference at Punjab Bhavan that the transport department's revenue is steadily increasing and has reached Rs 100.48 lakh per day.

Referring to the department's income for the last two months, the Minister stated that the

income of PEPSU Road Transport Corporation (PRTC) and Punjab Roadways was Rs 39.01 crore and Rs 34.15 crore, respectively, in September 2021, which increased to Rs 54.74 crore (PRTC) and Rs 49.57 crore (Punjab Roadways) in October. Raja stated that the total income of the two institutions increased by 42.57 per cent (Rs. 31.15 crore) in October from Rs 73.16 crore in September and that the daily income from both institutions is Rs 100.48 lakh.

Comparing the increased income of the department with the past, the transport minister said, "Ten years of the rule of SAD-BJP and four and a half years of Captain Amarinder Singh's compromised government allowed sheer loot of

the state exchequer and the amount of these 5220-days would stand at around Rs 5,200 crore." He further said that people who fill up their pockets by looting public funds could never think of public welfare.

Raja said the Akalis had surpassed Ahmed Shah Abdali in looting public money with both hands, revealing the true face of politicians who were expanding their business through the transport mafia by forming governments in the name of serving the people.

He claimed that Punjab and Haryana High Court Justice Surya Kant's order prohibiting the illegal expansion of multiple permits issued in 2012 had not been properly implemented.

"We have now fully implemented this decision and cancelled 680 multiple permits for illegal expansion of more than 1 lakh kilometres, with the state government profiting Rs 42 lakh per day in October," Raja said. He emphasised that if the illegal permit expansion had been halted from 2012 to 2021, the state exchequer would have received Rs 1,380 crore for 3,285 days (Rs 42 lakh per day) over a nine-year period, which could have been spent on public welfare. The transport minister said that if Rs 6,600 crore had gone to the state exchequer, 24,000 new buses could have been purchased, 50,000 new drivers, conductors, and other staff hired, and two new buses

could have been run from each village in the state. The scam will be thoroughly investigated by forming a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and that any person found guilty, whether a leader or an official, will not be spared at any cost, said Raja Warring.

According to the Minister, 304 buses have been seized for tax evasion, operating without permits, and other violations and 64 buses have been fined so far. He claimed the transportation department had collected Rs 7 crore in taxes.

The Minister also said that 842 more buses will be added to the state government fleet soon, with 1,100 PRTC buses and 1,550 Punjab Roadways buses currently on the road.

Mumbai Police nabs techie who issued rape threat to Virat Kohli, Anushka Sharma's minor daughter

The Mumbai Police has arrested a 23-year-old from Hyderabad for issuing a rape threat to Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma's minor daughter on Twitter. Identified as one Ramnagesh Srinivas Akubathini, the accused was taken into custody by the cyber cell of Mumbai Police on Wednesday. According to preliminary information, the accused is a B-

Tech graduate who worked in the software department of a food delivery platform.

Ramnagesh Srinivas Akubathini is being brought to Mumbai where he will be produced before a court with the police seeking further custody.

The accused had issued a rape threat to the minor on Twitter after the Indian cricket

team's loss to Pakistan in the ongoing T20 World Cup.



Earlier this month, the Delhi

Commission for Women (DCW) had sent a notice to the Delhi

Police seeking a response over rape threats made to Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma's daughter on social media.

The Commission, in a letter to the Delhi Police, termed the incident as "shameful" and called for the immediate arrest of the

accused. "This is the time to stand behind our team, not against them. Even if India lost to Pakistan, the players and their families don't deserve hatred," DCW chief Swati Maliwal wrote to the Delhi Police. Her letter went on to add, "I expect immediate registration of an FIR and arrests in the matter. Such people should be taught a lesson."



Nawab Malik's hydrogen bomb was not even a cracker: BJP's Ashish Shelar

"By taking names like Riyaz Bhati (an aide of don Dawood Ibrahim) and Haidar (a trafficker), Nawab Malik tried to create a big picture," Ashish Shelar said.

BJP leader Ashish Shelar on Wednesday, November 10, mocked NCP's Nawab Malik, saying the claimed "expose" had backfired on the Maharashtra minister. "Those who spoke of dropping a hydrogen bomb couldn't even burst a small cracker. On the contrary, they burnt their own hands. Forget a hydrogen bomb their condition now is such that they will need oxygen," Shelar said.

"By taking names like Riyaz Bhati (an aide of don Dawood

Ibrahim) and Haidar (a trafficker), he tried to create a big picture. This is like the story of Birbal's biryani, which was being cooked far away from fire. Despite using the machine of three parties, they couldn't put even one spot on BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis," he said.

Earlier, following up on his promise that he would drop a "hydrogen bomb" exposing Devendra Fadnavis's alleged underworld ties, Maharashtra minister Nawab Malik on

Wednesday morning had said that the former chief minister had links with Riyaz Bhati.

Nawab Malik's charges came a day after Devendra Fadnavis alleged that a company of the NCP leader and his family members purchased land in suburban Kurla at a very cheap rate through fictitious documents from two convicts of the 1993 Mumbai serial blasts case. "Yes, it is true that Haji Devendra Fadnavis's alleged Arafat, Munna Yadav, Haidar were made chairpersons of the [Construction Workers'] Board.

But there were no criminal cases against them. There was only one case against Yadav," Shelar said.

"In the last two years, there has not been even one case against the three. Even if there are cases, they pertain to protests," he added.

Malik had said Imran Alam Shaikh, brother of Haji Arafat was a Congress secretary then and now he is with NCP. Nawab Malik had also accused Devendra Fadnavis of criminalising politics.

Allegations by Fadnavis, Malik serious, issue will be raised in assembly: Nana Patole



Maharashtra state Congress President Nana Patole has said that both cabinet minister Nawab Malik and former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis need to substantiate the charges that they have levelled on each other. Talking to India Today TV, Nana Patole said, "Nawab Malik isn't just any other person. He's a cabinet minister and has levelled serious allegations. Devendra Fadnavis is a former chief minister of the state. They have levelled allegations of underworld connections on each other. This is a serious matter. The prestige of Maharashtra has taken a beating with this and the Congress party will raise the issue in the assembly session as well."

He also added that if the two aren't able to prove the charges then they will need to publicly apologise as well.

On the question of every party leader having a picture with the absconding Riyaz Bhati, he said that in social life it is difficult to recognise dubious characters and hence photos get clicked.

Nana Patole said that the Congress party has already demanded that the NCB put out all the CCTV footage of the cruise and clear the doubts.

"By putting out Shah Rukh's son in the front, the BJP had Uttar Pradesh elections in mind and whatever happens in Mumbai does have its impact in North India as well. The same happened during Sushant Singh Rajput's death as well. At that time the BJP had Bihar elections in mind but once the elections got over they forgot about it once the matter went to the central agency," he said.

Assam village exiles woman for 12 years over extra-marital affair

A woman in Assam's Lakhimpur district has been banished for 12 years from her village for her alleged involvement in extra-marital affairs.

A kangaroo court in Dighola Chapori village under Dhakuakhana Police Station on Tuesday ordered to exile the woman and her family for 12 years from the village.

According to the villagers, the husband of the woman lived in Kerala, where he worked at a private company. In his absence, the woman was allegedly having multiple extra-marital affairs. A local woman from the village said that earlier

the villagers had warned the lady against her affairs and also informed local police.

"She was involved in illicit relationships. We called her husband from Kerala and all the villagers handed over the woman to her husband. The couple also

decided to leave the village. All the villagers have decided that the woman and her family will not stay in our village anymore. We have also handed over all properties to them and exiled them from our village for 12 years," the local woman said. Talking to reporters, another woman said, "We have taken the decision to save the environment of our village."



**Some Call us a Media House
Others call us an Institution to learn from**



**Delivering News,
uncompromised
& Unbiased for the
Last 19 years**

**Email: editor@thesouthasianinsider.com
www.thesouthasianinsider.com**

Bombay HC sets aside single-judge order restraining sale of Vijaypat Singhania's autobiography

(News Agencies) -Granting relief to book publisher Pan Macmillan, a division bench of Bombay High Court set aside an order of a single-bench judge, which had restrained the sale, circulation and distribution of businessman Vijaypat Singhania's autobiography 'An Incomplete Life'.

Singhania, former chairperson of the Raymond Group is fighting a legal battle with his son Gautam Singhania, over the title of Singhania's autobiography and its release.

In 2018, Raymond filed a suit in Thane Court seeking a permanent injunction against Penguin publishers (erstwhile publishers) and Singhania on the ground that the book infringed Raymond's right to privacy and confidential information, including violating the registered trademark "The Complete Man" by giving the autobiography title



"The Incomplete Life".

In March 2019, Sessions Court at Thane restrained Singhania from publishing the book till April 22, 2019 on the appearance of Singhania and erstwhile publishers. The case is still being heard by the Thane court, where

it is listed for further hearing on November 27.

However, according to Advocate Siddhesh Bhole appearing for Pan Macmillan, since the restraining order did not get extended by court post April 22, 2019, Singhania approached this

company for publishing his autobiography that was now been titled 'The incomplete Life'. Raymond said the book was set for circulation on October 31 this year so they immediately moved Bombay High Court as Thane court was on Diwali vacation.

On November 4, Justice Tavde passed a restraining order against publication and circulation of the book. In its appeal then, Pan Macmillan approached Bombay High Court this week against the order, saying that in the session court, publishers Penguin was party to the case, while when Raymond approached High Court, they made publisher Macmillan as a party.

Bhole told the court that Macmillan and Pan Macmillan are two different companies and they have nothing to do with each other.

On hearing this, the division bench, after setting aside the order, granted liberty to Raymond to move the vacation single-judge bench again, which they immediately did. The matter was mentioned before single judge Madhav Jamdar, who has listed the matter for hearing tomorrow.

WARNING: MAY CONTAIN LEAD

ADVERTISEMENT

Ayurvedic medicines can contain lead, which can cause learning and behavior problems in children, miscarriage in pregnant women, and infertility.

- If you use Ayurvedic medicines, ask your doctor for a blood lead test.

Call **311** or visit **nyc.gov/leadfree** for more information.

NYC
Health

Bill de Blasio
Mayor
Dave A. Chokshi, MD, MSc
Commissioner

America needs help. Yet Democrats are getting sucked into fake culture wars

I do not know if I can survive three more years of Democrats stumbling over themselves to disavow the Democratic platform in a doomed attempt to win bad-faith culture wars. It is too painful, like watching ruthless hunters herding panicked animals over the side of a cliff. The poor, dumb beasts inevitably go extinct if they are not able to outthink such a rudimentary strategy. Walk around your town. Explore a major American city. Drive across the country. What are the most important problems you see? There is poverty. Homelessness. A lack of affordable housing. Vast and jaw-dropping economic and racial inequality. There is a lack of public transportation, a broken healthcare system, environmental degradation, and a climate crisis that threatens to upend our way of life. These are real problems. These are the things that we need our government to fix. These are what we need to hear politicians talk about. These are what we must debate and focus on, if we are really concerned about human rights and our children's future and all the other big things we claim to value. I guarantee you that neither "cancel culture" nor "critical race theory" nor, worse of all, "wokeness" will grab you as enormous problems after your exploration of America, unless that exploration ranges only from a college faculty lounge to a cable TV studio to the office of a rightwing thinktank. These are all words that mean nothing. To the extent that they are real at all, they are niche concerns that plague such a small subset of Americans that they deserve to be addressed only after we have solved the many other, realer problems.

All these terms function primarily as empty vessels into which bad-faith actors can pour racism, so that it may appear more palatable when it hits the public airwaves. Common sense tells us we should spend most of our time talking about the biggest problems, and less time on the lesser problems, and no time on the mythical problems. To engage in long and tortured debates over these slippery and indefinable culture war terms is to violate that rule, with awful consequences for everyone.

Let's not bullshit about this. Racism is a wonderfully effective political tool for Republicans, yet explicit racism is frowned upon in polite society now, so there is a constant flow of new issues to stand in for racism in political discourse. Lee Atwater, who invented Nixon's "southern strategy", explained this all decades ago, and it is still true. George Wallace could be outright racist, but subsequent generations of politicians have had to cloak it in "welfare reform" or being "tough on crime" or, now,

opposition to "wokeness" and "critical race theory" - things which mean, by the way, "caring about racism".

Three-quarters of a million Americans are dead from a pandemic. We have a Democratic president and a booming economy. So we will get culture wars, and more culture wars, all of which are built on stoking various forms of hate. This is a game that serious leaders should not play. Unfortunately, we don't have too many serious leaders. We have the Democratic party. Republicans will push these culture wars as far as they can, but it takes Democrats to make the strategy work. There are two types of Democrats falling for this trap now. One type is the group of fairly well-meaning people who assume that the fact there is a cottage industry dedicated to amplifying these terms in the media means there must be something to them. The other type are the opportunistic Democrats, who often brand themselves "centrists", who see the culture wars as a way to steal power from the left wing of their own party, even if it comes at the cost of hurting millions of Americans. We have seen this movie before. The 1990s was the era of fiery and stupid debates over gay people in the military, flag burning and Sister Souljah. They were just an earlier iteration of the same thing we're going through now. The decision of Democrats to lean into this dynamic by running to the right led to atrocities like Bill Clinton's "welfare reform" and crime bills that won him momentary electoral power by immiserating an entire generation of poor, non-white people, many of whom are still caged in prison today. Choosing to give credence to the culture wars has real life consequences. Already, we can see panicked Democrats rushing to decry the very sort of social justice fights that give the decrepit party its only redeeming value. Here is the good news: we don't have to do this. We can step off this train before it pulls out of Bad Faith Station on the way to the Trump 2024 victory party. What we need is some sort of broad force that can unite people of disparate races and persuasions around a shared, common interest. Something capable of demonstrating the value of the fight against inequality and corporate domination in a real, tangible way. Something that wages its fights in reality, not in the remote world of buzzwords and misdirection. Guess what? That thing already exists. It's called the labor movement. And it's energetic as hell right now. A wave of strikes across the nation that has been building for months is garnering levels of attention unseen in decades.

Ambani-Adani conflict in future renewable energy supremacy

By Susmita Ghosh

India moves to the future with green and clean energy in mind. Besides, being great for the environment, it may also destroy a direct business rivalry in their own rights among the two business leaders, Ambani and Adani group from India. Even if it has the potential to herald a new era in the renewable energy segment, it may create turbulence in the economy though.

The billionaires, Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani hail from Gujarat, with a huge reserve of family wealth. They have been outstandingly successful in every sphere ventured so far. Yet, almost on no occasion, they have faced off against each other, keeping a respectful space. In the rush to be the supreme clean energy provider, the condition may change in the coming decade.

India's power requirement is still highly dependent on coal, which is under the Adani-run companies. They focus on the utilities and infrastructure sector. Alternatively, the Ambanis delve into telecom, petroleum and retail, hence their spheres never overlap.

With the rising demand of alternative energies, the Adani group eyes the same with their Adani Green Energy. They are targeting a 25 gigawatt of energy goal by 2025. Supported by 20 percent shareholder, Total Energies SE from France, in the company, together they share an aim to be the largest renewable energy producer in the world by 2030.

The major competition to this goal may come from India only, as Mukesh Ambani is growing in the same sector

currently. Now, he is investing US\$10 billion in clean power and fuel over three years and claims to be the 'most challenging' mission of his life. According to the Ambani group, their goal is not to dominate the field but to meet 100 gigawatts of Modi's green energy target of 450 gigawatts by 2030 only.

However, their aggressive expansion and strategies in the telecom sector have put out major competitions from the market. The Adani group is set to face a tough challenge ahead.

It is a great future market for highly-dense country like India. With better human resource utilization in every sector, the demand for energy will increase manifold in future. As the traditional energy resources are useless or the price is on the steep rise, demand for renewable and unconventional energy sources is in high demand now. The Ambani-Adani group conflict is only the beginning of the scuffle and it may even transcend the nation on an international scale.

Besides this mega-rivalry, there are other economic superpowers to provide tough competition to the Ambani-Adani supremacy in India in energy sector.

There is the Tata group, with a backing of industrialists, a deep-rooted heritage in India. Their renewable energy wing, Tata Power is planning ground-breaking work in solar energy, EV charging stations and home automation. They are also planning to provide energy

(Contd on page 35)



ISSN No. 1554 06X

Editor in Chief & Publisher :

Sharanjit Singh Thind

Editor (Political Affairs-India) :

Aruna Singh

Susmita Ghosh (Dy Managing Editor India)

Anusha Syed (Legal Columnist)

Special Correspondents:

Gagandeep Singh (India)

Geeta Saxena (Insider Show Host)

Chief Photographer : Vijay Shah

Editorial Intern: Roubin Singh Thind

Web Coordinator : Harpreet Singh

A Publication of Media Partners Capital, Inc.

REGD & MAILING OFFICE :

P.O Box 7005 Hicksville New York 11801

Phone: 917 612 3158

editor@thesouthasianinsider.com, thesouthasianinsider@gmail.com

www.thesouthasianinsider.com

Disclaimer The South Asian Insider is a weekly newspaper published every week by The South Asian Insider. It's available in community & religious centers, ethnic grocery stores and also available by mail, email & online to subscribers. The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various writers, authors and forum participants in The South Asian Insider do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the Editor. All advertisers advertising in The South Asian Insider assume responsibility for accuracy of their advertisements. The South Asian Insider and/or people associated with it are not responsible for any claims made by the advertisers and don't endorse any product or services advertised in The South Asian Insider. We strongly urge consulting your lawyer before buying/contracting/hiring through the ads published in the newspaper. We are in the business of selling space and claims made by the advertisers are not authenticated or confirmed by an independent source



By getting the Russian, Iranian and five Central Asian NSAs to Delhi for a conference, India shows it can expand the Afghanistan game.

India wants to be a big player in Afghanistan, so why isn't it giving visas to Afghans?

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval is hosting a conference of Afghanistan's neighbours on 10 November in Delhi to discuss the next steps in that conflicted country. Doval's Russian counterpart Nikolay Patrushev is coming, as are those from Iran and all five Central Asian republics. Pakistan's Moeed Yusuf has refused the invitation. China says it can't come as it's busy. The US hasn't been invited.

This security dialogue is the third attempt by the conflicted region at finding some sort of via media on Afghanistan - the previous two conferences were held before the Covid-19 pandemic, before the world changed. Certainly,

Afghanistan is in dire straits today - starvation is rife, with mothers sometimes being forced to sell their children to feed their family, human rights defenders are being killed in cold blood, while the ISIS-Khorasan terror group is attacking mosques and hospitals to inflict maximum civilian casualties.

None other than the Taliban's top military commander, Qari Hamdullah, was killed last week in an ISIS-K attack on the Kabul military hospital, throwing up some key questions: Is the Taliban going to take this lying down? Is it going to retaliate and if it does, will that mean a repeat of the cycle of blood-letting and rank instability as it did in the late

1980s?

Moreover, India's primary red lines are to hold terrorism at bay - to make sure that a Talibanised Afghanistan's over-enthusiastic fighters don't look for new spoils in neighbouring Kashmir - and to watch for the impact of the recent peace agreement between the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Pakistan establishment brokered by none other than Sirajuddin Haqqani.

Remember that the Haqqani Network has been accused of the 2008 terror attack in Kabul in which an Indian diplomat and defence attache was killed and that the all-powerful Sirajuddin is the interior minister of Afghanistan today.

Unavoidable questions

This, then, is how the stage is being set as the region's top intelligence chiefs arrive in Delhi and put on their thinking caps. On top of the agenda will be the question: Should India and the region recognise the Taliban? If so, what does this do to the ousted but powerful Afghan diaspora who had to flee when the Taliban took Kabul without firing a shot on 15 August?

But there's another question that must be answered by India if the world as well as Afghans are to look at New Delhi as a serious player in the region. Which is, why isn't India giving visas to Afghan nationals who have been wanting to flee the Taliban

government these past three months?

The irony is that Afghans believe India to be their closest friend, which has invested in the education and training of Afghans in India (as many as 40,000 over the last 20 years) as well as another \$3 billion inside their country, building both dams and schools.

But the question front and centre on the mind of every Afghan since 15 August is what and whether this friendship is really worthwhile if Afghan nationals are being refused visas, even for a short stay?

Other nations like Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Qatar, the US, Canada, Germany, the UK and other nations have welcomed Afghan refugees since 15 August. Even Pakistan, which has had a bitter relationship with Afghanistan, has accepted many thousands of Afghans streaming in. So why has India repeatedly turned them away?

It seems there are no answers to this question. An Economic Times report citing an RTI request on how many Afghan nationals were given e-visas after Kabul fell to the Taliban on 15 August - when stamped visas were cancelled for fear that Afghan passports would fall into Taliban or Pakistani hands - has come up short.

Biden's terrorism complacency - US must act now to counter threats

The United States may have left Afghanistan, but the war against Islamic terrorism has not left us.

During a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Colin Kahl testified that the terrorist group Islamic State Khorasan (ISIS-K) could develop the capability to attack the American homeland in the next six to 12 months.?

ISIS-K is the same terrorist group that killed 13 United States service members and over a hundred innocent Afghans at Hamid Karzai International Airport in August 2021 during our chaotic withdrawal from



Afghanistan. Kahl also testified that al Qaeda, the group responsible for the devastating attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, could develop the capability to attack us here at home in a year or two.?? Make no mistake,

President Biden's catastrophic withdrawal from Afghanistan has put America and the world in grave danger. However, such a move is nothing new as this is a repeat of history from the Obama-Biden

administration's disastrous withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq in 2011, which led to the rise of the ISIS caliphate and a new wave of brutal attacks both regionally and across the world.?

