



British voters just unleashed an economic and political tsunami



And it's headed for American shores

(News Agencies) London : British voters didn't just shock the world and the financial markets by voting to leave the European Union : They also ignored President Barack Obama, handed Hillary Clinton a potential economic burden and injected new energy into the populist currents roiling politics on both sides of the Atlantic. The surprise 52-48 result in favor of leaving the European Union — which British networks projected just before 5 a.m. local time — came after a tense night of vote-counting throughout the United Kingdom. The British pound rose and fall rapidly as

the anti-EU "Leave" movement piled up big margins in the northeast, swamping wins by the "Remain" camp in London, Birmingham and Scotland. In addition to driving down the pound by nearly 10 percent, the vote slammed global markets, with shares in Asia down well over 3 percent in early trading. Futures markets also indicated a big swoon coming on Wall Street early Friday morning with shares expected to drop more than 3 percent. That would amount to a Dow drop of close to 600 points, a plunge frighteningly reminiscent of the 2008 financial crisis. Market analysts

struggled overnight to reckon with the potential global impact of the Brexit vote. "Massive institutional uncertainty is now being superimposed on economic fragility and financial fluidity," said Mohamed A. El-Erian, chief economic adviser at Allianz. A Labour lawmaker, called the vote "a seismic moment for our country." Keith Vaz, another Labour legislator, said: "This is a crushing decision, this is a terrible day for Britain and a terrible day for Europe. In 1,000 years, I would never have believed that the British people would vote for this." (Contd on page 21)



Liz bares all to back Brexit

ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ
 PUNJABI DUNIYA

SEC: Former Rangers pitcher, other pros swindled in Ponzi-like scheme



(Press Release) A Dallas federal judge ordered an asset freeze of an investment advisor who is accused of siphoning millions of dollars from professional athletes, including a former Texas Rangers pitcher. Roy Oswalt, who pitched for the Rangers in 2012, lost \$7 million to the scheme to Ash Narayan, who has been sued by the Fort Worth regional office of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Two other alleged victims include Jake Peavy, pitcher for the San Francisco Giants, and Mark Sanchez, a quarterback for the Denver Broncos, according to newly unsealed SEC court fil-

ings. Click here, here and here to see how each player described the swindle in "In each case, Narayan built trust by emphasizing his background and qualifications – including his Christian faith, charitable works, success working with other pro athletes, and his status as licensed attorney and CPA," according to an SEC court filing. "However, Narayan has never been a CPA." In May, the SEC filed a lawsuit in Dallas accusing Narayan, of Newport Coast, California, of making \$33 million in unauthorized transfers of the athletes' money to a struggling online sports and entertainment ticket business on whose board he served. Narayan pocketed \$2 million in fees, the SEC lawsuit states. Narayan was a managing director in the California office of Dallas-based investment advisory firm RGT Capital Management. He no longer works for the firm, according to the SEC.

"Mr. Narayan has worked cooperatively with the SEC from day one on this matter, and is disappointed that the SEC chose to bring this action," said Howard

M. Privette, an attorney with Greenberg Gross in California, who represents Narayan in the SEC case. "Mr. Narayan has always sought to act in his clients' best interests. Accordingly, he will continue to work with the SEC to ensure that this matter is resolved in the most favorable manner for those clients."

Other defendants include The Ticket Reserve Inc., CEO Richard M. Harmon, and chief operating officer John A. Kaprosky. The SEC obtained a court order on May 24 to freeze the assets of the defendants. Their attorneys could not be reached Tuesday.

According to the SEC's complaint, The Ticket Reserve also made Ponzi-like payments to existing investors using money from new investors. Since being fired from the investment firm where he worked and losing access to the clients' accounts, Narayan is alleged to have been redirecting to The Ticket Reserve the sham fees he received out of the money taken from client accounts, according to the SEC. The SEC secured

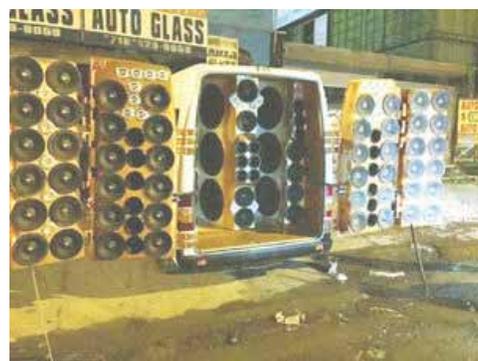
the court-ordered asset freeze before Narayan could make a planned financial transaction on May 31. "We allege that Narayan exploited athletes and other clients who trusted him to manage their finances," said Shamoil T. Shipchandler, director of the SEC's Fort Worth Regional Office. "He fraudulently funneled their savings into a money-losing business and his own pocket. The asset freeze stops the uncontrolled spending of investor assets within The Ticket Reserve until the case is resolved, preserving money that rightfully belongs to Narayan's clients."

The SEC's complaint alleges that the defendants violated anti-fraud provisions of the federal securities laws and a related SEC anti-fraud rule, and charges Narayan with violating the anti-fraud provisions of the Investment Advisers Act of 1940.

U.S. District Judge Barbara Lynn has appointed a receiver, attorney Michael D. Napoli of Dykema Cox Smith in Dallas, to handle the recovery of money for the swindled clients.

Feds bust Fresh Meadows man for \$8.5M health care fraud

(Press Release) Sajid Javed, 45, of Fresh Meadows has been arrested and charged with



being involved with a health care fraud scheme having to do with nine pharmacies in Queens and Brooklyn, according to a statement from the U.S. Department of Justice released on Wednesday.

