

# Kamala Harris Campaign In Meltdown 'No discipline. No plan. No strategy.'

*Campaign manager Juan Rodriguez is taking the most heat for the failings, but his defenders point their finger at the candidate's sister, Maya Harris.*



Page 24

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# Mesmerised by Indian classical music and dance!

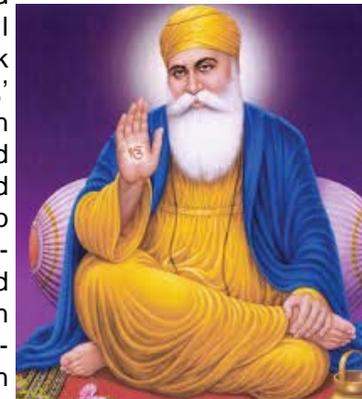


(Press Release) New Hempstead, everyone from Indian classical musicians vocalists and the dancers York: As I was walking out the audience was just and dancers on both the brought all of us on a of Pandit Jasraj Auditorium stunned by the amazing days, one better than the higher plane, in a at Vedic Heritage Inc in performances of all the other. The instrumentalists, meditative stage, even in

a trance and brought us closer to the Supreme Being. Her Holiness Sri Sri Anant Vibhusit Pratham Parvatyacharya GURUMAA Jyotishanand Saraswati was a pioneer in introducing the rich Indian Classical Music and Dance to the NY audience nearly four decades ago, and has brought us closer to the Supreme maestros and upcoming artistes, and maestros of today who were once upon a time upcoming artists! This stage at Vedic Heritage has become a pilgrimage destination for the classical music and dance community from India!

## Guru Nanak Birthday Wish

Guru Nanak, whom I call the 'Apostle of Peace,' was 'One' with God and Mother Nature, well beyond merely 'walk humbly with thy God,' and his 550th Birth celebration has caused dear Imran Khan and dear Narendra Modi to leave their Nuclear-tipped arms behind and instead embrace each other and peaceful visa-free regime on the path - Kartarpur Corridor - to Guru Nanak's birth-Gurudwara. I know that our birthday wish from all of us in America is for Guru Nanak's "Oneness" be embraced by all, such that the hate-based Terror-Genie evaporates into oblivion, and Kartarpur Corridor replaces the Line of Control on land and in our hearts."



**By Ravi Batra**  
Chair, National  
Advisory Council for  
South Asian Affairs

## Celebration of 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji

(Our Staff Reporter) New York : The 550th birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was celebrated in Consulate General of India, New York on Tuesday, November, 12 2019.

Sandeep Chakravorty, Consul General, inaugurated a Photo-exhibition on Life & Philosophy of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Consul General spoke about relevance of the message and philosophy of Guru Nanak

Devji and significant of Sangat and Pangat tradition which were started by Guru Nanak Devji. A large number of members of Indian diaspora and friends of India attended the event. Consulate also organized a Panel Discussion on "Contribution of Sikhs in America".

Mandeep Singh, Managing Director, Geocom Capital; Ravi Batra, Attorney; Karambir Kang,

Taj Hotels; Akashdeep Singh Sarpal, Country Head ICICI bank; Tajinder Singh, Publisher of Maha Punjab News Paper and Atma Singh, Member of Indian Community participated in the round table discussion and shared their views on the practical aspects of the teachings of Guru Nanak Devji. The celebration of 550th birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji ended with the traditional Langar

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# “Ekal Vidyalaya” Makes History – Reaches 100,000-School Milestone



(New York November 9, 2019) will remain as the historic day in the annals of “Ekal Vidyalaya Foundation (EVF)”. On this day, in star-studded, glamour filled “Future of India” Gala in New York City, Ekal reached 100,000 school milestones within minutes of its beginning. Going into the ‘Gala’, Ekal had 99,200 schools and so the evening was full of anticipated excitement to ring the bell for magical 100,000-school landmark. As soon as ‘Mohan Wanchoo’, took the reins of the evening as the chairperson of the gala, he took everyone by surprise with his trailblazing announcement. He pledged \$1 Million over the period of 5 years patching, with immediate effect, shortfall amount for 800-schools to

reach the magical figure of 100,000-schools. These additional schools will be established shortly and will benefit 25,000 children bringing annual literacy total to 2.7 Million children. Mohan Wanchoo’s pronouncement was not only celebrated with thunderous applause and sparkling ‘fireworks’, but it also set in motion exuberant outpour of generosity, for the rest of the evening. By the end of the evening \$3.1 Million were raised. This was in addition to Los Angeles Gala were \$2 Million were raised. This year, NYC magnificent Gala was hosted at lavishly decorated majestic ‘Gotham Hall’ and was attended by the elite of the society and Ekal’s dedicated supporters.

Although rooted in literacy, Ekal has blossomed into empowerment of rural-tribal folks across India. The evening’s keynote speaker and star-attraction was Bollywood celebrity and philanthropist ‘Vivek Oberoi’. In addition, distinguished speakers included ‘Raju Reddy’, a successful entrepreneur whose company was acquired by Hitachi, and ‘Ragy Thomas’, leading social-media management & marketing enterprise. ‘Ranjani Saigal’, the Executive Director of Ekal, traced 32-year history of the Ekal, including its transition into a nation building movement. Vivek Oberoi completely stole the show with his pledge to put all his entrepreneur might behind rural issues and spearhead

small-scale solar power solutions for energy requirements of villages. He said, “I have already received a commitment of over half a million dollars for such initiative”. At the conclusion of his captivating speech, he applauded Ekal getting Iconic “Gandhi Peace Prize” from the government of India for its social work in rural-tribal areas with gender equality. This award, which is given to only one organization each year was recently bestowed on ‘Ekal Abhiyan’ by Hon PM Modi and President Ram Kovind. For the benefit of people assembled, the ‘Peace Prize’ itself was ushered on the stage by a select group of people and presented to the gathering by Prakash Waghmare, a member of PR national

committee and Suresh Iyer, President of Ekal-USA. There was a brief panel discussion also moderated by ‘Amrita Saigal’, a young entrepreneur to highlight various aspects of Ekal that appeal to the Donors. Ragy Thomas pledged strong support to education and pledged \$100,000 to accelerate its pace. Raju Reddy, partnering with Ekal expressed desire to bring transformation to rural Telangana. ‘Sarva Mangal Family Trust’ and ‘Keshap Group’ confirmed to match technological intervention in education in ‘digital-tablets’ format. A momentous turn occurred when 13-yr ‘Riya’ donated \$1000 from a fund-raiser she had at her home. Vivek Oberoi was so touched by this that he appealed to the

gathering to match her cute gesture and the gathering responded by additional \$30,000. Several dignitaries were honored, including India Consul General of New York, Sandeep Chakravorty and New York Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney. Ekal also recognized several supporters for their distinctive projects. Among them were Dr Kavita Navani of ‘Sankalp’ for aiding 625 Ekal schools; Himanshu Shah of ‘Shah Capital’ for supporting ‘Gramothan Resource Ctr’; Adish & Asha Jain and Vandana & Vivek Sharma for corroborating in integral village development; Subra & Anu Dravida for promoting digital literacy through ‘Ekal-on-Wheel’ project.

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# In Maharashtra political churn, it's advantage coalition politics

**Irrespective of which way the Shiv Sena goes — whether with its estranged alliance partner, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), or with the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress, it is coalition politics that has won, not just in Maharashtra, but across India.**



Irrespective of which way the Shiv Sena goes — whether with its estranged alliance partner, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), or with the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress, it is coalition politics that has won, not just in Maharashtra, but across India.

Although coalition politics has its flaws, its greatest advantage is the element of checks and balances that coalition partners exert on one another.

It was nearly two

decades ago when the country was frustratingly witnessing the rise and fall of coalition governments, that the late bureaucrat-turned farmer leader, Sharad Joshi, had extolled the virtues of coalition politics. He had explained the significance of this political alignment in an interview to this journalist and said that this was best way forward for India because it would prevent excesses from any government that enjoys a comfortable majority.

The pitfalls of a coalition government are

the kind of embarrassing compromises that a dominant partner is forced to make to preserve the stability of the government itself. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh admitted to this during a meeting with editors in February, 2011, in New Delhi. Singh explained that his inaction on the alleged corruption in the United Progressive Alliance (UPA-II) government was because of the “limitations of coalition politics”.

Corruption is the result of weak institutions in India. It cannot be entirely blamed on the “limitations of coalition politics” as was done by Singh. In fact, that is a lesser evil compared to the critical strength of a coalition formation. It is almost as if there is an Opposition sitting within the government itself, and one cannot argue against a bigger and better advantage

than this.

This is exactly how the Shiv Sena functioned in Maharashtra in the last five years and more as the coalition partner of the BJP, although it did this out of a sense of urgency to assert its own existence in Maharashtra and not play second fiddle to the BJP.

Given the popular support for the BJP and its mascot, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after the results of the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, the Sena had been reduced to playing second fiddle to the BJP. The BJP wanted to preserve the alliance but also aimed to reduce the Sena to insignificance on its home ground.

Rather unexpected, BJP's numbers in the Maharashtra state assembly fell from 122 in the 2014 state assembly

polls to 105 in 2019. To be sure, the BJP, in an alliance with the Sena, contested 152 seats in 2019 compared to 230 in 2014 when the two parties had contested elections on their own and formed an alliance after the results. The Shiv Sena's numbers also fell, but less dramatically from 63 to 56. In 2014, the Sena contested 282 seats as against 126 in 2019, while the NCP improved its strength by 13 seats and the Congress by two.

The Shiv Sena, led by its late founder Bal Thackeray's son Uddhav, and the party's sharp-tongued, acerbic spokesperson Sanjay Raut, smelt an extraordinary opportunity to install a Sena chief minister in a 50:50 formula with the BJP.

When the BJP's top leadership and its erstwhile chief minister,

Devendra Fadnavis refused, Uddhav jumped ship, confident that he could now realise the promise he had purportedly made to his father—of installing a Sena chief minister once again, if not with the BJP, then certainly with the support of the NCP and the Congress. However, the latter dithered in taking a decision and Sharad Pawar sought more time from the Governor, who wrote to the Centre that no party or coalition was in a position to form the government and recommended President's Rule.

The people of Maharashtra certainly don't want a fresh round of elections. Therefore, the formation of a coalition government in the state is a strong possibility. This is the only way forward for the state now.

## Bringing transparency to the courts

**The Supreme Court's order on the RTI will make the judiciary accountable, within certain boundaries**

The Supreme Court verdict bringing the office of the Chief Justice of India (CJI) under the ambit of the Right to Information Act (RTI) has been widely welcomed. It sends a strong signal to all democratic institutions to adhere to the twin principles of transparency and accountability underlining the RTI Act. It has upheld the earlier decision of the Delhi High Court (HC) that the apex judiciary consisting of the CJI and other justices as per Article 124 of Constitution of India, besides the office of CJI, is a public authority covered under the RTI. The order is expected to infuse the administrative systems with substantive element of transparency, within the judiciary. The decision also sends across a message to the public offices to take off the veil of secrecy and facilitate more disclosure.

The issue arose from a request by Subhash Chandra Agrawal for information about the number of judges who filed their annual assets details to the CJI voluntarily. The Central Information Commission (CIC) ordered disclosure, but the

Central Public Information Officer (CPIO) in the office of apex court preferred a writ in the Delhi HC. The matter went before the full bench of HC of AP Shah (CJ), Vikramjeet Sen and S Muralidhar JJ, who concurred with the CIC. It held that that the administrative wing of judiciary should be transparent and furnish information held by office of CJI, if not hit by the exemption-clauses in Section 8. On January 10, 2010, Justice Shah had said that judicial independence was not a judge's privilege but a responsibility cast upon him.

After staying the operation of Delhi HC order, the case was not taken up for hearing for a number of years. When the appellant sought to know the status, file notes were shared which revealed that, each time, it was directed to be posted after vacation or before a new CJI.

Finally, the bench headed by Justice Gogoi has given a comprehensive judgment on the entire RTI Act. Justice NV Ramana and Justice Dhananjay Chandrachud wrote separate but concurring

judgments.

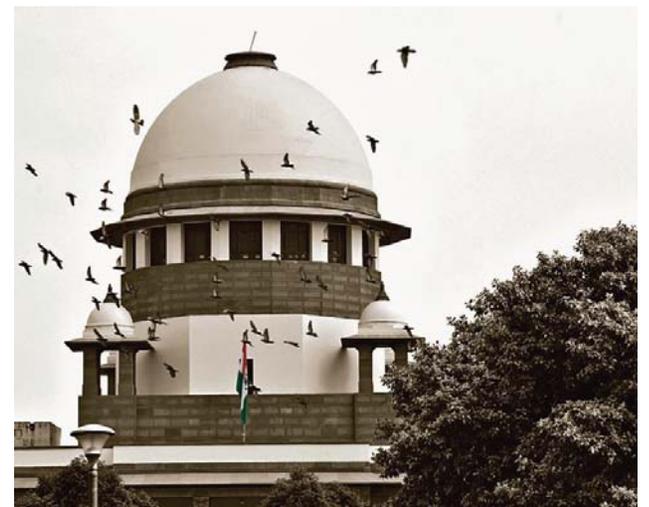
The SC's affirmation of the HC judgment has wider implications and a clear signal to infuse transparency in all high institutions. The bench said that transparency does not undermine judicial independence, while Justice Ramana added “...Right to privacy and Right to information go hand in hand. None can take precedence over the other”.

There is also a word of caution that the judiciary must be protected from surveillance through the RTI. Justice Chandrachud said that, in any given case, the information officer should weigh the public interest and employ the principle of proportionality. He also added that “the question is of drawing a line. In the name of transparency, you can't destroy the institution”. Having said that the CJI office is an integral part of public authority, though not a separate entity under section 2(h), the bench has remanded the information requests back to the SC's CPIO for “reconsideration”, and to decide whether to give information or not. The

judgment explains how disclosure or denial can be carved out of the provisions of RTI Act, adhering to its true spirit and contextual limitations found from definitions and exception clauses. Requests have to be decided after a very careful consideration of a whole range of issues, balancing disclosure with privacy.

What is extremely significant is the fact that the constitutional bench has accepted the will and wisdom of the Parliament to bring judiciary into the realm of accountability legislation. It is also a thumbs up for the RTI regime, since, of late, it appeared to be at the receiving end in recent times. Voices from some quarters were also being raised that while SC was advocating transparency in all spheres, the decision in its own case was pending. Now, civil society can hope that transparency would remain the mantra for good governance in all the three estates - judiciary, executive, legislature.

The judiciary carries the trust of the people and is



accountable to the people. It is a unique wing of constitutional governance, with authority to review the decisions by the President, prime minister or chief ministers and legislatures both at centre and states. It is the real guardian of the fundamental rights of the people. Hence an endorsement from the bench headed by CJI will give fillip to people's quest for transparency and accountability.

Finally, being a party to the litigation before the bench, the SC has just not confined itself to the disclosability of the information sought but has gone ahead to explain the nuances of various provisions of information rights. Though the appeals were nine-year-

old, the judgment has added a significant precedent to the new information jurisprudence. In fact, the judgment is reiteration of section 2(h) of RTI Act, which defines and expands the definition of public authority. The examples and explanations however, including indicative illustrations culled out by judiciary, might possibly expand the restrictions and reduce the scope of transparency to a certain extent.

The judgment will also bring back in focus the rules recently made by the government under RTI (amendment) Act 2019, which alters the tenure and salary structure of Information Commissioners at the Centre and in states.

## Trump impeachment inquiry requires the truth - America must hear from whistleblower



President Trump was elected by the American people. Now Democrats, with the help of an unknown person, with questionable motivations, and almost exclusively second-hand knowledge of the events in question, are obsessed with reversing that election through impeachment. Americans deserve the truth: the whistleblower must testify.

The whistleblower is the origin of the entire impeachment inquiry. Speaker Pelosi announced her impeachment inquiry based solely on the whistleblower's complaint — before the House collected so much as a single piece of evidence to verify the allegations.

In fact, since the whistleblower filed his or her complaint, key facts have emerged that only further disprove this narrative. The transcript of the phone call between President Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was released and contains no reference to the 2020 presidential election. President Zelensky confirmed he felt no pressure from President Trump, was not aware of any conditions on the military aid, and was happy with the call. The Ukrainian government took no actions to initiate any investigations, and the military aid ultimately flowed to Ukraine after certifying that Ukraine was cleaning up corruption, which is required by law.

So the whistleblower filed a complaint that contained not only second-hand rumors but also information that turned out to be false. And yet, Speaker Pelosi chose to use this disproved information as the basis for her entire impeachment witch-hunt.

The truth is that Washington liberals have wanted to impeach President Trump since the day he took office. For them, the facts don't matter. All that mattered was that Pelosi supported impeachment for some reason, for any reason. Once she was on board the impeachment train, there was no stopping it.

That's why Pelosi's lieutenants have been sure to rig the rules of the

impeachment inquiry against President Trump. During both the Nixon and Clinton impeachment inquiries, Republicans and Democrats had co-equal subpoena power. Under Pelosi's partisan rules, Chairman Schiff can unilaterally veto any of the Republican witnesses, and he has already begun to do so.

Schiff has indicated he will deny Republicans' request to call witnesses like Hunter Biden, whose suspicious appointment to the board of a Ukrainian oil and gas company raised concerns in the State Department back in 2015, and Alexandra Chalupa, a Democratic National Committee operative who worked with Ukrainian officials to dig up political dirt against the Trump campaign during the 2016 election.

Remember, Schiff himself promised that the whistleblower would testify before Congress. Then Schiff flip-flopped when media outlets reported the whistleblower had a political bias against President Trump and had coordinated with House Democratic staff before even filing a complaint. Did Schiff inappropriately orchestrate the whistleblower's actions? What role did Schiff play in pushing a false media narrative about President Trump? Unless the whistleblower testifies, we may never know. It's no wonder Pelosi wants to pretend the whistleblower isn't important, doesn't matter, doesn't exist. We cannot allow Democrats to simply sweep the whistleblower under the rug. With less than a year to go before the 2020 elections, the American people should be the ones who decide who the president will be, not Pelosi and Schiff through a sham impeachment witch-hunt. If the so-called whistleblower complaint is Pelosi's basis for impeaching the president of the United States, shouldn't the American people at least have the opportunity to hear from the whistleblower and assess his or her sources and motivations? The whistleblower needs to testify.

## Bolivia's blunt message to leaders drunk on power

There's much we still need to know about what has unfolded in Bolivia, but one thing is clear: Evo Morales, who on Sunday resigned the presidency under overwhelming pressure -- some call it a coup, others say it's a path to restoring democracy - could have left office at the end of almost 14 years in power and remained a beloved figure for most Bolivians. Instead, he refused to accept the democratic limits on his power. Morales tried to stay in office against his people's will. Now his legacy is in question, as is the future of Bolivia.

The story of Morales, the country's first indigenous president, is one of first hope and optimism, which was then overpowered by ego and disillusionment.

And it is a reminder that Latin Americans are not looking for saviors. The age of caudillos and redeemers is over. They want government for everyone, and results-oriented democracy.

Morales became president in 2006, at the height of the so-called pink tide, when leftist presidents were winning elections across the region. He vowed to undo centuries of exploitation, racism and inequality, and to a large extent he kept his word. His policies slashed poverty and brought economic growth. But even his strongest supporters gradually grew concerned over his excessive attachment to power.

Under his direction, Bolivia

enacted a new constitution in 2009, limiting presidents to two consecutive terms. He was elected again in 2009, and won a third time in 2014, claiming his first term under the old constitution didn't count. He also promised he would not seek another term, a promise he would break this year. He had never lost an election, and was growing steadily more powerful, his self-regard expanding in tandem. His Movement For Socialism (MAS) had gained control of all the branches of government and much of the media.