With the creation of the ISIS caliphate, ISIS militants trained foreign fighters and created a propaganda network that inspired terrorists to carry out attacks across Europe and on American soil.

Radical Islam is again on the march.?

In Afghanistan, the Biden administration continues to claim the United States maintains an "over-the-horizon

counterterrorism" capability in Afghanistan that can prevent the rise of radical Islam. However, they don't bother to identify what neighboring countries we are working with or who are our partners on the ground helping us develop intelligence. Never mind would these countries allow us to access, base and overfly our intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platforms. How effective can this "over-the-horizon counterterrorism" be if the Pentagon is now saying that we are in danger of an attack, "somewhere between six and 12 months"?



Yogi Adityanath's Expanding Hold Over **BJP** Ahead Of Election

Yogi Adityanath, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, is now so vaunted within his party that it appears the BJP's duo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah is expanding into a trinity to include the saffron robe-wearing leader from Uttar Pradesh who is seeking re-election.

At the meeting yesterday of the BJP's national executive - its senior decision-making body - Adityanath was originally scheduled to deliver virtually his presentation on preparations for the election, but, sources say, he was phoned by party President JP Nadda and invited to not just be present in person, but deliver the session's political resolution. This is a huge privilege conferred at the gathering since the resolution, which outlines the BJP's mission statement by outlining the schemes and plans that will shape the party's governance, is watched closely by the BJP's ideological mentor, the RSS. In 2017 and 2018, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, among the party's veteran leaders from UP, delivered the resolution, an acknowledgement of his stature. Yogi Adityanath has now eclipsed Rajnath Singh entirely as the leader with real flex from UP as well as its top leader from the Thakurs, the caste that the Defence Minister also belongs to. Incumbent Chief Ministers of other poll-bound states including Uttarakhand and Goa which will

vote along with UP shared their plans online.

The other leader asked to be present in person was Bhupender Yadav, the union Environment Minister, who flew back from the climate summit in Glasgow after being asked to address the press conference held after the national executive session.

So how did Yogi, who is sui generis as a leader and who does not come from the RSS school of swayamsevaks (cadre) and pracharaks (communicators), now enjoy the unreserved backing of the Sangh (perspective leaders like Sushma Swaraj who was not from the Sangh were accepted but could only go so far as leaders). The foreground of the RSS' total acceptance of Yogi is that he now a totemic figure for the Sangh cadre - prepared to up the ante in maximalist majoritarian politics. After all, in terms of optics, a saffron-wearing monk ruling the country's most politically significant state, is a statement-making visual. The primacy that Yogi Adityanath was allowed yesterday proves that he has been able to put behind him, at least as far as the Sangh is concerned, the disastrous handling of the second wave which was marked by the grisly sight of bodies floating down the Ganga, a pointer to the breakdown of the primitive health system in UP. At the time, senior BJP leaders including a union minister, had publicly criticized the issue. This was when Dattatreya Hosabale,

Sangh General Secretary and the RSS CEO, rushed to Lucknow and organised a lunch with the Chief Minister and his deputy, Keshav Prasad Maurya, to sort out their differences.

Hosabale spent four days in Lucknow collating feedback on Yogi Adityanath's administration; the conclusion was that Adityanath alone could be counted on to deliver a decisive victory in the state. There was prevarication about a cabinet reshuffle as Yogi Adityanath resisted pressure from the central party leadership to include certain leaders; the cabinet was finally reshaped two months later, bearing Yogi Adityanath's imprint. Amit Shah's recent public endorsement of Yogi Adityanath as the rerun Chief Ministerial face stems from this Sangh view. On October 29, Amit Shah said publicly in UP, "If you want Modi as the Prime Minister in 2024, you must vote for Yogi as Chief Minister." This index-linking of Yogi and Modi's prospects is significant. UP's 80 parliamentary seats are key to deciding who becomes PM, but to bracket Yogi Adityanath with Narendra Modi is extraordinary. What has impelled the change is that Yogi Adityanath has come a long way from the horrific handling of the second wave as the man with a plan. He has changed the conversation so much that even the Opposition in UP makes no mention of the

Covid missteps, even in a desultory way. Yogi has ensured that the issues that he is comfortable with - Ram Mandir, Kabristans (burial grounds) and the lack of funding for them, and a grandiose warning of surgical strikes on the Taliban - are the issues to be debated in the UP elections.

Even the grotesque running over of four farmers by a minister's car in October and the arrest of the minister's son has been defused by Yogi Adityanath (four others were killed in retaliation violence including BJP workers and supporters). He initially used all his powers to prevent Opposition leaders like Priyanka Gandhi Vadra from being able to visit the families of the farmers who were killed. That may have been a PR disaster, but the Chief Minister rebounded by ensuring that special treatment being given to the minister's arrested son was stopped. More importantly, he used trusted aides from the Goraknath mutt or sect of which he is the head priest to reach out to the protesting farmers via their leader, Rakesh Tikait. This measure was crucial in dialling down the tension; Tikait said funerals and compensation should not be politicised. In the farm belt of Western UP, where the BJP could have been stung badly by the long-running protests against three new farm laws, the sting has been taken out of the farmer agitation by deft politics.

Is India Really Ready For the Next Big Outbreak?



Did India's political leaders learn anything from the deadly second wave of Covid-19? Hospitals in the capital, New Delhi, are once again overwhelmed with patients and the health authorities don't have beds for them. The disease has changed - dengue, not coronavirus - but the dysfunction remains the same.

For the country that wants to be the pharmacy to the world, its own health system is notoriously bad. With some of the lowest government spending of any nation, public hospitals are overcrowded and inaccessible. The multitude of private facilities are out of reach for most citizens. India's courts were forced to intervene earlier this year to address the dangerous inequities in hospital oxygen supplies, while state and federal authorities fought among themselves over procurement and citizens died in the back of autorickshaws gasping for breath.

The pandemic pushed many into serious debt to access health care, with families forced to sell assets, jewelry and even livestock to pay hospital bills. Even before Covid, India's out-of-pocket medical expenses were among the world's highest, accounting for about 60% of total health expenditure. Public health spending is less than 2% of gross domestic product, compared to 5.4% in China and a global average of nearly 10%, according to World Bank data. Researchers at Azim Premji University found the virus pushed an additional 230 million people - more than the entire population of Brazil - below the poverty line, with worrying increases in malnutrition and hunger.

The first warning signs that it would be a bad dengue season came in late August, when a hospital in Firozabad in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh reported a surge in deaths from a "mystery fever." But it was no mystery; it was mostly dengue and scrub typhus.



Celebrating Big 40th Miss india New York 2022

Panache entertainment

in association with IFC presents



*Miss india New York 2022
Miss Teen India New York 2022
Mrs India New York 2022
Pre Teen New York 2022*



Registration is open now

Contact : Nishibahl 917-992-0076

Shilpa Jhurani 631-356-3655

There's An \$80 Billion Hole In India's Climate Pledge

When it comes to saving the planet, the ambition of India's reach is praiseworthy. The challenge lies in the weakness of its grasp.

After emphasizing for years that a pathway to going green was more important than a deadline, India surprised delegates at the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow by announcing a net zero goal for emissions by 2070. More onerous than that longer-term commitment is the intention to use non-fossil-fuel sources for half of its energy needs by 2030. It's a daunting target. The share of renewables in the country's current energy mix is only 12%. Besides, the third-largest emitter would guzzle 2.5 trillion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually by 2030, almost double what it required at the start of the decade.

Still, the world's lowest-cost solar and second-lowest-cost wind producer can deliver on its

pledge, provided a \$6 trillion (\$80 billion) hole in the heart of the country's power system can be filled.

That's the quantum of accumulated financial liabilities at India's electricity distribution companies, or discoms. This large overhang crimps their ability to pay on time, forcing them to run up operational debt to electricity suppliers and transmission firms. According to the most recent government data, discoms' payment arrears are now nearly \$14 billion, almost a fifth of which are claims of renewable power producers.

In most of India's 28 states, these utilities are controlled by local governments. A 22.3% "technical and commercial loss" - euphemism for free electricity to farmers and power theft - means that the distribution firms never quite manage to find their footing, despite several restructuring attempts. Their shaky financial

position hurts generators, including clean-energy firms. Many discoms now have outstanding dues of between six and 12 times their monthly bills. Without reforming this bankrupt industry, India will struggle to meet its bold target of raising non-fossil-fuel generation capacity - including hydroelectric and nuclear power - to 500 gigawatts by 2030, up from roughly 150 gigawatts now.

Ads by But that's easier said than done. During last year's Covid-19 lockdown, the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi provided \$17 billion in emergency liquidity support to discoms to prevent them from defaulting. Since New Delhi was loathe to ratchet up public debt, it relied on a couple of public-sector financiers to do the job. They borrowed and funneled the money to the utilities to pay suppliers - including the state-

owned NTPC Ltd., the country's No. 1 power producer.

However, the catch was that state governments had to guarantee the concessional loans taken by their discoms. According to ICRA Ltd., the Indian affiliate of Moody's Investors Service, seven states extended almost \$14 billion in such guarantees. Technically, these are contingent liabilities, though in practice they're proving to be very real. Recently, when power distributors in three states couldn't pay their arrears to NTPC, the Reserve Bank of India intervened and deducted money from their governments' accounts at the RBI.

This is a pass-the-parcel game, where a higher branch of the government lends to entities controlled by a lower branch, and then gets bills of its own producer paid. Private-sector investors, who must do the heavy lifting for India to hit its

clean-energy goals, won't be getting these favors: They will have to run around to get paid even as state politicians threaten to renegotiate long-term power purchase agreements.

How then to reform discoms? Better software and demand-management systems may boost their ability to absorb renewables, as Sumant Sinha, chairman of ReNew Energy Global Plc, one of India's biggest producers of clean electricity, told Bloomberg News last month. However, efficiency gains alone won't address the problem of being stuck with older vintages of more expensive power purchase deals. "Utilities which enjoy superior contracts will have cheaper power - it has less to do with management skills," says energy analyst Rahul Tongia at the New Delhi-based Centre for Social and Economic Progress.

When misinformation masquerades as medical advice

Doctors wield enormous power over people's lives because they have a monopoly on the knowledge of diseases and their appropriate treatment. Needless to say, such power must be exercised with great responsibility, particularly when on primetime television. But on several occasions, in the ill-considered debates around health that are watched by millions every night, prudence takes a backseat, and alarmist soundbites get preferential airplay. Things have come to a head with the



discussions and Rajkumar). This time, one was pronouncements following the inundated by anxious queries recent, unfortunate demise of a not only from laypersons, but young actor (Puneeth also from some non-cardiologist

physician colleagues: Am I at high risk of having a heart attack just because I am Indian? I have been exercising regularly; should I stop till I get a CT scan done? Many of these questions have clear answers that are based on good quality medical research. It may be worth addressing three of these, both in order to allay anxiety, and to set the record straight. First, are you prone to having a heart attack just because you are an Indian? Researchers have known for some time now that South Asians (Indians,

Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans) with heart attacks are on the average five years younger than those with heart attacks from other parts of the world. This is often cited as evidence of a "genetic" predisposition, as if we are fated to suffer heart attacks at a young age just because we are Indian. However, there are two good explanations for this finding that have nothing to do with an inherent predisposition. The first has to do with population structure.



India needs a new, integrated approach to Eurasia

C Raja Mohan writes: The time has come for it to begin a strategic conversation with Europe on Eurasian security. This will be a natural complement to the fledgling engagement between India and Europe on the Indo-Pacific. Delhi's Indo-Pacific strategy has acquired political and institutional traction, thanks to intensive Indian diplomacy in recent years. It must now devote similar energy to the development of a "Eurasian" policy. If the Indo-Pacific is about Delhi's new maritime geopolitics, Eurasia involves the recalibration of India's continental strategy. This week's consultations in Delhi on the crisis in Afghanistan among the region's top security policymakers, following the US withdrawal, is part of developing a Eurasian strategy. National Security Advisor Ajit Doval has invited his counterparts from Pakistan, Iran, Central Asia, Russia, and China to join this discussion on Wednesday. Pakistan's Moeed Yusuf has declined to join. It is not yet clear whether China will attend. Pakistan's reluctance to engage with India on Afghanistan reveals Delhi's persisting problem with Islamabad in shaping a new

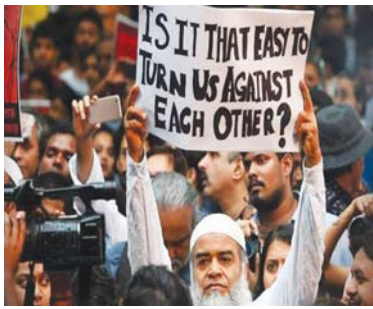
Eurasian strategy. But it also reinforces the urgency of an Indian strategy to deal with Eurasia. After years of self-doubt, Delhi has clinched the internal debate on the Indo-Pacific and has made it integral to India's foreign and security policies. Given its novelty and strategic salience, the Quad or the Quadrilateral forum that brings India together with Australia, Japan and the US, looms large over the Indo-Pacific debate. But Delhi now has a mix of other important unilateral, bilateral, minilateral, and multilateral initiatives in the Indo-Pacific. As in the Indo-Pacific, so in Eurasia, there is no shared international understanding of what constitutes the region. Among those who study the geography of the earth's landmass and oceans, there are agreed definitions of the Indo-Pacific and Eurasia. If the Indo-Pacific describes the long stretch of tropical waters from the east coast of Africa to the central Pacific, Eurasia is the name of a tectonic plate that lies under much of what we know as Europe and Asia. But the trouble begins when it comes to the political geography of Eurasia. In Russia's definition, Eurasia covers the former territories of the Soviet Union, which collapsed in 1991. In other words, it is about Russia's political claim to a sphere of influence in its "near abroad". Then there are various

older usages like "inner Asia" and "Central Asia" that cover parts of the region. Given the deep connection between Muslim Central Asia and West Asia, some prefer the term "Greater Middle East" to describe parts of this region. For Delhi, it makes sense to use the broadest possible definition of Eurasia in reimagining the region. The most important development in Eurasia today is the dramatic rise of China and its growing strategic assertiveness, expanding economic power and rising political influence. Beijing's muscular approach to the long and disputed border with Bhutan and India, its quest for a security presence in Tajikistan, the active search for a larger role in Afghanistan, and a greater say in the affairs of the broader sub-Himalayan region are only one part of the story. As the world's second-largest economy, China's commercial influence is felt across the world. Physical proximity multiplies China's economic impact on the inner Asian regions. The impressive expansion of China's Belt and Road initiative across central Asia and Russia, onto the shores of the Atlantic, and Europe's growing economic interdependence with China have added to Beijing's powerful

leverages in Eurasia. These leverages, in turn, were reinforced by a deepening alliance with Russia that straddles the Eurasian heartland. Russia's intractable disputes with Europe and America have increased Moscow's reliance on Beijing. Amidst mounting challenges from China in the Indo-Pacific maritime domain, Washington has begun to rethink its strategic commitments to Eurasia. The US withdrawal from Afghanistan is just the beginning of a long-overdue redefinition of US global strategic priorities. Even Europe, which has seen a massive deployment of US military resources since the Second World War, is not immune to the inevitable rearrangement of the US military's global disposition. Washington and Brussels are now in the middle of an important debate on how to rebalance the trans-Atlantic responsibilities for Europe's collective defence. Whether defined as "burden-sharing" in Washington or "strategic autonomy" in Brussels, Europe must necessarily take on a larger regional Eurasian security role. More broadly, regional powers are going to reshape Eurasia. India has certainly dealt with Eurasia's constituent spaces separately over the decades. What Delhi now needs is an

integrated approach to Eurasia. Like the Indo-Pacific, Eurasia is new to India's strategic discourse. To be sure, there are references to India's ancient civilisational links with Eurasia. The collaboration between the Sangha and the Shreni in the Buddhist era produced lasting interaction between the two regions. India's inward orientation after the decline of Buddhism did not stop the flow of Central Asian forces into the subcontinent. The arrival of the British in India and the consolidation of the Raj as a territorial entity in the subcontinent saw the outward projection of India's influence into Central Asia. British rivalry with Russia during the Great Game in the 19th and early 20th centuries put Eurasian geopolitics at the top of undivided India's security agenda. The Partition of the subcontinent and India's physical disconnection from inner Asia, however, cut India off from Eurasian geopolitics. Overcoming the geographic limitation - represented by the Pakistan barrier - will be central to an expanded Indian role in Eurasian geopolitics. While there are many elements to an Indian strategy towards Eurasia, three of them stand out.

The truth about radicalisation in India



The claim by the Indian agencies of having busted ISI terror modules has led G S Bajpai and Ankit Kaushik to believe that "the threat of radicalisation in India is pervasive and increasing exponentially" ('Before they cross the line', IE, October 29). The situation, according to them, is quite serious and demands a policy response from the government. We have, however, seen multiple terror cases brought by the security agencies that have failed to stand in the courts - often after years of the accused being incarcerated under the UAPA. It is, therefore, not wrong to expect experts to examine the claims by the state agencies with scepticism. That aside, the authors' concern should not be brushed aside. Radicalisation of minds is a reality in India.

There are different kinds of radicals in our midst: Believers in the dictatorship of the proletariat replacing multiparty democracy, or in the idea of a world ruled by Sharia or in the thought of India being a land primarily of Hindus, with others having lesser rights.

The challenge is to describe the Indian reality of radicalisation. It appears that the writers hold the belief propagated by the agencies - that the sources of radicalisation lie outside the boundaries of India, ISIS or al Qaeda being most prominent. Speaking plainly, when we look at radicalisation from this lens, we tend to focus on Muslims. Looking at a government-sanctioned research project to understand the phenomenon of radicalisation in India led by Bajpai himself, one finds that his assumption is not very different. For example, "the study will be conducted in four states like Maharashtra, Assam, Kerala and Jammu and Kashmir." One can only guess the religious profile of the 75 radicalised individuals to be sampled from these states.

No Ram Rajya yet



Denials, drama and massive publicity campaigns have become the weapons that the Prime Minister uses against all criticism of his governance, so why should his chief ministers not follow his lead?

It was the images from Ayodhya this Diwali that inadvertently highlighted for me the flaws of politics and governance in the 'new India'. Image one was of the Chief Minister in a saffron turban that matched his ascetic's robes standing on the banks of the Saryu and announcing proudly that this year nine lakh 'diyas' would light up the banks of the river. And, he added with a smug smile, another three lakh 'diyas' would be lit in the temples of this city that Hindus have for centuries believed was Ram's capital in times of antiquity. Next on my TV screen came images of thousands of flickering clay lamps and psychedelic lasers lighting up the moonless sky. An awestruck celebrity anchor declared that this event would make it into the 'Guenis Book of Records'. Later, on social media, 'old' India surfaced in images of what happened after the lights dimmed and the TV reporters left. As the clay oil lamps started to sputter out, barefoot women and children crept furtively around collecting what oil they could in plastic bottles. The reporter who took the pictures said that he had seen this happen year after year ever since the 'ascetic' who has ruled Uttar Pradesh for the past five years decided that his legacy would be to make Ayodhya a major tourist attraction. In pursuit of this aim,

he is seen in Ayodhya every Diwali bowing deeply to actors dressed as Ram, Lakshman and Sita, and has tried every year to increase the number of 'diyas' on the banks of the Saryu. It is as if he wants to trick the people of Uttar Pradesh into believing that Ram Rajya is already here. This year he has seemed especially keen to use melodrama and an advertising blitzkrieg to create this impression in case there are those who remember the things he continues to be in denial about. He has never admitted that at the height of Covid's brutal second wave, desperate people abandoned dead loved ones in the Ganga or buried them in shallow graves on its banks because they could not afford proper last rites. When questioned about this, Yogi's answer has always been that there are Hindu communities who traditionally do this. I have not seen an interview in which he has been asked why there were queues outside cremation grounds and why pyres burned all night, but if he was asked, he would probably deny that any such thing happened. Just as he has always denied that people died in hospitals for want of oxygen, beds and medicine.

Denials, drama and massive publicity campaigns have become the weapons that the Prime Minister uses against all criticism of his governance, so why should his chief ministers not follow his

lead? In fairness to Narendra Modi, it must be said that these weapons have worked so well that Opposition leaders have taken to copying him. Those who lead the pathetic rump that is left of the once-mighty Congress party routinely ensure these days that TV cameras follow them when they visit temples. And, Arvind Kejriwal made sure that the Diwali pooja he performed in his home was televised live, and urged the people of Delhi to pray with him. Modi has succeeded in writing the rules of what he likes to call 'new India', but the real question is whether it is possible to conceal old India's old problems beneath the gloss and glitter of illusory change and melodrama?

Polls say that unemployment continues to be a huge problem, and it will continue to be a problem because the economy is still stumbling along rather than roaring ahead. The Prime Minister's acolytes point out with reverence and awe that he has announced all the reforms needed to move the economy away from stagnant socialism. But we will not see India really change until there is serious administrative reform. If massive publicity campaigns can be organised overnight, why is it so hard to change administrative

procedures that are colonial, cumbersome and obsolete? Modi's promises of change are many. But where are those smart cities promised seven years ago? His new promise is that every Indian home will have clean drinking water by the next general election. How will this be achieved? This column has often praised the Swachh Bharat campaign, and it is remarkable that open defecation has become socially unacceptable, but to say that India has become free of this ancient habit is not true. Swachh Bharat should include sanitary living conditions, so why does garbage continue to rot in public places? Why do human beings continue to be sent into filthy sewers to clean them without protective clothing or the right tools? Eradicating manual scavenging should be an essential part of Swachh Bharat, and yet it finds almost no mention in it.