He allegedly submitted more than \$8.5 million in fraudulent claims Medicare and medicaid, according to the Department of Justice. His arrest — which was announced by U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York Preet Bharara, Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Department of Health and Human Services Scott Lampert and Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the FBI Diego Rodriguez — is part of a Medicare Fraud Strike Force-led nationwide sweep that has resulted in civil and criminal charges against 301 people "These alleged criminals

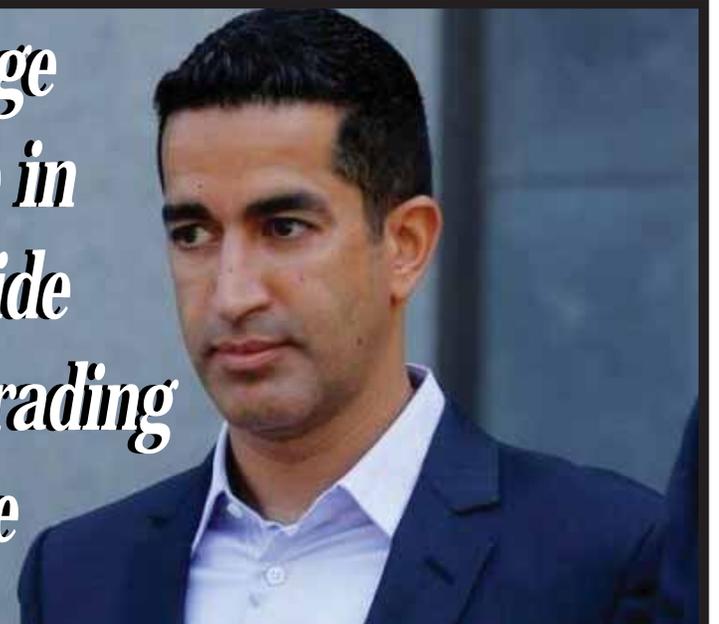
arrested around the country today and here in New York City are stealing money meant to help people seeking medical assistance," Rodriguez said in a prepared statement. "It's not a visible theft in public view, but the victims of the crime suffer greatly when they can't get the assistance they need."

By seeking reimbursement for prescription drugs that were never actually dispensed by his pharmacies, Javed's alleged scheme defrauded Medicaid and Medicare. From January 2013 and December 2014, the Fresh Meadows man obtained reimbursements for undisposed drugs totaling more than \$8.5 million, the authorities said.

As part of national takedown operations involving more than \$3.4 billion in fraudulent billings over time, almost 1,200 people have been charged. And since a Medicare Fraud Strike Force was created in 2007, more than 2,9000 people who falsely billed have been.

According to the statement, Javed is being charged on one count of health care fraud and one count of illegal remuneration; they carry a maximum sentence of a decade in prison and a maximum sentence of five years in prison, respectively.

New York hedge fund executive in apparent suicide after insider trading charges: police



(Press Release) Sanjay Valvani, a hedge fund manager at Visium Asset Management LP who was criminally charged last week in a major insider trading case, has been found dead in an apparent suicide, the police said on Tuesday. Valvani, 44, was discovered by his wife on Monday evening in the bedroom of his Brooklyn home with a wound to his neck, a New York Police Department spokeswoman said. A suicide note and a knife were recovered, she added. The death marked a stunning turn in one of the U.S. government's biggest recent insider trading cases. Valvani's lawyers, Barry Berke and Eric Tirschwell, called his death a "horrible tragedy that is difficult to comprehend." "We hope for the sake of his family and his memory that it will not be forgotten that the charges against him were only unproven accusations and he had always maintained his innocence," they added. The city's medical examiner's office will determine

the cause of Valvani's death, and police said an investigation was under way. Prosecutors last Wednesday unveiled charges against Valvani alleging he fraudulently made \$25 million by getting advance information about U.S. Food and Drug Administration approvals of generic drug applications. Prosecutors said the inside information was provided by Gordon Johnston, a political intelligence consultant and former employee at the FDA, who got it from a friend, who still works at the agency. Valvani passed some of the tips to Christopher Plaford, then a Visium portfolio manager, who made his own illegal trades, prosecutors said. Both Johnston and Plaford secretly pleaded guilty earlier this month and agreed to cooperate in the case against Valvani, who pleaded not guilty to charges including securities fraud, wire fraud and conspiracy. He had been free on \$5 million bond. The charges were announced by Manhattan

U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara, who has overseen a series of insider trading prosecutions that have resulted in 107 people being charged and 81 being convicted since 2009. That push has suffered recent setbacks following a 2014 appellate ruling that limited the scope of insider trading laws, resulting in charges being dropped or dismissed against 14 defendants. A spokesman for Bharara declined to comment.

Valvani grew up in Kalamazoo, Michigan and graduated from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business before heading to Wall Street where he began covering the pharmaceutical sector. He had been a partner at Visium Asset Management and was instrumental in building it with founder Jacob Gottlieb into an \$8 billion firm that counted some of the country's biggest pension funds as clients.



Malik Nadeem Abid elected Vice President of NYS Adult Day Services Association

He will also be Chair of Policy and Lobbying Committee

(Agencies) The Board of Directors of New York State Adult Day Services Association, representative body of Adult Social & Medical Model Daycare Centers, in a recent meeting unanimously elected Malik Nadeem Abid as it's Vice President. Malik Nadeem was not a candidate for this position but based on his vast experience in Medicaid Managed Care & Managed Long Term Care and his strong political ties within political circles he was requested by the Board to accept this position. Mr. Abid is the only person in the entire South Asian community who

earned best respect in the Healthcare Industry and has worked at the top corporate executive level in different health insurance companies for over 17 years. Most recently, he helped form a new Managed Long Term Care Health Insurance company as consultant. NYSADSA is the only organization representing Adult Day Care Centers in New York State providing legal, legislative and business advice to this business. Mr. Abid was the first ever South Asian to start an Adult Day Center in New York State four years ago, Royal

Community Care Center which is still serving the community in Brooklyn. He also started several new Centers in Queens and Long Island which are providing essential socializing services to South Asian Seniors. Mr. Abid is considered to be the only expert in Managed Long Term Care and Senior Care in the entire South Asian Community. Apart from running his Adult Day Centers, Mr. Abid also provides Consultancy services from starting up new centers to policy and legal advice to owners of Centers.