Some Bolivians started looking askance when the president built a gleaming new 29-story presidential palace in the impoverished capital, and then a multimillion-dollar museum honoring, well, himself.

After 10 years in office, many wondered if their president would ever agree to leave power. They had seen democracy destroyed in Venezuela and Nicaragua. The MAS supermajority in Congress, beholden to the president, started pushing to allow him another term. An indigenous Aymara legislator poignantly protested, wearing a cardboard crown in the National Assembly and campaigning with the sarcastic slogan, "I also want to be king." Morales, who insists he is a man of the people, decided to put the question to voters, sure they would support him. But in a 2016 referendum, they narrowly voted "No" to a fourth term.

(Contd on page 24)



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# Maharashtra: A flawed decision

**President's rule is hasty. The governor should have waited**

On Tuesday afternoon, based on a recommendation by the governor of Maharashtra, Bhagat Singh Koshiyari, the Union government decided to recommend the imposition of President's rule in the state. The President signed off on this later in the evening. The governor's office said he was satisfied that a government in the state could not be carried on in accordance with the Constitution. This, then, entailed the use of Article 356, which brings the state under central rule. The state's political theatre has indeed been fluid. Close to three weeks after the

assembly election results came out, and four days after the term of the last assembly expired, no government has been formed. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said it did not have the numbers when it could not muster the support of the Shiv Sena. The Sena could not get letters of support from the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress in the time allotted to it to stake claim. And it was not clear if the NCP, which had been asked by the governor to show if it had adequate support, would have the numbers either. Yet, the governor's report was politically

unsound and legally questionable. To be sure, the governor has discretion, especially in a political context where no party or alliance has an outright majority, but this discretion has to be used wisely. His task is to exhaust all possibilities of government formation before recommending the use of Article 356. In Maharashtra, this was not the case. The possibilities of an alliance government were alive, and the political process should have been allowed to take its own course. There may have been delays, but negotiations among



possible partners — the Sena, NCP, and Congress — were still in progress. While the governor gave 48 hours to the BJP, he gave 24 hours to the Sena, and, in effect, less than 16 hours to the NCP, to show the letters of support. A level playing field would have been more just. Indeed, both the Sena and the BCP did ask for more time —

48 hours. There may have eventually been an impasse, which would have necessitated President's rule. But the process with which it has been done now is hasty, leading to questions about the governor's impartiality. The BJP, at the Centre, should have waited too, for the current decision can be seen as a move to keep rivals out.

## *Ayodhya verdict could be end of vicious politics over Ram temple*

**The BJP was formed in 1980 and the temple movement was launched in 1985. Since then, nine Lok Sabha and nine Vidhan Sabha elections were held in the state.**



Is it the end of politics on the emotive Ram temple issue that returned on the centre stage ahead of almost every election since the early 1990s?

The demolition of the disputed shrine in December 1992 had slowed the growth of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Many recall the first reaction of BJP leader, Lal Krishna Advani, whose Somnath-Ayodhya yatra had largely galvanised public across the country. Soon after the demolition of the shrine, he had said, "Now we are finished."

This was reiterated by several BJP-VHP leaders, who believed the existence of the disputed shrine infuriated and

united the Hindus. Even Mohd Azam Khan, who was closely associated with the Babri Masjid Action Committee, had earlier said, "The BJP's decline started after December 6, 1992, and that's why LK Advani never wanted the mosque to go. They wanted to keep the issue alive." The BJP was formed in 1980 and the temple movement was launched in 1985. Since then, nine Lok Sabha and nine Vidhan Sabha elections were held in the state. The first state assembly was held in 1989 when it won 57 seats in a house of 425 members in undivided UP. Two years later, after laying the foundation stone of the temple, the

party's tally peaked to 221. The mosque was demolished in 1992 and BJP's tally came down to 177 that year. The party could not form the government. Again, when elections were held in 1996, the party ended with 174, which further fell to 143 in 2002, 51 in 2007 and 47 in 2012.

Once again, some leaders believe that the issue cannot be milked any more in the elections now that the court has decided in favour of the Hindus. After all, it has been an issue of faith for the BJP, which has always accused the opposition of doing politics over it. Others peg their hopes on the charisma of Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

whose fusion of religion with aspirations has so far paid rich dividends.

But elections are still far off. The UP assembly polls will be held in 2022, while the general elections in the country are scheduled for 2024. Thus the BJP will have to keep the temple issue alive till then.

Senior leaders, while dismissing any fears of the issue losing its potency, remember how the emotive issue was built in about five years after its first public mobilisation campaign in 1985. Similarly, the construction of a magnificent temple may easily take another five years to complete with the BJP planning several landmark days before 2022 and 2024.

However, some have noticed the muted response of the majority community over the apex court verdict allowing temple construction at the claimed site.

There could have been two reasons for the subdued response: One, the Supreme Court's observation the Muslims have been wronged twice in the past has injected a sense of guilt as the title issue remains undecided. Second, the restraint displayed by the hardliners could also be because the Prime Minister and the BJP

high command had sent an unequivocal message down the line not to make provocative statements.

Imagine people like Vinay Katiyar and Uma Bharti kept silent instead of raising some slogans. The picture of a beaming Uma Bharti hugging MM Joshi, sitting on the dais, even as the kar sevaks were demolishing the shrine on December 6, 1992, is in the archives of many newspapers. One assessment is that there will be a studied silence on the issue till the formation of the trust and formulation of the scheme by the Centre. A government official in Uttar Pradesh said the government may take a call on relaxing darshan at the makeshift temple by removing the zigzag, heavy iron barricades through which pilgrims have to walk. But much would depend on the threat perception.

Politically, both the BJP and the opposition see a demise of a potent issue that decided many an election in the past. Should the BJP worry? None other than Kalyan Singh, at the forefront of the temple movement, said, "We have got the temple, now we must focus on employment." He has been a witness to the issue losing its traction in election after the demolition.

# Trump Exposed A Brutal Day for the President



(News Agencies) Perhaps it was George Kent's bow tie, which looked like it was paying homage to Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox, but a dramatic day of testimony on Capitol Hill sent the mind back to one of the more compelling vignettes to emerge from that earlier scandal.

Richard Nixon was relaxing, in his own fashion, with West Wing hatchet man Charles Colson and imagining the joyful day when he would have payback against the diverse enemies arrayed against him. "One day

we'll get them—we'll get them on the ground where we want them," Nixon rhapsodized. "And we'll stick our heels in, step on them hard and twist, right Chuck?" An impeachment inquiry is a constitutional exercise, a vindication of checks and balances, a living expression of rule of law. Yes, yes, sure—all of that. But the start of public hearings Wednesday was a reminder of what impeachment really is in the modern presidency: A brutal exercise in psychological exposure.

There was breaking news from the hearings, but it

was mostly a matter of detail. There was a new anecdote from diplomat William Taylor about Trump allegedly haranguing a subordinate to keep up the pressure on Ukraine to investigate the Biden family. This was a validation of the existing narrative rather than a fundamental twist of plot. In a more profound way, the day was a portrait—a vivid one, in an especially grave setting—of Trump being Trump: obsessive, hectoring, contemptuous of process and propriety, as bluntly transactional about military aid to a besieged

ally as he would be about a midtown real estate deal. In that sense, this latest impeachment exercise fits neatly with the modern history of White House scandal. Presidents tend to be prosecuted for being themselves—men of compulsive and agitated ambition and need. Sometimes historians speculate about what kind of president Nixon would have been like if his positive features—the canny operator in global politics—could have been detached from the noxious ones, the crudeness and paranoia. The same

fantasy can be indulged with Bill Clinton—if his powerful gifts of persuasion and illumination were somehow delinked from his addiction to seduction and indiscipline in personal affairs. The answer, of course, is that such an outcome is inconceivable. In every case, the scandals were projections of fundamental character, springing from the same inner drives that vaulted them to success in the first place. Taylor nodded to this in his opening statement. He recounted being aghast at how military aid to Ukraine was being

withheld to extract a statement from new Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky on a publicly announced probe of Hunter Biden. Gordon Sondland, Trump's ambassador to the European Union who was also immersed in the negotiation, "tried to explain to me that President Trump is a businessman," Taylor said. "When a businessman is about to sign a check to someone who owes him something, the businessman asks that person to pay up before signing the check."

(Contd on page 23)

## Why the Shiv Sena parted ways with the BJP in Maharashtra

It had become the junior partner both electorally and ideologically. Splitting was essential to remain relevant



(News Agencies) The Shiv Sena, the oldest ally of the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP), surprised everyone by parting ways with the BJP after the assembly election results came out on October 24. On the face of it, the Sena had two key demands; the chief minister's post, and a better deal in the power-sharing arrangement between the two parties. But

at a deeper level, beyond the two demands, the Sena was concerned about two other issues.

One, Sena chief, Uddhav Thackeray, though mild-mannered, did not want to play second fiddle to the BJP in state politics. Two, he wanted to secure the future of his 29-year-old son, Aditya, who won from the Worli assembly constituency.

In Maharashtra politics, since the days of late Bal Thackeray, the Sena has never played the role of a junior partner. The National Congress Party (NCP) chief, Sharad Pawar's Silver Oak residence, and Bal Thackeray's Matoshree

residence, have long been the two power centres in the state. But the Lok Sabha and the assembly polls of 2014, and the emergence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and BJP president, Amit Shah, shattered the old political matrix, pushing parties such as the Sena into a corner. After the 2014 assembly elections, the Sena got insignificant portfolios. The files of its ministers were routinely stalled or sent back with questions by chief minister Devendra Fadnavis's office.

Uddhav Thackeray also sensed that tying up with the BJP was not yielding him

and his party the desired results. In 2014, the Sena went alone in the assembly polls and won 68 seats, while in the 2019 assembly polls, despite the alliance with the BJP, it could only win 56 seats. The Sena's stature has been diminishing with every election, even as the BJP has increased its footprint in the state's politics.

In 1995, the Sena won 73 seats, while the BJP won 65 in the 288-member assembly. The two parties joined hands to form the first saffron government in the state, and Sena's Manohar Joshi became the chief minister.

(Contd. on page 23)

# The Tis Hazari case: How the police, lawyers, and the court got it wrong



(News Agencies) The police is usually at the receiving end of any controversial incident which involves law and order. It is criticised for either failing to act in a given situation, or overreacting and using excessive force. In the recent clash between the lawyers and the police at the Tis Hazari courts in Delhi on November 2,

however, it is the lawyers who are getting much of the flak, and there is sympathy for the police for unwarranted aggression by the lawyers.

Analysing the sequence of events at Tis Hazari, one gets the unmistakable impression that the police, the bar, and even the judiciary did not acquit themselves with the kind of patience, understanding

and neutrality that is expected of these institutions. Sixteen years ago, Justice VS Malimath, who was appointed by the Government of India to suggest necessary changes in the criminal justice system, lamented that the system was "virtually collapsing". He gave comprehensive recommendations, but, thanks to vested interests,

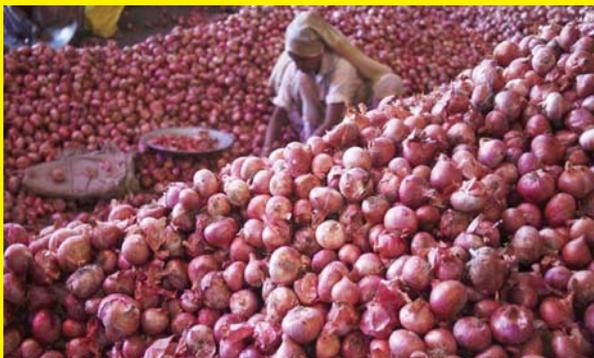
those could not be implemented fully. The latest Tis Hazari incident is symptomatic of the collapse that Justice Malimath foresaw. The police leadership, unfortunately, failed on two vital fronts. The ministry of home affairs was dissatisfied that the pent up anger of the policemen on the streets, raising slogans and demanding justice. And the rank and file was unhappy with the leadership for not taking a stand and upholding the dignity of the uniform. There was an inexplicable delay in the registration of cases even in incidents which were widely reported in the media, showing lawyers attacking a policeman, manhandling another policeman, and misbehaving with a female

deputy commissioner of police. The Bar Council of India, in its first reaction on November 5, criticised these "acts of grave misconduct" and directed the associations to identify the lawyers as "hooliganism and violence" have "no place in the bar". It even deplored that "we are tarnishing the image of the institution" by protecting such rowdy elements. However, the very next day, in a volte face, the Bar Council said that their demand was that the guilty policemen should be arrested within a week, failing which they will resort to a peaceful dharna. Apparently, the hardliners had prevailed. It is relevant to mention here that the Supreme Court had explicitly laid down in Harish Uppal vs. Union of India that the lawyers have

no right to strike. The lawyers, however, in disregard of the court's directions, continue to be on strike. The Delhi High Court, according to a respected recently retired judge of the Supreme Court with whom I had occasion to interact, had "seriously erred in taking up the matter suo motu with such alacrity on a Sunday ex parte and without having the full facts before it". It forayed into what was essentially an executive domain, and then gave directions which were one-sided. The commissioner of police, the lieutenant governor of Delhi, and the ministry of home affairs were pre-empted from taking any action in the matter. The Delhi Police was hurt by the mauling they had got from the lawyers. The judicial directions were like rubbing salt into their wounds.

## Understanding India's inflation trends

The spike in retail inflation is due to food. The Reserve Bank of India must not use it to increase policy rates



(News Agencies) India's inflation numbers are diverging once again. Retail inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), grew at 4.6% in October on an annual basis. This is the highest in 16 months. The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) grew at just 0.2% in October though, the lowest in 40 months. These figures will be a key subject of discussion when the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India meets next month to decide on policy rates. The short answer to why inflation numbers show a divergent trend is food. Food and beverages have a share of 46% in the CPI basket. This is only 24% for the WPI basket. The spike in retail inflation is mainly because of a seasonal shock to food prices, especially vegetables. In fact, non-food, non-fuel retail inflation is the lowest since January 2012. In terms of a trend, this is not very different from what the WPI numbers tell us. WPI for food group grew at 7.7% in October, the highest in 38 months. There is very little monetary policy can do in terms of influencing onion prices when crops have been destroyed due to rains. However, the sharp fall in non-food inflation suggests that aggregate demand in the non-farm economy continues to be weak, despite RBI having cut policy rates in five consecutive MPCs.



## Ayodhya case: Muslims should accept the five acres

A mosque in Ayodhya will reflect how our plural national existence calls for accommodation

(News Agencies) The sobriety and restraint shown nationwide in the wake of the Ayodhya judgment is commendable. We are all advised not to see the outcome in terms of winning or losing. However, despite the universal acceptance of the judgment, as had been announced repeatedly by social groups and political parties, there are some people who have expressed their disappointment. Furthermore, we hear voices, some reputed to be sane and sensible, exhorting the Sunni Waqf Board to refrain from accepting five acres of land directed to be given to them as part of complete justice in the circumstances. This might be myopic and may detract from the moral capital that the Muslim side has gained in the course of the judgment. There are several reasons that might be cited for not accepting the offer of five acres. During the aborted or unsuccessful negotiations for an out-of-court settlement, some Muslims felt that this would create a precedent of willingness

to exchange an existing mosque for another place, and could lead to complication for other sites, including in Mathura and Varanasi. There was a more fundamental theological reason about the character of a mosque being permanent and not susceptible to alteration by an act of man. Be that as it may, now that the decision has been given, it may be advisable to consider the matter in its entirety, and not forego an opportunity for greater reconciliation between the communities. It is important to note that the court was very candid in holding that 1934 (when the first attempt was made to intrude), 1949 (when the mosque was desecrated and idols placed), and 1992 (when the mosque was demolished) were acts in violation of the rule of law. At least, to that extent, the contested narrative that has beguiled politics for decades has firmly been put to rest in favour of the truth. The court also did not endorse the claim that the Babri Masjid was constructed on the site of a temple (leave

alone Ram temple) after demolishing it. Nor did the court accept the proposition that the mosque had been abandoned. The Places of Worship Act was upheld without the qualification sought to be added by the Allahabad High Court. The concept of juristic personality was restricted to a deity and not expanded, as was sought by the Hindu side, to include the birthplace of Ram. The Muslim side came within a whisker of complete success. Then, how did the court end up giving the 2.77 acres of disputed land to the Hindus, having made it clear that a title suit was being adjudicated, and is not a matter of faith? In deciding the title suit as a matter of law, the court noted that the outer courtyard along with the Ram Chabutra was admittedly and uninterruptedly in the possession of Hindus, and Muslims conceded that Ram was born in Ayodhya (but not at any particular spot). On the other hand, the inner courtyard and the three-domed structure had repeatedly been subjected to adverse claims.

# Delhi-NCR air quality remains in 'severe' category after marginal improvement



(News Agencies) forecast that a significant Government pollution improvement in air quality monitoring agencies had was expected on

Saturday. Air quality in the national capital remained in the 'severe' zone on Saturday morning, however, the air quality index (AQI) showed a marginal improvement. Government pollution monitoring agencies had forecast that a significant improvement in air quality was expected on Saturday. The air quality remained in the

'emergency' zone over the past four days. The air quality index (AQI), as calculated by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) at 6.30 am was 414. This was against the overall AQI reading of 458 on Friday. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)-led task force will review pollution levels today in order to take a call on extending

the curbs. Schools in Delhi-NCR were shut on the past two days for deteriorating air quality. Scientists at the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that weather had a key role to play in increasing pollution levels in the capital over the last four days. Wind speed is expected to go up to nearly 20 kmph today,

which will help in fast dispersal if pollutants. So far a layer of clouds, low wind speed combined with a layer of pollutants had pushed up pollution levels in the Capital. "Since the accumulation of pollutants is high, dispersion will take time and air quality is expected to improve significantly over the weekend starting Saturday itself," said a senior IMD scientist.

## 4-month-old baby dies aboard flight from Surat to Mumbai



(News Agencies) A four-month-old girl died on board a SpiceJet Surat-Mumbai flight on Friday. A post-mortem investigation could not establish the cause of death and samples from body tissues have been sent to Sir JJ Hospital.

Riya, who was with her mother Preeti Jindal and grandparents, could have lost consciousness on board without her family realising it, according to airline sources. According to airport sources, Riya and her mother were taken to the airport medical room after the flight landed in Mumbai.

"The infant did not respond to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), after

which she was rushed to a nearby private hospital, where she was declared dead," said an airport official.

The child was taken to Nanavati Hospital where she was declared dead before admission. Officials from the hospital refused to comment.

The flight took off from Jaipur for Mumbai via Surat. The family boarded the flight from Surat.

Sources in the airline said, "The mother told doctors that she had fed her daughter around 5.30 am after which the baby went to sleep. The family noticed there was no movement from the child on board, but did not report it to the crew, assuming the child was asleep."

## India is 'most open' economy, says PM Modi

PM Modi called on the Brics members to participate in India's efforts to become a \$5-trillion economy by 2024, with investments of \$1.5-trillion in the infrastructure sector alone.

(News Agencies) Prime Minister Narendra Modi pitched India as the "most open and investment-friendly economy" even as he called on members of Brics to make the grouping's mechanisms more efficient and outcome-driven to drive economic growth.