No matter how many 'diyas' light up the banks of the Saryu and how many temples we build in Ram's ancient capital city, we cannot fool people into believing that Ram Rajya is already here. Beneath the surface of the shiny new India that we see in the unending publicity drives, still exists an older India that has been unable to deal with basic problems.



The ONLY temple in the world outside India
dedicated to Shri Shani Maharaj

Shri SHANI DEV Mandir, New York

Sarvamangala Shri SANEESWARA Temple, New York

*Regular Poojas' and
Homams' are conducted on
daily basis:*

Special Poojas:

- + Sri Saneeswara
homam
- + Sri Saneeswara -
parikara pooja
- + Sri Saneeswara
harati
- + Sri Navagraha Homa
- + Poornima: vrata
Pooja
- + Pradosham Pooja
- + Sri Sankatahara
chaturthi Pooja
- + Sri Satyanarayana
Vratha
- + Birthdays / Wed-
dings / Upanayanam &
More... ..



**1616 Hillside Avenue, Temple Suites
New Hyde Park NY 11040
Ph: 718 740 9400 / 516 358 9400
Email: temple.navagraha@gmail.com**

Temple Hours: 8.00 am to 9.00 pm

*The Temple entrance is in the western side parking lot behind Hot Breads &
Maharajas in New Hyde Park NY*

Functions of the space:

*Temple / Community Events / Senior Social Day Care Center /
Art & Music School / Library / Spiritual Lounge / Gift Shop*

www.NavagrahaUSA.com



We need greater global cooperation

Pratap Bhanu Mehta writes: In new era of great power rivalry, countries are choosing to preserve national supremacy over global problem-solving. This will have consequences.

Our thinking about the international system is focussed on a new era of great power competition. An assertive China is seeking to refashion the international order and exercise greater regional hegemony. The United States, in turn, will seek to deny China that privilege. Recently, Secretary Antony Blinken outlined the US approach to China: "Competitive when it should be, collaborative when it can be, and adversarial when it must be." This is a very smart formulation. But at a high level of abstraction, this pretty much describes the approach of every country in the world to this geopolitical moment. The big question is whether the competitive and adversarial dynamics are now so deep that the space for "collaboration" is diminishing fast. Two dynamics were supposed to counteract the risks of great power competition. The first was global economic interdependence. Global trade has rebounded to its pre-pandemic levels. Even China-US trade and investment ties remain robust. The American financial sector has still not given up on China. But it is hard to shake off the sense that the logic of interdependence is now under severe ideological stress. Interdependence has not led to greater convergence on political values or a more open global political order. The domestic political economy in China has shifted to "dual circulation", while the success

of Biden's plans hinges on reversing significant aspects of globalisation. There is now bipartisan consensus in the US that China needs to be contained; just as China is convinced that the US will not only not tolerate China's further rise, it will still actively undermine its political system and civilisational claims. In much of the world, the full psychological force of the pandemic is yet to kick in. This will encourage a kind of wariness about excessive interdependence, even if hedged with sufficient diversification of sources. The fact of interdependence will continue by dint of its historical momentum, but it has lost its ideological power, and will crumble. The second dynamic counteracting competition was the idea that common challenges like climate change, the pandemic and the risks posed by technology will foster greater global cooperation. A lot of global institutional infrastructure created the illusion of greater cooperation. But there are increasing doubts whether any of this global infrastructure will achieve its aims. As Bruno Maçães has often forcefully pointed out, most recently in his provocative *Geopolitics at the End of Time: From the Pandemic to the Climate Crisis*, almost all the global crises that should have been occasions for global cooperation have become the sites for intensifying global competition. Eventually, Covid-19 vaccines will get

to the rest of the world. But it is hard to convince anyone that most countries of the world were willing to treat the pandemic as a global public health crisis, where global monitoring, allocation and production decisions were governed by global health considerations. The shift in the climate change discourse is about intensifying technological competition and maintaining national economic supremacy, rather than solving a global problem. Optimists could argue that it is precisely this competitive dynamic that spurs innovation, and will eventually generate solutions that will benefit everyone.

But this optimism is wearing thin. It is not entirely clear that all the innovations induced by this competitive dynamic will, in fact, limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Second, it leaves the question of a modicum of justice in the international order entirely unresolved. Associating "justice" with the international order might seem like an oxymoron. But a lot of the positions of the West are about preserving its developmental hegemony in a context where that hegemony is no longer tenable. We have also learnt over the last couple of decades that the international system, and all global public goods, including security, can be made extremely vulnerable even by small groups carrying a sense of grievance.

What we need to fix our judicial system



For much of last month, the Indian public has observed with interest the criminal proceedings that followed the arrest of Aryan Khan, son of filmstar Shah Rukh Khan. When the Bombay High Court finally granted bail to Aryan, millions of Indians learnt that grant of bail by a court does not automatically entitle the accused to an immediate release, unless the bail order is deposited in a physical letterbox installed outside the Arthur Road prison. The box is opened four times a day and Khan's lawyers missed the last deadline because of which his son had to spend an extra night in jail. People were astonished to learn that a "bail box" can stand between jail and the freedom of an Indian citizen.

Post this episode, Justice D Y Chandrachud, who heads the e-Committee of the Supreme Court, commented at a public event that the delay in communicating bail orders has to be addressed on a war footing. In September, his fellow judges on the bench had taken suo moto cognisance of the issue of non-release of prisoners after grant of bail and directed the creation of FASTER (Fast and Secured Transmission of Electronic Records) System, which would transmit e-authenticated copies of the interim orders, stay orders, bail orders and record of proceedings to the duty holders. The court was entirely silent on the fact that the Phase II document for the e-courts project, published in 2014, had announced an ambitious but unfulfilled plan to allow for the transmission of information between key institutions in the criminal justice system.

The "bail-jail" connectivity issue in the Aryan Khan case is but a symptom of a much deeper problem with the structure, management and accountability of the e-Committee, which is responsible for steering the e-courts project. A budget of Rs 935 crore and Rs 1,670 crore was approved by the government for Phase I and II of the project, respectively, and the e-Committee, headed by a Supreme Court judge, decides how to spend it. Yet, there is relatively little to show for all this money. Many courts do have computers and it is easier to get case information for ordinary citizens (provided they can read English) but why is it that a basic functionality, like electronic transmission of orders between the courts and the prisons, escaped the attention of the e-Committee, despite being mentioned in its own vision documents? This could be because the e-Committee is not accountable to anybody. Neither the Comptroller Auditor General (CAG) nor the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Lok Sabha has reviewed its handling of the e-courts project, despite the substantial expenditure of public funds. The Department of Justice (DoJ), which works under the Ministry of Law and Justice, after much pressure from the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Law and Justice, commissioned two timid, if not limited, evaluations of the project to the same Delhi-based think-tank.

Afghan soil must not be used for terrorism: Doval, NSAs of 7 nations adopt declaration



(News Agencies) - could impact regional security, Afghan territory must not be used for terror activities, a joint declaration adopted by eight countries asserted on Wednesday. The declaration was a result of the Third Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan held in New Delhi. Hosted by National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval, the Dialogue witnessed participation from Iran, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. New Delhi had also invited China and Pakistan to join the talks, but the two countries chose not to accept the invitation. In addition to specifying that the situation in Afghanistan

the declaration goes on to call for an open and inclusive government in Kabul. The declaration clearly specifies that Afghan territory must not be used for "sheltering, training, planning or financing" terrorist activities. It also condemns the recent terrorist attacks in Kunduz, Kandahar and Kabul. Without naming Pakistan, the declaration goes further to state that all eight countries support non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs. In his opening remarks, NSA Doval reportedly said, "We all have been keenly watching the developments in that country. These have important implications

not only for the people of Afghanistan but also for its neighbours and the region." "This is the time for close consultation amongst us, greater cooperation and interaction and coordination among the regional countries," he added. The eight countries also expressed "deep concern" over the suffering of the Afghan people following the Taliban takeover in August of this year. They also underlined the need to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people. In addition, the declaration calls for "collective cooperation against the menace of radicalization, extremism, separatism and drug trafficking" in the region.

Opium cultivation continues even as Taliban vows crackdown on Afghanistan's drug trade



(News Agencies) - The Taliban's move to eradicate the drug trade in Afghanistan and ban opium production has faced challenges on several fronts. With the country being one of the biggest producers of opium and a lack of alternative livelihood, farmers continue to cultivate opium despite the Taliban's warning. The illicit opium trade is intertwined with Afghanistan's economy, which is in turmoil. However, the production of opium threatens to deter foreign aid in Afghanistan, which has been facing a major economic and humanitarian crisis since the takeover by the Taliban. Soon after coming to power on August 15, Taliban spokesman

Zabiullah Mujahid said the new government won't allow drug trade in the country. He said, "We are against drugs and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is trying to eradicate the production of narcotics, but it is only possible when the whole world helps us in empowering the farmers and providing them with an alternative to earn their livelihood." An Afghan farmer, Abha Wali, told Aljazeera, "We grow poppy so that we can buy bread for the family to survive. No government has helped us. We don't have adequate water for other crops, so the poppy has become the only available option."

Invest in First Mortgages

**EARN 8-15%
ANNUALLY ON WELL
SECURED, SHORT TERM,
1ST MORTGAGE LOANS.
MONTHLY DIVIDENDS**

**Learn about Investment Opportunities
B-1 Business Visas
EB-5 Investor Visas
Hotel - Land - Business
Investment/Partner Opportunities
For details & disclosures**

WREAM

Whitestone Real Estate Asset Management Corp.
Phone: 917 612 3158 Email: whitesone1979@gmail.com

Real Estate Broker/Investor/Private Lender Since 2009



The first signs of global warming are now clearly visible. We urgently need to limit greenhouse gas emissions. Nothing and no-one will be spared from climate change. This warning is therefore to all people, all countries and, in particular, to the Belgian Council of Ministers who, on the weekend of March 20 and 21, will have to decide what action to take regarding essential measures linked to the Kyoto Protocol.



UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP



Fantastic!

Burgers-Lobster-Shakes

and a whole lot more

Sandwiches, Wraps, Salads, Kids' Meals

Order Online For
TAKE OUT OR DELIVERY
www.bethpageburgerbar.com

CATERING
On or Off Premises
Private Room Available

Open 7 Days a Week 11:30AM to 9:00PM

\$5⁰⁰ OFF

**ANY DINE-IN ORDER
\$30 OR MORE
MON-THURS ONLY**

With coupon only. Cannot combined with any other
coupon or special. Exp. 10/28/21.

BETHPAGE: 4011 Hempstead Turnpike
Right off the Route 135/Seaford Oyster Bay Expressway

516-597-5309

[illegible]

China to attend Pakistan's Troika Plus meet after skipping India's security dialogue on Afghanistan

(News Agencies) -China said on Wednesday that it will attend a meeting on Afghanistan convened by its all-weather ally Pakistan, after skipping a security dialogue hosted by India on the situation in the war-torn country, citing "scheduling reasons".

Pakistan will host senior diplomats from

Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here that "China supports Pakistan in hosting the extended troika meeting". "We support all efforts conducive for stability in Afghanistan to building up consensus in the world," he said, adding that China's special envoy to Afghanistan Yue Xiao Yong will attend the meeting hosted by Pakistan.

On Tuesday, Wang said that China would not attend the security dialogue on Afghanistan convened by India due to "scheduling reasons". He said China has notified the Indian side in reply.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on Thursday chaired an eight-nation dialogue in New Delhi which was attended by officials from Iran, Kazakhstan,

Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

All-weather allies China and Pakistan followed a coordinated policy after the Taliban took control of Afghanistan backing the Afghan militant group and getting international recognition for its interim government.



the US, China and Russia in Islamabad on Thursday to discuss the situation in neighbouring Afghanistan. The Troika Plus meeting will be attended by special representatives from all four countries, the Dawn newspaper reported.

Asked whether China would attend the meeting in Islamabad, Chinese Foreign

Chinese forces exercise near Taiwan in response to US visit

(News Agencies) -Chinese military forces are holding exercises near Taiwan in response to a visit by a US congressional delegation to the island. The drills in the area of the Taiwan Strait are a "necessary measure to safeguard national sovereignty," China's Defence Ministry said in the announcement Tuesday that gave no details on the timing, participants and location of the exercises.

It said the "joint war preparedness patrol" by the Eastern Theatre Command was prompted by the "seriously incorrect words and actions of relevant countries over the issue of Taiwan" and the actions of those advocating the self-governing island's independence.

The US has strong but informal relations with Taiwan, and tensions have been rising between the US and China over several issues including Hong Kong, the South China Sea, the coronavirus pandemic and trade. Details on the US delegation that reportedly arrived in Taiwan on Tuesday were not immediately available.

A Chinese Defence Ministry statement

from an unidentified spokesperson strongly condemned the visit, saying "no one should underestimate the firm determination of the People's Liberation Army to safeguard the Chinese people's national sovereignty and territorial integrity." China regards Taiwan as its own



territory to be annexed by military force if necessary. The sides split amid civil war in 1949 and, following a brief period of rapprochement, relations have grown increasingly tense under Taiwan's independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen. During China's National Day weekend in early October, China dispatched 149 military aircraft southwest of Taiwan in strike group formations, causing Taiwan to scramble aircraft and activate its air defence missile systems.

**TEXT AND
WHATEVER
JUST
DON'T
TEXT
AND**



STOPTEXTSSTOPWRECKS.ORG



WE THANK OUR CUSTOMERS FOR THEIR TRUST & LOYALTY

28 YEARS OF EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE



INDO US EXPRESS, INC.

HICKSVILLE, NEW YORK

WORLDWIDE COURIER  FREIGHT-FORWARDER

DOMESTIC & LOCAL DELIVERY

CALL US AT: 212-447-5720 or FAX 516-932-3750

ALTERNATE NUMBER: 347-538-7041

OR EMAIL US: INDOUSEXPRESS@GMAIL.COM

www.indousexpress.com

GREAT SERVICE, 7 DAYS A WEEK, 365 DAYS A YEAR!

AUTHORIZED AGENT FOR:

UPS - FedEx - DHL - USPS - Amazon

CALL ABOUT OUR SPECIAL RATES

TO & FROM INDIA/WORLDWIDE





US lifts travel restrictions for most European countries, opens doors

The US lifted restrictions on Monday on travel from a long list of countries including Mexico, Canada and most of Europe, allowing tourists to make long-delayed trips and family members to reconnect with loved ones after more than a year and a half apart because of the pandemic.

(News Agencies) -The US lifted restrictions on Monday on travel from a long list of countries including Mexico, Canada and most of Europe, allowing tourists to make long-delayed trips and family members to reconnect with loved ones after more than a year and a half apart because of the pandemic. Starting Monday, the U.S. is accepting fully vaccinated travelers at airports and land borders, doing away with a COVID-19 restriction that dates back to the Trump administration. The new rules allow air travel from previously restricted countries as long as the traveler has proof of vaccination and a negative COVID-19 test. Land travel from Mexico and Canada will require proof of vaccination but no test. Airlines are expecting more travellers from Europe and

elsewhere. Data from travel and analytics firm Cirium showed airlines are increasing flights between the United Kingdom and the U.S. by 21% this month over last month. The change will have a profound effect on the borders with Mexico and Canada, where traveling back and forth was a way of life until the pandemic hit and the U.S. shut down nonessential travel. Malls, restaurants and Main Street shops in U.S. border towns have been devastated by the lack of visitors from Mexico. On the boundary with Canada, cross-border hockey rivalries were community traditions until being upended by the pandemic. Churches that had members on both sides of the border are hoping to welcome parishioners they haven't seen during Covid-19

shutdown. Loved ones have missed holidays, birthdays and funerals while nonessential air travel was barred, and they are now eager to reconnect. River Robinson's American partner wasn't able to be in Canada for the birth of their baby boy 17 months ago because of pandemic-related border closures. She was thrilled to hear the U.S. is reopening its land crossings to vaccinated travelers. "I'm planning to take my baby down for the American Thanksgiving," said Robinson, who lives in St. Thomas, Ontario. "If all goes smoothly at the border I'll plan on taking him down as much as I can. Is crazy to think he has a whole other side of the family he hasn't even met yet." According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S.

Around 4 million US federal govt workers to be vaccinated by Nov 22



(News Agencies) -President Joe Biden is pushing forward with a massive plan to require millions of private sector employees to get vaccinated by early next year. But first, he has to make sure workers in his own federal government get the shot. About 4 million federal workers are to be vaccinated by Nov. 22 under the president's executive order. Some employees, like those at the White House, are nearly all vaccinated. But the rates are lower at other federal agencies, particularly those related to law enforcement and intelligence, according to the agencies and union leaders. And some resistant workers are digging in, filing lawsuits and protesting what they say is unfair overreach by the White House. The upcoming deadline is the first test of Biden's push to compel people to get vaccinated. Beyond the federal worker rule, another mandate will take effect in January aimed at around 84 million private sector workers, according to guidelines put out this past week. On Saturday, a federal appeals court in Louisiana temporarily halted the vaccine requirement for businesses with 100 or more workers. The administration says it is confident that the requirement will withstand legal challenges in part because its safety rules preempt state laws. "The president and the administration wouldn't have put these requirements in place if they didn't think that they were appropriate and necessary," Surgeon General Vivek Murthy said Sunday on ABC's "This Week." "And the administration is certainly prepared to defend them." If the mandates are a success, they could make the most serious dent in new coronavirus cases since the vaccine first became available, especially with the news this past week that children ages 5-11 can get the shot making an additional 64 million people eligible. But with two weeks remaining until the federal worker deadline, some leaders of unions representing the employees say that convincing the unvaccinated to change their mind is increasingly challenging.

8 dead in stampede at US music festival, 11 hospitalised with cardiac arrest

(News Agencies) -At least eight people were killed and many were injured in a crush during the opening night of the Astroworld music festival on Friday in Houston, officials said. Houston Fire Chief Samuel Peña confirmed the casualty figures at an early morning news conference outside NRG Park.

The crush occurred at around 9 or 9:15 p.m. when the crowd began to compress toward the front of the stage, CBS News



affiliate KHOU 11 News Houston said.

The fire department transported 17 people to hospitals, the channel said, adding 11 of those transported were in cardiac arrest.

The crush occurred when the crowd surged during a set by rapper Travis Scott, the Houston Chronicle said.

A crowd of 50,000 showed up for the two-day event, the paper added. The second day of the festival has been cancelled.

Obama hits Russia, China for lack of urgency on climate



(News Agencies) - Barack Obama expressed confidence at UN climate talks Monday that the Biden administration will ultimately get its \$555 billion climate package through Congress and faulted US rivals China and Russia for what he called a "dangerous lack of urgency" in cutting their own climate-wrecking emissions. "When it comes to climate, time really is running out," Obama told climate advocates. Though there has been progress since the historic 2015 Paris climate agreement "we are nowhere near where we need to be." His comments came as conference leaders acknowledged Monday that many key sticking points exist after a week of talks. A trust gap between rich and poor nations on climate change issues emerged when the negotiations went through a check of what's been accomplished and what's left to be done. Developing countries used versions of the word "disappointing" five times when leaders talked Monday about the progress to date. The UN climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland, is the former American president's first since he helped deliver the triumph of the 2015 Paris climate accord when nations committed to cutting fossil fuel and agricultural emissions fast enough to keep the Earth's warming below catastrophic levels of 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit). That celebration has faded and been replaced by worry. Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of the Paris accord. President Joe Biden put America back in as soon as he took office this year but U.S. efforts at fighting climate change were set back years by the Trump move. "1.5 C is on life support now, it's in ICU," said Alden Meyer, a long-time observer of climate talks with E3G, an environmental think tank. Obama's appearance on the sidelines of the talks sought to remind governments of the elation that surrounded the Paris accord and urge them to announce more immediate, concrete steps to put the 2015 deal into action. "The U.S. is back and in moving more boldly. The US is not alone," Obama said. Obama noted efforts by the United States - the world's second-worst climate polluter now after China - stalled when Trump pulled out of the climate accord. "I wasn't real happy about that," he admitted but added that optimism is required to save the planet. "There are times where I feel discouraged. There are times where the future seems somewhat bleak. There are times where I am doubtful that humanity can get its act together before it's too late," Obama said. "We can't afford hopelessness." Despite opposition within Biden's own Democratic party that has blocked the climate-fighting legislation, Obama said he was confident that some version of Biden's ambitious climate bill will pass in Congress in the next few weeks. "It will set the United States on course to meet its new climate targets," he said. And while in 2015, rapport between Obama administration negotiators and their Chinese counterparts was seen as paving the way to the global Paris accord, Obama on Monday criticized Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin for not joining other global leaders at the climate talks in Glasgow. "It was particularly discouraging to see the leaders of two of the world's largest emitters, China and Russia, decline to even attend the proceedings, and their national plans reflect what appears to be a dangerous lack of urgency," Obama said.

Mayor-Elect Eric Adams Launches Transition, Announces Leadership



New York, NY -- Mayor-elect Eric Adams launched his formal transition organization today as he prepares to lead New York City, naming key leadership and activating a Web site for applicants who want to join his administration.