India Association Annual Gala held



(By a staff reporter) Melville, Long Island- India Association of Long Island (IALI) recently celebrated it's 37th Annual Awards Gala Dinner . As per a press release by the organizers shared with Insider, It was a grand success and a memorable event with overwhelming attendance by guests. The

Grand Ballroom was filled with VIPs, Dignitaries, Honorable Officials of the Nassau and Suffolk Counties, Honorees, Community leaders, IALI Executive Council, Past Presidents, esteemed members, media and guests. On this occasion, IALI honored seven (7) distinct individuals for their out-

standing contributions in their respective fields in serving the community for which they were bountifully recognized with plaques and citations from Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The honorees were - Dr. Vaijinath Chakote, Mrs. Usha and Dr. Parveen Chopra, Dr. Avtar Josen, Dr. Abhay Malhotra, Dr.

Dev Ratnam, Dr. Gaddam Reddy, Mr. H K and Malti Shah. IALI also bestowed two (2) special awards to Mr. Peter Bheddah and Padmasree Pandita Tripti Mukherjee. IALI also recognized two (2) students, Ritwik Rudra and Akash Wasil. A scholarship was awarded to both by Mrs. Usha and Dr. Parveen Chopra.

India American Community Rallies Around Tom Suozzi for Congress

(By a staff reporter) Hicksville, New York – With just five days to go before the June 28th Democratic Primary, the Indian American community is rallying around former Glen Cove Mayor and Nassau County Executive Tom Suozzi in his bid for New York's 3rd Congressional District.

As county executive, Tom was always a friend and great supporter of the Indian American community. As a Congressman, he has pledged to join the India Caucus and will work on US-India relations.

"I have always enjoyed a great relationship with the hard working men and women of the Indian American community and I am so thankful for their support. I encourage everyone to go out on Tuesday June 28th and vote," said Suozzi.

The past weekend Suozzi received



the endorsement of the New American Voters Association (NAVA) and the New American Democratic Club.

"Tom Suozzi is the kind of leader we need now in Washington to represent and address the New American Communities," said Dilip Nath, President of NAVA. "He has firsthand experience in working with our community and is exactly the kind of coalition-building leader we need in Washington. He will be prepared and ready on his first day in Congress to fight for working families and small businesses, and he will stand up for comprehensive immigration reform for many New Americans."

The 3rd Congressional District covers northern portions of Queens, Nassau and Suffolk counties. A primary for the Democratic nomination will be held June 28, 2016. (Picture Courtesy: Newsday)

Trump hits back, calls Clinton 'world class liar'

(Agencies) Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump fired back at his Democratic rival Hillary Clinton on Wednesday, calling her a "world class liar" in his first major speech of the general election for the White House.

Reading from a teleprompter, Trump went on to say Clinton was the "most corrupt" person ever to run for the White House and that she had "perfected the art of politics of personal theft".

Clinton had called him the "King of Debt" in a speech on Tuesday, slamming his business experience, his strong suit, and practices in what her campaign said was "Evisceration Part II".

Part I came some days ago when Clinton questioned his foreign policy credentials, or the lack of them, and remarks that have left his own party supporters and surrogates squirming.

Trump, who prides himself as a counter-puncher, had let that attack pass with remarkably low intensity push back. But he counter-tweeted

Clinton's Tuesday speech live.

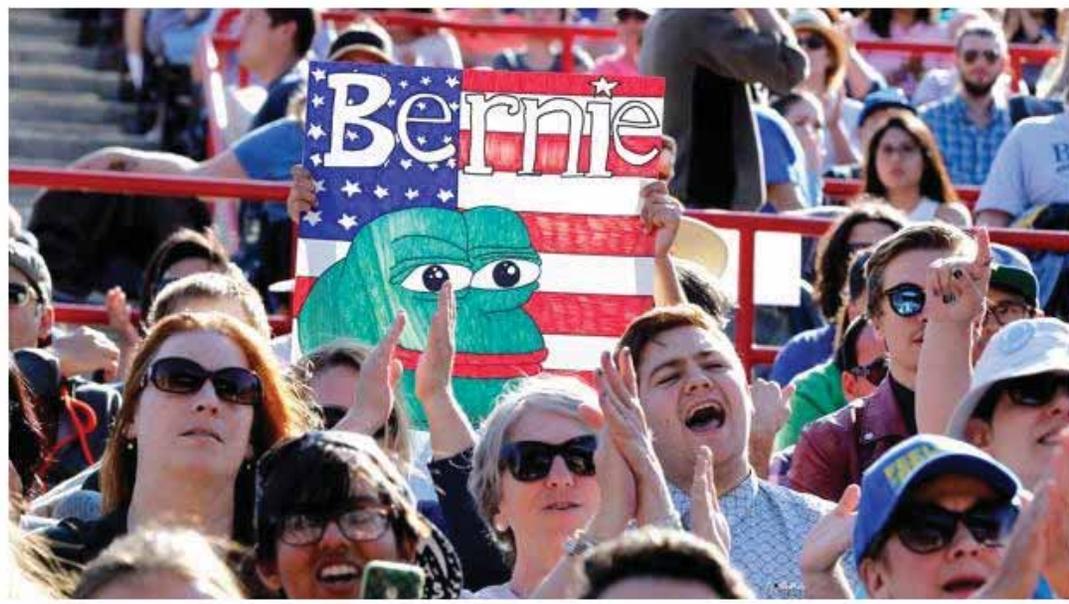
He hit back full on on Wednesday in a speech replete with insults and questionable claims and facts, but one that was the kind of disciplined attack Republicans had long wanted of him.