Modi, who on Thursday concluded a visit to Brasilia to attend the Brics (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) Summit, told the grouping's business forum that India is the world's most investment-friendly economy because of political stability, predictable policy and business-friendly reforms. He called on the Brics members to participate in India's efforts to become a \$5-trillion economy by 2024, with investments of \$1.5-trillion in the



infrastructure sector alone. Addressing the plenary session of the summit, Modi said Brics' mechanisms and processes must be made more efficient and outcome-driven to meet challenges of the global economy. "We need to pay special attention to mutual trade and investment. Intra-Brics trade accounts for just 15% of world trade, while our combined population is more than 40% of the world's population," he said. The services sector has

good prospects to grow and the cost of intra-Brics trade should be reduced. Medical devices, new energy options and innovations for the differently-abled and elderly can be priority areas for cooperation, he added. Calling for enhanced cooperation to tackle climate change, Modi said sustainable water management and sanitation are important challenges in urban areas. He added that India would host the first meeting of Brics water ministers. Modi also said

terrorism is the biggest threat to development and peace. "In 10 years, two-and-a-half million lives were lost to terrorism (and) according to various estimates, more than \$1 trillion was lost to the world's economy," he said. Terrorism and its financing, drug trafficking and organised crimes create deep indirect harm to businesses by creating an environment of scepticism, and the activities of five working groups will enhance security cooperation within Brics, he said. The Brasilia Declaration adopted at the summit extended support to India's efforts to counter terrorism by condemning the menace in all its forms. It said terrorist acts are "criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivations whenever, wherever and by whomsoever committed". The declaration called for concerted efforts to fight against terrorism under UN auspices in accordance with international law and underlined the responsibility of all states to prevent the financing of terror networks and "terrorist actions, including those from their territories". The Brics members reiterated their commitment to combat illicit financial flows and to cooperate within the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and FATF-style regional bodies and in other multilateral, regional and bilateral forums.

## Sambhar mystery: Avian botulism likely behind bird deaths

The post-mortem report said: "There were bruises on the breast muscle (of the birds) and (their) lungs were congested."

(News Agencies) Post-mortem of two bird carcasses by a Bikaner-based research organisation has found avian botulism to be the possible cause for the death over 8,000 birds in India's largest inland salt lake in Rajasthan Sambhar, officials said on Friday. A team from College of Veterinary and Animal Science, Bikaner, visited the lake site on Thursday and gave its report on Friday. HT has a copy of this report. The

post-mortem report said: "There were bruises on the breast muscle (of the birds) and (their) lungs were congested." The report on clinical signs exhibited by the affected birds pointed at dullness, depression, anorexia, flaccid paralysis in legs and wings, and neck touching the ground. "The birds were unable to walk, swim or take flight," the clinical report said, adding that there was no rise in body temperature, no nasal

discharge and no respiratory distress. Based on these reports, the experts from the Bikaner college concluded that "the most probable diagnosis is avian botulism". A disease investigation team, including veterinary pathologist Dr Rohitash Dadhich, veterinary microbiologist Dr Sandeep Kumar Sharma, veterinary medicine assistant professor Dr Madan Mohan Mali, visited Sambhar on Thursday to investigate the

cause of mass mortality of migratory birds and to give an advisory for the prevention and containment of mortalities. "The sick birds were examined for their clinical symptoms and samples (nasal and oral swabs) were collected for analysis in the laboratory," the report said. A government statement said the death toll of the birds rose to 8,065 with carcasses of 3,265 birds buried on

Friday and 102 rescued. Meanwhile, the Rajasthan high court on Friday asked all parties to submit laboratory reports by November 20, the next day of hearing in the petition. The division bench of chief justice Indrajit Mahanty and justice Mahendra Kumar Goyal issued notices on November 13 to the state government, asking for affidavit on steps taken to prevent further death of migrating birds.

# Economy fine, people getting married, airports full: Union Minister Suresh Angadi

**Noting that the economy slows down every three years but it will pick up soon, the minister of state for railways said "some people" are trying to malign the image of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.**

(News Agencies) Noting that the economy slows down every three years but it will pick up soon, the minister of state for railways said "some people" are trying to malign the image of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Airports are full, trains are full, people are getting married. Some people are doing this for nothing else but to malign the image of Narendra Modi," Angadi told reporters during an inspection of the soon-to-be-commissioned Tunda-Khurja section of the eastern dedicated freight corridor, which will stretch

from Punjab's Ludhiana to Howrah in Bengal and be completed by December 2021.

"Every three years there is a fall in demand in economy. It is a cycle. Then the economy picks up also," he added.

Opposition parties, including the Congress, have been criticising the government over the state of the economy and plans to raise the issue in the Winter Session of Parliament starting on Monday.

The junior minister for railways also said that in the coming days, India will become the "manufacturing hub

of the world". The 194-km-long fully electrified rail route between New Bhadan and Khurja in Uttar Pradesh, part of the Eastern DFC, will carry mostly iron and coal to Mughal Sarai, Tatanagar and Chakradharpur among other destinations. With the dedicated freight corridor (DFC), the logistical cost on this route will decrease from 14 per cent to 7 per cent, Angadi said. The commissioning of the corridor would enable the decongestion of existing over-saturated paths which, in turn, would result in improving punctuality of passenger trains.



# Judgments are not to be played with, Supreme Court tells ED

**The petition of the agency, appealing the Delhi high court's decision that gave pre-arrest bail to Shivakumar referred to him as former "Union finance minister" and "home minister". Shivakumar is a member of the Karnataka legislative assembly.**



(News Agencies) The Enforcement Directorate came in for some sharp criticism from Supreme Court judge Rohinton Fali Nariman in a case involving Karnataka Congress leader DK Shivakumar for evoking a section of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act that a bench headed by the judge himself had struck down in 2017 (in a different case) and for copy pasting its (the agency's) own petition filed in a case against former union minister P Chidambaram. The petition of the agency, appealing the Delhi high court's decision that gave pre-arrest bail to Shivakumar referred to him as former "Union finance minister" and "home minister". Shivakumar is a member of the Karnataka legislative assembly.

The Supreme Court dismissed the appeal. Justice Nariman told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing on behalf of ED that its officers cannot play around with the top court's judgements, and asked him to read his dissenting view in the Sabarimala case, delivered on Thursday. That judgement, authored by Justice Nariman and Justice Dhananjay Chandrachud, emphasized the importance of all government functionaries and officers following judgements delivered by the top court.

The judge took strong exception to ED invoking section 45(1) as a ground to cancel Shivakumar's bail. The provision imposes stringent conditions for release on bail of an accused even for offences

which are not related to PMLA.

"For your edification and edification of government .... You must read the dissenting verdict. Tell the officials that our judgments are not to be played with," Justice Nariman told Mehta.

Mehta responded that all the judgements passed by the court were read, taken seriously and followed.

On Thursday, in their dissenting judgement, the two judges said the 2018 order by a five-judge bench allowing entry of all women into Sabarimala would have to be implemented and asked authorities to take action against those opposing the judgment. The two judges said organised acts of resistance to thwart the implementation of the judgement must be put

down firmly. In a majority ruling on Thursday, the court agreed to a review of the decision among other issues pertaining to religious practices, but did not stay the 2018 order. The dissenting judgement dismissed the review.

As the appeal came up for hearing, Shivakumar's counsel, senior advocate Abhishesh Manu Singhvi pointed out that ED had done a "copy paste" job. And had also resurrected

the stringent section 45 (1) of PMLA, which was declared unconstitutional in 2017 by the top court. Senior counsel Mukul Rohatgi, also representing Shivakumar, supported Singhvi's contention.

Mehta persisted with his argument that the court must give ED an opportunity to justify its opposition to the bail and pleaded that Shivakumar was facing a probe for money laundering to the tune of Rs

142 crore.

A visibly annoyed Justice Nariman told Mehta: "This is not the way to deal with the citizens of this country."

The bench went ahead to dismiss the ED's appeal, affirming the HC decision to grant Shivakumar bail.

The bench also issued notice to ED on Shivakumar's appeal challenging the refusal of the Delhi High Court to quash the various proceedings launched against him by ED under PMLA.

## Kolkata gang rape: NCW member says shelter broke rules, should be shut down

**The victim, who is partially mentally challenged, had moved into the facility three days before the incident. The septuagenarian mother of the victim, who also lived in the same shelter, died on Thursday evening. No arrest was made till Friday night**

(News Agencies) National Commission for Women (NCW) member Chandramukhi Devi said the Kolkata shelter housing the mentally-challenged gang rape victim was unsafe should be shutdown for flouting of rules. Chandramukhi was in Kolkata on Friday to investigate the early Tuesday morning shocker. The 38-year-old victim, who walked out unchecked from the Seba Old Age Home in the Panchasayar area on Monday night, was allegedly abducted and gang raped. There was no security at the old-age home to prevent her from going out at an unsafe hour. The woman was raped first inside a car and then on a desolate field in the southern outskirts of Kolkata before being thrown off the running vehicle. The victim, who is partially mentally challenged, had moved into the facility three days before the incident. The septuagenarian mother of the victim, who

also lived in the same shelter, died on Thursday evening. No arrest was made till Friday night. "I visited the home and also met the police. While the role of the police has been satisfactory, the home is in absolute disarray and needs to be closed down," said Chandramukhi Devi. Seba Old Age Home is supposed to only house the elderly but also kept mentally and physically challenged persons. The NCW registered a suo motu complaint on Wednesday and formed an inquiry panel headed by Chandramukhi Devi. Chandramukhi Devi visited the shelter and said the facility was operating without permission and in violation of all norms. "I spoke to the owner of the home and it has become evident that the shelter is being run with purpose of business and not social service. This cannot be allowed to continue," she said.

# Respond to the cyber intrusion, within law

## An invasion of sovereignty is not the same as an act of war. India should take cautious countermeasures

(News Agencies) The news of cyber intrusions into the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant, and the Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) shook the cyber security apparatus. Pukhraj Singh, a cybersecurity expert, tweeted about the incident after alerting the authorities. In his opinion, the intrusion constituted a casus belli in the Indian cyberspace, meaning, an act or situation that provokes or justifies a war. The factual matrix of this cyber "attack", however, does not add up to a situation where a sovereign nation may justifiably go to war, in the conventional sense of the term. In his analysis, Singh is correct to point out the absence of a cyber deterrence strategy, which permitted the malware to linger in protected systems for months after they were first detected. But I disagree with his advocacy for a departure from "rules-based war fighting", towards "pre-emptive, extrajudicial maneuvering" within the

adversary's battle space. Inviting as it may seem to follow in the footsteps of former US official, Richard Danzig's, "defend forward" doctrine, it is apparent that this position advocates action that is overtly illegal in international law. The so-called "right to pre-emptive self-defence" is a creation of American warfighting doctrine and is not a norm of customary international law (CIL). Due to the hybrid nature of cyber operations and international legal norms in their current form, governments all over the world are grappling with "below-the-threshold" operations in cyberspace. The use of military force is prohibited for States, who remain the principal subjects of the international legal order. According to the United Nations Charter provisions that are also considered CIL norms, a nation State may lawfully resort to the use of force in the exercise of its inherent right to self-defence against an 'armed attack' by another state.

According to the Tallinn Manual 2.0, a cyber intrusion or attack is considered an armed attack if its physical manifestations cause damage or consequences that are similar, or at least comparable, to the use of kinetic force. Without physical damage, a cyber theft of data in the eyes of international law, even by a State, does not amount to an armed attack and no right to use kinetic military force in self-defence arises. However, this does not imply that there is no remedy against what is clearly an invasion of the country's sovereignty and a dangerous intrusion into our critical information infrastructure. We can lawfully take cautious countermeasures against such intrusions to ensure that the intrusion ceases and leverage domestic laws and institutions to crystallise India's position on international law norms that we consider non-binding. The Tallinn Manual is neither a binding document, nor universally considered to be

the definitive expression of CIL norms. Yet, it is a valuable resource to identify rules where India's interests in cyber space demand interpretations that depart from Western interpretations tailored to serve Western interests. India has the prerogative to object to the application of a rule at odds with our national security interests. Despite speculations that the malware caused the power plant to shut down, the government has maintained that it was due to a mechanical issue. Similarly, some have insinuated that the presence of the malware in Isro systems was temporally proximate to the unsuccessful landing of Chandrayaan-2. However, no such statements have been forthcoming from the government. Without physical damage or disruption, the harm caused at this stage appears to be exfiltration of data, which falls within the domain of espionage. Espionage, while illegal in domestic law, operates in a grey zone in



international law, where it is neither legal, nor illegal. Singh illustrates how a cyber espionage operation can be quickly weaponised into a destructive kinetic attack, depending on the attacker's intent. However, the same is true of operations that embed spies and covert operatives in foreign territory. Without identifying the attacker, one cannot speculate their intent. Technical attribution efforts have led to the North Korea-based Lazarus group. However, Singh asserts that false flag operations are all too common, and deeper digging could unearth unusual suspects. He adds that our response must be premised on "full-spectrum cyber attribution", but this is only possible by carrying out a full-scale investigation that can reveal with some degree of certainty, the identity and affiliations of the intruder.

Unless such attribution efforts conclusively point towards a State actor, the intrusion can be treated as an act of cyber terrorism, defined under Section 66F of the Information Technology Act, 2000. Depending on the information exfiltrated, offences under the Atomic Energy Act, 1962 can also be made out. If an FIR is registered under these provisions, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) would be charged with this investigation. Such an investigation would be an opportunity to strengthen our counter-intelligence capabilities in cyberspace. However, the investigation of these acts by the NIA risks exposing fault lines that go deeper than the overlap between various institutions, blurring the line between military and civilian responses to cyber intrusions.

# 1

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## मोदी का एलान-ए-जंग

# बूंद-बूंद को तरसेगा पाक



**नई दिल्ली** ■ हम हिंदुस्तानी

भारतवासियों को ज्ञापित है कि भारत-पाकिस्तान के बीच बढ़ती घड़ियां को रोकने के लिए भारत सरकार ने एक नया कानून पारित किया है। इस कानून के तहत भारत सरकार को अधिकार मिलेगा कि वह पाकिस्तान के नागरिकों को भारत से निकाले।

इस कानून के तहत भारत सरकार को अधिकार मिलेगा कि वह पाकिस्तान के नागरिकों को भारत से निकाले।

### भारतीय-अमेरिकन कम्युनिटी द्वारा घोर निंदा

वॉशिंगटन ■ हम हिंदुस्तानी

वॉशिंगटन में भारतीय-अमेरिकन कम्युनिटी ने मोदी सरकार के नए कानून की घोर निंदा की है।

### आईएस में शामिल हुई महिला को अमेरिका ने एंटी देने से किया इंकार

वॉशिंगटन ■ हम हिंदुस्तानी

अमेरिका ने एक महिला को आईएस से अलग करने से इंकार किया है।

# Sri Lankans fear violence over Facebook fake news ahead of election

Facebook's decision to allow politicians to promote content already rated false by factcheckers has been widely condemned



(News Agencies) Sri Lankan civil society groups are sounding the alarm about Facebook's policies in advance of the 16 November presidential election, with warnings that the company's controversial decision to allow politicians to advertise misinformation is "inappropriate and incendiary to boot". Sanjana Hattotuwa, a senior researcher for the Centre for Policy Alternatives (CPA), on 7 November published a letter he

had sent to Facebook on 30 September seeking additional support for civil society groups monitoring the election because he said he had received no response.

In the letter, he noted that Facebook has not launched in Sri Lanka all of the transparency tools for monitoring election ads that it built for other countries after the platform was used to carry out a Russian interference campaign in the 2016 US presidential election.

The partial suite of tools is "both entirely inadequate and unhelpful", Hattotuwa wrote. "I see no valid reason for Facebook to treat Sri Lanka's presidential

election any differently than the Indian Lok Sabha [parliamentary] election, and thus, make available in Sri Lanka the same oversight and resources that were rapidly iterated for India."

Other concerns about Facebook's responsibility to the country have been raised by the chairman of the National Elections Commission (NEC) and People's Action for Free and Fair Elections (Paffrel), a civil society group that has long monitored Sri Lanka's elections. They have questioned whether and how Facebook will enforce the country's law banning all political propaganda in the 48 hours before an election – a so-

called "cooling period". "I don't know how we can ensure all sorts of Facebook political campaigning activities are stopped after the ban on campaigning from midnight on Wednesday," the NEC chairman, Mahinda Deshapriya, told the Sunday Times of Sri Lanka. Deshapriya also said he was "not satisfied" with Facebook's record on "removing questionable content". Rohana Hettiarachchi, the executive director of Paffrel, wrote to Facebook on 11 November to convey the group's "humble request to you to help us to control and mitigate Facebook related campaigning" during the cooling period before the election.

## Afghanistan paedophile ring may be responsible for abuse of over 500 boys

Social workers claim teachers and local officials are implicated, and believe thousands more children may have been targeted



(News Agencies) A paedophile ring involved in the abuse of at least 546 boys from six schools has been discovered in Afghanistan's Logar province.

Some of the victims of the abuse have since been murdered according to the campaigners who first discovered videos of abuse posted to a Facebook page. Five families killed their sons after their faces were seen on videos posted to social media. Two other boys – a 13 and 15 year old – were killed last week, although the perpetrators are unknown. Civil society organisation, The Logar Youth, Social and Civil Institution, which has been working in the region for 16 years, revealed the extent of the abuse after discovering more than 100 videos on the social media site. The institution is investigating other high schools in the region, believing thousands more children may have been abused. Mohammed Mussa, a lead social worker at the institution, alleges that teachers, headteachers and local authority officials are implicated in the abuse ring. "The boys we have spoken to are between the ages of 14 to 20 and the cases were reported in relatively secure areas. That's one of the reasons why we think that the numbers could peak significantly," he said. "Perpetrators might coordinate because they understand that if legal action is taken against them, they work as a group rather than an isolated incident." One school boy, Tamim\*, 17, from Logar province, said that he recorded his headteacher's demands on his phone last year.

## Afghanistan: Kabul car bomb kills 12, including kids

At least 12 people died in the explosion that apparently targeted a convoy from a private security firm.

(News Agencies) A car bombing in Kabul during morning rush hour on Wednesday targeted a private security company's convoy with officials saying 12 people were killed, including children.

The attack also wounded 20 people, including four of the company's foreign staff, but their nationalities were not released. Reports in the immediate aftermath of the attack said seven died but a new death toll was later released.

The explosion occurred in the Qasaba area in the Afghan capital. The GardaWorld security company - based in Montreal, Canada - was the apparent target, according to Nasrat Rahimi, an interior ministry spokesman.

A vehicle belonging to the security company and two private cars were damaged in the attack, Rahimi added. Ambulance sirens were heard shortly after the car bomb went off and a large plume of smoke rose from the area - scenes all too familiar for Kabul and other cities and towns across Afghanistan.

Among those killed were 12-year-old Dunya and her 7-year-old brother who were on their way to school.

The two children were walking with their father when the car-bomb detonated. The father, who was severely



wounded and lost a leg and a hand, was in hospital, according

to reports on social media. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. The Taliban and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or ISIS) are active in the capital and have previously claimed attacks in Kabul.

The Taliban control or hold sway over half of Afghanistan, staging near-daily attacks that target Afghan forces and government officials but also kill scores of civilians. 'Deadly friendly fire'

In other violence, at least four Afghan army soldiers were killed on Monday night during an air strike by US forces in eastern Logar province, said Anwar Khan Ishaqzai, the provincial governor. Six other troops were wounded in the attack near Puli Alam, the provincial capital. The air strike came as a gun battle was under way between the army and the Taliban in the area, the governor said, adding an investigation was

started into the "friendly fire" strike.

A spokesman for US forces in Afghanistan said the coalition was aware of the reports from Logar. "US and Afghan forces are working closely together to develop a shared understanding of this event. A joint investigation is ongoing" said the spokesman, speaking on condition of anonymity under regulations. Also on Monday night, five policemen were shot and killed at their checkpoint in western Herat province, said Abdul Ahid Walizada, the provincial police chief's spokesman. Walizada said three other police officers were wounded in the attack in Oby district. The violence came a day after President Ashraf Ghani announced the government in Kabul would release three high-ranking Taliban prisoners in an apparent prisoner swap for Western hostages who had been kidnapped by the group in 2016.