"Day 1, my administration will be prepared to tackle the multiple crises facing New York, ready to fight crime, COVID, economic uncertainty and inequality while renewing the spirit of our great city," Mayor-elect Adams said. "Over the coming weeks, my transition team will turn my policy goals into actionable plans, recruit and vet talented candidates for senior positions, and absorb input from thought leaders, experts and everyday New Yorkers."

The Adams transition will be led by United Way of New York City CEO and President Sheena Wright and nine co-chairs who represent the breadth of diversity and talent in New York City, including top leaders from the worlds of government, labor, business and advocacy. Katie Moore is executive director of the transition. Meaghan Brown is chief operating officer. The full list of transition members will be announced soon.

The list of co-chairs is as follows:

Sheena Wright, President and CEO of United Way of New York City
 Kyle Bragg, President of 32BJ SEIU
 Steven Choi, Executive Director of One for Democracy
 Sharon Greenberger, President and CEO of YMCA of Greater New York
 David Lee, Chair of the League of Asian Americans of New York

Charles Phillips, Infor CEO
 Felix V. Matos Rodriguez, Chancellor of The City University of New York

Rich Maroko, President of the New York Hotel and Gaming Trades Council

Stephen Scherr, Goldman Sachs CFO

Darren Walker, President of the Ford Foundation

"Eric Adams has a clear vision for New York, and it is our job to ensure he has the tools to realize his goal of a safer, fairer, more prosperous city," Adams transition Chair Sheena Wright said. "Over the next seven weeks, we will task a dozen committees and dozens of committed experts and advocates with the essential work of preparing the Adams Administration to deliver for New Yorkers."

"As a proud New Yorker I'm humbled to serve one of the city's major foundations, and I'm honored to do my part to ensure that our city is successful under the leadership of our new Mayor," said Ford Foundation president Darren Walker. "I look forward to working with my co-chairs and the broader transition team to identify the highest level of leaders who will be committed to making New York City a place where there is less inequality and more opportunity for all New Yorkers."

"Eric Adams is the person to lead New York City at this pivotal moment. A product of our city's public schools and two-time CUNY graduate, Eric knows the necessity of a quality public education system that can prepare every city resident to contribute to our economy and thrive," CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez

said. "I know that as mayor, Eric will continue to fight for people like him who started without much, who are struggling now more than ever, and who need a city that works for them."

"Working people are excited about Eric's administration because they know he is one of them and understands their struggles," said Rich Maroko, President of the New York Hotel and Gaming Trades Council. "I am honored to help build the Adams Administration so that it can deliver on Eric's vision for workers, those who are struggling, and all New Yorkers who rely on their government to provide opportunity and hope."

"New Yorkers are inspired by Eric's story and his plans for New York-and I know he will be ready to lead on Day 1," said Kyle Bragg, President of 32BJ SEIU. "I am excited to get started and to help Eric make New York a safer, fairer, more prosperous city for all New Yorkers."

"Eric Adams personally understands what it is to face poverty, homelessness and bias-and has dedicated himself to helping those who are facing that today," said Steven Choi, Executive Director of One for Democracy. "I am excited to bring my background in fighting for social justice to help the Mayor-elect achieve his vision for our city and improve the lives of marginalized communities and all New Yorkers."

"I am honored to be helping Mayor-elect Adams prepare his administration to move New York City forward," Sharon Greenberger, President and CEO of YMCA of Greater New York, said.

Did Demonetisation fail or was it defeated?

After all, by some quirk of destiny, he had the best view of the before and after phases of demonetisation. In November 2016, as then Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, he knows about the months of preps that took place before November 8. On D-day, his office was one of the epicentres. Post note ban, through umpteen media briefings, he fronted the government's defence on the move and remonetising the economy. His first briefing was exactly one hour after PM Modi announced the note ban.

In 2018, he took charge of the RBI as Governor, barely a few months after the central bank said that as much as 99.3 per cent of the junked notes have returned to the banking system.

But RBI Governors are so close and yet so distant to India's populace. Close because every individual carries the signature of the RBI Governor on an Indian Rupee. Distant because RBI Governors are traditionally publicity-shy. So, the fine print of the note ban exercise and the aftermath that Das is aware of may never get known.

COUNTDOWN AND NOTE BAN D-DAY

At around 6 pm on November 8, I was at a Vijay Chowk lawn right across the parliament building when the news came that PM Modi would address the nation at 8 pm.

Two hours later, PM Modi sprang a huge surprise for everyone. Note ban was not on the list of umpteen wild guesses about the address that came up during the intervening two hours.

A couple of days later, I could piece together the events that led to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's



announcement.

I found note ban wasn't conceived in a day, and the RBI was not kept out of the loop as the Opposition had said in the aftermath.

The government and the RBI began discussing demonetisation in May 2016. At the start of November, the government decided that the time to strike had come. On November 7, the drawn-out plan kicked into action, and over the next 24 hours, things moved at breakneck speed.

On November 7, the Union government delivered an advisory note to the central bank's board for outlawing the high-denomination bills.

To discuss the advisory, the RBI Board, led by Urjit Patel, decided to meet in Delhi at 5:30 pm on November 8. The board had 10 members. But only eight of the 10 were present in the meeting. A ninth was abroad and a tenth was in the central bank's Mumbai headquarters, assigned to coordinate the immediate implementation of one of India's biggest-ever economic decisions.

Exactly at the same time, barely two km away in South Block, PM Modi had the entire Cabinet assembled and waiting. The then Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley, the lone man in the Cabinet who knew exactly what was on had left his North Block office at

5:25 pm after going through the arrangements for the post-announcement measures.

None of the ministers had cellphones -- following a decision introduced in July 2016 for Cabinet meetings. There was no circulated agenda for the meet.

Right after the RBI Board's unanimous nod, PM Modi reached his office and informed his Cabinet about the huge reform. The Cabinet reviewed the lone tabled agenda and Okayed it.

At 8.00 pm, PM Modi told India that 86 per cent of the money in circulation, adding up to Rs15.44 lakh crore, was no longer valid for transactions.

PLANNING BEGAN SIX MONTHS PRIOR

Top sources say that while the final push was a sprint, the planning for the ban was not casual or rushed.

Formal discussions on the proposal started in May 2016, and during the initial months, the then RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan, and a Deputy Governor used to fly down to Delhi on Fridays to meet with a team compiled by PM Modi from the PMO and the Finance Ministry at 6 pm. Some sources say Shaktikanta Das (Department of Economic Affairs) and then Finance Secretary Hasmukh Adhia were in that team. The two teams held detailed planning sessions to prepare for the consequences of the note ban.

The need for secrecy meant that the meeting minutes were not recorded.

Sources say that Dr Raghuram Rajan, who was RBI Governor till September 4, 2016, was part of the discussions between May and August. In September, Urjit Patel replaced him as RBI Governor.

On November 8, before the PM's address, blueprints,

ADVERTISEMENT



Happy Diwali & prosperous NewYear to all with best healthy & wealthy best wishes!



INDO US EXPRESS, INC.

**Worldwide Couriers / Freight Forwarders
Domestic Rush Delivery / Import / Export
Custom Clearance / Trading Consultant**

Gurinder Singh
CEO

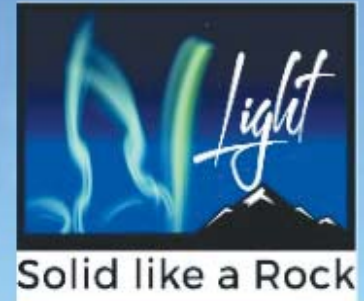
SALES OFFICE

224 West 30th St., #604, New York, NY 10001
Mail: P.O. Box 7304, Hicksville, NY 11802

Office: 212.447.5720 Fax: 516.932.3750
Delhi: 98.1849.0552
Mumbai: 92.2453.1807
New York: 347.538.7041

Visit US Online: www.indousexpress.com
Email: indousexpress@gmail.com

Insurance



**Are you paying too much for Auto,
Home, Business, Workman
Compensation, Contractors,
General Liability, E&O ?**

Call us today for complimentary analysis of your policy.



Sharanjit Singh Thind
Licensed P&C Insurance Broker/ Notary Public
(Service with Honesty & Smile, Since 2012)

Tel: 516-654-4488

insure@nlightfin.com www.nlightfin.com



We Spent a Year Investigating What the Chinese Army Is Buying. Here's What We Learned.

term to make those ambitions a reality.

Over the past year, I was part of a team of researchers at the Center for Security and Emerging Technology that sifted through 350 Chinese military equipment contracts related specifically to AI. The sample we analyzed is part of a larger, publicly available dataset of 66,000 procurement records published between April and November 2020.

Our just-published report, based entirely on open-source information, shows how China is already using artificial intelligence in its military strategy, as well as how it plans to acquire future AI capabilities. We found that the Chinese military is "intelligentizing" warfare by purchasing AI systems for all manner of applications, including autonomous vehicles, intelligence analysis, decision support, electronic warfare and cyber operations. At the same time, we found reason to be skeptical of the most ominous predictions about China's efforts to fully automate warfare through "doomsday"-like weapons.

Perhaps most importantly for U.S. policymakers, our investigation into the PLA's buying habits shows how Chinese progress in military AI is being driven, in part, by access to American technology and capital. Our report highlights the critical role U.S. companies play in supplying China with data,

software and funding. This points to serious shortcomings in the U.S. export control system, which wasn't built to screen the high volume of technology transfer and capital flows into China, and which struggles to distinguish between military and civilian purchasers. Even as the United States attempts to decouple supply chains from China when it comes to American goods, it also needs to consider new strategies to prevent American know-how from inadvertently powering China's technological advancements.

Procurement contracts show what the Chinese military wants to buy, what it's actually buying and from where. Some of the contracts we reviewed are mundane, documenting purchases of office supplies like toilet paper and staplers. More salient are the records showing that China is working to make its military more connected and autonomous in the immediate future. We found several instances in which PLA units were already buying commercial, off-the-shelf autonomous drones and AI-enabled surveillance software - in other words, ready-made AI tools that can be used right away.

Intelligent and autonomous vehicles, for example, accounted for more than a third of the contracts in our dataset. These include swarms of fixed-wing drones and rotorcraft, which could be used to saturate U.S.

or Taiwanese air defenses in a conflict over the island. Several PLA units seemed to be purchasing unmanned vehicles through "the Drone Network" - an online marketplace similar to eBay, but for military equipment. Notably, based on the public contracts in our dataset, China doesn't appear focused on lethal autonomous weapons or automated nuclear launch, as some have suggested. In fact, of the seven areas canvassed in our report, command and control systems and automated targeting software were purchased the least often - and most of these systems seem designed to support human decision-making processes, not to replace them outright. Like the United States, China's most promising AI applications so far seem to be for back-office tasks like intelligence analysis and predictive maintenance. Overall, while the U.S. military's annual budget still eclipses China's by \$500 billion, we estimate that the countries spend roughly the same amount on military AI, likely more than \$1.6 billion.

Our research also highlights that U.S. companies are inadvertently powering Chinese military advances in AI. The overwhelming majority of advanced computer chips at the heart of China's military AI systems are designed by U.S. firms like Intel, NVIDIA and Xilinx, and manufactured in Taiwan. We found that suppliers actually depicted NVIDIA-

branded processors in photos of their products, providing clear evidence of the role U.S. technology plays in powering China's advances. One company, which won a contract to supply chips for the PLA Strategic Support Force, even bought the domain "nvidiaapu.com."

Some Chinese suppliers make an entire business out of sourcing foreign data or components and reselling them to sanctioned Chinese defense companies and army units. Others partner with U.S. tech firms on AI research or buy ship-tracking data from U.S. satellite companies. Notably, some companies that supply the Chinese military with AI-based battle management and cybersecurity software are financed by U.S.-based venture capital companies.

Although China is working diligently to make its military supply chain more independent of the U.S. and free itself from reliance on Taiwan for semiconductors, industry leaders say it will likely be years before Beijing can achieve its dream of self-sufficiency.

The interdependence between the United States and China has been well-documented, but our report provides one of the clearest illustrations yet of how loopholes and shortfalls in the export control system are enabling the outflow of U.S. technical know-how to the PLA.

New York governor's race heats up, 1,600 miles away



this sunny city - some 1,600 miles from Manhattan - as they jostled for influence, jobs and endorsements.

It was hard to miss who was gunning for the biggest job of all: Gov. Kathy Hochul, Attorney General Tish James and de Blasio all arrived Wednesday and Thursday, each plotting out paths to their Democratic primary campaigns. The annual SOMOS conference has been one of the most important times on New York's political calendar for decades. The four-day junket is named for the nonprofit group that hosts it. SOMOS was founded in the late 1980s to foster the city and state's powerful Latino community.

"It's a really important event each year," de Blasio said before arriving. "It's actually where most of the leadership of this state get together and a lot of important work is done there that actually doesn't happen any place else." On the same flight as de Blasio was Hochul, who delivered remarks at a reception for pro-choice women's political organization Eleanor's Legacy. De Blasio also attended the soiree, and Hochul hosted her own event Friday afternoon. James - whose bombshell report on Gov. Andrew Cuomo's alleged misconduct prompted his resignation - swung by Eleanor's Legacy reception, after striking out on her own Thursday with an event at a San Juan elementary school.

Not campaigning in Puerto Rico? Gubernatorial aspirant and city Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, who has a fear of flying. By Thursday afternoon, the scene in San Juan coalesced around the Royal Sonesta Hotel where hordes of people milled about on the resort's lush patios. Through the backslapping, elbow grabbing, and cheek kissing ran a steady flow of rum, wine and Medalla, the local beer of choice. But the real schmoozing tends to start later in the night at El San Juan bar in the same oceanside cluster of resorts.



COP26 Won't Keep the World to 1.5°C. Have the Talks Failed?

Two new reports released on the sidelines of the conference suggest the commitments here at COP aren't doing much to move the needle. Research from Climate Action Tracker and the United Nations Environment Programme both show the world is on track to warm 2.7°C over preindustrial levels under current policies. That takes into account new policies announced since the start of COP, like the U.S. climate spending included in the bipartisan infrastructure bill that passed Congress on Nov. 5.

That's an alarming level of warming that would almost certainly trigger irreversible tipping points altering life as we know it-not to mention nearly twice the Paris Agreement target of limiting temperature rise to about 1.5°C. But there's more nuance to the findings than the topline numbers may suggest. The reports should be a wake up call, but they don't mean the talks have failed-at least not yet. The report presents four scenarios:

In the most pessimistic, countries basically continue with their current policies, leading to that frightening 2.7°C number. In a middle scenario, where countries implement policies in line with 2030 emissions-reductions commitments, temperatures rise 2.4°C. The most optimistic scenario essentially assumes that countries are either taking emissions-reducing action today that they aren't reporting (which is highly unlikely), or will suddenly move much faster on emissions reduction than they have been up to now (still pretty unlikely). In that case, temperature rise would be limited to 1.8°C.

Many activists and analysts, however, see those long-term pledges as largely irrelevant. Commitments to eliminate emissions by 2050-or later in the case of countries like China, India and Saudi Arabia-will only keep temperatures from rising to unsafe levels if they drive real action in the next decade. "There's

a massive credibility, action and commitment gap," says Bill Hare, CEO of Climate Analytics. That is, there is a significant gap between what is pledged-actions that would limit warming to 1.8°C-and what has actually been implemented-actions that would lead to up to 2.7°C of warming.

Supporters of multilateral climate talks say this is where COP meetings have proven their worth. For example, just before the Paris COP meeting, the world was on track for 3.6°C of warming, according to a Climate Action Tracker report at the time. Commitments-undergirded by policy-have moved the needle. COP26 can similarly offer a venue for leaders to apply pressure to one another and hold each other accountable to their commitments.

But, like everything in the world of international climate talks, it would be an uphill climb.

Punjab Assembly adopts resolution against Centre's farm laws



(SAI Bureau)-The Punjab Assembly on Thursday adopted a resolution against the Centre's three contentious farm laws, claiming it had "unlawfully ventured into the domain of the state government". It is the second resolution, which was adopted by the Vidhan Sabha against the Centre's three farm laws. The first one was passed last year in October when Amarinder Singh was the chief minister of Punjab. The resolution was moved by the state Agriculture Minister Randeep Singh Naba on the concluding day of the two-day Assembly session. The resolution was passed in the absence of two BJP legislators. "This special session of Vidhan Sabha held on November 11, 2021 through a resolution moved by agriculture minister Punjab and adopted by the House, once again rejects the three contentious legislations which were enacted by the Union government without any competence, by unlawfully venturing into the domain of the state," it said.

Describing the three farm laws as an "attack on the federal structure", Nabha said the Punjab government will not implement these. According to the resolution, the Vidhan Sabha strongly deprecates and condemns the efforts of the Union government aimed at "systematic dismantling of farmer-friendly regulated mandis and replacing them with trader-friendly unregulated mandis". "The Punjab Vidhan Sabha feels concerned at the unfair concessions extended to the traders and corporations of allowing purchases from unregulated markets without paying market fee, rural development fee etc. and thus providing unfair advantage to unregulated markets vis-à-vis regulated mandis," it said. The resolution said this will eventually lead to shifting of trade from the APMC mandis to the private mandis apart from causing fiscal loss to the state Government and adversely affecting rural development.

Canadian woman first in the world to be diagnosed as suffering from 'climate change'

in the emergency department. People were running out to the Dollar Store to buy spray bottles," the head of the emergency department told local media. The record-shattering heatwaves in Canada and parts of the United States were responsible for hundreds of deaths. At least 233 people died in British Columbia from the heatwaves. The emergency condition was caused by what meteorologists described as a dome of high pressure over the Northwest, worsened by human-caused climate change, which is making such extreme weather events more likely and more intense. It was unclear what triggered the dome, but climate change

looks to be a contributor, given the heatwave's duration, extremes, and the fact that it is setting new temperature highs a month earlier than the usual hottest time of year. The very high temperatures or humidity conditions posed an elevated risk of heat stroke or heat exhaustion. Doctors had to try and figure out ways to sustain the increasing pressure on the hospitals in the region as more and more patients arrived with heatstrokes and other heat-related illnesses. The emergency room doctor then reached out to his counterparts in other hospitals only to find out the situation was worse than he had imagined. Heatwaves were not the only

cause of mortality in the region as raging wildfires contaminated the breathable air filling it with suspended particulate matter PM2.5. "If we're not looking at the underlying cause, and we're just treating the symptoms, we're just gonna keep falling further and further behind," Dr Merritt told Glacier Media. Healthcare professionals have now come together and launched an initiative to better human health by protecting the planet. Led by 40 healthcare professionals, the initiative, named Doctors and Nurses for Planetary Health, works to inform people about the effects of climate change on health.

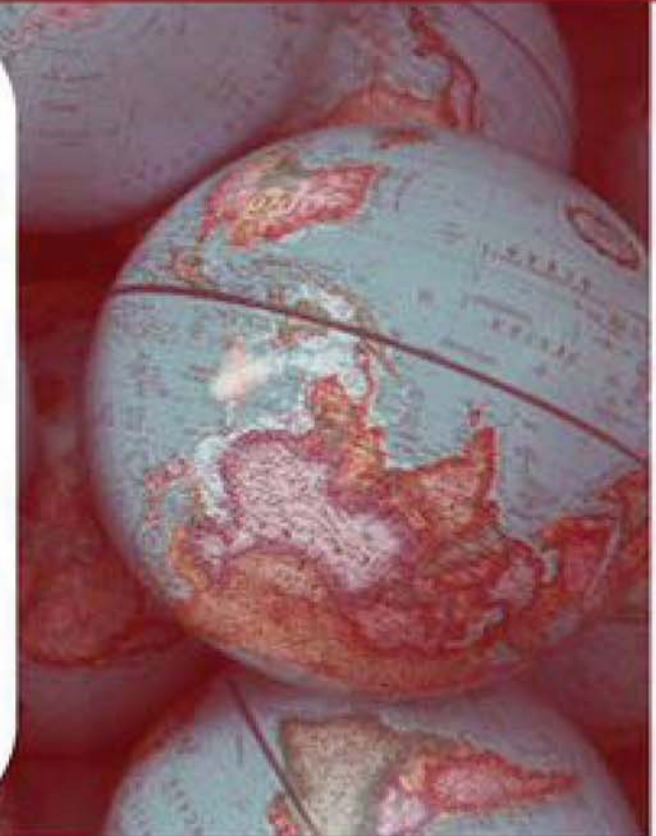
Ambani-Adani conflict in future renewable energy supremacy

audit services to industrial and commercial consumers. With Tesla set to come to India in 2022, Elon Musk will eye a sector of the renewable energy segment. Jeff Bezos has a goal of completely renewable energy-producing by 2030. Amazon Sustainability already has 8.5 gigawatts of electricity production capacity globally now, which can be a challenger in India too. The Ambani and the Adani group are equipped to face the challenges. Mukhesh Ambani's Reliance has US\$13 billion of annual earnings. The Adani group is faring well with its ports, mines, power generation and warehousing across India. A clash for the supremacy in renewable power may harm the Indian economy for a short time. However, a definite winner or an amicable collaboration can take the country leagues forward in achieving complete renewable energy usage in the coming decade. **By Susmita Ghosh**

PASRICHA & PATEL^{LLC}

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

NOW REPRESENTING LONG ISLAND & QUEENS



SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT,

Pasricha & Patel has always strived to provide superior legal representation to its clients in a vast array of fields such as:

Business
Closings

Technology
Law

Commercial
Litigation

Commercial
Transactions

25+

Years of
Excellence

- ✓ **Real Estate**
- ✓ **Immigration**
- ✓ **Trust & Estates**



55 NORTH BROADWAY, SUITE 201, HICKSVILLE NY 11801

Visit www.pasricha.com | Call 516-530-1596 | Write to us at law@pasricha.com

1794 Oak Tree Road
Edison, NJ 08820
T: (732) 593-6200

381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1220
New York, New York 10016
T: (646) 741-9399



Biden's infrastructure win gives him some momentum. Here's why he needs that

Friday night was a long one for President Biden, working the phones at the end of a week where his party lost a bellwether race in Virginia, following months of Democratic infighting over his agenda. Down in the polls, he had just returned from an overseas trip where he said he faced questions about whether he had support to back the pledges he made on the world stage.