After wrapping up the nomination weeks before Clinton, Trump was widely seen to have squandered the advantage by embroiling himself in one controversy after another with his remarks.



(Agencies) There was once a band called Steely Dan. Bernie Sanders' millennial supporters may be unaware of it since they were way over their age bracket. But Steely Dan made music mellow than a marshmallow.

Steely Dan occurred to me as reports of the recent Nevada convention of the Democratic Party filtered through. Among the highlights (or low, given how it went down), was a Hillary Clinton backer, California Senator Barbara Boxer facing a fusillade of projectiles, including dildos, from miffed Sanderskiner. Media attributed this to the BernieBros, the moniker given to



Will 'BernieBros' cause a 1968-like disruption for Democrats?

the Vermont Senator's young male legions.

Two questions occurred to me, and woefully, neither will ever

be answered: 1) What sort of person carries a dildo to a political convention? 2) Whatever happened to them? (the dildos, I

mean). Steely Dan, for those immune to rock trivia, was named after a steam-powered dildo in author

William Burroughs' counterculture classic, *Naked Lunch*. Maybe Bernie's kids were reminded of these lyrics: See the glory/Of the royal scam. Most of us have become used to drama being staged by Donald Trump and his followers. But within a fortnight, that scene has shifted. It's now the Democrats that are beset with more chaos than the latest Marvel supermovie. Even The Donald's acolytes never tossed sex toys at opponents, though, given their demographic, throwing beer

cans might be more likely.

Two weeks earlier, the punditry was still predicting violence and viciousness at the Republican convention in Cleveland. Instead, those stakes have been moved to Philadelphia, where the Democrats will have their do. Instead of Texas Senator Ted Cruz trying to derail the Trump train, we have Sanders raining on Hillary Clinton's parade. We had the commentariat unloading historical details about previous contested conventions of the GOP. Now, you have a Democratic Senator warning that this may be 1968 all over again, when anti-war protestors turned the perimeter of the Chicago venue into a near war zone.

This is a pretty good reason to stop with the predictions this election season – it's as unscripted as Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha.

Something tells me there will be plenty more of this to watch before we return to our regularly scheduled programming. Till then, this is the world of alternate reality TV. Perhaps, rather than dildos, Sanders' supporters ought to be carrying chill pills. Or at least listen to some Steely Dan – I'd suggest starting with their excellent debut album, *Can't Buy A Thrill*.

Three Separate, Equal and Dysfunctional Branches of Government



(Agencies) Washington — The continuing breakdown in Washington's ability to govern seemed to spread like a contagion Thursday through all three branches of government.

The dysfunction somehow managed to reach new levels. The Supreme Court, left short-handed by a Republican refusal to act on President Obama's nominee in the final year of his presidency, deadlocked on a major immigration case. The inaction validated a lower court finding against the administration's attempt to allow millions of unauthorized immigrants to live legally in the United States.

Mr. Obama, who sought to address the nation's immigration crisis through his executive powers because of a persistent impasse on Capitol Hill, was

unable to achieve one of his major goals — which pleased Republicans but left the president angry and disappointed.

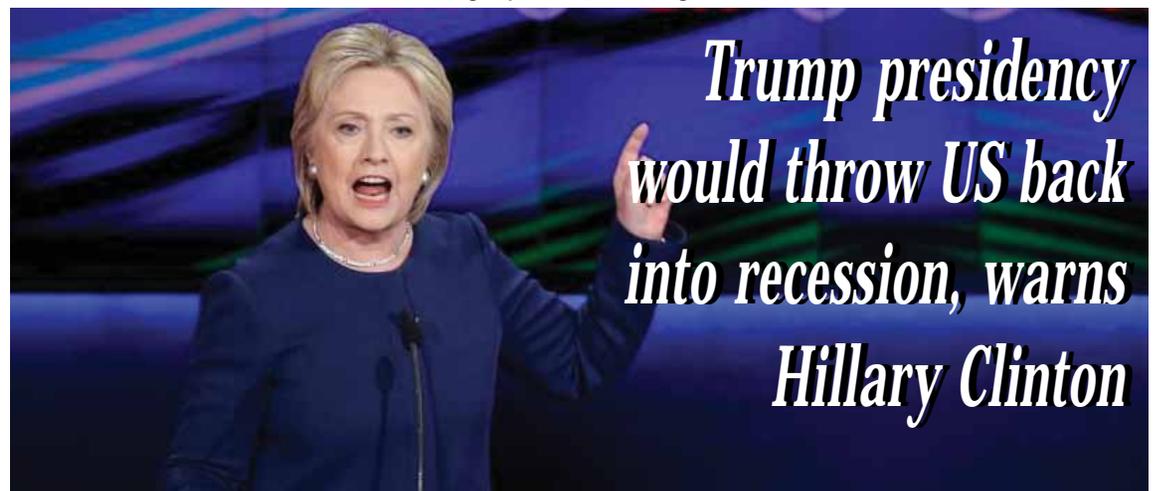
Democrats ended a raucous 25-hour protest on the House floor, failing to gain a vote on gun safety issues but exulting in the attention they received via a breakout social media campaign that threw the House rule book out the Capitol's neoclassical windows. Republican leaders accused Democrats of trying to capitalize on the Orlando, Fla., shooting while destroying the decorum of the House.

The decision by Democrats to act out in the House was just the latest attempt to upend the political status quo in a year distinguished by political disruption, from Donald J. Trump rattling the Republican establishment to Senator Bernie Sanders — the democratic socialist who made an appearance at the House protest — drawing huge crowds of young voters with calls to radically change the way Americans think about government.