# Record-high 44,000 dengue cases reported in Pakistan

Mosquito-borne infections soar to record-high number in the country this year with 66 deaths so far.



(News Agencies) A record-breaking 44,000 people have been infected with mosquito-borne dengue in Pakistan this year, a senior health official said, as increased outbreaks linked to rising temperatures and erratic rainfall ravage other parts of Asia. Rana Safdar, a senior official at the

National Institute of Health (NIH), told AFP news agency on Wednesday the figure is a huge leap from the previous record of 27,000 infections in 2011. Safdar said 66 people were killed by the disease so far in 2019, compared with 370 in 2011. He blamed climate

change for the surge, but would not elaborate. The government was "employing all available resources at its disposal to contain the problem", he said. The highest number of patients was recorded in the capital, Islamabad, and the neighbouring city of Rawalpindi, where 12,433 people were found infected with the virus, with 22 deaths. The southern province of Sindh had 10,142 cases and 26 deaths, according to NIH data shared with local media outlet the Dawn. There were 9,260 cases in Punjab, the

most populous province. Dr Mahseema Siddique, who treats dengue patients, blamed the government for the rise in cases, saying local authorities in Punjab and Islamabad, in particular, failed to take precautions such as covering up water reservoirs or spraying anti-dengue chemicals. "They woke up only after hundreds of people got infected and that was too late. There are a large number of areas where spray teams could not make it," he said. Dengue is transmitted mainly by

the Aedes Aegypti mosquito, which thrives in densely populated tropical climates and breeds in stagnant pools of water.

Mosquitoes pick up the virus from infected humans - even asymptomatic ones - and pass it along to other people through bites. Infections have steadily climbed across the globe since the 1970s because of rising temperatures and irregular monsoon rains linked to climate change, which allow for ideal mosquito breeding conditions. This year

outbreaks have rampaged through Southeast Asia in particular, infecting hundreds of thousands, killing hundreds, and crippling healthcare systems as governments struggle to contain the untreatable virus. Dengue is mostly found in crowded areas, and breakneck urbanisation across the globe has helped the virus thrive. Dubbed "breakbone fever", it inflicts suffering, with intense flu-like symptoms: severe headache, pain behind the eyes, full-body aches, high fever, nausea, vomiting, swollen glands and rashes.

## IMF releasing first tranche of \$6bn loan package for Pakistan

With an eased debt burden and inflation that has slightly slowed, Islamabad still wrestles with big economic challenges.



(News Agencies) Pakistan's fiscal deficits are narrowing, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Friday as it announced it would release the first tranche of its \$6bn financial assistance programme to the country. The IMF agreed to the three-year rescue package for Pakistan in April - its 13th bailout programme for the South Asian nation since the late 1980s - as the economic outlook for the country of 208 million people worsened. "Completion of the review will enable disbursement of SDR 328 million [\$450m worth of Special Drawing Rights] and will help unlock significant funding from bilateral and multilateral partners," Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, head of the IMF mission to Islamabad, said in a statement after the

mission completed its first programme review.

"The government policies have started to bear fruit, helping to reserve the

buildup of vulnerabilities and restore economic stability. The external and fiscal deficits are narrowing, inflation is expected to decline and growth, although slow, remains positive," the IMF statement said. The mission was in Islamabad from October 28 to November 8. The IMF said Pakistan's near-term economic outlook was broadly unchanged from the time of the

programme's approval in April, with gradually strengthening activity and average inflation expected to decelerate in the 2020 fiscal year. However, domestic and international risks remain, and structural economic challenges persist, it said.

"Positive for Pakistan! IMF Mission concludes successfully. IMF confirms that Pakistan met all First Quarter Performance Criteria by

good margins and economy continuing to get better. Thank you PM and entire team!," Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, finance adviser to Pakistan's prime minister, said in a tweet on Friday night. Pakistan has lifted interest rates over the past year to tame high inflation - which eased to 11.04 percent in October from 11.37 percent in September. But last month, the central bank governor, Reza Baqir, signalled an extended

pause on rate hikes. The government of Prime Minister Imran Khan, who took power in August, obtained temporary relief from close allies - such as China and Saudi Arabia - with short-term loans worth more than \$10bn to buffer foreign currency reserves and ease debt pressures on the country's current account. But analysts had called an IMF bailout inevitable, as Pakistan faced an increasing fiscal crunch.

## Pakistan anti-government protesters call off Islamabad sit-in

Protest leader Rehman tells supporters to launch 'Plan B', threatening to block several main highways across country.

(News Agencies) Thousands of anti-government protesters in Pakistan called off a two-week sit-in on Islamabad's main highway, but began what they called "Plan B" aimed at crippling the country's roads and toppling Prime Minister Imran Khan. Protest leader Fazl-ur-Rehman, chief of the conservative Assembly of Islamic Clerics (Jamiat Ulema Islam-Fazl; JUI-F) party, told his supporters on Wednesday to return to their home states to begin the "next phase" of the "ongoing movement", which he said would continue until the government resigns and fresh elections are held. Demonstrators set off on the march from the southern city of



Karachi on October 27 and arrived in Islamabad on October 31, where they had been holding a sit-in for almost two weeks. "Our strength is converged here, and our associates are out on the roads. They need your help and

assistance," Rehman told the crowd from the top of an articulated truck that has served as a stage for nightly addresses to protesters. "Your presence here has cut the roots of the government. In the next phase,

we will demolish this trunk." He threatened to block several main highways, which could disconnect major cities from the rest of the country. Earlier on Wednesday, JUI-F workers, holding party flags, blocked the western Quetta-Chaman highway linking the country with Afghanistan, resulting in a long queue of trucks laden with goods, footage aired by private news channels showed. "The roads are already blocked with our workers but we are going to sit with them," said Qutb-ud-Din, one of the many party supporters dismantling the makeshift tent camp in Islamabad. "We are going to begin Plan B."

# Workers making £88 Lululemon leggings claim they are beaten

**Upmarket brand that recently launched partnership with UN Foundation opens investigation as women in Bangladesh factory say they suffer regular abuse**

(News Agencies) Lululemon, an athleisure brand whose £88 leggings are worn by celebrities and Instagram influencers, are sourcing clothing from a factory where Bangladeshi female factory workers claim they are beaten and physically assaulted.

The Canadian brand recently launched a partnership with the United Nations Foundation to reduce stress levels and promote the mental health of aid workers.

Yet young female workers at a factory in Bangladesh making clothing for the label gave detailed accounts of how they struggled to survive on meagre wages and faced physical violence and regular humiliation at the hands of their managers, who called them "whores" and "sluts". The factory is owned and run by the Youngone Corporation, which supplies Lululemon. Lululemon said it has a strict code of practice, and does not tolerate any violations of this. The company said it would immediately



launch an investigation. "There are currently no orders planned for this factory, and we will take appropriate action based upon the findings of our investigation," a spokesperson said. A UN Foundation spokesperson said: "We believe all workers should be treated fairly and welcome Lululemon's investigation."

One worker at the factory claimed she was slapped for leaving work early, after feeling unwell. "I was sick, so one day I left work at 5pm but I informed the line supervisor. He told his bosses I

left without telling anyone and the next day, when I went to work, the technician in charge of my line slapped me," she said.

She added: "He slapped me so hard my cheeks turned red and everyone asked me what happened. I couldn't tell them the actual story. I just told them I had allergies." The worker claimed she did not complain as she felt no one would care. She added that female workers were also called "prostitutes".

"During last Ramadan, they created a new line and recruited

new female workers. One day, a technician hit a label operator so hard on her chest. We could see she was in pain the whole day ... She was lying in the back of the line for hours but our bosses did nothing about her."

Lululemon launched a partnership with the United Nations Foundation (UNF) on 8 October, saying that for the last three years the leggings company and the UNF have been working together to develop a curriculum of evidence-based mindfulness, yoga and self-care

training, and have conducted pilot testing to more than 500 aid workers in eight countries to date, including the United States.

The company has upped its sales and profit outlook and is now forecasting that it will haul in \$3.8bn (£3.02bn) to \$3.84bn in sales in 2019. Lululemon, which was started in 1998 by Canadian billionaire businessman Chip Wilson, as a purveyor of yoga pants, has been expanding and introducing new product lines.

But the clothes it produces are purchased from a range of developing countries where labour is cheaper, including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Vietnam, among other parts of the world.

The company's website says: "We don't own our manufacturing facilities so we take great care selecting our manufacturing partners. Our approach is to build relationships with factories that are aligned with our values and meet our sourcing expectations."

## Cyclone Bulbul: 20 dead and millions displaced as storm hits India and Bangladesh

**Twelve reported dead in India and eight in Bangladesh as storm uproots trees and floods croplands**



(News Agencies) Twenty people have died and more than two million others have spent a night huddled in storm shelters after Cyclone Bulbul hit the coasts of India and Bangladesh with fierce gales and torrential rain, officials said on Sunday.

The cyclone packed winds of up to 120km/h (75mph) when it hit late on Saturday, forcing the closure of ports and airports in both countries.

Ten people were killed in India's West Bengal state, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported, including two after uprooted trees fell on their homes and another after being struck by falling branches in Kolkata. Two others died in nearby Odisha state, PTI

reported. In Bangladesh, eight people were killed – five by falling trees – and at least 20 people were injured.

Five others are missing after a fishing trawler sank in bad weather on the Meghna river near the southern island of Bhola, district administrator Masud Alam Siddiqui said. The cyclone also damaged some 4,000 mostly mud and tin-built houses, disaster management secretary Shah Kamal said. In coastal Khulna, the worst-hit district in Bangladesh, trees were ripped from the ground, blocking roads and hampering access to the area. Some low-lying parts of the district were flooded, disaster management minister Enamur

Rahman said. Authorities said the cyclone was weakening as it moved inland. "It has turned into a deep depression, causing heavy rainfall," Bangladesh weather bureau deputy chief Ayesha Khatun said.

Bulbul hit the coast at the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest which straddles Bangladesh and India, and is home to endangered species including Bengal tigers and Irrawaddy dolphins. The mangroves shielded the coast from the storm's full impact, Khatun said. Some 2.1 million people across Bangladesh were relocated to cyclone shelters. Troops were sent to coastal districts while tens of thousands of volunteers went door-to-door and used loudspeakers to urge people to evacuate their villages. "We spent the night with another 400 people," said Ambia Begum, who arrived at a shelter in the port town of Mongla late on Saturday along with her family. "I am worried about my cattle and the straw roof of my house. I could not bring them here. Allah knows what is happening there."

## Bangladeshi MP allegedly hired eight lookalikes to take her place in exams

**Awami League's Tamanna Nusrat is accused of paying impersonators in at least 13 tests**



(News Agencies) A Bangladeshi politician has been expelled from university after allegedly hiring as many as eight lookalikes to take her place in exams. Tamanna Nusrat, from the ruling Awami League party, is accused of paying the lookalikes to pretend to be her in at least 13 tests. The scandal emerged after the private broadcaster Nagorik TV entered a test hall and confronted one of the women posing as Nusrat, in a video that went viral. Nusrat, who was elected to parliament last year, was studying for a bachelor of arts degree with the Bangladesh Open University

(BOU). "We expelled her because she has committed a crime. A crime is a crime," said the BOU head, MA Mannan. "We have cancelled her enrolment. She will never be able to get admitted here again." A college official said: "The proxy students were protected by the MP's musclemen when they sat for the tests. Everybody knew it but nobody uttered a word because she is from a very influential family." Nusrat could not be reached for comment. Test fraud, cheating and leaking of question papers ahead of exams are common in Bangladesh, prompting authorities frequently to cancel results.



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# Congress can seek eight years of Trump tax records after an appeals panel rejects

Congress can seek eight years of Donald Trump's tax records, ruled a federal appeals court on Wednesday, after the president argued against the release in a fight over how far lawmakers can take their investigations.



(News Agencies) The order was handed down by the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, rejecting requests made by Trump's lawyers last month to revisit a decision in support of a House of Representatives

subpoena. Trump's lawyers have argued against accounting firm Mazars USA releasing the records, as Democrats have inquired about his business interests and wealth. Trump attorney Jake Sekulow said the

president would take his appeal to the US Supreme Court. The House Oversight Committee subpoenaed Mazars this year, saying it needed the records to determine if Trump complied with laws requiring disclosure of his

assets, and to assess whether those laws needed to be changed. The request focuses on his tax records from 2011 to 2018. While campaigning for the presidency in 2016, Trump broke with a decades-old convention of candidates releasing their tax returns publicly. Trump's lawyers sued the House committee in April, arguing that its subpoena exceeded limits on Congress's investigative power. A complaint filed by the president's attorneys said the true motive for the subpoena was to expose private financial information 'with the hope that it will turn up something that

Democrats can use as a political tool against the President'. A lower court judge ruled against Trump in May, saying the documents might assist Congress in passing laws and performing other core functions. The May decision was the first time a federal court waded into the tussle about how far Congress can go in investigating Trump and his business affairs, and marked an important victory for House Democrats. A three-judge panel of DC circuit judges, in a 2-1 ruling, upheld the lower court judge in October. 'Contrary to the

president's arguments, the committee possesses authority under both the house rules and the constitution to issue the subpoena, and Mazars must comply', Judge David Tatel wrote on behalf of the majority. Judge Neomi Rao, who was appointed by Trump to the DC appeals court, dissented from the October decision. Rao and another Trump appointee to the court, Gregory Katsas, voted to rehear the case, Wednesday's order showed. They were joined by Karen Henderson, an appointee of former President George HW Bush.

# Chile's elites aren't listening to the protestors



(News Agencies) A version of this article originally appeared on CNN Español. The stories are making headlines in Chile: the former ministers of foreign affairs are concerned with the country's image. After a wave of protests, the government has just canceled two big international gatherings: the meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation group (APEC), with its anticipated commercial war between China and the US, and COP25, the 2019 United Nations climate summit, where Chile was meant to lead the charge against climate change.

What worries the political elite is actually a mirage manufactured for the outside world, an illusion that is far from reality. Chile is not a Latin-American "oasis;" that's a good publicity slogan that has been falling apart before our eyes. On October 18 this year, a social movement exploded in a developed, OECD-member country

that is the statistical envy of the region: a GDP of nearly \$25,000 per capita, with constant growth over the last few decades, per

the World Bank. It draws immigrants like a magnet with the promise of attaining the Chilean dream.

But there is no Chilean dream. No hay tal sueño chileno. For the vast majority, we've been living in a nightmare ever since the Chicago Boys forcibly installed their model of savage capitalism and privatized our rights in the 1970s. After the rule of Augusto Pinochet, democratic Chile has

maintained the status quo, rarely correcting for social necessities.

I come from extreme poverty. My mother was older. She was single. Because she didn't get married, I'm a huacho, orphaned on my father's side. A few years ago, the current minister of justice wholeheartedly defended the legislation that left me and all illegitimate children with fewer rights than the offspring of married parents. These ministers

who defend inequality publicly and shamelessly are now part of a government that claims to have listened to the message of this year's protests. My mother was sick, and we lived for 20 years as guests in other people's homes, moving from house to house. I'll say it again: I come from extreme poverty. I had to take out a government loan to pay for my higher education at the public University of Chile. The

current president, the billionaire Sebastian Piñera, was able to go to college for free in the Chile of his youth. Since then, the country has been destroyed by Pinochet's 1973 coup d'état, then revived for the benefit of certain economic interest groups by people like the president's brother, José Piñera, inventor of the much-criticized AFP (Pension Fund Administrators). The AFP is one of the targets of the current protests.

# There could be trouble ahead for Saudi Arabia's economy

(News Agencies) The stars of the business world returned last week to Saudi Arabia's so-called Davos in the Desert, a conference formally known as the Future Investment Initiative (FII). Last year, several CEOs dropped out, afraid of associating publicly with a regime that has been accused of — and has consistently denied — being responsible for the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. And while it's true that their return this year indicates the extent of Saudi Arabia's rapid rehabilitation, the kingdom will need more than a glitzy attendee list of business elites to mend its economic troubles. The CEOs of BlackRock, Blackstone, SoftBank, Standard Chartered, Credit

Suisse and others have all made a return this year after dropping out last year. The FII's impressive guest list is indeed a testament to the high level of interest in Saudi Arabia ever since Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced a sweeping economic reform program in 2016, dubbed Vision 2030. Promising to wean the kingdom off oil, the program aimed to open the Saudi market in new ways, including plans to privatize state-owned entities and to sell up to 5% of oil company Saudi Aramco in a public offering. But the plan's progress has been uneven so far. Saudi Aramco did finally announce Sunday plans for an IPO, but it was originally slated for 2018 and had been paused or delayed

multiple times. Now, Aramco is expected to list just 1% to 2% of the company on the Saudi stock exchange, as doubts linger over Mohammed bin Salman's desired valuation of \$2 trillion for the company. A smaller listing would still reap a windfall for Saudi Arabia, but far short of the \$100 billion



figure Aramco officials touted in 2016. On top of all this, the International Monetary Fund last month sharply cut Saudi Arabia's 2019 growth forecast to 0.2% from 1.9%, citing a decline in the kingdom's oil GDP resulting from the OPEC+ production cuts. Saudi Arabia has successfully pushed

through some business reforms, such as loosening foreign ownership limits on its stock market and launching its inaugural tourist visa to tap into the potential of its tourism and leisure sectors. Indeed, its improvements led Saudi Arabia to climb 30 spots in the World Bank's Doing Business Index this year.

through some business reforms, such as loosening foreign ownership limits on its stock market and launching its inaugural tourist visa to tap into the potential of its tourism and leisure sectors. Indeed, its improvements led Saudi Arabia to climb 30 spots in the World Bank's Doing Business Index this year.

## The longest prison sentence so far in the college admissions scandal has just been handed down: 6 months

(News Agencies) Former real estate executive Toby MacFarlane was sentenced to six months in prison Wednesday for his role in the college admissions scandal — the longest prison term for any of the defendants so far. MacFarlane must also pay a \$150,000 fine and perform 200 hours of community service, according to the US Attorney's Office of Massachusetts. Prosecutors had recommended 15 months

in prison, one year of supervised release and a fine of \$95,000. MacFarlane, 56, a former executive at a California title insurance company, previously pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud and honest services mail fraud. Prosecutors say he gave William "Rick" Singer \$450,000 to get his son and daughter admitted into the University of Southern California as star athletes, when neither of them was. MacFarlane's daughter

had never played soccer when she submitted her application to USC in 2013 with an essay that said in part: "My parents have a hard time attending my soccer matches because our opponent's parents are always making rude remarks about that number 8 player who plays without a care for her body or anyone else's on the field. It is true that I can be a bit intense out there on the field." She was able to graduate from the school before anyone knew of her

involvement with Singer, the mastermind behind the national college admissions scandal. MacFarlane's son was accepted as a basketball recruit in 2017. His application listed his height at 6 feet, 1 inch, when he was 5 feet, 5 inches tall, and said that he played on the varsity team from 2014 to 2016, even though he only played his senior year. Several parents have been sentenced over the scandal, including actress



Felicity Huffman. She was released after serving 11 days of a two-week sentence for her role in the scandal. Sentences had previously ranged from probation to 5 months in prison.