But by Saturday morning, Biden could not contain his ebullience, celebrating a major legislative victory: a long-stalled \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill had passed with bipartisan support.

"Finally, infrastructure week," Biden said, chuckling over what had become a running joke about his predecessor, who failed to ever make a deal on the investment needed for the nation's roads and ports despite often promising to focus on the problem. "I'm so happy to say that: infrastructure week," he said.

The bill's passage - combined with some positive news on the economy and the pandemic - could give Biden some momentum for tackling the next big piece of his agenda, a sprawling package of social programs, an overhaul of the tax system and billions of dollars of climate incentives. The size and scope of the plan has exposed deep division within his own party. But it's another win he's eager to secure ahead of looming 2022 congressional

elections.

"The week started rough for Biden, but the [infrastructure] win and great jobs numbers shows the path by which Biden can turn this around," said Jennifer Palmieri, who worked in the Obama White House.

But there are a host of forbidding odds working against Democrats as they head into the 2022 midterm elections, says Doug Heye, a Republican political consultant. "Inflation, national security, the border and so much more," Heye said. "It's hard to find an issue where Democrats have an advantage now." Biden says he needs to do more to explain his bills.

Biden's Saturday morning speech likely won't be the last he'll give celebrating this victory. He said he wants to hold a signing ceremony for the infrastructure bill along with the Republicans who were key to its passage in both the House and Senate - a nod to an idea he campaigned on, that Washington can work for the American people despite political polarization.

His advisers have also acknowledged that the White House needs to do a better job explaining their giant legislative packages to Americans.

His first bill, a \$1.9 trillion COVID aid package, contained a series of measures that Democrats have had a hard time getting credit for, including monthly child tax credit payments. This week, Biden said he'll be talking about

ports - a sector that will get a lot of long-overdue investment of \$17 billion from the infrastructure package.

In Biden's view, his job now is to try to "put people at ease and let them know there's a way through this," whether it's the pandemic or the supply chain snarls that he says have shaken Americans' confidence. "Whether you have a Ph.D. or you're working, you know, in a restaurant, it's confusing. And so, people are understandably worried," he said. Economic concerns have helped fuel the tumble in Biden's approval ratings. He went from a very bad August, after the chaotic U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the surge in COVID cases, to a not-much-better September, and slumped into October. But on Friday, in addition to the infrastructure bill passing, the jobs report showed a big jump with 531,000 jobs created in October, and the unemployment rate falling to 4.6%. And social media started filling with photos of children getting their COVID vaccines, after a CDC recommendation came through making it possible for kids ages 5-11 to get a shot.

"I have one focus," Biden said on Saturday. "How do we give you some breathing room? How do we get you to the point where we take pressure off you so you can begin to get back to a degree of normality and we move

to a different place?"

Biden worked the phones to get the bill passed.

As a senator in the 1990s, Biden boasted about his ability to find common ground and get big legislation passed. As president he has struggled to drag what he called the "once in a generation" infrastructure package over the finish line, wading through weeks of procedural wrangling and ugly congressional sausage-making.

Biden and top aides worked the phones from the presidential residence late into the night on Friday, making sure wavering Democrats didn't balk. The progressive wing had wanted to use the infrastructure bill as leverage to ensure Biden's social spending package also passes. After the deal was already sealed, Biden even called the mother of a key House Democrat, Rep. Pramila Jayapal, a classic Biden move. He has also had conversations with moderates, who are concerned he is spending too much time shooting for transformational programs and not enough time on kitchen-table issues. That was the takeaway for some Democrats from the loss in Virginia's gubernatorial race on Tuesday.

Rep. Abigail Spanberger, D-Va., told the New York Times that Biden was going too far, saying: "Nobody elected him to be F.D.R., they elected him to be normal and stop the chaos."

said they had joked about it afterward. But he stood resolute behind his strategy to go big when it comes to giving Americans relief through the social programs in his next big bill.

"I don't intend to be anybody but Joe Biden. That's who I am. And what I'm trying to do is do the things that I ran on to do," he said. "Ordinary, hard-working Americans are really, really - been put through the wringer the last couple years, starting with COVID," he said.

And he maintained that Democrats should see Tuesday's election loss as a call to forge ahead on his plans. "They want us to deliver," Biden said of voters. "Last night, we proved we can."

The next bill may be tougher for Democrats to pass

Former Obama aide Palmieri said this week's elections lit a fire under her party. "The losses had the necessary impact of focusing Democrats on getting the very popular bipartisan infrastructure bill done," she said. The next package would have benefits for Democrats facing reelection next November, Palmieri said, including tax credits that take effect immediately. "There will be benefits for Democrats to run on in 2022," Palmieri said. But first, Biden will need to knit together the progressive and moderate wings again. Republicans have already said they will not support the next package, which has tax increases on the wealthy to pay for extending the child tax credit, universal pre-K and elder care, and other Democratic wish-list items.

Biden: Infrastructure bill will ease economy woes, just wait

President Joe Biden touted his \$1 trillion infrastructure plan Wednesday as an eventual fix for the nation's inflation and supply chain woes - if Americans just have the patience to wait for the construction to begin.

The president toured the Port of Baltimore at the start of what is likely to be a national tour to showcase his signature legislation that cleared Congress last week and that he intends to sign on Monday. He declared that the spending would improve transportation of products and supplies from overseas and within the U.S. to help lower prices, reduce shortages and add union jobs. That message is becoming more critical as the government reported Wednesday that consumer prices in October climbed 6.2% from a year ago. Inflation has intensified instead of fading as the economy reopened after the coronavirus pandemic, creating a major challenge for Biden whose administration repeatedly said that the price increases were temporary. During remarks at the port, he acknowledged that consumer prices remained "too high."

"Everything from a gallon of gas to a loaf of bread costs more," he said. "We still face challenges and we have to tackle them ... we have to tackle them head on."

Higher prices have eaten into wages and turned public sentiment on the economy against Biden in polls. One of the obstacles for reducing inflation has been backlogged ports with ships waiting to dock at major transit hubs, causing shortages and leaving some store shelves depleted ahead of the holiday shopping season.

"Many people remain unsettled about the economy and we all know why," Biden said.

He offered his infrastructure plan as the solution, albeit one that will take time to manifest. Better infrastructure - whether roads, bridges, ports or whatever - would give more capacity and resiliency for the supply chain. There would be more capacity to unload ships and move goods, which in turn would reduce price pressures and shortages.

Biden said the infrastructure spending would create jobs paying \$45 an hour, nearly 50% above the current national average. It would create a wealth of jobs to fix aging



pipes, bridges and roads, and boost clean energy and cybersecurity. And most wouldn't require college degrees.

"This is a once in a generation investment," he said.

The president pointed to Baltimore's port as a blueprint on how to reduce shipping bottlenecks that have held back the economic recovery. The facility is adding container cranes as well as a 50-foot berth where ships can be unloaded. Baltimore's port is also benefiting from grants to upgrade the Howard Street Tunnel, a brick-lined underpass for trains that opened in 1895. The tunnel would be expanded so that shipping containers could be double-stacked on railcars, making it easier to move goods out of the port.

The president, who consulted with the CEOs of Walmart, Target, FedEx and UPS on Tuesday, emphasized that these investments are part of a national effort to relieve supply chain bottlenecks in ways that can aid broader growth.

His administration also announced new investments to reduce congestion at the Port of Savannah in Georgia, nearly a month after the administration helped broker a deal for the Port of Los Angeles to operate nonstop.

The president has been trying to explain that the port congestion shows just how strong the economic rebound from the pandemic has been. A forecast by the National Retail Federation suggests a record level of imports this year.

The inflation phenomenon is also global in nature, with Germany and China recently reporting high levels.

The president made his case Wednesday in a city of nearly

600,000 people that supports him. Nearly 90% of voters in Baltimore backed Biden in last year's election. The president also stopped in the city for a CNN town hall on Oct. 21.

Baltimore embodies the complexities of an increasingly diverse America at a time of heated

national politics. Many Americans have seen a TV version of the city's poverty, crime, political corruption and vacant row houses on shows such as HBO's "The Wire." Unrest following the 2015 death of Freddie Gray from injuries in a police van helped to propel a national movement for respecting the rights

and lives of Black Americans.

But Baltimore also contains deep pockets of wealth and prosperity in what is a microcosm of the broader inequality confronting the nation. There are the mansions of the Guilford neighborhood, elite private schools, celebrated restaurants and the prestige of Johns Hopkins University.

As president, Donald Trump slammed the majority Black city on Twitter frequently, calling it "the WORST IN NATION." But while Trump scorned Baltimore, Biden sees a test case for his agenda that goes beyond the ports. His child tax credits are sending thousands of dollars to families in a city with a child poverty rate north of 30%. Work has begun to renovate and modernize the historic Penn Station, possibly improving rail transit across the Northeast.

Let's go to explore a magical place

*Come into the lap of Nature, Explore Hiking, Day Camping, *fishing & *Hunting on 100 Acres of Unexplored & Beautiful land backing to thousands of acres of state land.*



Email: whitestone1979@gmail.com

Catskill, New York

** Limited spots available,
Terms & Conditions apply.*

APOLLO
FARMS & RESORTS

Biden to sign \$1 trillion infrastructure bill on Monday



The White House announced Wednesday that President Joe Biden will on Monday sign into law the largest federal investment in infrastructure in more than a decade.

In a statement, the administration said Biden will be joined in a signing ceremony by members of Congress who helped write the \$1 trillion piece of legislation to improve the nation's roads, bridges and waterways.

"The President will highlight how he is following through on his commitment to rebuild the middle class and the historic benefits the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal will deliver for American families,"

the White House said in a press release.

Namely, "millions of good-paying, union jobs for working people, improvements in our ports and transportation systems that strengthen supply chains, high-speed internet for every American, clean water for all children and families, the biggest investments in our roads and bridges in generations, the most significant investment in mass transit ever, and unprecedented investments in clean energy infrastructure." Biden's signature will make the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act law 10 days after the House passed the bipartisan piece of legislation.

The legislation includes about \$550 billion in new funding for transportation, utilities and broadband. It also invests \$110 billion into roads, bridges and other major projects, directs \$66 billion toward passenger and freight rail and \$39 billion into public transit.

The bill will invest \$65 billion in expanding broadband access. It will put \$55 billion into water systems, including lead pipe replacements. The legislation also includes a provision for cryptocurrency tax reporting. Lawmakers have tried and failed for years to pass such a comprehensive bill to upgrade the nation's utilities and surface

transportation infrastructure. The White House and many other leading Democrats say the bill will ease pesky supply-chain disruptions and keep prices from soaring even higher.

While 13 House Republicans helped the bill clear the chamber last week, its fate had been uncertain for much of the fall. Fierce debate between progressive and centrist Democrats, which centered on the bill's passage in tandem with the separate Build Back Better plan, threatened to derail the infrastructure plan.

Ultimately, progressives accepted promises from centrists that they would support

the \$1.75 trillion social safety net and climate package when it comes up for a vote. Centrists asked to the delay the Build Back Better vote until they are able to review the Congressional Budget Office's estimates of the plan's budgetary impact.

Unlike the infrastructure package, the Build Back Better bill is opposed by virtually every Republican on Capitol Hill. Democrats will attempt to circumvent a GOP filibuster in the evenly split Senate using a special budgetary rule known as reconciliation that will allow the party to muscle the legislation through with a simple majority vote.

As the bipartisan infrastructure bill passes, here's what's next for Biden's economic plans

While many Democrats let out a sigh of relief when the House passed a bipartisan infrastructure bill, the party has a grueling few weeks ahead of it to enact the rest of its economic agenda.

The more than \$1 trillion package passed Friday that would refresh transportation, broadband and utilities fulfills one part of President Joe Biden's domestic vision. Democrats now have to clear multiple hurdles to enact the larger piece, a \$1.75 trillion investment in the social safety net and climate policy.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer has said Democrats aim to pass the social spending bill by Thanksgiving. Meeting the deadline will require both



chambers of Congress to rush while keeping nearly every member of a diverse Democratic caucus united - a challenge that has led to repeated roadblocks as lawmakers advanced the bills this year.

Biden on Saturday sounded sure that his party would line up behind

a sprawling bill that it aims to sell on the midterm campaign trail next year.

"I feel confident that we will have enough votes to pass the Build Back Better plan," he told reporters.

Biden also signaled he could sign the infrastructure bill next week

after lawmakers return to Washington. Asked Monday when the president would sign the bill, White House spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre said "I do not have a date, but it will be very soon."

His administration plans to send key officials around the country to sell the benefits of the package, NBC News reported, citing a memo from a White House official.

The House plans to take the next step in passing the social spending plan. The chamber will try to approve the bill during the week of Nov. 15 once it returns from a weeklong recess. With no Republican support expected, Democrats can lose no more than three votes for the package.

It would then go to the Senate. To pass the bill under special budget rules, all 50 members of the Democratic caucus will have to support it.

Schumer will have to win over conservative Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia, who has not yet blessed a framework agreement on the legislation. The House could also send the Senate a bill that includes four weeks of paid leave for most American workers - a provision Manchin has opposed. Once the Senate irons out any objections from Manchin or other Democrats, in addition to any constraints budget reconciliation rules put on the bill, it could approve a different version of the plan than the House does.

Biden to hold signing ceremony on Monday for bipartisan infrastructure bill



President Joe Biden will sign the bipartisan infrastructure bill on Monday during a ceremony that will include members of Congress, governors and mayors from both parties, the White House announced on Wednesday. "At the signing ceremony, the President will highlight how he is following through on his commitment to rebuild the middle class and the historic benefits the Bipartisan Infrastructure Deal will deliver for American families," according to a news release from the White House.

Biden will also host "representatives of the incredibly diverse coalition that pushed for the bill across the country" during Monday's ceremony, the White House said.

Congress passed the \$1.2 trillion bill last week after months of agonizing negotiations among congressional Democrats.

The legislation, which includes major investments for communities across the country, was passed by the Senate in August before it stalled in the House of

Representatives as Democrats in the chamber worked to negotiate a deal on a sweeping economic and climate package. Many Democrats had tied that separate, major pillar of Biden's agenda to the fate of the infrastructure bill but it ultimately did not prevent passage of the infrastructure legislation. The infrastructure bill eventually passed in the House in a 228-206 vote, with 13 Republicans crossing party lines to vote with the majority of Democrats -- a move that quickly drew criticism from

members of their party, including former President Donald Trump. The bill's passage marks a major bipartisan win for Biden and represents the largest single infrastructure investment in American history.

Biden appeared in Baltimore on Wednesday to tout the benefits of the legislation. Speaking at the Port of Baltimore, the President said that the bill will address the supply chain crisis by modernizing ports and reducing congestion.

"By investing in our roads,

bridges, ports and so much else, this will make it easier for companies to get goods to market more quickly," he said. The legislation includes \$550 billion in new federal investments in American infrastructure over five years, which includes money for ports, airports, rail, roads, bridges and mass transit. The package also includes tens of billions of dollars for improving broadband infrastructure and the electricity grid and for a nationwide network of electric vehicle chargers.

Trump told a gathering of House Republicans that he loves all of them, except the 13 who voted for Biden's infrastructure bill, report says

Former President Donald Trump told a group of House Republicans at a closed-door gathering in Florida that he loves all of them except for the 13 lawmakers who voted last week for President Joe Biden's landmark bipartisan infrastructure bill, The Washington Post reports. "I love all the House Republicans. Well, actually I don't love all of you. I don't love the 13 that voted for Biden's infrastructure plan," Trump said at a Monday fundraising dinner for the National Republican Campaign Committee, the House Republican caucus' campaign arm, a source in the room told The Post.

After months of back-and-forth negotiations between the progressive and moderate wings

of the Democratic caucus, the House finally voted on and passed the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act late on the night of November 5. The legislation passed the Senate in August with the votes of 19 GOP senators.

The bill, the largest investment in infrastructure since the creation of the federal highway system, delivered a huge legislative victory for Biden - with the help of over a dozen GOP representatives.

The measure passed the House with the votes of 13 Republicans who defied Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy to approve the \$550 billion investment in shoring up America's highways, bridges, and ports, public transit, and clean energy measures.



Those lawmakers include retiring Reps. Adam Kinzinger of Illinois, Anthony Gonzalez of Ohio, and Tom Reed of New York as well as Republicans representing competitive districts like Reps. Nicole Malliotakis and John Katko of New York, Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania, and Don Bacon

of Nebraska.

Those 13 Republicans quickly faced the wrath of their more Trump-aligned colleagues like Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, who posted the office numbers of all 13 Republicans who voted for the bill on Twitter and urged her 450,000-plus followers to call and express their displeasure.

Those offices were soon inundated with angry calls. One of the Republicans who voted for the bill, Rep. Fred Upton of Michigan, shared with CNN a violent, threatening voicemail his office received in which the caller described Upton as a "fucking traitor" and said, "I hope you die. I hope everybody in your fucking family dies."

House Republicans' votes on the bipartisan infrastructure bill are now poised to become sticking points in Republican primaries in the 2022 midterms. Another Republican who voted for the measure, Rep. David McKinley of West Virginia, will face off against another GOP incumbent, Rep. Alex Mooney, who voted against it, since West Virginia lost a seat in post-2020 reapportionment.

How big a deal is Biden's infrastructure bill?

Anat Shenker-Osorio: 'A massive achievement'

The infrastructure bill is a massive achievement for Democrats in a country where naming a post office requires herculean efforts thanks to Republicans hell bent on impeding progress. This is a bill to protect the water we drink and bridges we cross, to deliver reliable internet to our farms and modern equipment to our ports. Whether the American people will see it as such is a different question.

I would like to live in a place where what people think about Democrats depends on what Democrats say and do. But, in America, how this bill will affect voters' views depends largely on how the media cover it. To date, stories have centered on legislative process and conflict, aka "Democrats infighting". To be sure, there is division at play: but it's between the richest few plus the politicians they pay for and the rest of us, who support the provisions in this bill and Build Back Better (BBB) by large margins.

When the media accurately report this, and give proper due to the Democrats acting for Americans of every color, creed and background, this bill and - when passed - BBB will be recognized as Democratic party accomplishments. And an accomplishment for democracy, too; for it's thanks to the voters who turned out in record numbers last year that we have new leaders who govern in our name.

" Anat Shenker-Osorio is the host of Words To Win By: a podcast about progressive wins



Bhaskar Sunkara: 'Are the best days of Bidenism behind us?'

Joe Biden's infrastructure legislation, even in its scaled-back form, is an obvious policy success. Its \$1.2tn in funding for roads and bridges, mass transit and rail service, as well as upgrades to ports, the electric grid and water infrastructure will pay dividends for generations to come.

The real questions rest around the political aspect of this policy victory. This is the second major piece of legislation from the Biden administration, along with the important withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan. Yet somehow Biden and the Democrats appear weak and ineffective to many Americans.

The president is held hostage by a few conservative members of his own party and has been unable to clearly sell his broader and more ambitious Build Back Better bill - the vote for which has been decoupled from the infrastructure bill and delayed, to the frustration of progressives - with a clear message.

From the perspective of this socialist, the pending Build Back Better bill may actually try to do

too much, throwing money at problems that require more coordination, planning and state capacity to properly solve. Biden would be far better able to sell his agenda if it centered around a few big, fully funded and universal programs.

Of course, the design of the emerging BBB bill is not Biden's fault alone. It reflects the varied (and sometimes rotten) interests of the Democratic caucus and the unwieldiness of the American political system.

For now, Biden has a much-needed political win. But I, once again, can't help feeling that the best days of Bidenism might already be behind us.

" Bhaskar Sunkara is the editor of Jacobin, a Guardian US columnist and the author of The Socialist Manifesto - The Case for Radical Politics in an Era of Extreme Inequality

Steve Phillips: 'This is a big deal' When you examine the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework (BIF) through a historical lens, it looks pretty damn good. Throughout US history there has actually been pretty strong support for robust

government investment in people and infrastructure so long as the beneficiaries of said largesse were white. The New Deal and the GI Bill enjoyed broad support, but, as Ira Katznelson wrote in When Affirmative Action Was White, "the GI Bill did create a more middle-class society, but almost exclusively for whites." Advertisement

As people of color began to demand their fair share of the public pie (which they helped bake through back-breaking, wealth-creating work by, among other things, picking cotton and grapes and laying railroad tracks), the political will for public investments dropped dramatically.

From Prince Edward county, Virginia, shutting down its schools entirely rather than desegregate in 1959 to the fierce resistance to Obamacare, getting support for any public investments has been a Herculean task. As a result the infrastructure has atrophied in ways that endanger the public in general and poor people and people of color in particular.