Partisan turmoil is nothing new in Washington. But the cloistered Supreme Court now finds itself disrupted as well by its empty seat, unable to fully function because of a Senate unwilling to act.

In what passes in today's capital for a breakthrough, eight Senate Republicans joined Democrats in giving majority support to a

bipartisan compromise to prevent terrorism suspects from buying firearms. But that plan, engineered by Senator Susan Collins, Republican of Maine, can go nowhere until she rounds up significantly more Republican support.



(Agencies) Democrat Hillary Clinton said on Tuesday that if Republican rival Donald Trump wins the White House, it will be a disaster for the US economy, predicting a "Trump recession."

"Now I don't say this because of typical political disagreements - liberals and conservatives say Trump's ideas would be disastrous," Clinton said. "Economists on the right, the left and the centre all agree Trump would throw us back into recession." Clinton's speech in Columbus, Ohio, a state that will be a battleground in the November 8 election, was the second in which she has argued the wealthy businessman is "temperamentally unfit" to lead the country. The first was on foreign relations and national

security.

"Donald Trump has said he is qualified to be president because of his business record," Clinton said. "So let's take a look at what he did for his businesses: He's written a lot of books about business. They all seem to end at Chapter 11; go figure," Clinton said, in a jab referring to Chapter 11 of the US Bankruptcy Code.

Clinton then said Trump, a self-described "king of debt," had allowed businesses to amass huge debts and declare bankruptcy, leaving hundreds of people without jobs and wiping out shareholders.

Allowing the United States to accrue similar debt would rattle investors and could lead to economic catastrophe, she added. On Twitter during Clinton's

speech, Trump said, "I am 'the king of debt.' That has been great for me as a businessman, but is bad for the country. I made a fortune off of debt, will fix US."

Clinton also said the likely Republican nominee's tax plan - which aims to simplify the tax code, along with slashing the top corporate tax rate to 15% from 35% - would benefit the wealthy over working families.

The nonpartisan Tax Foundation estimated the plan would increase the federal deficit by \$9.5 trillion over the next decade. The former secretary of state also said Trump's plan to scrap trade deals could start "trade wars" and that the agreements should instead be renegotiated if they do not benefit American workers.



Uneasy about Donald Trump, Apple hangs up on Republicans

(Agencies) Breaking a tradition of contributing towards presidential conventions of both parties, Apple will not support Republicans this time because of its unease with Donald Trump.

The Cupertino, California-based company has not officially announced its decision, but unidentified officials confirmed it to multiple US media outlets.

While Trump has attacked Apple for its production facilities in China, vowing to bring them back to the US, the company is more troubled by his racist and bigoted remarks.

It joins Hewlett-Packard, the other IT giant whose CEO Meg Whitman has compared Trump to Hitler and

Mussolini, in refusing to support the Republican convention.

Apple's help, as that of Microsoft and Google, which are all backing both conventions, may not amount to much in itself — Apple products worth \$140,000 in 2008.

But the optics of it will be troubling for the Republican Party, which is struggling to come to grips with their nominee and his bitterly divisive remarks on race, religion and all in between.

Other companies that have decided to not sponsor the Republican convention include JP Morgan Chase and Ford Motors, according to a Bloomberg report.

It's a standard practice for many US companies to contribute towards both conventions through resources and products, without seeming to be taking sides. But 2016 will be different.

Trump, who likes to flaunt his private sector experience and friends, and who is usually quick to respond to slights and put-downs, had not responded till late Sunday. The real-estate magnate has been struggling lately with his own party's continuing misgivings about him, alternating between seeking its help and claiming he will be fine by himself.



On Saturday, he sought help, telling supporters at a rally, "I'm raising a lot of money for the Republican Party, and a lot of beneficiaries, and I like doing it — but we have to have help".

"You know, life is like a two-way street, right? It's a two-way street. So that's it. Otherwise, I'll just keep doing what I'm doing. I'll just keep funding my own campaign."

US State Department officials call for strikes against Syria's Assad



(Agencies) Washington: Over 50 US State Department officials signed an internal memo protesting US policy in Syria, calling for targeted military strikes against the regime of President Bashar al-Assad and urging regime change as the only way to defeat the Islamic State. According to a US cable, Washington policy in the Middle East has been "overwhelmed" by the continuing violence in Syria. It calls for a "judicious use of stand-off and air weapons, which would undergird and drive a more focused and hard-nosed US-led diplomatic process." CNN reviewed a draft of the memo, which has since been classified.

The Wall Street Journal first reported on the memo's existence. The internal memo was sent throughout the "dissent channel", a mechanism for State

Department officials to offer alternative views on foreign policy without freedom of retaliation or retaliation. It was established in the 1960s during the Vietnam War to ensure that senior leadership in the department would have access to alternative policy views on the war. The 51 officials who signed the memo are mostly from the rank and file of the department, many of them career officers in the foreign service who have been involved in Syria policy over the past several years either in Washington or overseas.

There are no high-level names but they reflect a widespread view in the State Department that tougher military action in Syria is needed to force Assad to negotiate a diplomatic solution. US Secretary of State John Kerry himself has advocated a more muscular US military posture in Syria to force Assad to negotiate a

political settlement. Sources familiar with the memo said the officials had been discussing sending it for some time, but they finally decided to move forward because negotiations with Russia over a political transition in Syria have all but collapsed and the fragile ceasefire continues to disintegrate.

The memo says that neither Assad nor Russia has taken past ceasefires and negotiations seriously and suggests a more robust military approach was needed to force a transitional government in Syria. President

Barack Obama has resisted wading deeper into the Syria conflict, but officials familiar with the memo said the State Department officials could be trying to force a policy debate in the upcoming elections. News of the cable came as Pentagon officials said Russia launched airstrikes against US-backed Syrian rebels in southern Syria.