## Apprehensions at the US-Mexico border continue to decline



(News Agencies) Customs and Border Protection apprehended more than 42,000 migrants at the southern border in October, continuing a downward trend in arrests after record highs earlier this year, acting CBP Commissioner Mark Morgan announced Thursday. The decline in arrests is in line with a recent downward trend following a peak in May, when apprehensions spiked to nearly 133,000. The administration has credited a series of policies -- including the program informally known as "remain in Mexico" and regional partnerships -- for the drop in arrests. "This administration has and continues to take bold action to address this crisis and the numbers show it's working," Morgan said at a news conference in the White House briefing room, noting that there was a 14% decline in arrests in October compared to September. Border Patrol arrested 35,444 migrants on the southern border in October,

compared to 40,507 in September, according to agency data, and 9,806 people were deemed inadmissible. The number of migrants arriving at the US-Mexico border skyrocketed last year as CBP apprehended and deemed inadmissible nearly one million people during the government's 2019 fiscal year, Morgan announced last month. Over the summer, border apprehensions reached record highs, straining the Department of Homeland Security's resources and leading to overcrowding in border facilities. Earlier this year, CBP was holding roughly 20,000 people in custody. Now, the average is less than 3,500 detainees daily, according to Morgan. The demographics of people arriving at the southern border earlier this year created an added challenge for the department. The majority of arrivals were from the Northern Triangle countries of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, and many

of them were families or unaccompanied children seeking asylum in the United States. To staunch the flow of migrants, the administration introduced policies that dramatically limit who's eligible for asylum in the United States, including a rule

that prohibits migrants who have resided in or traveled through third countries from seeking asylum in the US. The Supreme Court cleared the way for the rule, which bars people traveling through Mexico from being able to claim asylum, to go into effect nationwide while the

appeals process plays out. Morgan noted Thursday, however, that there was a shift in demographics in October, from majority Central American migrants to Mexican migrants. "For the first time in nearly 18 months, Mexico was

the country of origin for the majority of apprehensions and inadmissible aliens, rather than Northern Triangle countries, with single adults surpassing families," he said. Many of the policies rolled out by the administration so far do not apply to Mexican migrants.

### The Supreme Court and Congress must defend Dreamers

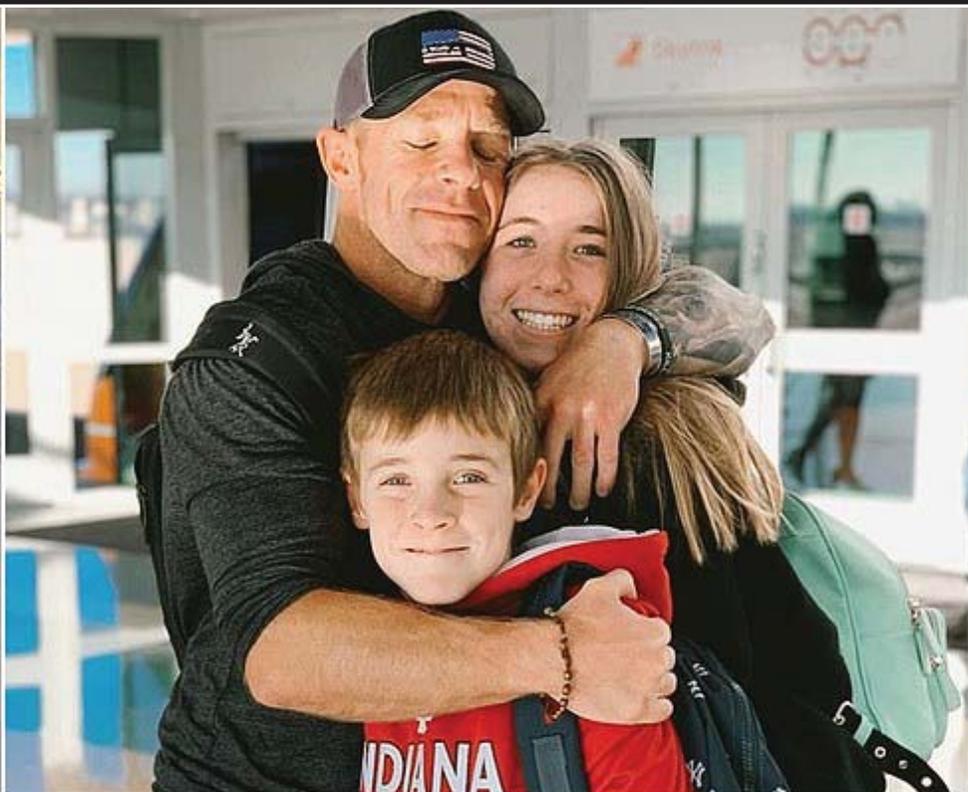
For the last two and a half years, President Donald Trump has led a campaign of unprecedented cruelty towards immigrants, especially children.



(News Agencies) A major front in the President's war on immigrants is his attack on Dreamers, young immigrants who came to the United States as children and are American in every way except their immigration status. President Trump is fighting to end deportation protections for hundreds of thousands of Dreamers, and whether or not his anti-Dreamer agenda succeeds will depend on the Supreme Court and Congress. In 2012, in response to bipartisan calls from Congress, former President Barack Obama used his legal authority to establish Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, also known as DACA. DACA provides two-year, renewable protection from deportation to Dreamers on an individualized basis if they register with the government,

pay a fee, and pass criminal background checks, among other requirements. More than 800,000 Dreamers came forward and received DACA. DACA unleashed the full potential of Dreamers, who are contributing to our country as soldiers, engineers, medical students, teachers, small business owners, and in myriad other ways. DACA is also a lawful exercise of the President's authority to establish deportation priorities. Past administrations -- Democratic and Republican -- have stopped deportations of low-priority cases and courts have long recognized this authority. For example, in its 2012 decision striking down most of Arizona's controversial immigration law,

the Supreme Court reaffirmed that the federal government has broad authority over whom to deport. Justice Anthony Kennedy, on behalf of the court's majority, noted: "A principal feature of the removal system is the broad discretion exercised by immigration officials." DACA is also a smart and realistic approach to immigration enforcement. There are millions of undocumented immigrants in the United States, so the government has to set priorities about whom to deport, and whom not to deport, based on its enforcement priorities and limited resources. Under the Obama administration's policy, it was a high priority to deport those convicted of serious crimes or who posed a threat to public safety, and limited resources were not to be used to deport Dreamers. On September 5, 2017, President Trump ended DACA. Hundreds of thousands of Dreamers faced losing their work permits and being deported to countries they barely remember. When he announced the repeal of DACA, President Trump called on Congress to "legalize DACA," but since then, he has rejected numerous bipartisan deals to protect Dreamers.



# TRUMP PARDONS SOLDIERS

- US President Donald Trump cleared three armed services members who were accused or convicted of war crimes on Friday
- Trump ordered the release of Clint Lorance, a former army lieutenant who was convicted of murder after he ordered soldiers to open fire on Afgans, killing two

(News Agencies) US President Donald Trump cleared three armed service members Friday, who were were accused or convicted of war crimes.

Trump cancelled murder charges against Army Green Beret Major Mathew L. Golsteyn, whose trial was set to begin next month.

The president also ordered the release of Clint Lorance, a former army lieutenant who had been convicted of murder for ordering soldiers under his command to open fire on three unarmed Afgan men, including two who died.

And Trump reversed the demotion of Chief Petty Officer Edward Gallagher, a Navy SEAL who was acquitted of murder, but convicted on a lesser charge in a war crimes case this summer.

'There are no words to describe how grateful my family and I are to our President - Donald J Trump for his intervention and decision', Gallagher said in a social media post after his demotion was reversed. Trump personally called the three men after granting the pardons, which defied rulings made by military leaders seeking to punish the service members.

All three also had been favorites among conservatives who see them as heroes who should not have been prosecuted. Trump, when the White House was considering intervening in Golsteyn's case, commented at the time, 'We train our boys to be killing machines, then prosecute them when they kill!'

In explaining his decision to clear the three service members on Friday, the White House released a statement saying 'The president, as Commander-in-Chief, is ultimately responsible for

ensuring that the law is enforced and when appropriate, that mercy is granted'. 'For more than two hundred years, presidents have used their authority to offer second chances to deserving individuals, including those in uniform who have served our country', the statement explains.

'These actions are in keeping with this long history. As the President has stated, 'when our soldiers have to fight for our country, I want to give them the confidence to fight'.

A court-martial for Golsteyn had been scheduled for December at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, but was postponed until February. The former Green Beret had been accused of killing a suspected bomb-maker while deployed in Afghanistan in 2010.

Golsteyn has argued that the Afghan was a legal target because of his behavior at the time of the shooting.

Heading a team of Army Special Forces troops at the time, Golsteyn said he believed that the bomb-maker, known only as Rasoul, was responsible for an

explosion that killed two US Marines - Sgt. Jeremy R. McQueary, 27, and Lance Cpl. Larry M. Johnson, 19.

The case attracted Trump's attention. He tweeted that Golsteyn is a 'U.S. Military hero' who could face the death penalty 'from our own government'. Lorance, an 82nd Airborne Division lieutenant, in August was sentenced to 20 years in prison, forfeiture of all pay and dismissal from the army after prosecutors said he recklessly ordered his men to open fire on the Afgan men in July 2012. The trio on motorcycles had approached his patrol in southern Afghanistan.

Prosecutors said this was in violation of the military's rules of engagement, which requires soldiers to hold fire unless they have evidence of hostile action or hostile intent.

Two of the men were killed and the third ran away. Gallagher had his rank reduced from that of Senior Chief to Petty Officer First Class and was to

have \$10000 docked from his pay the 40-year-old was sentenced in July for the only charge he was convicted of - posing with the corpse of an ISIS fighter.

The conviction carries a maximum confinement sentence of four months but because Gallagher already had spent 10 months in the brig awaiting trial, it was considered time served.

The jury of five Marines and two Navy personnel decided the sentence.

Gallagher left the July 3 sentencing saying that he was fine about the demotion. 'The jury came with a verdict. I trust them', he said.

The 40-year-old, whose got 20 years in the service, had been acquitted of murdering the ISIS fighter whose body he posed with, despite the testimony of seven SEALs who spoke against him during the court martial.

Trump that day celebrated the Navy SEAL for the court victory. 'Congratulations to Navy Seal Eddie Gallagher, his wonderful wife Andrea, and his entire family', the president said.



# US Coast Guard seizes 5,000lbs of cocaine worth \$69million after intercepting a narco submarine in the Pacific Ocean



on October 23.

The US Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane then intercepted the vessel in international waters shortly before midnight. A boarding team was said to have taken control of the vessel before the four suspected smugglers inside could sink the sub via its installed scuttling valves.

About 5,000 pounds of cocaine, with a street value of approximately \$69million was seized from the vessel, the Coast Guard said in a news release.

A video shot the day after the interception shows Coast

Guard crews on the submersible, off-loading multiple big, fabric-wrapped bundles - presumably cocaine bricks - from the vessel and onto onto military vessels.

The bundles are then placed into a net and then hoisted onto the Coast Guard boats, where they are then tagged.

The US Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf's crew assisted the Harriet Lane's crew in removing the cocaine from the narco-trafficker's vessel.

The Coast Guard has been actively deployed in

the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Basin, patrolling known drug transit zones off the Central and South American coasts.

The Harriet Lane previously made headlines in 2018 when it helped seize 17,203 pounds of cocaine, worth \$260million while operating in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, according to WTKR.

The Harriet Lane is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter, based out of Portsmouth, Virginia. The Bertholf is a 418-foot National Security cutter commissioned originating from Alameda, California.

(News Agencies) The US Coast Guard said that it stopped a narco-submersible in the Pacific Ocean, intercepting about \$69million worth of cocaine.

The Coast Guard said that a maritime patrol aircraft operating in the Eastern Pacific Ocean area flagged a suspected narcotic-trafficking semi-submersible in the water

## Michael Bloomberg pours \$100 MILLION into anti-Trump ad campaign to cover just four battleground states



election battleground states - Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin - begins running on Friday, according to Bloomberg spokesman Jason Schechter.

The former New York City mayor has already filed paperwork in at least two states to appear on presidential primary ballots. Bloomberg himself is not featured in the ad campaign. One example of a new ad: An image of Trump's Twitter account that says, 'Last week, Bloomberg started putting out feelers for a presidential run. The billionaire businessman had announced in March that he planned to sit this one out, after

initially testing the waters. But Bloomberg perceives the field as weak, according to reporting from The Times. President Trump licked his lips at the prospect of a New York-New York brawl. 'Little Michael will fail,' Trump told reporters outside the White House last week. He had been using that nickname for the 5'8" Bloomberg ever since the former New York City Mayor endorsed Hillary Clinton at the Democratic National Convention in July 2016. He doesn't have the magic to do well,' Trump added. Even though the ex-mayor hasn't announced a run, his record is already being scrutinized.

Earlier this week, The Times did a deep dive on some of the lewd comments Bloomberg has made about women over the years, including during his mayoral tenure, when he told partygoers in 2012 to 'Look at the a\*\* on that' at a passing female guest. The reporting prompted Bloomberg's spokesman to issue a mea culpa. 'Mike has come to see that some of what he has said is disrespectful and wrong,' said Stu Loeser, who is advising Bloomberg's potential presidential campaign. 'He believes his words have not always aligned with his values and the way he has led his life.'

(News Agencies) New York billionaire Michael Bloomberg, who is deciding whether to launch a Democratic presidential bid, is pouring \$100 million into an online advertising campaign attacking President Trump. The campaign, which targets voters in four general

## New Jersey man, 21, charged with killing a woman during a night of 'rough sex' in a car



from Maywood was charged with reckless manslaughter last month over the death of Francis Victoria Garcia, 19.

Garcia was found dead in a car that was parked in a detached parking lot at a high-rise in Hackensack, New Jersey, after a Halloween party.

Gaffney, 21, had posted a picture on social media after the woman lost consciousness in the back seat of her car, Superior Court Judge Margaret Foti was reported as saying by NJ.com. 'Just (expletive) this bitch. She passed out. I don't know what to do,' Gaffney wrote on Snapchat.

On Wednesday the judge refused to release Gaffney on bond, saying he had a past history of substance abuse as well as the nasty nature of the social media post.

Gaffney had contacted friends who were in the area and told them Garcia wasn't breathing after he posted the Snapchat photo. Earlier in the night, the woman was said to have been attending a loud Halloween party on the 14th floor of the building, before she left with a man in his 20s - since identified as Gaffney - according to the Daily Voice.

A 911 call about Garcia was said to have come in to the operator at about 2.14am

Friday. First responders then transported her to the hospital where she was pronounced dead. Bergen County Prosecutor Mark Musella said in a statement that Garcia died from 'compression injuries to her neck.'

An affidavit obtained by NJ.com claims she had a blood-alcohol level of .256, three times over the legal limit for driving.

Adam Lustberg, an attorney for Gaffney, said he is waiting for a 'more detailed autopsy report' that may shed more light on Garcia's death. 'At this point, it's just too early to tell,' he claimed.

An affidavit of probable

cause states that Gaffney said the pair had sex in her car for roughly 20 minutes and he had placed his hands around her neck. She later lost consciousness.

Gaffney also allegedly told police that they had taken prescription medication prior to the incident.

It was not immediately clear whether Garcia and Gaffney knew each other previously or if they'd just met at the party.

A law enforcement source told the Daily Voice that Garcia had bruises on her neck consistent with Gaffney's claim. The autopsy results have not been publicly revealed yet.

(News Agencies) A New Jersey man accused of killing a woman during 'rough sex' in a car posted a picture of her dead, naked body on Snapchat before calling for help.

Michael T. Gaffney, 21,

# Venice floods: Italy to declare state of emergency over damage



Italy has declared a state of emergency in Venice after the Italian city was engulfed by 1.87m (6ft) high water levels, flooding its historic basilica and cutting power to homes. More than 80% of the city, a Unesco world heritage site, was under water when tides were at their highest. Italy's Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte described the flooding as "a blow to the heart of our country". He said the government would now act quickly to provide funds and resources. He said the government would "accelerate" the building of structural defences for the lagoon city, referring specifically to the so-called Mose project - a hydraulic barrier system to shut off the lagoon in the event of rising sea levels and winter storms. The prime minister said he was declaring emergency

measures on Thursday, adding that individuals could claim up to •5,000 (£4,300; \$5,500), and businesses up to •20,000, in compensation. Many museums remained shut on Thursday, AFP reports. It comes as Venetians woke to sirens indicating that the tide would "remain high" in the coming days.

The mayor of Venice, Luigi Brugnaro, blamed climate change for the highest water levels in more than 50 years this week, saying the impact was "huge" and would leave "a permanent mark". St Mark's Square - one of the lowest parts of the city - was one of the worst hit areas. Mr Brugnaro said the famous St Mark's Basilica had suffered "grave damage". The crypt at the historic landmark was completely flooded on Tuesday and there are fears that the basilica's columns may have

been structurally damaged. "The damage will run into hundreds of millions of euros," Mr Brugnaro warned.

On Wednesday, pumps were deployed to drain water from the church and its 12th Century crypt.

Small business owners and vendors in the city were appealing to tourists, many of whom had left the city after the water levels rose, to return.

One merchant told the mayor that his business relied on tourism, but that his kiosk was swept away by the tide.

The city of Venice is made up of more than 100 islands inside a lagoon off the north-east coast of Italy. It suffers flooding on a yearly basis. Only once since official records began in 1923, however, has the tide been higher than it reached this

## Is climate change behind Venice flooding?

This latest Acqua Alta (high water) occurrence in Venice is the second highest tide the city has experienced in recorded history. However, if we look at the top 10 tides, five have occurred in the past 20 years and the most recent was only last year. While we should try to avoid attributing a single event to climate change, the increased frequency of these exceptional tides is obviously a big concern. In our changing climate, sea levels are rising and a city such as Venice, which is also sinking, is particularly susceptible to such changes. The weather patterns that have caused the Adriatic storm surge have been driven by a strong meridional (waving) jet stream across the northern hemisphere and this

has fed a conveyor belt of low pressure systems into the central Mediterranean. One of the possible effects of a changing climate is that the jet stream will be more frequently meridional and blocked weather patterns such as these will also become more frequent. If this happens, there is a greater likelihood that these events will combine with astronomical spring tides and hence increase the chance of flooding in Venice. Furthermore, the meridional jet stream can be linked back to stronger typhoons in the north-west Pacific resulting in more frequent cold outbreaks in North America and an unsettled Mediterranean is another one of the downstream effects.

week - hitting 1.94m in 1966. On the island of Pellestrina, two people died as a result of the flooding on a thin strip of land that separates the lagoon from the Adriatic Sea. A resident was electrocuted as he tried to start a pump in his home and a second person was found dead elsewhere on the island. The flooding in Venice was caused by a combination of high spring tides and a meteorological storm surge driven by strong winds blowing north-eastwards across the Adriatic Sea. The winds were so strong that an empty vaporetto - or public water bus - ended up

grounded in Venice's Arsenale complex. Mr Conte said the Mose flood defence project, part of which was successfully tested in 2013, was not expected to be operational until the end of 2021.

Work on the project began back in 2003 and has already cost billions of euros. It has been plagued by corruption and bribery allegations.

In 2014, the former mayor of Venice, Giorgio Orsoni, stepped down after he was accused of involvement in the embezzling of around •20m (\$27m; £16m) in public funds earmarked for flood defences.

## Peter King's departure creates opening for Democrats on Long Island

"It's going to be an extremely difficult seat for the Republican Party to hold," former Suffolk County Republican Chairman John Jay LaValle said. "Compounded with the fact that we're in a very blue state and there will be any number of states up for grabs across the country, this might not be the highest priority for the [National Republican Congressional Committee]. There's any number of retirements coming — a lot of seats in play, so this doesn't come at a great time for the Republican Party."

Babylon Councilwoman Jackie Gordon had been the only Democrat declaring for a bid against King before his announcement Monday. The Iraq and Afghanistan War veteran announced a challenge in May and already has endorsements from national Democratic groups such

as EMILY's List. But King's departure will likely lead to the field expanding quickly.