The Flint, Michigan, water crisis showed how aging lead pipes can create a health crisis. Every lead pipe in the country will now be replaced. The pandemic laid bare the digital divide of who has access to high-speed internet and who doesn't, and now rural areas can get broadband access. Politically, you don't have to look far back into history to understand the importance of the infrastructure bill. No legislation at all would be coming out of Congress had Stacey Abrams and the Georgia civic

engagement groups not flipped the two Senate seats in the January runoff elections. Given where we were, I'm feeling that the BIF is a BFD.

" Steve Phillips is the founder of Democracy in Color and author of Brown is the New White: How the Demographic Revolution Has Created a New American Majority

Lloyd Green: 'A shot in the arm' The infrastructure package is a shot in the arm for the US, a badly needed win for Joe Biden, and a reminder that the Democrats face an uphill climb in next year's midterms. The US Senate passed the bipartisan infrastructure framework last August by a wide margin, but it took three more months for the House to adopt the legislation. Suffice to say, the ensuing delay did not engender public trust.

Looking back, Mitch McConnell and 18 of his Republican colleagues said "yes" to a \$1tn spending on roads and bridges, but too many House Democrats appeared ready to make the perfect the enemy of the good. Less than a year in the job, polls show the president trailing Donald Trump in a hypothetical rematch. Meanwhile, South Carolina's representative James Clyburn, the number three Democrat in the House, is warning that internal divisions may cost his party control of both houses of Congress. Over in Pennsylvania, Representative Conor Lamb, the state's likely Democratic senatorial candidate, has taken to calling himself a "normal Democrat" to distinguish himself from his caucus's more recalcitrant and "socialist" members.

House passes \$555 billion infrastructure bill, sends legislation to Biden's desk

The House passed a \$555 billion infrastructure bill on Friday night, sending the legislation to President Joe Biden who is expected to quickly sign the measure into law.

The funding package, which passed 228 to 206 and relied on Republican votes to get across the finish line, will ramp up government spending on roads, bridges and airports, as well as funding for public transit, water and broadband.

Six Democrats voted against the measure and 13 Republicans voted in favor. The Democratic opposition was progressive

members who were unhappy that the bill was being voted on before passage of a \$1.75 trillion social safety net spending bill.

The vote hands Biden a victory on a major bipartisan bill, but one that took months to get through Congress and revealed deep divisions in the Democratic Party. The Senate approved the bill in August before it stalled for months as House progressives clashed with Democratic centrists.

In a statement, Biden praised Friday's House vote as "a monumental step forward," saying the bill will tackle the climate crisis, create jobs and

"ease inflation pressures and lower costs for working families." On Friday, Biden put new pressure on House Democrats to pass both the infrastructure package and the social policy measure, also known as the Build Back Better bill.

"I'm asking every member of the House of Representatives to vote yes on both these bills right now," Biden said during remarks from the White House. "Send the infrastructure bill to my desk, send the Build Back Better bill to the Senate. Let's build on incredible economic progress,

build on what we've already done because this will be such a boost when it occurs."

House leadership later decided to push back the vote on the safety net bill due to several moderates insisting on first seeing a Congressional Budget Office cost estimate of the legislation to ensure the bill is fully paid for. Democrats cannot afford to lose more than a handful defections given their narrow majority in the House.

Progressives, however, wanted the infrastructure package to be linked to the social

spending plan out of concern that passing infrastructure first would weaken their leverage in shaping and advancing the Build Back Better bill.

Democrats are now aiming to vote on the safety net bill before Thanksgiving. House passage would send the legislation to the Senate, where it will need the support of all 50 Democrats to find its way to Biden's desk.

On the House floor, shortly before the vote, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., called both bills "historic," saying they will create millions of jobs and help working families.



Looking to Buy/Sell ?

We know the difference between Home & House

Honesty, Integrity & Experience



Specializing in Investment & Income Producing Real Estate

Nlight Real Estate

Tel: 516 NLIGHT4



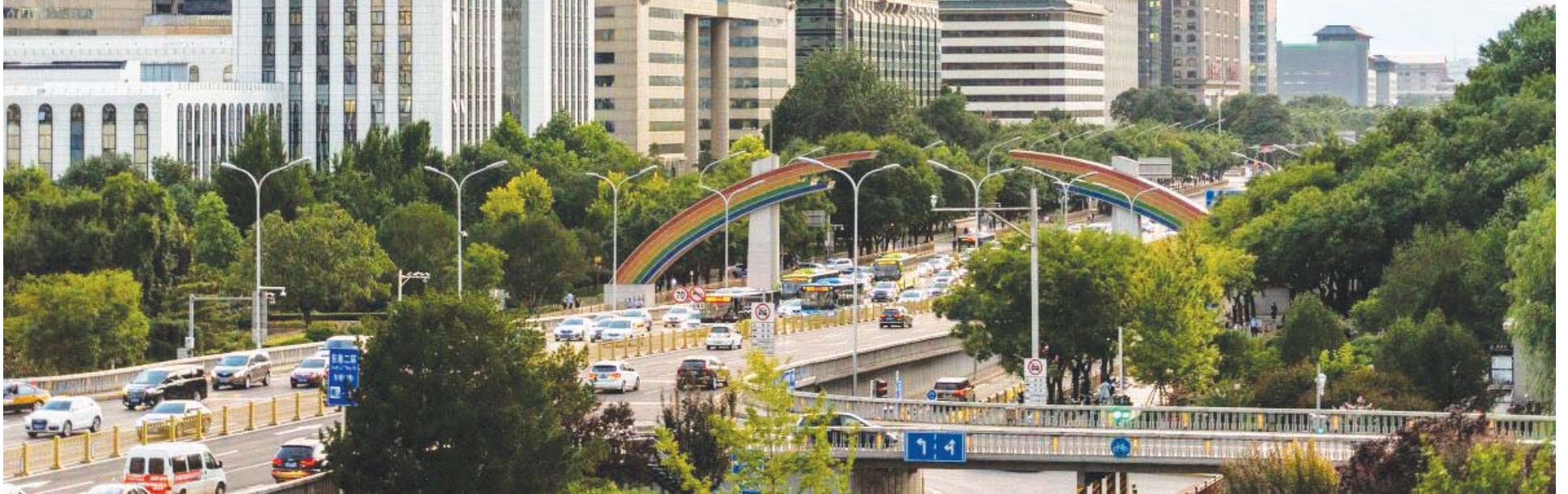
Sharanjit Singh Thind
Real Estate Broker/Notary Public



180 Broadway, PH 3A, Hicksville NY 11801
Email: homes@nlightrealestate.com
www.nlightrealestate.com



The risks Americans face in traveling to China



Americans—particularly businesspeople and the politically engaged—should be thinking twice about traveling to China.

For years, China watchers have warned of Beijing's increasing use of "hostage diplomacy," and last month, it was on full display. Two Canadians in China, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, were detained by Chinese authorities in 2018, shortly after Canada arrested Huawei CFO Meng Wanzhou at America's behest over alleged violations of US sanctions. As soon as Meng was returned to China in late September, Kovrig and Spavor were released.

The Chinese government insisted for years their seizure of the Canadians was unrelated to Meng's detention. So how is it they were released only hours after Meng's plea deal was executed? Make no mistake: just like their North Korean clients, the Chinese government took hostages to force a favorable political outcome. They have been rewarded for their behavior, and history shows it will only continue. A warning to anyone else traveling to China: You could easily be next.

For any one tourist traveling to China, the risk of being detained is low, statistically. Before the pandemic, nearly three million Americans traveled to China in a given year. Those detained have had business or institutional links

there. For instance, Michael Kovrig, released at the resolution of the Meng case, advises an international-conflict nonprofit on the northeast Asia region.

But given the arbitrariness of China's behavior, it would be unwise to simply ignore the risk. China, of course, denies it is detaining foreigners for geopolitical gain. A Foreign Ministry spokeswoman recently said accusations of "hostage



diplomacy" are mere "disinformation" and the US, not China, practices diplomatic coercion.

A few examples may convince you otherwise.

Last fall, according to The Wall Street Journal, Chinese officials warned US authorities they might detain US citizens in response to Department of Justice actions against Chinese military-affiliated scientists accused of pilfering US

research from American universities. We should not take that warning lightly, because China has done this before.

In June 2014, US and Canadian officials nabbed a Chinese aerospace entrepreneur for his role in stealing sensitive US military secrets, including information on the F-35 fighter-jet program. While he was awaiting extradition to the United States, the Chinese retaliated

against innocent civilians: Two months later, Chinese officials snatched a Canadian couple, Kevin and Julia Garratt, from the northeastern city of Dandong, where they had worked to provide aid to orphanages and the disabled.

They were charged without evidence of being spies. Julia

was released after six months, but Kevin suffered in detention for more than two years. They were only released after the Chinese spy waived extradition, traveled freely to the US, and pleaded guilty to his charges. Does this sound familiar? It's the same playbook Beijing just used.

Americans have been targeted, too. In 2018, US citizen Han Tong was thrown in jail, where

she has languished for the past three years while her two American children—Victor and Cynthia Liu—who joined their mother on a family visit, had been prevented from leaving China until last Monday, seemingly in order to pressure Han's husband to return to China to face business-related charges.

The cruelty of this conduct cannot be understated. The Chinese government knowingly jails and prosecutes innocent foreign citizens for tangential political purposes.

China refuses to reform its legal system to modern international standards or to allow an independent judiciary. The message from Beijing to foreigners is clear: The law and its supposed protections for the innocent are disposable the moment it becomes advantageous to discard them. In the US, our rule of law system protects the American people from our government. The Chinese system protects the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) from the Chinese people, and from the ordinary course of geopolitics, too.

Fortunately, we have tools at our disposal to respond.

First, we can deploy sanctions on Chinese individuals, officials, and judges responsible for any future hostage-taking of US citizens using the recently passed Robert Levinson

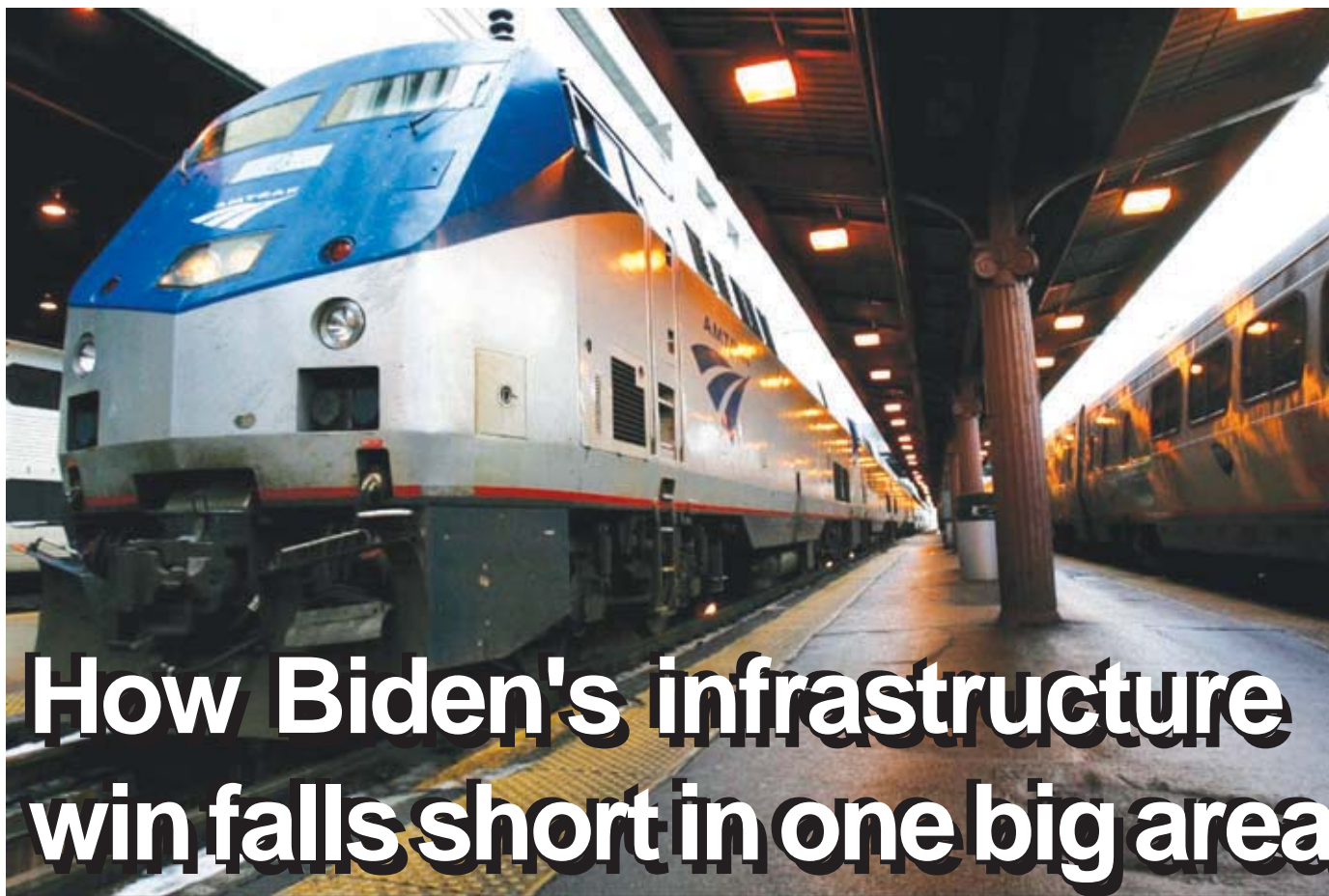
Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act. The law should also be broadened to allow the US government to target officials who seize our allies' citizens. With such a change, the US could have punished China for targeting Canadians.

Second, the West can further discourage travel to China, especially from business executives and others who are at the greatest risk.

Currently, travel to China is listed by the State Department as a Level 3 risk, due in part to China's "arbitrary enforcement of local laws." The US government should consider raising the warning to Level 4, in line with countries like Iran and North Korea, which routinely take Americans and others hostage.

Finally, the international business community, which is disproportionately targeted by China's hostage-taking (as well as China's theft of intellectual property), should find its voice. Companies should consider reducing corporate travel to China. This would clearly tell Beijing its hostage-taking tactics have consequences.

Today, Meng is being quoted in Chinese media about the "torment" she supposedly endured, wearing an ankle monitor while living comfortably in either of her two mansions as she awaited extradition.



How Biden's infrastructure win falls short in one big area

The bill is historic in its scope with \$550 billion in new money funneled into hard infrastructure, from overhauling bridges to supercharging Amtrak's most popular rail corridor in the Northeast.

Congress has cleared a multibillion-dollar infrastructure package that could improve Americans' commutes and quality of life, but which fails to meet President Joe Biden's ambitious pledge to cut emissions off at their root: the transportation sector.

The bill, H.R. 3684 (117), is historic in its scope with \$550 billion in new money funneled into hard infrastructure, from overhauling bridges to supercharging Amtrak's most popular rail corridor in the Northeast. But it falls far short of Biden's original vision, which promised to dramatically reduce the climate impacts of transportation, the single largest source of pollution. In the end, the final product was the victim of the bipartisan focus it took to get the bill done and is an example of the razor thin governing majority Democrats must navigate.

Democrats did manage to bolster climate policies lacking in that bill with a reconciliation package that, at present, will add billions for transit and passenger rail, set new expectations for states to reduce carbon emissions and makes it easier for Americans to buy electric vehicles. But even combined, the two do not approach how Biden promised to move the nation toward carbon neutrality and zero emission vehicles soon after he took office. The dream meets the reality

Beyond getting the requisite 10 Republican votes to move an infrastructure bill through the Senate, Biden and Democratic leadership had to corral their own party to ensure both bills could pass together, including baking in support from two Senate kingmakers: Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.). And, the reconciliation

bill is set to shrink to half its former size and without the centerpiece of its climate initiatives, a clean electricity program that would have incentivized utilities to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

The reconciliation package was supposed to be the sugar that made the infrastructure bill go down for progressives and greens, but the evisceration of its climate package makes it a more bitter pill to swallow. In particular, greens have chafed at the focus on roadbuilding in the infrastructure bill, in the absence of guardrails that would force a focus on repair rather than expansion.

Beth Osborne, the director of transit and safe streets advocacy group Transportation for America, accused Congress of "doubling down on a dinosaur of a federal transportation program" that she said has produced a dangerous, inequitable and unsustainable transportation network. But others in the transportation industry see a lot to like in the infrastructure bill, even if it won't be the watershed moment for blunting climate change many had hoped for.

"It will touch every single community," said Adie Tomer, who leads the Metropolitan Infrastructure Initiative at Brookings. "It's going to be bigger than the New Deal."

What's in the bill

The infrastructure bill allocates \$110 billion in new funding for roads and bridges, the large majority of which will run through long-established formulas that are funneled to state Departments of Transportation. That's energized states desperate for cash, but

sustainability advocates see it as a net loss because states will spend those dollars according to their own goals. Some states like California have reducing carbon emissions baked into their plans, but other states could just use them to build more roads, for instance.

Also missing from the infrastructure bill is any requirement that would prioritize repairing things before building new. The House-passed surface transportation bill would have prioritized this kind of "fix it first," and also would have made states measure and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. But the House bill got sidelined in favor of the more bipartisan Senate version over the summer.

Some of those priorities made it into the current reconciliation bill, H.R. 5376 (117), however. A community climate incentive grant program, for instance, will force states to take steps to reduce carbon emissions and encourages cities to do the same.

And a silver lining for those who wanted states to prioritize maintenance of existing infrastructure is the \$37 billion bridge repair program, a safety-critical initiative to address a problem that has long been neglected, even as major bridges in Cincinnati and Memphis have been forced to close for months due to safety problems rooted in their decrepitude.

The infrastructure bill promises \$7.5 billion to build electric vehicle charging stations, which will be enabled by the tax credits in the reconciliation bill and dwarfed by the \$34 billion that piece has for electrification.

The politics behind Poland's border crisis



Never let a good crisis go to waste.

There's no doubt Poland faces a legitimate emergency. Thousands of migrants aiming to come across the border with Belarus have set up camp in the damp birch forests that mark the frontier between the two countries. A reported nine people have died so far trying to make their way into the country, and Polish border guards say there have been more than 30,000 illegal attempts to cross the border since August. Poland has boosted its security forces along the border, and in one recent video, dozens of Polish officers can be seen forming a shield barrier to prevent migrants who've torn down a barbed-wire fence from rushing into the country. It's a result of the policies of Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko, who is trying to weaponize thousands of desperate people hungering to get into the EU as a way of punishing the bloc for the sanctions imposed on him and his allies for the brutal crackdown against pro-democracy protests that followed last year's contested presidential election results.

But that doesn't mean the crisis isn't coming at an opportune time for Poland's ruling nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) party.

PiS has been sagging in opinion polls after its toughening of abortion laws was blamed for the death of a young woman from septic shock after doctors delayed aborting her fetus. Thousands of people marched in cities across the country protesting the ruling party, and the policies that stem from its close alliance with the Roman Catholic Church.

A new survey found PiS at 32.5 percent support - still the most popular party in the country, but behind the combined weight of the two leading centrist opposition parties.

But the border emergency is serving to divert attention away from the abortion issue, while strengthening the party's appeal with its core voters, who are leery of any increase in immigration. It also gives the government a handy cudgel with which to bash the opposition.

Warsaw's efforts to defend its border have also received the strong backing of countries and institutions normally in conflict with the Polish government over perceptions the country is backsliding on democracy and rule of law - ranging from the Netherlands to Germany and the European Commission.



China is tightening its grip on outspoken CEOs. That's bad news for entrepreneurs

Over the last 12 months, China's government has engaged in an unprecedented regulatory crackdown on the country's technology sector. Alibaba was hit with a multibillion-dollar antitrust fine; new regulatory rules were crafted that target the emergent online education sector; and the ride-hailing service Didi Chuxing saw its software pulled from app stores just days after it pursued an IPO in the US, which went against the wishes of Chinese regulators.

Many foreign managers, investors and government officials - who once thought that China would gradually emerge as a democratic, market economy - now fear the end of Chinese capitalism. Many sense a paradigm shift toward Maoist principles, guided by an authoritarian regime now more powerful than ever before.

But the truth is that this is not a paradigm change. The West is simply beginning to realize what China's self-selected label of a "socialist market economy, Chinese style" is all about. China's leaders, current and past, have at no point committed to Western-style capitalism. The government has always maintained a high degree of direct political control over the economy to secure the regime's long-term survival. That control rules out a regulatory hands-off approach.

In the 1980s and 1990s, markets for information, capital, land use rights and natural resources were partly liberalized: Planned prices were replaced by market prices and new non-state competitors gradually entered the stage. But these markets were still tightly regulated, giving the political leadership wide leeway to influence market outcomes whenever it deemed necessary - not only for economic and social reasons, but also for political reasons. The government continued to influence lending decisions, public procurement contracts and land allocation.

Further, the government has continued to operate state-owned enterprises to remain in control of critical industries, such as telecommunication, banking, energy and mining. Though the government has gradually allowed the rise of a thriving entrepreneurial sector, with millions of small- and medium-size enterprises providing employment for the masses, it has simultaneously strengthened and modernized the country's state-owned economy by auctioning off small- and medium-size firms - oftentimes to former firm managers, employees or outside bidders - to concentrate state support and financial resources to modernize and scale up its large corporate giants. With considerable success, at least in terms of scale: 82 of the 135 Chinese

corporations listed on Fortune's Global 500 index are state-owned.