(Agencies) Earlier Thursday, Russia said it wanted a long-term ceasefire in the northern city of Aleppo. Russia has been providing military support to the

Syrian army. State Department spokesman John Kirby confirmed the existence of the cable but would not go into detail about the contents. He said doing so would not be respectful of the process. "We are aware of a dissent channel cable written by a group of State Department employees regarding the situation in Syria. We are reviewing the cable now, which came up very recently," he said. "This is an important vehicle that the secretary, as well as the department institutionally, values and respects."

British man charged over attempt to kill Donald Trump at rally

(Agencies) A 19-year-old British man has been charged for trying to grab a police officer's gun at a Donald Trump rally in Las Vegas in a bid to kill the presumptive Republican presidential nominee. According to a complaint filed in federal court in Nevada, Michael Sandford tried to disarm the officer at Saturday's rally at the Mystere Theatre in the Treasure Island Casino before being overpowered.

It said the young man told a Secret Service agent after his arrest that he had driven from California to Las Vegas "to kill Trump," and had been to a range a day earlier to learn to shoot as he had never fired a gun before.

"Sandford acknowledged that he would likely only be able to fire one to two rounds and stated he was convinced he would be killed by law enforcement during his attempt on Trump's life," the complaint said.

It added that Sandford told investigators he had purchased tickets for a rally in Phoenix, where he "would try again to kill Trump" in the

event his plan in Las Vegas failed.

Video of his arrest carried by US media show a skinny man with short brown hair and a grey T-shirt being escorted out of the rally by police officers with his hands behind his back.

The prosecutor's office said Sandford was ordered held without bond, as he was considered dangerous and represented a flight risk.

Britain's Foreign Office is "providing assistance" in the case, a spokesman said. "Would try this again"

The complaint said Sandford had told investigators he had been in the United States for about 18 months, and had lived in Hoboken, New Jersey, before traveling to California. It said Sandford told investigators that he had targeted officer Ameel Jacob's gun because it was in an unlocked position and would be the easiest way to gain access to a weapon at the rally where those attending had to go through metal detectors.

The dead ends of Uttar Pradesh

One way of skirting them in the next polls is to bring trifurcation of the state on to the political agenda.



But in this election in UP, the politics of memory will probably dominate the politics of hope. All the four political parties carry too much of the weight of the past. The debate will not be over which party can bring about a decisive transformation; it will be over which party's baggage weighs the least. Mayawati, to her credit, did stabilise law and order in UP. But even her core constituents felt a sharp sense that the promised transformation in the state did not come. In retrospect, though, Mayawati should gain from grudging acknowledgment of her achievement. Akhilesh Yadav was elected with considerable hope; he seemed to exacerbate all the vices of the Samajwadi Party rather than accentuate its virtues.

The Congress is still struggling with its betrayal of the minorities during the '80s. It has no achievement to point to, no ground on which it can stand. It is struggling in other ways too: It does not have credibility, identity, leader or organisation. In some ways, a Congress-Mayawati political accommodation would make a lot of political sense. Even though both would sacrifice something in the short run, a defeat for the BJP in UP will potentially open up spaces for

both parties.

The BJP did spectacularly in the 2014 election. But in UP, the party's most reactionary and communal core is also dominant. This core does give the party a certain organisational energy; and it will be foolish of other parties to underestimate the BJP machine's capacity for political outreach to new constituencies, particularly Dalits. But the BJP is suffering from two handicaps. The first is that almost all its UP related project, like cleaning the Ganga, as ambitious as they were, may not be implemented in time; in short, the implementation capabilities of the government may not give sufficient wind to its campaign. Second, the party does not have an obvious leader who is without considerable baggage. Rajnath Singh is a seasoned politician. But no one has a memory of him, either at the Centre or at the state, of firing up administration. Smriti Irani will bring energy and freshness, but what she stands for will be unclear; and the rest of the lot have long track records of being openly communal.

Two contrasts between Bihar and UP are also instructive. Bihar has been the graveyard of every social revolution, but its politics has always aspired to a sense

of being composed of genuine social movements. Except for fleeting moments, UP politics has been more nakedly a politics of patronage and faction, with not even the fig leaf of ideology. Second, in Bihar, "communal" versus "secular" has been a central axis of politics. In UP it would be historically odd to describe any of the parties as staking the secular ground in any deep way. The Congress's active de-Muslimisation of the state administration in the '50s, to flirting with communalism in the '80s; the SP's constant use of the communal card; the BJP's obvious roots in communal politics; Mayawati's relative indifference to these issues; and even the old Jat-Muslim divide that was reflected in Charan Singh's politics — all make for a state politics that is at base far more deeply cynical and potentially communal.

UP has not been immune from economic change. The fragmentation, volatility and uncertainty in UP politics is a consequence of these changes. You get a sense of an electorate that is desperate to experiment; equally, you get the sense that none of the political formations are up to responding to these big challenges.

It is a sign of the stakes in Uttar Pradesh that all political parties already seem to be in election mode. But UP politics will be particularly intense, because like the state itself, the character of politics has very little organic identity left. At one level, there is considerable evidence that voting patterns in UP are a lot more fluid than standard analysis that tries to correlate social identity with voting patterns allows for. For instance, part of Mayawati's Dalit base has on occasion deserted her, particularly during the 2014 elections, and there is growing evidence of fluidity in the Muslim vote as well. This is also a state where the distinction between national and local elections is often quite clear. In 2009, Congress did well in the national elections, but failed to convert it into a state victory. In 2014, the BJP did spectacularly well. How much of those gains can endure? The state is characterised by deep genuine multi-party competition, with little likelihood of it congealing into a competition of two blocks. Each of the four major parties — the SP, BJP, BSP and Congress — aspires to form a government on their own.