"He's always been his own guy and that explains his ability to survive and thrive in a landscape that is increasingly hostile to Republicans," said Larry Levy, executive dean of Hofstra University's National Center for Suburban Studies. "Now that he's leaving, this seat becomes more competitive and should attract A-list marquee candidates and millions of dollars from around the country."

King's retirement at the end of 2020 brings an end to the career of one of the brashest, most accessible and most complex members of New York's congressional delegation in recent memory.

Many Democrats have painted him as a hard conservative. But while he fits that description on issues like policing and has been one of

the nation's leading voices on a right-leaning foreign policy for decades, he's also repeatedly been ranked one of the most moderate members of Congress. He has reached across the aisle on topics like aid for Sept. 11 survivors and is the only remaining House Republican who voted against Bill Clinton's impeachment.

He first publicly acknowledged that he might reconsider his plans to run for reelection in September when daughter Erin King Sweeney announced that she would leave her seat on the Hempstead Town Council to move to North Carolina, where her husband had received a new job. It had long been assumed that she would eventually run to succeed her father.

"The prime reason for my decision was that after 28 years of spending 4 days a week in Washington, D.C., it is time to end the weekly commute and be home in

Seaford," wrote King, 75, in an early-morning Facebook post. His wife, "Rosemary and I decided that, especially since we are both in good health, it is time to have the flexibility to spend more time with our children and grandchildren. My daughter's recent move to North Carolina certainly accelerated my thinking."

The most widely mentioned name in the hours after King's departure was Liuba Grechen Shirley, his Democratic opponent last year. King defeated her by about 6 points, after beating his prior three opponents by an average of 27. Grechen Shirley, whose campaign successfully pushed for a 2018 FEC decision that lets candidates spend their campaign funds on child care, has spent the past year creating a national PAC focused on helping Democratic mothers win office.

"I've heard from many encouraging supporters across the district, and with so much on the line for our community, I am seriously considering another run for Congress," Grechen Shirley said in a statement.

Suffolk County District Attorney Tim Sini's name was also floated by a supporter of his. A former police commissioner and an assistant U.S. attorney under Preet Bharara, Sini first won the office in 2017. Other possible Democratic candidates mentioned by people familiar with the district included Babylon Town Supervisor Rich Schaffer, Suffolk's Democratic chair; and state Sen. Monica Martinez. On the Republican side, it'll be a harder haul than what King faced, Levy said, but that doesn't mean there's not widespread interest from officials in both Suffolk and Nassau counties.

# Trump Exposed A Brutal Day for the President

The clash of values and mindset could not have been sharper. Taylor, a career public servant, reminded Sondland that, “the Ukrainians did not ‘owe’ Trump anything.”

The coming weeks will likely also offer a window into the other great continuity of presidential scandal from Watergate to Monica Lewinsky to Ukraine. That is the need for presidents to project confidence and control when the very nature of an impeachment inquiry underscores that they have lost control.

The news has been full of reports lately about Trump’s “isolation,” “anger,” “frustration” and “rage”—toward Democrats, toward the media, toward his own team for failing to bring Democrats and

the media to heel. And the White House’s internal recriminations are flowing in both directions. “Frustrated Trump allies urge him to stop talking about himself,” my colleague Anita Kumar wrote earlier this week, in one example of the genre.

The effort to project control recalls the scene in “Animal House” in which the ROTC parade commander, surrounded by chaos, vainly shouts, “Remain calm! All is well!” At the Trump White House on Wednesday, press secretary Stephanie Grisham assured reporters that Trump was too busy to dignify the impeachment inquiries by paying attention: “Not watching. He’s working.” Trump, meanwhile, did manage to

squeeze in a few moments to fire off a new barrage of tweets denouncing the proceedings. “New hoax. Same swamp,” he wrote.

This contradiction, too, fits into a long presidential tradition. “One year of Watergate is enough,” Nixon pronounced piously at his State of the Union address in January 1974. Congress, the federal courts, the news media, and, ultimately, the public decided that it wasn’t quite enough—they wanted seven more months until the 37th president faced the inevitable and resigned.

Clinton had the opposite outcome—his public approval rose so steadily that Jay Leno joked that Clinton was doing so

well in the polls, “he is already planning his next sex scandal.” His ultimate success in the impeachment drama of 1998 and 1999 reflected both a forgiving public appraisal of his behavior and his ability to project that he was “a compartmentalizer,” in the phrase his aides invoked at that time. Clinton supposedly left the defense to his lawyers and focused on public business, and for the most part avoided the relentless drive against him by Republicans in Congress. In that sense, his approach was the exact opposite of Trump’s. But make no mistake: Compartmentalization was largely an illusion. Behind

the scenes in the Oval Office and West Wing, Clinton was often distracted by fear, embarrassment over his private failings and rage over what he regarded as a supremely illegitimate effort to make them public in a campaign to reverse the results of an election.

Someday, if Trump and Clinton ever repeat the golf outings they used to share, they will have plenty to talk about in their shared experiences.

One thing they both know: Impeachment is not merely an inquiry into presidential misconduct. It is a violent intrusion into intimate regions of presidential psychology. There is no way to compartmentalize that.

## *Why the Shiv Sena parted ways with the BJP in Maharashtra*

**It had become the junior partner both electorally and ideologically. Splitting was essential to remain relevant**

In 2009, the Sena won 44 seats while the BJP got 54. This was the turning point for the Sena. It not only lost the stature of big brother, but lost the post of the Leader of Opposition in the assembly. In the 2014 and 2019 assembly polls, the BJP won 122 and 105 seats respectively. Since 2014, the BJP leadership also stopped visiting Matoshree as much as they did earlier. During Bal Thackeray’s time, no deal with the Sena would happen without a visit to Matoshree. This change hurt Uddhav Thackeray’s ego. During the post-mortem of the 2019 assembly election, Sena’s leaders found that the BJP had fielded party rebels against official candidates of the Sena — something which had damaged the latter. Before the Lok Sabha polls, the BJP had

also poached many Sena leaders, though all senior leaders (Chandrakant Khaire, Shivaji Adalrao Patil, Vasant Gite) lost the Lok Sabha polls in 2019.

The dip in the Sena’s strength was not limited only to the assembly. The BJP has steadily been eating into the Sena’s vote bank in the local government structure also. In the 2017 Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) polls, the BJP and Sena fought separately, and the former was about to snatch the power from Sena in Asia’s richest civic body that has a budget of over ~35,000 crore. The Sena got 84 seats while the BJP got 82 seats. Contrast this with the previous BMC election of 2012. The Sena had then got 75 seats, and the BJP won 31 seats. The 2017 BMC poll result was a warning

to the Sena that if the BJP continued in power in the state and the Centre, then, one day, the Sena would have to cede power to the BJP in the BMC, the soul of the party. The Congress and the NCP are opponents of the Sena, but they always gave way to the Sena in the BMC polls. The Congress and NCP tactic was to let the Sena rule the BMC, while they presided over the state government.

At a more fundamental level, the BJP wanted to encroach into the Sena’s vote bank because both share the same ideology. Unless one goes down, the other will not grow. The BJP ran with the Sena’s Hindutva agenda, while the Marathi manoo agenda was taken over by the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena chief Raj Thackeray. All of this, put together,

convinced the Sena that it had no option but to break the alliance with the BJP in order to secure its political future. The Sena was then waiting for the right opportunity. After the assembly results, Sharad Pawar called up Uddhav Thackeray and convinced him, with facts and figures, that the Sena could not grow under the shadow of the BJP. For their part, NCP leaders feel that they are strong in rural Maharashtra while the Sena is strong in Mumbai and its peripheral urban pockets. If the Sena is with them, they together can stop the BJP and rule Maharashtra for several years. The key question now is if the Sena’s calculations translate into a real, durable, political alliance or increase its power, or whether it turns counterproductive.

## Michael Bloomberg, Deval Patrick blindsided Dem primary field

now less than three months before the Iowa caucuses — leaves the prospects for either man dim, according to conversations with a dozen Democratic strategists. Bloomberg doesn’t have the same fundraising mountain to climb as Patrick. But as a 77-year-old white man, he faces demographic challenges in a party primary where his absurd wealth is as much a liability as an asset.

Bloomberg, who was already prepared to spend \$500 million to help unseat President Trump this year, would join a contest where another billionaire, Tom Steyer, has failed to gain much traction despite spending at least \$32 million in the early states of Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina since July.

If he runs, Bloomberg has signaled he might skip the first four early states in favor of competing in the 15 states that vote on Super Tuesday on March 3. That strategy

gives him one narrow path to the nomination: Spend heavily and hang on until the field narrows to two or three candidates.

Democratic strategists view the outspend-and-outlast strategy as highly unlikely to succeed. The Super Tuesday electorate awaiting Bloomberg includes several Southern states where a high percentage of the Democratic vote will be cast by African Americans. And it includes Texas and California, two massive states with significant non-white populations — all potential liabilities for Bloomberg. His national polling, which is more reflective of Super Tuesday electorate than an early-state vote, is dismal. “I saw Michael Bloomberg said he wants to run for president, I rolled my eyes and went back to reading about college football,” said Chris Lippincott, a Texas-based Democratic strategist who ran a super

PAC opposing Sen. Ted Cruz last year. “It’s too late. We do not have a dearth of quality candidates ... I don’t know anybody who looks at the debate stage and says, ‘God, you know what we really need is another white guy.’ If we needed another white billionaire, Tom Steyer would be doing better.” Or as Jennifer Palmieri, the former Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton campaign adviser put it, “Skipping the early states was [former New York Mayor Rudy] Giuliani’s strategy in 2008. It didn’t work for Giuliani, but it may be that the Bloomberg folks have also concluded that is their only path.”

Patrick, meanwhile, is relatively unknown outside New England and would have to raise millions of dollars quickly while raising his national profile.

“Both of their strategies are questionable,” said Matt Bennett of the center-left group Third Way, who worked on Wesley Clark’s

late entry into the 2004 campaign. “I have experienced the unbelievable scramble of trying to stand up a presidential campaign and join a race that is already sprinting forward, and it is very, very hard.”

“In Bloomberg’s case,” Bennett said, “he can spend his way to a place in the race, though I think it is too late. I think he missed his moment. With Governor Patrick, I don’t know how he does it, because he doesn’t have the money.” Bloomberg, who had decided in March not to run because of Biden’s perceived strength, changed his mind last week because he believed the former vice president wasn’t strong enough in the primary. A similar sense beset Wall Street and hedge fund donors from Massachusetts who favor Patrick, who works at a private equity fund but governed one of the most Democratic states in the nation.

# No discipline. No plan. No strategy.' Kamala Harris campaign in meltdown

(SAI Bureau) Washington D.C. Kamala Harris' campaign is careening toward a crackup.

As the California senator crisscrosses the country trying to revive her sputtering presidential bid, aides at her fast-shrinking headquarters are deep into the finger-pointing stages. And much of the blame is being placed on campaign manager Juan Rodriguez. After Rodriguez announced dozens of layoffs and re-deployments in late October to stem overspending, three more staffers at headquarters here were let go and another quit in recent days, aides told POLITICO. Officials said they've become increasingly frustrated at the campaign chief's lack of clarity about what changes have been made to right the ship and his plans to turn the situation around. They hold Rodriguez responsible for questionable budget decisions, including continuing to bring on new hires shortly before the layoffs began.

Amid the turmoil, some aides have gone directly to campaign chair Maya Harris, the candidate's sister, and argued that Rodriguez needs to be replaced if Harris has any hope of a turnaround, according to two officials.

"It's a campaign of id," said one senior Harris official, laying much of the blame on Rodriguez, but also pointing to a leaderless structure at the top that's been allowed to flail without accountability. "What feels right, what impulse you have right now, what emotion, what frustration," the official added. The person described the current state of the campaign in blunt terms: "No discipline. No plan. No strategy."

This account is based on interviews with more than a dozen current and former staffers as well as others close to the campaign, including donors. The sources were granted anonymity to speak freely about the turmoil within the organization and protect them

from repercussions. The internal strife is the latest discouraging development for Harris' once-encouraging candidacy. She has slid into low single digits and is now banking on a top-tier performance in Iowa to pull her back into contention. Inside the campaign, which had already experienced staff shakeups before the layoffs, rank and file aides are fed up with the weak leadership and uncertainty around internal communication, planning and executing on a clear vision. They say the constant shifting has eroded trust in the upper ranks. While staff ire centers on Rodriguez, his defenders argue he has stood loyally by the candidate despite being relegated to a role akin to deputy campaign manager to Maya Harris. They say he's had to get Maya Harris' buy-in even on routine decisions, which were often slow to materialize, further undermining staff's confidence in him as a supervisor.

"From the outset of this race, he has had all the responsibility with none of the authority. He's been managing this race with at least one, if not two, hands tied behind his back," a senior campaign official and longtime Harris hand said of the Rodriguez-Maya Harris dynamic. Rodriguez's decision to keep mum amid criticism from staff is evidence of his devotion to the candidate, his defenders said. "He would never talk shit about [Maya]. He would never undermine her. He's just not that guy," the senior official said. Aides describe a bleak environment in which workers have started to openly question the judgment of managers after seeing colleagues marched out the door. During a recent meeting, aides pressed Rodriguez and Maya Harris for answers about campaign strategy. At one point during the more than two-hour discussion, Maya Harris herself turned to Rodriguez and challenged him in front of about 20

staffers, and several more listening in by phone. Rodriguez seemed unprepared for the exchange, according to people present. They walked out with little consensus about how to prioritize upcoming events and strategy around advertising. One recently departed aide tried to sum up the mess: At the staff level, the person said, "everybody has had to consolidate. Everybody has had to make cuts. And people are pissed. They see a void. They want to push someone out. And I understand that. But the root cause of all of this is that no one was empowered really to make the decisions and make them fast and make them decisively."

Still, others point to Rodriguez's constant yielding to Maya Harris as a reason he should be held accountable for the campaign's failures. "It was his decision," another aide said of the fraying pact, adding there were opportunities for him to take control. "He chose to defer to Maya."

The unorthodox composition of the campaign is further complicated by other factors. Rodriguez's California business partners — Ace Smith, Sean Clegg and Laphonza Butler — are senior Harris advisers atop a flat leadership structure that includes just a few other outside voices, including ad maker Jim Margolis, pollster David Binder and Maya Harris. Critics of the arrangement say it has contributed to an insular culture and reinforced the business partners' long-term obligations to one another. The leadership upheaval is the latest turn in a campaign that has endured multiple reorganizations and never gelled as a unit. In September, Rodriguez announced internally that he was putting Butler and Rohini Kosoglu, Harris' former Senate chief of staff, in charge of most departments. The moves soon gave way to other changes.

Under an updated iteration, Clegg formally assumed control of messaging while

Butler took over the financial, digital and operations teams. Dave Huynh, the campaign's delegate expert, was put in charge of the political department. Emmy Ruiz's turf included states and the field organization. And Kosoglu oversaw scheduling, communications, advance and policy.

Yet, even these seemingly clearer lines of authority are already being blurred.

In late October, Rodriguez informed staff that he was redeploying aides to Iowa from other states and laying off dozens of others, including at the campaign's headquarters. He said at the time that the moves were driven by the need to stash enough money for a seven-figure TV ad buy in the weeks before the Iowa caucuses. Now, it's unclear whether Harris will have the money to do so.

The former aide said people in the campaign began warning of declining revenues early, but that leadership dysfunction around Rodriguez, Maya Harris and others convinced the person that Harris wasn't getting an unvarnished view of the picture. "I don't think

anybody wanted to tell her," the former aide said, adding, "I still don't think she knows the severity."

Other aides express fears that the candidate is not being advised of the gravity of the organizational troubles. And they question the wisdom of firing junior and midlevel staffers while the main people empowered to make decisions have all been spared. Harris' history with Rodriguez began six years ago, when Rodriguez, who had been an aide to Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, took a job in the California attorney general's office as a conduit to the city of Los Angeles. Late in 2015, Rodriguez, then a senior adviser to Harris' Senate campaign, came out of the bullpen to manage her race after she parted ways with her first manager. It wasn't a competitive contest, but Rodriguez helped oversee spending cuts and staff and consultant layoffs as he worked to significantly slash Harris' overhead. Maya Harris had helped bring in the first round of hires for that campaign, including several people who were eventually fired, before leaving to run policy for Hillary Clinton's 2016

campaign. When the Harris sisters were building the 2020 staff, they and others were in talks with at least one well-known Democratic strategist whose understanding of the proposed role at the time was to serve alongside Rodriguez given his lack of national campaign experience. The consultant passed, and no one else emerged in that capacity.

Rodriguez confidants from the campaign said they urged him to quit long ago given the challenging nature of the family dynamic, but they don't think he will. "It was like, 'I need to be the captain of the Titanic and go down with this ship,'" one said after talking to him recently.

In a statement to POLITICO, Rodriguez said, "Campaigns are long and arduous, but we are all united in our commitment to making sure Kamala is the nominee to take on Donald Trump and win." "We have had to make tough decisions to compete in Iowa and ensure Kamala is in a position to be the Democratic nominee, but Maya, I, and the rest of the amazing team are pouring our heart and soul into winning this campaign."

Aides pointed to late efforts to save the organization.

## Elixir Releases xx messenger, the First Metadata-Shredding App

"Apps alongside our talented team," said David Chaum. The xx alpha messenger shreds metadata generated by users while also providing end-to-end encryption of message content. This metadata is retained by most current software and smartphone apps, creating a mountain of information about a user's activities, such as a record of every interaction with any other user. Metadata can be tracked by third parties to reveal intimate details about the patterns and structure of our lives. Elixir's revolutionary cMix network delivers low latency while efficiently mixing and processing messages and other transactions in high volume. The xx network public alpha runs on five global nodes located on four continents and is on track to scale to 1,000-5,000 transactions per

second. As the xx network is developed it will incorporate the work of Praxxis, a quantum-secure digital currency and blockchain also developed by David Chaum. "Our goal has always been to support mainstream adoption. This test messenger allows community members to verify that the xx network successfully addresses the scaling challenges often described as the blockchain 'trilemma'. It was critically important to us to release a first dApp on the smartphone that was consumer-focused because we believe that blockchain's future is in day-to-day use by everyone," added Ben Wenger, the engineer who leads Elixir's development. To begin private messaging on the xx alpha messenger, go to xxcollective.io and join the xx collective Access List by downloading the app in iOS or Android.

# Bolivia's blunt message to leaders drunk on power

The president refused to take no for an answer. He went to the constitutional court, also considered friendly to the president, which offered a novel argument that could potentially keep Morales in office forever, claiming term limits are a human rights violation.

But Morales still had to win the election. The rules dictated that if he didn't win an outright majority, he needed 10% more votes than the runner-up, or else he would face a runoff. After the polls closed last month, the vote count was showing Morales in first place, but not far enough to avoid a runoff that he would very likely

lose. Suddenly the counting stopped. For 24 hours no one knew what was happening. When results restarted, he quickly secured the necessary margin and declared victory.

The streets erupted amid cries of fraud. International observers agreed. The former foreign minister of Costa Rica, Manuel Gonzales, leading an observer mission of the Organization of American States (OAS), called it an "inexplicable change in trend." The European Union, United Nations, the US and other countries backed the OAS.

As massive protests roiled the country,

preliminary results of an OAS audit found "manipulations to the computer systems" and vote totals in places that exceeded the number of registered voters. It was, the OAS said, "overwhelming" evidence that the vote was not credible. At that point, Morales agreed to another election, but his loss of trust was irreparable.