Xi Jinping's administration is eager to frame current policies targeting the private tech economy as part of a broader effort to reduce extreme income inequality. References to "common prosperity" - a term initially used in 1953 - evokes Mao Zedong's ideas of equal wealth distribution. The narrative is appealing, especially for those left behind in the country's rapid ascent to global wealth and power. But as long as the government avoids standard fiscal tools to redistribute wealth and reduce income inequality at a larger scale, "common prosperity" remains elusive. If inequality were truly a central political concern, why not rely on a systematic tax reform and extension of public services? Why target select entrepreneurs and their businesses at the cost of creating uncertainty for investors and entrepreneurs?

The timing of events suggests a different motivation. The start of the new era of intervention coincides with Ant Group co-founder Jack Ma's outspoken critique last year of the country's dated financial regulatory system, and the government's immediate decision to withdraw Ant's IPO. Ma's business lost billions in value. The lesson has been made clear: Even China's highly visible tech champions are

not beyond the government's reach.

Of course, China's high-tech entrepreneurs have long been aware of the delicate balance they had to strike to scale in their specific niche. Most of those who succeeded so far did so thanks to close business-government relations and active support of government priorities.

Yet, as the technology gap with the West narrows, China's desire for self-reliance rises, and once-servile entrepreneurs have become increasingly outspoken in their critique of China's economic system. The government's grip is tightening to bring those back into the fold who could pose a threat to the Communist Party. Some of China's once-celebrated entrepreneurs have stepped down, such as Colin Huang, former CEO of the e-commerce platform Pinduoduo, and Zhang Yimin, founder of ByteDance. Ma, once an outspoken commentator and critic of current affairs, avoided public statements for months. For those tech entrepreneurs who wish to continue operating in China, they'll have to pursue even closer business-government alliances - especially those who own and administer resources the government deems valuable for its own survival.

You can't crop an entire continent out of the fight against climate crisis



In Uganda, where I am from, it used to be that no one ever really talked about climate change. It was taught in school as if it were a far-off threat -- something that our grandchildren might face. But we are facing it now, and our futures are in jeopardy. Uganda is heavily reliant on agriculture for people's livelihoods, and that means that increasing drought, flooding, landslides and even locust swarms, all driven by global warming, have caused countless people to lose their incomes -- and even their lives -- in the last decade. And it's not just Uganda: The entire continent of Africa is often ignored or made an afterthought in global discussions on climate change. In 2021, millions of people in Angola are facing starvation as a result of the worst drought in 40 years. Similar drought is crushing Algeria and Madagascar, which are devastated by water shortages. Many people talk about the Amazon rainforest and how it is a critical carbon sink for our planet. But fewer people are aware of the unsustainable and illegal logging in the Congo rainforest, the second-biggest tropical rainforest on Earth.

I have experienced this dismissive thinking personally. In late 2019, the same year I started campaigning on the climate crisis, I was invited to travel from Uganda to Switzerland for the 2020 World Economic Forum in Davos -- and I experienced why it's so hard for activists like me to be noticed.

After a press conference with activists from European countries, including Greta Thunberg, I was cropped out of the corresponding news photograph. The photo was taken of five activists as we were all standing in a line, but someone decided only the White faces in that photograph should make the news story.

Thinking of Buying/Selling ?



WINZONE REALTY INC.



Baldev Singh

Associate Broker/Notary Public

146-20 34 av. Flushing NY 11354

Cell : 917-224-7395

Email : josanbaldev@yahoo.com



Since Evergrande nearly defaulted on its debt, China is taking a close look at rules governing residential real estate. Local govts now want more say in how escrow accounts are used.

Why investors are fleeing China's investment-grade property bonds

Even seemingly healthy Chinese real estate developers are getting dragged into the Evergrande mess.

The financial crisis at China's biggest property developer has spread to companies with investment-grade debt, walloping firms like Country Garden Holdings Co., the nation's largest builder. Are investors overreacting? Probably not. Since China Evergrande Group nearly defaulted on its debt, local governments across the country have been taking a close look at the rules governing residential real estate

development, in many cases tightening requirements for how much cash the builders need to keep on hand for ongoing projects. As regulators delve into developers' holdings, investors are realizing how little they know about these businesses' finances. At the root of the problem is that apartments in China are often sold long before they are completed. For construction projects, developers take property loans from banks, capped at 40% of the total project cost for large commercial lenders. To fund the remainder, local governments

often allow developers to put apartments on the market when construction is still in its early stages. For the pre-sold units, consumers pay the full price of their homes, delivering a lump sum to escrow accounts. In theory, developers are only supposed to tap those holdings to pay construction bills, or when they have delivered the apartments to consumers. But in practice, developers often treat that pot of money as free cash to be used for things like debt repayments. The trouble at Evergrande has cut down on the practice. As the giant

developer struggles to deliver 1.6 million paid-for homes to buyers, local governments want more say in how escrow accounts are used. Rules vary from city to city. In Beijing, developers are required to set aside only 10% of cash in the escrow accounts. But smaller cities are less lenient, asking for a cash buffer of as much as 40%. That has left developers operating in smaller markets without access to money they had hoped to use to pay their debts. The amount of cash set aside can be substantial. For instance, Chongqing-based Jinke

Properties Group told investors that as of September, half its 30 billion yuan (\$7 billion) in cash was in escrow accounts, according to Debtwire. Shanghai-based Cifi Holdings Group Co. said that as of June, about 30% of its cash was in escrow.

Country Garden, whose debt Moody's Investors Service Inc. has given its lowest investment grade, is in an especially difficult spot. More than 70% of its real estate portfolio is in China's smaller cities. How will the developer repay its debt, then? The question will soon become urgent: Country Garden has a \$1 billion convertible bond that investors can redeem in December, as well as \$1.3 billion in bonds due next year.

The bond rout is deepening because of asymmetric information. We don't know how much off-balance-sheet debt there is, or how much cash developers can deploy to repay investors. Investors are justifiably skittish. To stop the selloff, some honesty is perhaps in order?

Know who all are landing jobs in India amidst economic revival

Looking for a job?

Here are the key takeaways about hiring trends based on our analysis of Naukri JobSpeak surveys of the last five years for the month of October:

" Hiring reported positive across all experience bands in October 2021 compared to October 2020

" Demands for senior professionals with work experience of eight to 12 years witnessed the highest traction of 55 per cent. Senior talent least likely to face retrenchment

" Chances of landing jobs are much higher in Bengaluru and Hyderabad followed by Pune and Chennai

" In general, job opportunities in metro cities are twice as much as in non-metro locations

" Information technology and telecommunications emerge as the fastest growing sectors in terms of hiring

" Job opportunities in the IT and telecom sectors are largely driven by the switch to everything digital amidst the pandemic

" Conversely, the auto sector reported job cuts



as global chip shortages impact vehicle availabilities

" Middle-level executives are in much greater demand as companies navigate through the pandemic-induced slowdown

JOB VARIATIONS ACROSS SECTORS, YEARS
Naukri JobSpeak surveys analysed by India Today's Data Intelligence Unit show rapid variations in fresh hiring across sectors since 2017.

Finance, for instance, was the flavour of India's job market five years ago. But in October 2018, human

resource management reported maximum hiring. A year later, the IT sector offered more opportunities. Most sectors, however, saw job losses in the pandemic-battered 2020.

Banking and insurance, nevertheless, showed some resilience, adding ten per cent more jobs in October 2020, data show. **CITY-WISE ROTATION**
Kolkata was number one in terms of additional hiring in October 2017 while Pune emerged as a hot job destination in 2018.

With the IT sector growing at a fast clip in 2019, Hyderabad offered maximum job opportunities that year.

There were considerable job losses in most of the cities in 2020, except Chandigarh that added some jobs in the month of October last year, the DIU analysis shows.

According to available data, demands for freshers remained high in 2017 and 2018. That was when the Indian economy negotiated the aftereffects of demonetisation and the goods and services tax and cost-cutting became a dominant theme in employment.



Why India is hosting plurilateral talks of NSAs on Afghanistan now

India is hosting a meeting of national security advisors (NSAs) from Afghanistan's 'regional' neighbours on November 10 and 11 on the country's situation.

This meeting was supposed to take place in 2020. Covid-19 delayed it. Two meetings of this arrangement had taken place in 2018 and 2019. Back then, Afghanistan was a democracy. Now, the situation has changed drastically in Afghanistan. It is an Islamist dictatorship. A democratically elected government has been ousted by the Taliban, the most powerful jihadi force in Afghanistan.

India is hosting a meeting of national security advisors (NSAs) from Afghanistan's 'regional' neighbours on November 10 and 11 on the country's situation. India had invited countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Russia, Iran, Pakistan and China. Seven of these countries have confirmed their participation in the

NSA-level meeting.

The two countries that have rejected India's invitation for talks on Afghanistan are the ones who have emerged as staunch supporters of the Taliban: Pakistan and China. Pakistan was, in fact, so happy with the Taliban's return to Afghanistan that it declared that India's investment in the civilian government of the country was doomed.

However, smarting under the taunt from its arch-rival, India has tried to stay relevant in Afghanistan despite resisting an apparent pressure to recognise the Taliban. India has reportedly maintained a channel of communication with the Taliban. Yet, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his recent interactions at the G-20 meeting in Italy, warned the world about "any form of intimidation or threat

that would emerge out of Afghanistan".

India's concern has been particularly grave given the intricate proximity between the Taliban, the Pakistan Army's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and various terror outfits operating from Pakistan's soil. The rejection of India's invitation to Pakistan and its all-weather friend China for a dialogue on Afghanistan reinforces India's interpretation of the situation.

Rejecting India's invitation, Pakistan NSA Moeed Yusuf accused India of being "a spoiler" that "can't be a peacemaker" in Afghanistan. China also said it would not be part of this arrangement pushed through by India in its immediate neighbourhood.

Besides Pakistan and China, Iran recently did not invite India for a meeting on Afghanistan.

Domestic automakers see worst festive season performance in nearly a decade: Report



The all-important festive period from Navratri to Diwali this year marked the worst performance for domestic automakers in nearly a decade.

Sales of passenger vehicles (PVs) usually peak during the period, but demand was much lower during this year, especially in northern India. Registrations for new vehicles during the 30-day period declined steeply by double digits in comparison to the same period last year, reported The Economic Times.

The report added that demand dipped for both passenger vehicles and two-wheelers. Industry insiders quoted in the report said retail sales of PVs dropped by about a third in the 30-day period. Roughly 3,05,000 PVs were delivered this time compared to 4,55,000 units last year.

Data cited in the report from the government's VAHAN portal showed that automakers sold fewer cars in comparison to last year. Even two-wheeler and tractor registrations dipped over 10 per cent, indicating a sharp drop in sales.

The report, however, noted that the data may not fully capture the registrations closer to Diwali as it comes with a lag of 7-15 days.

FADA president Vinkesh Gulati told the publication that the festive season has been a big dampener for automotive dealers in at least a decade.

Gulati highlighted supply-side challenges on semiconductors and lack of demand in entry-level segments for both cars and two-wheelers as reasons behind the drop in sales during the important festive period.

Demand remained strong for compact SUVs and luxury vehicles, but shortage of supplies due to a range of factors dented overall sales.

Air pollution and genes may elevate risk of depression: Study

Exposure to high-particulate-matter air pollution may significantly increase the risk of depression in healthy people who have a genetic predisposition for the disorder, according to a first-of-its-kind study.

The research, published on Monday in the journal PNAS, combined scientific data on air pollution, neuroimaging, brain gene expression, and additional data gathered from an international genetic consortium

from over 40 countries.

"The key message in this study, which has not been shown before, is that air pollution is affecting important cognitive and emotional circuitry of the brain by changing the expression of genes that are conducive to depression," said Hao Yang Tan from the Lieber Institute for Brain Development (LIBD) in the US.

"More people in high-pollution

areas will become depressed because their genes and pollution

in their environment exaggerate the individual effects of each," said Tan, who led the research

in collaboration with Peking University, China.

The researchers noted that all people have some propensity for developing depression, but certain people have higher risk written into their genes. This predisposition does not mean that a person will develop depression, but it increases a person's risk above the average population, they said. The study shows that depression

is far more likely to develop in otherwise healthy humans who have these key genes and who live in environments with high levels of particulate-matter in the air.

"Our results are the first to show a direct, neurological link between air pollution and how the brain works in processing emotional and cognitive information and in risk for depression," said Zhi Li, a postdoctoral fellow at the LIBD, and lead author of the study.





Paytm finds buyers, but no blow-out demand in India's largest IPO

Paytm's \$2.5 billion initial public offering (IPO), India's largest, was oversubscribed at the close of bidding on Wednesday, although investors showed less enthusiasm than for some other tech firms that have ridden the country's IPO boom.

The company, which had already raised \$1.1 billion from anchor investors, received \$2.64 billion worth of bids for the remaining shares on offer, or 1.89 times, according to stock exchange data.

Institutional investors bid for 2.79 times the shares reserved for them, while retail investors bid for 1.66 times.

Some analysts said the company, centered around payments but marketed as an all-in-one app, may have struggled to sell its complex model to investors as

well as its path to profitability. Loss-making Paytm, formally called One97 Communications, offers a range of services from banking, shopping, movie and travel ticketing to gaming.

"In every Paytm business there is already an incumbent player and there is no clear path to profitability. When you combine that with the valuation, it just doesn't sit right," said a fund manager with an investment firm that has stakes in several Indian startups, but decided against investing in Paytm.

Other analysts, however, said a subscription level of 1.89 times was on a par with other major global issues and showed Indian investors had confidence in digital businesses. Paytm increased the size of its offering last month and priced it at 2,080-2,150 rupees

per share, targeting a \$20 billion valuation which some retail investors saw as expensive.

"I'd have liked to invest in Paytm if the price was a little lower. At this price Paytm is highly overvalued for a company that's not going to turn a profit any time soon," said Pratik Chandra, a 30-year-old chartered accountant from Jamnagar, Gujarat.

Marquee investors trimmed their stakes in the IPO. Ant Group (688688.SS), which had a 28% holding in Paytm, is selling shares worth 47.04 billion rupees and will be left with a 23% stake. SoftBank's (9984.T) Vision Fund is cutting its stake by 2.5 percentage points to 16% with a 16.89 billion rupee share sale.

Paytm's IPO will be the largest Asia Pacific fintech IPO ever and is also the second-largest fintech

IPO of 2021 globally, said Elevation Capital, which will own 15% of shares in Paytm after the IPO. "We hope to continue to strive and drive financial inclusion for the underserved and unserved population of the country," a Paytm spokesperson said, adding the company was overwhelmed by the response to its IPO.

WEAK RESPONSE VS ZOMATO, NYKAA

By comparison, food delivery start-up Zomato's (ZOMT.NS) IPO was more than 38 times oversubscribed earlier this year and its shares are up around 79% from the offer price, while e-commerce beauty platform FSN E-Commerce Ventures (Nykaa) (FSNE.NS) saw demand for 82 times the number of shares on offer.

Domestic stocks slip as metals, banks fall; Nykaa soars after market debut



Indian shares ended slightly lower on Wednesday, weighed down by metals and bank stocks, while online fashion startup Nykaa nearly doubled in a stellar market debut.

The blue chip NSE Nifty 50 index closed down 0.15% at 18,017.20, while the benchmark S&P BSE Sensex lost 0.13% to end at 60,352.82.

After retreating from record highs in October on heavy foreign selling and overvaluation fears, Indian equities somewhat rebounded last week in part due to positive sentiment during the festive season of Diwali.

However, markets have struggled to continue the momentum this week, with both main indexes on Wednesday clocking their second straight session of losses.

In Mumbai trading, the Nifty Metal Index fell 1.76%, tracking broader metal markets. Dalian iron ore futures hit a year's low, as demand worries intensified owing to China's regulations on steel and a worsening liquidity crisis in the country's property sector.

The Nifty Bank Index lost 0.88% and posted its third straight session of losses. Lender IndusInd Bank was the top percentage loser on the Nifty 50. On the upside, Nykaa's parent firm made a blockbuster debut, valuing the Indian online beauty startup at nearly \$14 billion.

Elon Musk remains world's richest person after losing \$50 billion in 2 days

The world's richest person, Elon Musk, lost a whopping \$50 billion from his net worth in just two days after the shares of his company Tesla plunged sharply.

Musk's wealth decline is the steepest in the two-day history of the Bloomberg Billionaires Index and the biggest one-day fall since Jeff Bezos's \$36 billion plunge following his divorce with Mackenzie Scott in 2019, reported Bloomberg.



According to the report, the sharp decline in Tesla stocks came amid a turbulent few days for the

electric carmaker. It all started when Elon Musk asked his Twitter followers over

the weekend whether he should sell 10 per cent of his stake in the company. This was followed by news that his brother Kimbal Musk sold shares just before the poll. Claims were also made that Musk may want to sell his stake to cover his personal debts.

STILL THE WORLD'S RICHEST PERSON

While Musk has lost a sizeable chunk of his net worth after the fall in Tesla stocks, he still remains the world's richest

person by a good margin.

Elon Musk's net worth decreased to \$288 billion, down 35 billion in the past 24 hours. As a result, Musk's lead over Jeff Bezos as the world's richest person has dropped to \$82 billion. The wealth gap between Musk and Bezos recently increased to as much as \$143 billion, higher than the total net worth of Bill Gates, who is the fourth-richest person in the world.



Four Nasa astronauts splashdown in Gulf of Mexico, ending 200-day flight

Four astronauts splashed down off the coast of Florida on Tuesday morning riding home with SpaceX to end a 200-day space station mission. The dragon spacecraft streaked through Earth's upper atmosphere in the wee hours leaving behind a meteor trail before parachuting into the Gulf of Mexico.

Onboard the Crew Dragon was Nasa astronauts Shane Kimbrough and Megan McArthur, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency astronaut Akihiko Hoshide, and European Space Agency astronaut Thomas Pesquet coming home after a nearly six-month-long science mission at the International Space Station.

The four astronauts should have been back Monday morning, but high winds in the recovery zone delayed their return.

"One more night with this magical view. Who could complain? I'll miss our spaceship!" Pesquet tweeted Sunday alongside a brief video showing the space station illuminated against the blackness of space and the twinkling city lights on the nighttime side of Earth.

Before undocking, German astronaut Matthias Maurer, who's waiting to launch at Nasa's Kennedy Space Center, tweeted it was a shame the two crews wouldn't overlap at the space station but "we trust you'll leave everything nice and tidy." His will be SpaceX's fourth crew flight for Nasa in just 1 and 1/2 years.

A FLY AROUND THE SPACE STATION

Before leaving, the Crew Dragon conducted a fly around the ISS to capture the exterior of the station, this was the first for SpaceX vehicles.

Such fly around was earlier conducted by the Space Shuttle mission. The last Russian capsule fly-around was three years ago.

"Crew-2 Commander Shane Kimbrough and Pilot Megan McArthur monitor data as Mission Specialist Thomas Pesquet captured photos of the International Space Station during the first-ever 'fly around' of the complex from inside a commercial Crew Dragon," Nasa said in a blog post.

A SCIENCE-RICH MISSION

The four astronauts, who arrived at the Station earlier this year were part of some of the major scientific experiments in microgravity which included four spacewalks to enhance the station's solar power, a movie-making visit by a Russian film crew and the first-ever space harvest of chilly peppers.

The astronauts worked on experiments related to the loss of muscle mass, especially in space flight. The experiment could pave way for long term flights for astronauts going to the Moon and beyond. The Ultrasonic Tweezers experiment by astronauts will help develop acoustic tweezers that use sound for remote and contactless manipulation of materials in microgravity. Meanwhile, astronaut Megan McArthur was part of the Cool flames experiment that burn at extremely low temperatures and are nearly impossible to create in Earth's gravity. Understanding how fire spreads and behaves in space is crucial for the safety of future astronauts and for understanding and controlling fire here on Earth.

"These valuable scientific research helps to prepare humans for future

space exploration missions while generating numerous innovations and benefits for humanity on Earth," Nasa said.

NOT A COMFY RIDE HOME

It wasn't the most comfortable ride back. The toilet in their capsule was broken, and so the astronauts needed to rely on diapers for the eight-hour trip home. They shrugged it off late last week as just one more challenge in their mission.

Their stay on board the flying outpost had also been not that easygoing. The first issue arose shortly after their April liftoff; Mission Control warned a piece of space junk was threatening to collide with their capsule. It turned out to be a false alarm. Then in July, thrusters on a newly arrived Russian lab inadvertently fired and sent the station into a spin. The four astronauts took shelter in their docked SpaceX capsule, ready to make a hasty departure if necessary.

CREW-3 TO LAUNCH WEDNESDAY

With the safe arrival of Crew-2, Nasa and SpaceX is targeting the launch of four astronauts part of the Crew-3 mission to Space Station on Wednesday. The liftoff of the Falcon-9 rocket with four astronauts to the station is likely to happen at 9.03 pm EST (7.33 am IST).

The next crew will also spend six months up there, welcoming back-to-back groups of tourists. A Japanese tycoon and his personal assistant will get a lift from the Russian Space Agency in December, followed by three businessmen arriving via SpaceX in February.

Record number of gravitational waves hit Earth, shed light on unknown mysteries of universe



It was 1916 when Albert Einstein first predicted the existence of gravitational waves, a ripple in space-time, in his general theory of relativity. Over a century later, scientists have for the first time detected one of the largest batches of these waves that passed through Earth.