In UP, almost all parties have conspired to put a lid on the politics of inequality within the state. There is considerable variation in the development experience of eastern, central and western UP. But most unconscionably, whole regions like Bundelkhand that have suffered immensely have been sidelined by all political parties. One measure of that marginalisation is the fact that all demands for the trifurcation of UP have been taken off the political agenda. Small states are not a panacea. But the case for breaking up UP is quite compelling.

Any party half-serious about UP's development would at least

try and make trifurcation a political issue; Mayawati had once proposed it but has backed off. The Congress lost considerable political credibility by raising concerns over Bundelkhand, only to avoid the issue of statehood. The deep question of regional inequality within the state cannot be addressed within the existing state framework. The suppression of the trifurcation argument is a suppression of the debate over UP's development itself, and the character of its politics will not change unless the state is itself broken up.

Getting Twitchy About Mr. Trump

It's a question fit for Donald Trump himself: Can Republicans fire this guy?

Monday's news that Mr. Trump's campaign is turning over the couch cushions for cash and has built next to nothing in terms of a national organization was just the latest reason for Republicans to worry that they have a historic loser on their hands. Mr. Trump's racist comments about the federal judge presiding over a lawsuit against Trump University, his congratulating himself on predicting the mass shooting in Orlando, Fla., and his insinuating that the nation's Muslims and President Obama were somehow involved in domestic terrorist plots have persuaded many Republicans that Mr. Trump will never fulfill their hopes of becoming a more judicious "presidential" candidate.

Fully 70 percent of registered voters now say they dislike Mr. Trump, including more than three-quarters of women and nearly 90 percent of nonwhite people, according to a new Washington Post/ABC News

poll. Hillary Clinton, the presumptive Democratic nominee, has opened a double-digit lead in some national polls. Small wonder that yet another group of Republicans has mounted yet another long-shot effort to deprive Mr. Trump of the nomination. Called "Free the Delegates," it's an initiative to rally convention delegates to vote against Mr. Trump in Cleveland next month. Kendal Unruh, one of the group's founders and a Colorado delegate, told The Washington Post that this can be done by passing a "conscience clause" before the convention that would allow delegates from states that Mr. Trump won to abstain or vote for another candidate.

Courageous Conservatives PAC, whose founder, Chris Ekstrom, is a pro-Ted Cruz Dallas businessman, backs the group. The conservative pundit Bill Kristol has voiced support for the movement, too, having failed so

far to recruit a kindred spirit to start a third-party campaign against Mr. Trump.

Free the Delegates is not an effort to find an alternative to Mr. Trump with broad appeal. It's a campaign to ditch him because he's not conservative enough, and it has no apparent plan beyond that. Mr. Cruz, the second-place primary season finisher liked by many in the Free the Delegates group, doesn't have nearly the delegates he would need to become the nominee. Meanwhile, more moderate anti-Trump forces are split among John Kasich, Marco Rubio and Jeb Bush, none of whom came close to Mr. Trump in the primary contests. Mitt Romney, a prominent voice against Mr. Trump, says he won't run. Gary Johnson, the Libertarian candidate, polls in the single digits nationally. So far, the latest dump-Trump scheming seems less like a cohesive strategy than another manifestation of the intraparty war of ideologies that led to Mr. Trump's win in the first place. Having wooed and accommodated the forces of chaos, party leaders now fear

that Mr. Trump will not only lose, but that he'll cost them control of the House and the Senate, too — one reason former President George W. Bush has agreed to help individual G.O.P. candidates.

Republican leaders in Washington have made little effort to quash the anti-Trump machinations. Mitch McConnell, the Senate majority leader, and John Cornyn, the Senate's second-ranked Republican, refuse to answer questions about Mr. Trump's latest blunder. Paul Ryan, speaker of the House, seems to change approaches by the day, but as yet does not repudiate Mr. Trump.

While Mr. Trump was winning, it made some sense, as a purely partisan matter, for Mr. Ryan to swallow hard and say he was supporting the man chosen by a plurality of the Republican primary electorate. Confronted by shocking new evidence of disarray in the Trump camp, as well as Mr. Trump's loose-cannon habits, Mr. Ryan is now saying delegates are absolutely free to follow their conscience.

Yoga: The Myths Debunked

When this microcosmic consciousness unites with the all-pervading macrocosmic consciousness, this union is known as yoga.

The global renaissance of 'yoga' has a potential to become a radical movement which could prove to be the quantum leap in human evolution. The proviso however being that one clearly understands what it actually means. These days many people seem to be practising 'yoga' but in effect what they are practising, or rather attempting to practise is just one of its limbs i.e. asanas. The actual word is yoga-asanas, but the suffix is left out. Thus, the impression is that there is a universal renewed interest in 'yoga', the revival is mostly confined to asanas alone.

Driven by ignorance, we lead our lives as an individual unit of body-senses-mind-intellect with an individual consciousness. When this microcosmic consciousness (called Jiva) unites with the all-pervading macrocosmic consciousness (called Ishwara), this union is known as yoga. It is the state where the mind dissolves in the real Self and all the seeds of past impressions (samskaras) get burnt in the incandescent fire of self-realisation. It is the pinnacle of inner evolution succinctly described by sage Patanjali in his well-known aphorism: yogash chitta vritti nirodhah. The magnitude of what is being conveyed through the one word 'yoga' is thus such that it should not be taken frivolously.

Yoga is the ultimate destination of a human being's evolutionary journey. And there are several paths that can be tread with this intention: raja yoga (also known as ashtanga yoga), bhakti (devotion), gyana (knowledge), hatha yoga and the rather esoteric path of laya yoga.