In a perfect situation, Bolivia would have a fuller investigation and a new election with credible results. Instead, Morales has been forced from power by the actions of the military. He and his backers are emphatic that this was a coup. His critics claim his removal saves Bolivian democracy. The

coming days will show whether the country can return to peace and a democratic path, or if darker days lie ahead. Bolivia's and Morales' saga is a reminder to the rest of Latin America -- and, indeed, the world -- that despite the all-too-visible flaws in democracy, it remains the system that most people prefer. Even a president who has produced good results for his country can throw it all away by ignoring that fact. Few people anymore want an all-powerful ruler. Nobody, no matter how charismatic, skilled or even beloved, gets to keep power forever.



## Zut alors! The Americans who are farming edible snails

**Taylor Knapp says that he finds snails "fascinating", which is probably for the best, given that he looks after as many as 70,000 of them.**



Mr Knapp is the founder and owner of the largest snail farm in the US, Peconic Escargot, based on Long Island, New York - there are just two such farms certified by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to rear the molluscs for human consumption.

He hand-delivers fresh snails (escargots in French) to restaurants in New York City, and is struggling to keep up with demand. He has seen annual sales double since first opening for business in 2017. The 31-year-old, who is also a chef, came up with the idea after tasting fresh snails for the first time while working in Europe. He says he realised that they tasted much nicer than the canned, pre-cooked varieties available in the US. However, it is illegal for US restaurants or food firms to import fresh snails, whether dead or alive, as they are considered to be a pest or invasive species. And the three

main edible species are all native to Europe.

But with trade figures showing that US consumption of snails rose 42% to 300 tonnes in 2018, he saw a business opportunity and decided to launch Peconic so US chefs could get their hands on fresh ones.

But if you cannot import snails into the US, where was he to get his breeding stock from? Thankfully, he was able to buy some petit gris or little grey snails (one of the best species for eating) from a supplier in California.

The descendants of these snails had set up home in California since 1850, after they were brought over to the US by a European immigrant. He or she had seemingly been able to sneak them past the US Customs service, which had been up and running since 1789.

To launch Peconic, Taylor and his business partner raised

\$30,000 (£23,000) from a crowd-funding scheme and other investors. He then worked closely with the USDA to get regulatory approval.

This includes making sure the greenhouse where his snails live is snail-proof, and that they cannot escape, however slowly. This includes an airlock door, all drain holes being grated, and the greenhouse being surrounded by gravel which is regularly sprayed with snail repellent. It is Alcatraz for snails.

"It's a bit of an overkill," says Ric Brewer who owns the other USDA-approved snail farm - Little Gray Farms Escargotiere - in Washington state. He wonders whether understaffing at the USDA means that they have put in excessive rules.

"The USDA is stretched for resources, they are stretched for inspectors," says the heliculturalist (someone who breeds and raises snails for eating).

Ric's farm opened in 2011, and is home to up to 50,000 snails; as the name of his business suggests, he also specialises in the petit gris species.

"As an animal, they have been around for more than 500 million years, and have a complicated life cycle for such a seemingly primitive creature," he says. "As a culinary source, they are a very

adaptable ingredient, and have a low environmental impact as livestock.

"They are cooked just as you would clams, crabs or lobsters - put into a pot of boiling water, though I do hibernate them first in a refrigerator. They most likely don't even know what's happened." Rick and Taylor both sell their snails raw, which means that they have to be kept chilled at all times, and have a shelf-life of just one week. This is a world away from canned snails, which can last for years if the tin is unopened. For their troubles, they can charge more twice as much for their snails. Chef Ryan Angulo sells Peconic snails at Brooklyn's French Louie restaurant. "They have such a different flavour and texture [compared with the canned alternative]," he says. "They are about the price of a local oyster. In the same vein, you should treat them as you would a fresh [cooked] oyster

- cooked gently with ingredients that highlight its flavour."

Taylor says that he is aiming to expand sales beyond New York, and is looking at partnering with a seafood distributor so that his snails can stay nice and cold during transportation. Currently he sells up to 27kg (60lb) of snail meat a week.

"We have saturated the New York market," he says. "We need to be breaking out to some other east coast cities like Boston and Philadelphia." However, as exporting is currently out of the question, as the USDA doesn't permit it, it means the two producers will have to wait before then can try to make a dent in the global market, with wholesale sales worth some \$117m a year.

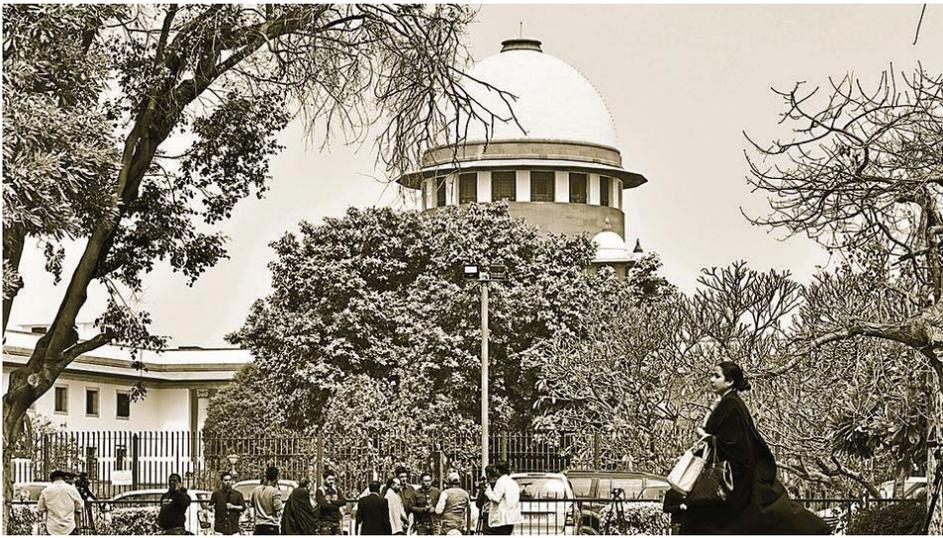
"Snails are fascinating, but I don't find them to be loveable," says Taylor. "I enjoy eating them, so to say that I love them would be a little much."





# The core of the Ayodhya judgment

Work simultaneously for both parties, ensure tangible action, and answer questions on funding



Now that the Supreme Court has decided that the Ram temple will be built on the Ayodhya site, and a mosque is to come up on an alternative site of five acres in “a prominent place” in Ayodhya, the right thing to do is what S Radhakrishnan advised: *dirgham pasyatu, ma hrasvam* (Look far ahead, be not shortsighted). Anything else will be a waste of time. That looking ahead requires, however, looking at the judgment’s small print closely. Article 142 of the Constitution is central to this. It is, in fact, the backbone of the judgment. A broad brush enabling article, it empowers the Supreme Court to pass any order necessary “for doing complete justice in any cause”. And, it is within the terms of this article that the court has ordered the creation of a Trust for the construction of the temple. A Trust is to be formed, it has ordered, within three months of the verdict to get the temple project going. This has been clearly understood. The Supreme Court has also said that “simultaneously, with the handing over of the disputed property to the Trust”, the central government or the state government “shall hand over to the Central Sunni Waqf Board”, the land at “a suitable prominent place in Ayodhya” for the construction of the mosque.

Along with these orders, the court has passed a few vital consequential orders. The court said the following unambiguously: One, the handing over of

the disputed site to the temple trust and the handing over of an alternative site to the Sunni Waqf Board should be done simultaneously. That is to say, it has intertwined the two operations. It has made the two exercises coextensive, coeval, coterminous. It has made them a concurrent activity. Two, on the agency for doing this, the verdict has left an option open: Central

government or state government. This is broad-minded in a sense, but can be problematic in terms of the listed jurisdictions as per the Union, State and Concurrent Lists. “The Central Government and the State Government shall act in consultation with each other to effectuate the above allotment in the period stipulated.” That — effectuation within three months — is the key.

Three, that Trust is also to be empowered by government in a way that enables it to proceed with the “construction of a temple and all necessary, incidental and supplemental matters”. Three words emerging from these three stipulations become crucial: simultaneously, effectuation, supplemental. The first — simultaneously — is about the timing. The court has left the State with no option. It must arrange for the disputed site to be handed over to the new Trust (or body), and a new site measuring five acres to be handed over to the Waqf Board together. Not to do so would be violative of the orders. The second — effectuation — is about tangible action on the ground. What the court has said is that intentions are not enough, what is required is tangible, palpable, hard-as-land

action on the ground. The third — supplemental — seems to point to funding. Is it saying that the State must apply itself to the question: How are the two constructions to be funded? Will the State place funds at the disposal of the Trust and the Waqf Board for the construction or will those come from public contributions? Does the Constitution of India permit State funding of places of worship? But by far, the most important “far-sight” contained in the judgment is in what it says about the Babri Masjid’s demolition: “...the entire structure of the mosque was brought down in a calculated act of destroying a place of public worship. The Muslims have been wrongly deprived of a mosque which had been constructed well over 450 years ago.” In this lies a great forward-looking injunction to those who

have made no secret of their intention to repeat Babri Masjid-style demolitions elsewhere. The Supreme Court has made such intentions unlawful. And, in a sense, it has augmented heritage conservation norms by giving to them a theological dimension, by saying that the premeditated destruction of a house of worship is not to be countenanced. We who are elated by the judgment must ponder, carefully, the following chastising words in it: “This Court in the exercise of its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution must ensure that a wrong committed must be remedied. Justice would not prevail if the Court were to overlook the entitlement of the Muslims who have been deprived of the structure of the mosque through means which should not have been employed in a secular nation committed to the rule of law.”

## The economic contraction

There is a way out. Focus on the informal sector and rural incomes

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) contracted on a year-on-year basis by 4.3% in September. This is the second consecutive month of a dip in industrial output. The last time IIP growth was negative for two consecutive months was in March and April 2012. The economy was then caught in a three-pronged crisis. Growth was slowing, inflation was increasing, and both fiscal and external deficits were rising. The economy is not fragile today but it is also not well. GDP growth in the quarter ending June 2019 was 5%. Industry growth was just 2.7%, and manufacturing, a paltry 0.6%. The economic performance in the September quarter could be worse.

How did this happen? In 2012, the economy was still coming to terms with a sudden external shock, especially in terms of export demand, due to the global financial crisis. Crude oil prices were above



\$100 per barrel. Although the global economy is not doing very well today, there has been no sudden adverse movement. Crude prices are at comfortable levels. In other words, external shocks do not explain the current slowdown. There are two domestic factors at play. The first is

a large-scale push for formalisation in the economy through demonetisation and the imposition of Goods and Services Tax. The idea was to widen the tax base. The slowdown, which has accompanied these policies, seems to suggest that rather than becoming a part of the formal sector

and augmenting revenue, the informal sector has taken a big hit and is perhaps dragging down even the formal sector. Why did this happen? The costs, which come along with formalisation, might have jeopardised the viability of many informal businesses. The second is the squeeze on

farm incomes through low inflation. This has hurt the purchasing power of farmers. More than half the fiscal year is over. The government ought to address these two factors, rather than trying to pump-prime the economy through policies aimed at boosting the formal sector.



# Guru Nanak and the promise of an inclusive Pakistan

Pakistan reimagines its relationship with its Sikh heritage by opening a key corridor and restoring sites of worship

By Haroon Khalid

Pakistan - For a few days every November, the Pakistani city of Nankana Sahib is transformed as thousands of Sikhs and other devotees of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, descend upon it to celebrate Guru Nanak Gurburab, the anniversary of his birth.

They come from within Pakistan, from the Middle East, Europe, the United States and Canada, but the majority arrive from neighbouring India. This year - on his 550th birthday - the numbers are likely to be even greater. On Saturday, as part of the celebration, Pakistan opened a corridor that will allow Indian pilgrims to travel without visas between the Indian town of Dera Baba Nanak and the Sri Kartarpur Sahib Gurdwara, Guru Nanak's final resting place, about 6km (4 miles) away in Pakistan.

Men in colourful turbans and dangling kirpan (a knife or sword) and women in saris - once a regular sight in the cities and towns of what came to be known as West Punjab - will become so again. The sound of Sanskritised Punjabi and the drone of kirtan (devotional songs) from the loudspeakers of the city's gurdwaras will mingle with the azan, the Muslim call to prayer.

## Nankana Sahib

Located about 75km from Lahore, Nankana Sahib was once known as Rai Bhoi Di Talwandi, but was renamed in honour of Guru Nanak, who was born there in the 15th century.

Gurdwara Janam Asthan, a vast and imposing complex with large manned gates located at one end of the main artery that runs through the city, marks the spot where Guru Nanak was born. On the city's eastern side is Gurdwara Balila, where he played as a

child.

While Gurdwara Janam Asthan remains the main focus for pilgrims, over the past few years, several smaller gurdwaras that had been in ruins for decades have been renovated. These gurdwaras tell a story of a state reimagining its relationship with its Sikh heritage and actively trying to preserve it.

Partition and the Sikhs of Punjab

Carved out of colonial India during independence from Britain in 1947, Pakistan was intended as a home for the Muslims of South Asia, in contrast to Hindu-dominated India. But in this battle between Hindus and Muslims, the Sikhs of Pakistan found themselves in a precarious position.

The partition led to the largest mass migration in human history and the deaths of at least a million people.

The Sikhs of Punjab, the only province other than Bengal that was divided between India and Pakistan, were not left unscathed. Riots broke out between Sikhs and Muslims, with each community committing acts of brutality against the other.

Many Sikhs fled Pakistan for India, and overnight some of the most sacred religious sites associated with Sikhism, including Nankana Sahib, were abandoned. They quickly fell into disrepair or were taken over by refugees fleeing the violence.

But partition, which had been imagined as a solution to the communal issues of India, did not bring an end to the animosity. With Kashmir becoming a particular point of contention, the neighbours remained at odds. They have fought three wars and countless skirmishes since.

In this charged political environment, Sikh heritage fell

victim to neglect and, sometimes, hostility. So, too, did some Sikhs and Hindus living in the areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, formerly known as North West Frontier Province, the most westerly province of Pakistan which borders Afghanistan. The riots during partition did not reach there. But during the wars with India in 1965 and 1971, many were forced from their villages. Some headed for Nankana Sahib, about 500km (310 miles) away. When, as part of my research for my books *A White Trail* and *Walking with Nanak*, I spoke to some of the first Sikh families from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to have moved to Nankana Sahib, they told me how, upon their arrival, they found Gurdwara Janam Asthan in a state of disrepair; its sacred pond empty and its gardens overgrown. Other, smaller, gurdwaras were in a far worse state.

Finding refuge in the abandoned gurdwaras of Nankana Sahib, these Sikh families began some of the earliest renovation work - at their own expense. As, over the years, more Sikh families moved from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Nankana Sahib, a small Sikh community began to emerge.

The numbers increased exponentially after 9/11 as the Taliban sought sanctuary in parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and began targeting religious minorities. Some reported being asked to pay jizya (a tax levied on non-Muslims living in a Muslim state) and forced from their homes if they did not. In 2010, a young Sikh man named Jasper Singh was beheaded when his family could not pay. There were other high-profile killings of Sikhs in the region.

From a handful of families, the number swelled to several hundred. For the first time

since partition, a sizeable Sikh community had found a home at Nankana Sahib.

Sikh separatism and politics at the gurdwaras

But it was not just the local community that inspired the renovation of these structures. The 1980s witnessed a separatist movement by Sikhs in India. Pakistan, which was still reeling from its defeat to India in the 1971 war, was keen to avenge its "humiliation". It threw its weight behind the Sikh separatist movement, forming connections with expat supporters in Canada, the US and the United Kingdom. Many of these Sikh leaders travelled to Pakistan, where they began addressing Indian Sikh pilgrims, who would, in small numbers, gather for Guru Nanak's Gurburab at Nankana Sahib. Thus, the city's gurdwaras became places where the neighbouring states played out their politics.

In 1985, at the peak of the separatist movement, Indian diplomats were attacked by a mob of Sikh pilgrims seeking to avenge the killing of thousands of Sikhs in the aftermath of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's assassination by her Sikh bodyguards the year before.

It was against this backdrop that Pakistan began paying attention to - and

money for - the restoration of historically significant gurdwaras. Funding also arrived from the Sikh diaspora, as well as from Pakistani Sikhs who continued their efforts to restore their sacred sites.

While the Sikh separatist movement in Punjab subsided, the relationship between the Pakistani state and Sikh heritage survived. Under the military dictatorship of Pervez Musharraf, who was eager to project his rule as "enlightened moderation", protection of religious minorities and their festivals acquired a particular significance. Greater numbers of pilgrims from India were given visas, while the state began improving facilities at the gurdwaras.

All subsequent governments have followed; understanding not just the economic benefits of Sikh religious tourism but what it means for the country's image.

The Kartarpur Sahib corridor

It is this historical background that provides the context for the renovation of Gurdwara Darbar Sahib at Kartarpur, which began in the early 2000s through funds collected by Canadian and American Sikhs, and the opening of the Kartarpur Sahib corridor.

Believed to be one of the

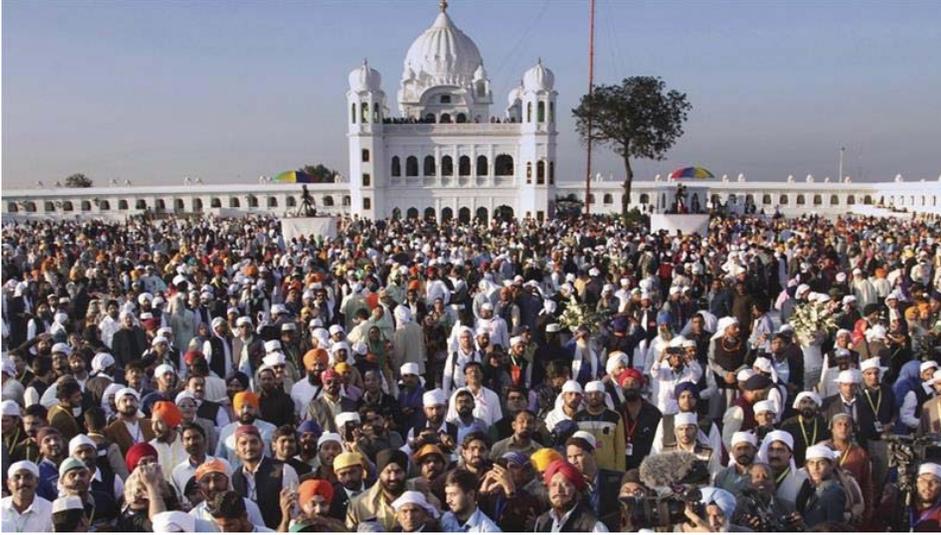
holiest Sikh sites in Pakistan, Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, once a modest building in the middle of fields with no proper road leading to it but now a well-served and expansive structure, at Kartarpur Sahib - about 180km (112 miles) from Nankana Sahib - holds the grave and the samadhi (memorial - a small marking constructed over the buried ashes of a deceased after cremation) of Guru Nanak.

Challenging dogma across religions, Guru Nanak attracted Muslims and Hindus as his followers. His philosophical movement argued for an inclusive religiosity that allowed people from different sects, castes and religions to come together and worship one God. After his death, upon the request of his followers, both a grave and a samadhi were constructed for his Muslim and Hindu followers. The first time I visited Kartarpur in 2013 I witnessed a local Muslim family paying homage to Guru Nanak at his grave. I was told that several local Muslims continued to revere him and were the only devotees who regularly visited the gurdwara after partition, even when the property was taken over by drug addicts and smugglers who, because of its proximity to the Indian border, often stopped there.



# 'Big moment': Indian Sikhs on historic pilgrimage to Pakistan

Hundreds of pilgrims launch journey across border to Kartarpur to visit shrine of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak



(News Agencies) Hundreds of Indian Sikhs have made a historic pilgrimage to Pakistan, crossing the border to one of their holiest sites under a landmark deal between the two rival countries.