The 35 new detections of the ripples in space-time take the total number of such observations to 90 since we first detected it in 2015. 32 of these ripples were detected from pairs of merging black holes, while three others likely come from the collision of a neutron star and a black hole.

The detection was done by an international team of scientists including Australian researchers from the ARC Centre of Excellence for Gravitational Wave Discovery (OzGrav). The detections were noted between November 2019 to March 2020. "Each new observing run brings new discoveries and surprises. The third observing run saw gravitational wave detection becoming an everyday thing, but I still think each detection is exciting!" said Dr Hannah Middleton, a post-doctoral researcher at OzGrav and co-author of the study.

WHAT ARE GRAVITATIONAL WAVES?

Gravitational waves are an invisible ripple in space that was first discovered by Albert Einstein over 100 years ago. Einstein predicted that something special happens when two bodies-such as planets or stars-orbit each other. He believed that this kind of movement could cause ripples in space. These ripples would spread out like the ripples in a pond when a stone is tossed in.

According to LIGO, the strongest gravitational waves are produced by cataclysmic events such as colliding black holes, supernovae (massive stars exploding at the end of their lifetimes), and colliding neutron stars. Other waves are predicted to be caused by the rotation of neutron stars that are not perfect spheres, and possibly even the remnants of gravitational radiation created by the Big Bang.

THE BIGGEST BATCH OF WAVES DETECTED

Scientists detected the current batch of waves emerging from mergers between possible neutron star - black hole pairs, a merger between a black hole and an object which could either be a light black hole or a heavy neutron star. While others were from a massive pair of black holes orbiting each other, with a combined mass 145 times heavier than the Sun, another was from a pair of black holes orbiting each other, in which at least one of the pair is spinning upright. Some waves came from a pair of black holes orbiting each other which have a combined mass 112 times heavier than the Sun, which seems to be spinning upside-down and a 'light' pair of black holes that together weigh only 18 times the mass of the Sun.



Machines scrubbing carbon dioxide from air gain momentum in fight against climate change

On a field ringed by rolling green hills in Iceland, fans attached to metal structures that look like an industrial-sized Lego project are spinning. Their mission is to scrub the atmosphere by sucking carbon dioxide from the air and storing it safely underground.

Just a few years ago, this technology, known as "direct air capture," was seen by many as an unrealistic fantasy. But the technology has evolved to where people consider it a serious tool in fighting climate change.

The Iceland plant, called Orca, is the largest such facility in the world, capturing about 4,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year. But compared to what the planet needs, the amount is tiny. Experts say 10 billion tons of carbon dioxide must be removed annually by mid-century.

"Effectively, in 30 years' time, we need a worldwide enterprise that is twice as big as the oil and gas industry, and that works in reverse," said Julio Friedmann, senior research scholar at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University.

Leading scientific agencies including the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change say that even if the world manages to stop

producing harmful emissions, that still won't be enough to avert a climate catastrophe. They say we need to suck massive amounts of carbon dioxide out of the air and put it back underground - yielding what some call "negative emissions." "We have already failed on climate to the extent to which direct air capture is one of the many things we must do," Friedmann said. "We have already emitted so many greenhouse gases at such an incredible volume and rate that CO2 removal at enormous scales is required, as well as reduction of emissions."

As dire warnings have accelerated, technology to vacuum carbon dioxide from the air has advanced. Currently, a handful of companies operate such plants on a commercial scale, including Climeworks, which built the Orca plant in Iceland, and Carbon Engineering, which built a different type of direct air capture plant in British Columbia. And now that the technology has been proven, both companies have ambitions for major expansion.

DIRECT AIR CAPTURE AT WORK

At Climeworks' Orca plant near Reykjavik, fans suck air into big, black collection boxes where the carbon dioxide accumulates on a filter. Then it's heated with geothermal energy and is combined with water and pumped

deep underground into basalt rock formations. Within a few years, Climeworks says, the carbon dioxide turns into stone. It takes energy to build and run Climeworks' plants. Throughout the life cycle of the Orca plant, including construction, 10 tons of carbon dioxide are emitted for every 100 tons of carbon dioxide removed from the air. Carbon Engineering's plants can run on renewable energy or natural gas, and when natural gas is used, the carbon dioxide generated during combustion is captured. Carbon dioxide can also be injected into geological reservoirs such as depleted oil and gas fields. Carbon Engineering is taking that approach in partnership with Occidental Petroleum to build what's expected to be the world's largest direct air capture facility in the Southwest's Permian Basin - the most productive U.S. oil field.

Direct air capture plants globally are removing about 9,000 tons of carbon dioxide from the air annually, according to the International Energy Agency. Climeworks built its first direct air capture plant in 2017 in Hinwil, Switzerland, which captured 900 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually that was sold to companies for use in fizzy beverages and fertilizer. The company built another plant, called Artic Fox, in Iceland that same year; it captured up to 50 metric tons of carbon dioxide

annually that was injected underground.

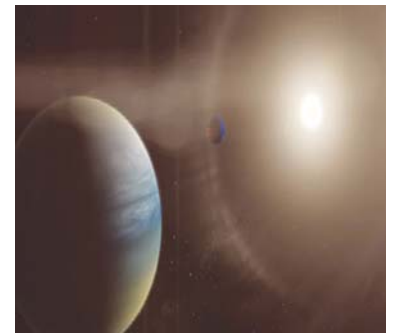
"Today we are on a level that we can say it's on an industrial scale, but it's not on a level where we need to be to make a difference in stopping climate change," said Daniel Egger, chief commercial officer at Climeworks.

Their plans call for scaling up to remove several million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually by 2030. And Eggers said that would mean increasing capacity by a factor of 10 almost every three years. It's a lofty, and expensive, goal. Estimates vary, but it currently costs about \$500 to \$600 per ton to remove carbon dioxide using direct air capture, said Colin McCormick, chief innovation officer at Carbon Direct, which invests in carbon removal projects and advises businesses on buying such services.

As with any new technology, costs can decrease over time. Within the next decade, experts say, the cost of direct air capture could fall to about \$200 per ton or lower.

For years, companies bought carbon offsets by doing things like investing in reforestation projects. But recent studies have shown many offsets don't deliver the promised environmental benefits.

Unique star system with 'super-Earths' surprises astronomers



The search for life beyond Earth has brought astronomers to a unique planetary system, which is nothing like any other observed over decades. Dubbed HD 3167, the star system has two super-Earths orbiting the star every one and 30 days, the third orbiting it every eight days.

However, like planets in our solar system going around the Sun in a flat plane orbit, the planets in the HD 3167 system orbit the star around its poles. The new revelation came as scientists studied the alignment of the exoplanets, which could be used to distinguish among concurrent evolution scenarios of the planets.

"Multi-planet systems usually host mini-Neptunes and super-Earths, whose sizes make orbital architecture measurements challenging," astronomers said in a paper published in the journal *Astronomy & Astrophysics*.

Astronomers first found the system in 2016 when they observed two planets, HD 3167 c and d, orbiting the star at an unusual inclination. The planets were circling their host star in a polar orbit, going above and below the poles instead of around the star's equatorial axis.

However, a new discovery has left scientists scratching their heads for an explanation as the third planet, HD 3167b, in the system does not follow the same law as the first two.

Using the Very Large Telescope in Chile, astronomers observed that the third planet circles the star on an equatorial flat planet like planets in our solar system revolve around the Sun, the planet is in a perpendicular orbit compared to the other two circling its poles.

Astronomers speculate that the unique orbit of the planets around the star could be the result of the gravitational interaction of the system with an unseen object in its outer reaches.



Finally, pills to treat Covid-19! All you need to know about Pfizer's Paxlovid and Merck's Molnupiravir

With initial data showing that Pfizer's Paxlovid and Merck's Molnupiravir could slash the risk of severe Covid-19 infection, these pills could bolster the world's therapeutic arsenal against the virus.

Vaccines have been the primary antidote in the battle against Covid-19 to date, but we could have at least two game-changers in the form of American pharmaceutical giant Pfizer's antiviral pill Paxlovid, and Molnupiravir, manufactured by Merck, Sharp and Dohme, and Ridgeback Biotherapeutics. Pfizer, one of the primary players in the Covid-19 vaccine manufacturing race, with over 2.5 billion doses administered, now has an antiviral pill to treat the infection. The preliminary data of Pfizer's experimental antiviral pill to treat Covid-19 shows an 89 per cent decrease in the chance of hospitalization or death for adults at risk of severe disease. Is Pfizer alone in the race for a pill

to treat Covid? Molnupiravir was actually the first oral tablet developed for the treatment of symptomatic Covid-19 patients. Initial data on the pill shows it can cut down hospitalizations by half. Both Pfizer's Paxlovid and Merck's Molnupiravir are pills to be taken orally. Neither pill can be taken as a preventive measure. It is to be consumed only by people who test positive for Covid-19 and show symptoms. What does clinical trial data show? The clinical trial for Pfizer's Paxlovid examined 1,219 patients with mild to moderate Covid-19, and the pill lowered the chances of hospitalization or deaths for adults by 89 per cent.

Among patients receiving Paxlovid, 0.8 per cent were hospitalized, and none died after 28 days of treatment. Merck manufactured Molnupiravir was administered to 775 patients who tested positive for Covid-19. Among patients receiving Molnupiravir, only 7.3 per cent were hospitalized and none developed a fatal infection. What is the regimen of the pills? Three pills of Pfizer's Paxlovid must be given twice a day to patients diagnosed with Covid-19. The pills must be administered within three to five days of the onset of infection. Four pills of Merck's Molnupiravir must be given twice a day to patients diagnosed with Covid-19. It must be administered within five days of the onset of infection.

UP: Kanpur reports 16 new Zika virus cases; CM Yogi Adityanath takes stock of situation



Sixteen new cases of the Zika virus have been found in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur district. So far, a total of 105 patients with the Zika virus have been reported in Kanpur. Two pregnant women are also included in the 16 new patients. In view of rising Zika virus cases, Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath also visited Kanpur today to take stock of the situation.

Yogi Adityanath held a review meeting with the officials and inquired about the efforts made regarding the infection of the Zika virus. While interacting with the media, the Chief Minister said that equal efforts are being made from the local level to the government level regarding the virus, it is expected that soon Kanpur will be free from the Zika virus infection.

On the other hand, despite all the efforts of the health department and district administration, the Zika virus is not being traced in Kanpur. Chief Minister who reached Kanpur to review the Zika virus, claimed that the situation is now under control. So far 105 cases have been found in Kanpur in the last one month, out of which 17 people have been cured. While the treatment of the remaining 88 patients is underway.

Officials told the Chief Minister that five wards were particularly affected by this, in which the team of Municipal Corporation, District Administration and Health Department jointly campaigned. CM also said that a team of experts was sent at the government level as well, as well as the monitoring committee carried out door-to-door cleaning campaigns.

Talking about the situation, he also said that there is no need to panic about the increasing cases of Zika virus infection. Make people aware and do the work of fogging, testing of samples with full dedication. Anyone found infected or showing symptoms should be isolated. Fogging needs special emphasis.

66 lakh AP schools children get eye check-ups under YSR Kanti Velugu scheme

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, launched YSR Kanti Velugu, universal eye care for citizens of the state through various phases, which has made progress with phase 2- school children screening and 'Avva-Tata' for senior citizens (aged above 60).

Officials said that 66,17,613 children had already been tested and 1,58,227 of them had been given spectacles, 13,58,173 citizens over the age of 60 had



been tested, from which 7,60,041 were prescribed with spectacles, 4,69,481 were issued with spectacles and 1,00,223 were operated on for

Cataract.

The delay in cataract surgery for the elderly was caused by the onset of Covid-19. The officials were instructed to take this into

cognizance and work towards ensuring that those who are due for the procedure are receiving it without further delay. The Chief Minister has also instructed officials to continue the testing process, and prescribe treatments for both children and senior citizens who haven't been tested yet.

To ensure that all new students who are admitted to schools undergo screening and treatment, officials will be conducting a one-week drive.

HCM directed officials to provide eyeglasses to those identified with eye problems and monitor them regularly by connecting with 104 service and village health clinics.

NADU-NEDU

The Chief Minister instructed officials to expedite all work related to the YSR health clinics. As many as 10,011 clinics have been proposed, of which work has been started for 8,585 clinics, while 1,426 clinics are ready.

Mallika Sherawat recalls her fight with Emraan Hashmi during Murder: 'It was so childish on my part also, I'm no less'

Actor Mallika Sherawat has spoken about her fights with her co-stars adding that most of them would get into an 'ego tussle' with her. In a new interview, Mallika called her fight with her Murder co-actor Emraan Hashmi, the 'funniest'. Directed by Anurag Basu and produced by Mukesh Bhatt, Murder released in 2004. It featured Mallika Sherawat, Emraan Hashmi, and Ashmit Patel in lead roles. Set in Bangkok, Thailand, the film is based on the 2002 American film Unfaithful. Murder

became highly successful at the box office. Murder 2 (2011) and Murder 3 (2013) were also parts of the film series.

During an interview on The Love Laugh Live show, when host Mandira Bedi asked about her fights with her co-actors, Mallika said, "I don't know why, but most of the co-actors would get into an ego tussle with me. They would expect me, the male co-stars like they come on set for me to--if I'm sitting, stand up and say 'good morning, how



are you' and fawn over them. It's not my personality, I'm a Haryanvi Jaat, I don't fawn over anybody if I'm forced to. I've had longer in touch. "I lost touch with quite a few skirmishes." She continued, "The funniest was he was a wonderful co-star with Emraan Hashmi after or because he's so friendly and

during Murder. We didn't speak during promotions or something we had a misunderstanding. It was so uncalled for and so childish on my part also. I'm no less." Mallika added that though she laughs about the fight now, they are no

giving. He's a nice boy." Meanwhile, fans will see Mallika next in RK/RKAY, directed by Rajat Kapoor. The film released in the US a while ago but is yet to release in India. She will also be seen in Nakaab, a digital series that also features Ankita Chakraborty and Esha Gupta.

Mallika Sherawat says a producer once wanted to heat chapatis on her waist for 'hot song' Emraan was seen in the recently released Dybbuk: The Curse is Real along with Nikita Dutta.

Alia Bhatt fumbles as Karan Johar asks rapid fire questions, Tanmay Bhat recalls her Prithviraj Chauhan goof-up.

Alia Bhatt was in the hot seat as Karan Johar asked her a bunch of rapid fire questions during a night shoot of Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani. He took to Instagram to share the video. On being asked about the film they were shooting for, Alia fumbled while saying Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani and burst into giggles. "Tongue twister that, right?" Karan asked. His next question was about the

Alia then shared her takes on the 'song of the season'. She sang a line from Diljit Dosanjh's Lover and when asked

After thinking for a few seconds, she said, "You winning the Padma Shri." Her answer left him squealing in



whereabouts of 'Rocky' (Ranveer Singh). She goofed up once again as she said that he was shooting before correcting herself: "Rocky is shooting. Working out, sorry." Karan remarked, "These were not trick questions, Alia, that you were really getting so flummoxed by." She, however, replied that she was 'feeling stressed'. "I don't like rapid fires," she said.

to pick a second, chose Raataan Lambiyan from Sidharth Malhotra and Kiara Advani-starrer Shershaah. Her pick for 'film of the season' was Sooryavanshi and when asked to name a show that she is loving, she said Succession. "Something that you have really, really loved on Instagram that you want everyone to reach out to? What have you watched on Instagram that really moved you?" Karan asked.

commented, while Alia's mother Soni Razdan and Manish Malhotra dropped heart emojis. "Was waiting for 'Who is the President of India?'" comedian Tanmay Bhat wrote, referring to her infamous 'Prithviraj Chauhan' gaffe on Koffee With Karan in 2012.

Ranveer Singh's mom poses with his poster after watching Sooryavanshi

Ranveer Singh today, November 10, shared a photo of his mother, Anju Bhavnani. In the photo, she is seen posing in front of Ranveer's Sooryavanshi poster. Anju had gone to watch Akshay Kumar-starrer Sooryavanshi in a theatre. Ranveer is seen in a cameo appearance in the film. He plays the role of police officer Simmba. **RANVEER SINGH SHARES PIC OF MOM POSING IN FRONT OF**



November 10, shared a photo of his mother posing in front of his Sooryavanshi poster. He wrote, "Hi

HIS POSTER
Ranveer Singh is seen in a c a m e o appearance in Rohit Shetty's Sooryavanshi. The actor t o d a y ,

Ma!" ALL ABOUT SOORYAVANSHI
Sooryavanshi is the fourth film in Rohit Shetty's cop universe that began with Ajay Devgn's Singham in 2011. The latest actioner features cameo appearances by Ranveer Singh and Ajay Devgn. After Singham and Singham Returns, Ranveer Singh carried forward the baton with Simmba.



Kriti Sanon begins shooting for Ganapath in UK, shares teaser to introduce her character

Kriti Sanon today, November 10, shared a teaser video to introduce the character she is playing in Ganapath. The actress will be seen in the role of Jassi in the film, also starring Tiger Shroff. She began shooting for the film today. Directed by Vikas Bahl, the film will see the actors in action avatars. KRITI SANON STARTS SHOOTING FOR GANAPATH IN UK

Recently, Tiger Shroff announced that he has begun shooting for Vikas Bahl's Ganapath. Today, November 10, Kriti Sanon also shared a teaser announcing that she has joined Tiger in the UK. She wrote, "Shoot Mode on. Super excited to start my #Ganapath journey as Jassi with full on action and loads of fun as I begin with the UK schedule (sic)."



Tiger Shroff also shared the teaser on social media and welcomed his leading lady. He wrote, "Time for some more action more dhamaka. Welcoming my leading lady, Jassi, as she begins the UK schedule of #Ganapath. Can't wait to

reunite with you @kritisanon (sic)!"

ABOUT GANAPATH

Directed by Vikas Bahl, Ganapath stars Tiger Shroff and Kriti Sanon in lead roles. This is not the first time the two actors will be seen sharing screen space. They made their debut together in Heropanti in 2014. Ganapath is being produced by Jacky Bhagnani of Pooja Entertainment in association with Good Co. Set in a post-pandemic dystopian era, the Kriti Sanon and Tiger Shroff-starrer is scheduled to release in theatres on December 23, 2022.



Farhan Akhtar 'really glad' after police detains 'creep' who threatened an actor's daughter

Actor Farhan Akhtar has expressed his relief at the detainment of the person who had made threats to an actor's daughter. After it was reported that the man was caught by the Mumbai Police, Farhan wrote in a tweet that he was glad at the quick action. However, he hoped such swift action is also taken by the police when female journalists' safety is concerned. "I'm really glad to hear the Mumbai Police cyber cell have located and arrested the creep who tweeted rape threats to a child.



officials have detained one person from Hyderabad who allegedly gave threats the child on Twitter. Senior Mumbai police officers

Now hoping for similar swift action in cases of female journalists who receive rape threats almost on a daily basis," he wrote. Mumbai crime branch's cyber wing

said that the suspect is a software engineer in food delivery app in Hyderabad. He is being brought to Mumbai. Once his involvement in the crime is established he would be put under arrest. The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) had also tweeted that it has taken suo motu cognisance of media reports of threats to th child.



When Yash Chopra locked Rani Mukerji's parents in a room: 'I'm not letting them out until...'

Actor Rani Mukerji had once revealed that Yash Chopra threatened to lock up her parents when she refused to do Saathiya. In an old interview, Rani had said that her father Ram Mukherjee and mother Krishna Mukherjee went to Yash's office to convey that Rani didn't want to star in Saathiya. Saathiya, released in 2002, is a romantic drama film directed by Shaad Ali and produced by Mani Ratnam and Yash Chopra under Yash Raj Films. The film featured Vivek Oberoi and Rani Mukerji in lead roles. It also starred Shah Rukh Khan and Tabu in special appearances. In an interview with News18, Rani had said that after Mujhse Dosti Karoge, she waited for about eight months 'without any work'. "At that time, refusing work,



like my mother thought I had gone mad because anything that was getting offered to me I was just like 'no, no, no'. I started taking decisions then." When asked what she did during that time Rani added, "nothing, I just sat at home". She also said, "A lot of film critics and magazines had written

me off and they said 'her career's over' and I was okay with that. I was like probably they are right but I'm not going to give up. I'm going to take up something that my heart believes in. Then luckily Saathiya came along and I remember Yash (Chopra) uncle calling my parents to the office. My parents had gone to tell Yash uncle that 'Rani is not interested to do this film'. He called me up and said, 'Beta, you're making a very big mistake. I'm locking the door of my room and I'm not letting your parents out till you say yes to the film'. And I thank him for that." Meanwhile, Rani Mukerji will be next seen in YRF production Bunty and Babli 2 along with Saif Ali Khan. In the first film in 2005, Rani was paired opposite Abhishek Bachchan.



The South Asian

INSIDER

Voice of South Asian Community

Since March 2002



The Home of
Solid Games
www.greystonegames.com

Vol. 20

Issue 38

Friday 12 November to 19 November 2021 \$1

www.thesouthasianinsider.com

How big a deal is Biden's infrastructure bill?



- President Joe Biden will sign into law the largest federal investment in infrastructure in more than a decade.
- In a statement, the administration said Biden will be joined in a signing ceremony by members of Congress who helped write the \$1 trillion piece of legislation.
- Biden's signature will make the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act law 10 days after the House passed the bipartisan piece of legislation.

Story on
Pages
34-38