At least 700 pilgrims were estimated to have passed through the corridor on Saturday, with more to follow in the coming days. They headed to the shrine of Sikhism's founder Guru Nanak, which lies in Kartarpur, a small town just

4km (two miles) over the Pakistan side of the border where he is believed to have died.

In a rare example of cooperation between India and Pakistan, a secure visa-free land corridor was created to allow up to 5,000 pilgrims a day to travel straight to the temple from the Indian side.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was among the first pilgrims to cross over into Pakistan's Punjab province from the town of Dera Baba Nanak in India.

He told Pakistani state media that it was a "big moment".

Indian actor Sunny Deol also made the journey. He tweeted photos of his experience, saying "today is a very big day".

'Lifetime wish'

For up to 30 million Sikhs around the world, the shrine, a white-domed building, has remained tantalisingly close but out-of-reach for decades.

When Pakistan was carved out of colonial India during independence from

Britain in 1947, Kartarpur ended up on the western side of the border, while most of the region's Sikhs remained on the other side. Since then, the perennial state of enmity between India and Pakistan, which have fought three wars and countless border skirmishes since independence, has prevented Sikhs from visiting the temple.

Saturday's opening of the land corridor comes days before Guru Nanak's 550th birthday on November 12 - a significant anniversary.

"Our lifetime wish has been fulfilled, we never imagined this," said Manees Kaur Wadha, an Indian pilgrim who arrived in Pakistan last week after managing to secure a visa, and was already at the shrine early on Saturday.

"Since childhood our elders had told us so many stories of Pakistan. They left from here. But we never imagined we would ever be able to see it and have these feelings," he told AFP news agency.

Sikhs from other countries have also been arriving in Pakistan in recent days to celebrate the November 12 occasion in the South Asian country.

Pilgrims could be seen on both sides of the border on Saturday morning readying for the corridor's inauguration.

Workers laid out dozens of coloured cushions, bright against the white of building, in preparation.

In a rare message of gratitude between the nuclear-armed neighbours, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi thanked his Pakistani counterpart Imran Khan for his "cooperation".

"I would like to thank the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, for respecting the sentiments of India. I thank him for his cooperation," Modi said in televised comments.

Khan said: "This is the holiest place for Sikhs, like Medina (in Saudi Arabia) is for Muslims.

"I am glad to see happiness on your faces." Sikhs being unable to

visit the Kartarpur shrine was like Muslims not visiting Madina - the second holiest city in Islam.

Strained ties

Despite the positive news, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Pakistan's foreign minister, said relations were currently incredibly strained between the two neighbours.

"There is no back-channel. We've had wars, things have been worse than this, but things are bad," Qureshi told Reuters news agency. "For any sane mind, it is concerning."

The Sikh faith began in the 15th century in the city of Lahore, now part of Pakistan, when Guru Nanak began teaching a faith that preached equality. There are an estimated 20,000 Sikhs left in Pakistan after millions fled to India following the bloody religious violence ignited by independence and partition, which led to the largest mass migration in human history and the deaths of at least one million people.

## Sikhs mark Guru Nanak's 550th birth anniversary in Pakistan

Despite India-Pakistan tensions, hometown of Sikhism's founder draws thousands of Sikhs from India and around the world.

By Sabrina Toppa

Nankana Sahib, Pakistan - When Sikh devotee Gurmit Singh crossed the Indian border to visit Sikhism's holiest sites in Pakistan this month, he set out on the journey alone. At 67, Gurmit Singh had hoped his family in the Indian city of Chandigarh would join him, but their applications were rejected.

Nonetheless, Gurmit Singh had grown up dreaming of visiting Sikhism's most cherished sites and was determined to fulfil his lifelong dream of seeing Kartarpur, the town where Sikhism's founder, Guru Nanak, was believed to have spent his final years. "I didn't know what to expect. My goal in life was to see these holy sites," he told Al Jazeera.

On Tuesday morning, Gurmit Singh, and thousands of Sikhs from around the world, poured into the eastern city of Nankana Sahib to



commemorate the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak at the ornate, palatial structure of the Gurdwara Janam Asthan. Guru Nanak was born in this city in 1469. Today, the predominantly Muslim town attracts Sikh pilgrims from around the globe. Pakistan is officially home to 20,000 Sikhs, who number about 20 million worldwide, with the vast majority in India.

**Opening of Kartarpur corridor**

In 1947, when India and Pakistan gained independence from the British, the state of Punjab

was cleaved in half, permanently dividing Sikhism's holiest sites between the South Asian rivals. Under a 1974 bilateral agreement, India and Pakistan opened the possibility of undertaking cross-border pilgrimages to visit each other's religious shrines.

This year saw Guru Nanak's birth celebrations increase in prominence due to the opening of the Kartarpur corridor, a nearly five-kilometre (3-mile) long land-link that allows Sikhs from India visa-free access to one of Sikhism's holiest

shrines in Pakistan. Prior to the construction of the corridor, thousands of Sikhs would stand on the fence along the India-Pakistan border to gaze at the gurdwara (Sikh temple) through a telescope, tears clouding their eyes. Now, up to 5,000 pilgrims a day have been permitted by the Pakistani government.

"The Kartarpur corridor will promote peace and harmony between the two countries at a time when everything - including trade - is at a standstill," said Aamer Ahmed, chairman of the Evacuee Trust Property

Board (ETPB), the main government body tasked with maintaining Sikh and Hindu religious sites across Pakistan. "Pakistan is the land of the Sikhs," echoed Imran Gondal, the ETPB's Deputy Secretary of Shrines. "We encourage them to visit Pakistan." In previous years, however, Sikh pilgrimages had been interrupted by the bitter enmity that periodically mars relations between the nuclear-armed South Asian neighbours. Recently, the ongoing Kashmir dispute locked the rivals into a prolonged tension, with Pakistan suspending trade,

downgrading diplomatic ties, and raising the issue at every international forum. Ramesh Singh Arora, a leading Pakistani Sikh politician who introduced the country's first Sikh marriage legislation, said that Pakistan had been committed to opening the Kartarpur corridor on time.

"If you look at the last 10 months, there was a lot of tension between these two countries," said Arora. "But the Pakistani government didn't stop the construction work at Kartarpur. It wanted to send the message that it would give the Sikhs free and open access to Kartarpur." Other Indian Sikh pilgrims, such as 66-year-old Paulkaur Singh, saw their trip to Pakistan as a way to heal the wounds of the Partition, the violent event that saw mass displacement and population exchanges as the South Asian borders were redrawn in 1947.

## New cases of HIV rise in Eastern Europe, decline in the West

Almost 160,000 people were diagnosed in Europe with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS, according to data from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organization's (WHO) regional office for Europe.

(News Agencies) More than 130,000 people were newly diagnosed with HIV last year in Eastern Europe, the highest rate ever for the region, while the number of new cases in Western Europe declined, global public health experts said on Wednesday. European Union and European Economic Area countries saw a reduction in 2017 rates, mainly driven by a 20% drop since 2015 among men who have sex with men. That left Europe's overall increasing trend less steep than previously.

All told, almost 160,000 people were diagnosed in Europe with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS, according to data from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the World Health Organization's (WHO) regional office for Europe. "It's hard to talk about good news in the face of another year of unacceptably high numbers of people infected with HIV," said Zsuzsanna Jakab, director of the WHO regional office. Calling on governments and health officials to recognise the seriousness of the situation, she urged them: "Scale up your response now." The United Nations AIDS agency UNAIDS warned in July that complacency was starting to stall the fight against the global epidemic, with the pace of progress not matching what is needed. Some 37 million people worldwide are infected with HIV.

# Stay Healthy And Super Fit With Dried Fruits And These Healthy Bars

Dried fruits contain little to no fat. They also contain significant calories per serving, making them a natural source of energy for athletes. They are also a good supplement for people seeking to gain weight in a healthy way.



(News Agencies) As healthy living has become a catchword these days, people have taken to eating dried fruits and health bars. Experts say these can give natural nutrients. V.V. Mani, Director, Operations, Unibic, and Suhasni Sampath, Co-Founder, Yoga Bars, explain how dry fruits and nuts used in health snack bars help the cause of healthy living:

Dried fruits generally contain more fiber than the same-sized serving of their fresh counterparts. Fiber helps in keeping your digestive system running smoothly.

The various dry fruits are packed naturally with a mix of nutritional elements like potassium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron, carotenoids, antioxidants, vitamins, dietary fiber, flavonoids, selenium and more apart from the good quality fat and protein that these provide. Dried fruits generally contain more fiber than the same-sized serving of their

fresh counterparts.

These help in various ways like increase of good cholesterol, reduction in bad cholesterol, maintaining blood pressure, blood sugar control, thyroid control, improving heart function, bowel

movement, skin health, hair control, cancer fighting properties, improving bone health, improved vision, easing digestion and fighting anaemia to name a few. Many of the dry fruits are low in glycemic index, and so, they help slow release of energy and control blood sugar.

Because most of the water is extracted from fruits, their nutrients are condensed into a small package. Dried fruits like apricots, raisins, prunes and figs contain high amounts of beta carotene, vitamin E, niacin, iron, magnesium, potassium and calcium. Dried fruits contain little to no fat. They also contain significant calories per serving, making them a natural source of energy for athletes. They are also a good supplement for people seeking to gain weight in a healthy way. Dried fruits like apricots, raisins, prunes and figs contain high amounts of beta carotene, vitamin E, niacin, iron, magnesium, potassium and calcium.



## Obese children more likely to develop asthma than kids of a healthy weight, warns study

Parents, please take note. Your child's weight plays an important role in determining his or her asthma risk. Obese or overweight children are at an increased risk of asthma, a new study has found.

(News Agencies) US Researchers say it is possible that weight gain is fuelling the rise in childhood asthma. Researchers discovered that obese youngsters

were more likely to develop the lung condition than children of a healthy weight. The findings suggest that the incidence of an asthma diagnosis among children with obesity was significantly higher than in those in a normal weight range and that 23-27% of new asthma cases were directly attributable to obesity.

"Paediatric asthma is

among the most prevalent childhood conditions and comes at a high cost to patients, families and the greater health system," said co-author Terri Finkel from Nemours Children's Hospital in Orlando. "There are few preventable risk factors to reduce the incidence of asthma, but our data show that reducing the onset of childhood obesity could significantly lower the public health burden of asthma," Finkel added. For the study published in the journal Paediatrics, the research team analysed medical records of more than 500,000 children. The researchers

reviewed de-identified data of patients aged two to 17 without a history of asthma, receiving care from six paediatric academic medical centres between 2009 and 2015. Overweight or obese patients were matched with normal weight patients of the same age, gender, race, ethnicity, insurance type and location of care. The researchers found that obesity



among children with asthma appears to increase disease severity. Being overweight was identified as a modest risk factor for asthma, and the association was diminished when the most stringent definition of asthma was used.



# Rani Mukherjee's Mardaani 2 in trouble ?

**Former LS speaker Om Birla, Kota residents say 'unacceptable to malign a city's name through cinema'**

(News Agencies) Kota residents on Friday met Lok Sabha speaker Om Birla, an MP from Kota, to register their protest against the forthcoming Rani Mukherjee's upcoming film Mardaani 2.

They said that the city has been positioned as an educational hub with many educational centres situated in its vicinity. However, the film shot in Kota

shows a different story of city which is against the city's legacy.

The film's trailer released on Thursday shows a serial rapist and murderer in Kota who targets young girls. It also mentions that the film is inspired by true events.

Birla after meeting protesters spoke to media and said that the issue will be

discussed with concerned people. "It is unacceptable to malign a city's name through cinema. The fictional story clearly mentioning the city's name is not justified," he added

The film has Rani Mukerji playing a police officer posing as Shivani Shivaji Roy in Mardaani 2 who vows to catch the serial rapist in two days.



## Akshay Kumar, Kareena Kapoor, Diljit Dosanjh, Kiara Advani Hint at Goof-Up



**Akshay Kumar on Thursday took to Twitter to share the first posters of his upcoming film Good Newwz, starring Kareena Kapoor Khan, Diljit Dosanjh and Kiara Advani.**

blogging site where the first image showed him with his face squashed between the baby-bumps of Kareena and Kiara. The second poster showed Diljit in a similar pose, while the third poster showed the lead cast together.

Akshay Kumar captioned he first image, "'Squeezing' in some #GoodNewwz for you this #Christmas season. Stay tuned, the biggest goof-up of the year is coming!" The second image was captioned, "There's always someone who ends up with the same #Christmas present as you!" While the

image featuring the cast was captioned, "The goof-ups are bound to multiply...and that's how you get, #GoodNewwz! Coming to you this #Christmas, 27th December (sic)." Dharma Productions too took to Instagram to share the posters of the film, alongside the caption, "Not all goof ups can be covered up, you see! Bringing you the biggest goof-up of the year, stay tuned! #GoodNewwz in cinemas 27th December!"

The film, which is directed by Raj Mehta is slated for a Christmas release on December 27, 2019.

Akshay Kumar on Thursday took to Twitter to share the first posters of his upcoming film Good Newwz. The film which sees Kareena Kapoor Khan team up with Akshay Kumar also features Kiara Advani and Diljit Dosanjh in pivotal roles.

The film posters show the two actors with their faces squashed in-between the baby-bumps of the lead actresses. Akshay shared the posters on the micro-

## Bhumi Pednekar: 'Can't do a film where the hero is smacking a girl and the nation is celebrating'

**Actor Bhumi Pednekar says she's not against item numbers but won't do roles outside her 'moral comfort'**



(News Agencies) She calls herself the "queen of heartland cinema", and in a short span of four years, actor Bhumi Pednekar has carved a niche for herself in the industry. An overweight girl in Dum Laga Ke Haisha (2015), a woman fighting for her rights in Toilet: Ek Prem Katha (2017), a 65-year-old in this year's Saand Ki Aankh or a girl with dark skin in Bala, Bhumi hasn't shied away from off-beat and unconventional roles.

Her career, Bhumi says, is only getting better with time. "Every character that I play is only getting more challenging and making me a better actor. Every time I think about what's next, some amazing writers and directors come with path-breaking parts for me. It's only the start and I keep telling people that Saand Ki Aankh and Bala are only my fifth and sixth films (respectively). My journey has been very short and beautiful, and I have a long way to go," the 30-year-old says. Bhumi believes she has always pushed the envelope with roles outside her comfort zone. She explains, "Be it playing a fat person or an aged person. I don't think it has anything to do with the way you look on screen, but how honestly you are telling the story." She goes on to explain that

she has no reservations about item numbers. "I love dancing and I'm not against item songs," she says, adding "I don't have a problem with women wearing bikinis on screen. In fact, I'll be wearing one on screen someday. But when women are made into objects of glamour, that is something I don't want to do. Today, a hero or a heroine is a person that inspires anyone to be or do better. I don't think it has anything to do with the way you look." And when it comes to not playing a particular kind of role, Bhumi sets the record straight once and for all. She says, "I'm not comfortable doing a film where the hero is smacking a girl's bu\*\* and the nation is celebrating it. I can't be a part of a film that is anti-feminist or women bashing, or something that is out of my moral comfort."

**Hrithik Roshan: 'My script becomes fuel for days like that, when I don't want to get up and work'**

**Hrithik Roshan feels no one expects him to dance in every film just because he happens to be a good dancer.**



(News Agencies) Right from the start of his career (Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai; 2000), he has been loved as much for his dancing talent as for his acting skills. So much so that Hrithik Roshan's dance pieces — almost always — become the centre of attraction in his films. But the actor feels there is no hard and fast rule about featuring dance numbers just because of his presence in a movie.

"I think that's an old thought process, which doesn't even exist now," says Hrithik, whose latest moves in the chartbuster, Ghungroo (from War), have been lapped up by audiences. "People are getting far more real about films. Our society is changing and at the end of the day, our films are a reflection of the evolution of our society. The collective consciousness is evolving and becoming more intelligent," he says.

Before War, Hrithik had hits such as Super 30 and Kaabil, and both didn't feature him in well-choreographed, dapper dance numbers. "See, our films are also evolving. And when you look at movies through that filter then you

won't expect an actor, who is known for dancing, to dance just because he knows how to, especially in films like Super 30 or Kaabil," he says. The 45-year-old actor, who was loved for his dance moves in films such as Kaho Naa..., Lakshya (2004), Dhoom 2 (2006) and Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara (2011) among others, says, "Filmmakers are only going by the audience's instincts. I don't think anyone is saying, 'Oh, Hrithik hasn't danced in Super 30. Why hasn't he?' That's why, at the end of the day, it doesn't affect anything or translate into anything." While Hrithik is on a career high and is set to complete two decades in the industry next year, he is clear that films "have to impact" him. "Otherwise, I can't do them and won't even be able to last for those 80-150 days [to shoot a film]. My enthusiasm won't last because some day, you will reach a stage when it will be so hot and you are so uncomfortable that you will be like, 'Let it go to hell and let's get it done somehow,'" he says.



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Page 31

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## Peter King's departure creates opening for Democrats on Long Island



(By Our Staff Reporter) ALBANY : Republican Rep. Peter King's decision to retire at the end of his 14th term creates an opening on southern Long Island that could very well wind up being New York's most hotly contested congressional race in 2020. King has been one of the loudest Republican Party voices on foreign policy and a defender of President Donald Trump, representing a district that has shifted more Democratic in recent years. (Contd on page 22)



## Venice floods: Italy to declare state of emergency over damage

(Contd on page 23)

## Michael Bloomberg, Deval Patrick blindsides Dem primary field

The two prospective presidential candidates would face long odds if they run but each could unsettle the race in far-reaching ways.



(By Our Staff Reporter) New York : The two potential candidates are expressions of the deep concern voiced by Democratic Party insiders and donors that the moderate frontrunner in the race, Joe Biden, is flawed and in danger of losing to a progressive alternative, Sen. Elizabeth Warren. At a bare minimum, Bloomberg and Patrick stand to complicate — and potentially lengthen — the campaign. “The combination of Deval Patrick and Bloomberg entering the

race blows up the primary,” said Quentin James, executive director of The Collective, a super PAC that supports African-American candidates. Bloomberg and Patrick would face long odds if they run — but each could unsettle the race in far-reaching ways. Bloomberg, a billionaire, could swamp his competitors in Super Tuesday states with advertising and remain a force deep into primary season with his nearly unlimited resources. Patrick,

a former governor, could cut into the field in two key early states, and have a significant impact on the consolidation of the black vote. Because Patrick hails from Warren's home state, he has built-in name recognition in New Hampshire, which shares its biggest media market with Boston, potentially sapping Warren and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders of their neighboring state advantage there. Patrick, Massachusetts' first and

only African American governor, could also threaten former Vice President Joe Biden's sizable lead with black voters, particularly in South Carolina. And he could prevent the two other black candidates in the race, California Sen. Kamala Harris and New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker, from growing their support with African-American voters. Yet the late timing of both Bloomberg's and Patrick's potential runs (Contd on page 22)

## Elixir Releases xx messenger, the First Metadata-Shredding dApp

David Chaum's global xx collective gets a first opportunity to test the network's privacy-protecting capabilities

(By Our Staff Reporter) LISBON — Elixir, the metadata-shredding privacy platform, has released the xx alpha messenger, the first smartphone dApp running on the xx network public alpha. The xx messenger offers unprecedented user privacy, as no other existing software, smartphone app, or dApp erases user data to prevent observers from making the connection between sender and receiver. “We've worked hard over many years to build the infrastructure of the xx network and lay the groundwork for privacy-protecting tools like xx messenger. It's one thing to describe such a privacy protecting platform, it's quite another to make it available for use on a smartphone. I'm very proud to show what the xx network is capable of and look forward to building more privacy-protecting (Contd on page 24)