The prevailing, resurgent interest in asanas seen these days world over is just one part of ashtanga yoga which is an eight-stepped ladder with the ascending rungs of yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and culminating in the highest point of samadhi. And the most celebrated text outlining its precepts is Patanjali's yoga-sutras which has been around circa 2500 years.

Yama refers to the five moral codes of conduct whilst interacting with others: satya — truthfulness in thoughts, speech and actions), ahimsa — non-violence in thoughts, speech and actions, asteya — non-stealing, aparigraha — non-hoarding, and brahmacharya — at the physical level it refers to celibacy and for householders, it means fidelity.

Niyama are the five self-disciplinary codes: shaucha — cleanliness of the body, external environment and of the mind, santosha — being contented with one's life, accepting everything without discrimination, tapah — austerity, svadhyaya — to be established in the real Self but it also refers to self-learning through scriptural texts and lastly, ishwarpranidhana — forsaking one's ego and being totally surrendered to God's will.

The third step on the path is of asanas, which is what generally people are referring to when they say that they are practising yoga. But there are many misconceptions about it that need to be dispelled. Asana has neither got anything to do with body contortion, acrobatics or gymnastics, nor is it physical exercise. Many people mistakenly think that they don't need to learn asanas because they are already going to the gym or doing aerobic exercises. See, such exercises stimulate catabolism. So, although you achieve an athletic, sculpted look, but your energy gets drained. Then people resort to all sorts of energy enhancing drinks which are laced with harmful chemicals with consequential deleterious effect on your vital organs. Asanas, on the other hand, balance your metabolism and thus energize your body with the added beneficial effect on the functioning of all internal organs.

Asana is a science and an art in its own right and one requires an in-depth understanding of body, its anatomy, its physiology and yes, geometry too. Another noteworthy point is that right posture alone is not asana. It has to be supplemented with poise, proper positioning, right alignment, focus on breathing and crucially, the presence of awareness of every part of your body in the said posture. Thus in a way, I can say that asana is moving meditation, for such is the heightened awareness of the body and breath.

One should never forget the objective of mastering asanas which is to be able to sit comfortably in a stable posture and thus acquire the eligibility of progressing to the higher stages on the path of yoga. It is another matter that as a by-product, the body becomes healthier, energetic and one may get cured of some ailments. But contrary to what is being propagated, it is important to bear in mind that asanas are not a panacea for diseases.

Herein I would also like to comment on who can teach asanas, for these days, just about anyone can declare oneself to be 'yoga teacher'. Strictly speaking, yoga can be taught only by a yogi. You cannot become a yogi just by adopting a certain external appearance. If the person teaches in a scientific way, very attentively, with patience and diligence then know that he or she is well versed in their craft.

Why the Most "Cultured" Among Us May Be the Most Resistant to Change

Poking big holes in long-held assertions, Goldberg and his colleagues at Stanford and Yale universities analyzed millions of Yelp and Netflix reviews to reveal that people considered the most culturally adventurous are actually the most resistant to experiences perceived as "crossing the line."

That is, those dubbed "cultural omnivores" — because they eat Thai for lunch, play bocce ball after work, and stream a French film that night — are the very ones opposed to mixing it up. No hummus on their hot dogs, forget about spaghetti Westerns, and do not mention Switched-On Bach. Those offerings are not considered culturally authentic. They are a hodgepodge to which these folks would likely wrinkle their collective noses — as they did in 1968 when Wendy (nee' Walter) Carlos electrified J.S. Bach. Today's cultural elites approve only if the experience is authentic, which means eating pigs' feet at a Texas barbecue passes the test and slathering a taco with tahini does not.

"We find these people hate the most atypical offerings," says Goldberg, an assistant professor of organizational behavior at Stanford Graduate School of Business. "They can pretend to be the most open, but it turns out they are not. By being multicultural, they are the most conservative and the most resistant to changes to the status quo."

The findings run counter to previous research, which viewed omnivorousness as synonymous with openness. Instead, Goldberg, along with Michael T. Hannan, professor emeritus of organizational behavior at Stanford GSB and Bala'zs Kova'cs of Yale University, write in their paper that "a taste for variety decreases one's receptivity to cultural innovation." This analysis, Goldberg says, has powerful implications for industry by illustrating the challenges an entrepreneur faces when introducing innovation to the market — largely represented by the custodians of social order.

To develop their thesis, the team worked for two years surveying data combed from more than 3 million reviews of restaurants on Yelp and movies on Netflix to take the public's pulse on what it eats, what it watches, what it likes, and what it hates. To make sense of the data, which Goldberg describes as "scattered and unstructured," the team applied algorithms and noticed that films or food that crossed multiple categories were discounted, undervalued, and actually suffered a penalty for being perceived as "less pure," precisely by the people who pride themselves in broad and varied tastes.

It was a "Eureka moment," Goldberg recalls. Everything he thought he knew was suddenly turned on its head.

Goldberg is uniquely qualified to perform this research, having spent the early part of his career as an IT specialist in Israel and then earning his PhD in sociology at Princeton University. So he knows the cultural omnivore is a fairly recent invention. Until the 1960s, when baby boomers rebelled against the status quo, people were born into certain cultures — usually determined by ethnicity and class — and that's largely where they stayed. But in a rejection of the social order, baby boomers began to experiment. It became hip to dabble in all kinds of cultures, as long as they were the real deal.

Today, a higher status accrues to those who are perceived as open to new experiences, and those who oppose experimentation are dismissed as narrow-minded monoculturists, or worse, rednecks, Goldberg notes.



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Udta Punjab: Nothing reforms society as entertainment



There is a moment in the film, Udta Punjab, when a rockstar with an admirable range urinates over his hostile audience. He does this because he was in the middle of a serious speech about drug abuse but his audience asks him to shut up and sing. (Also, he is on cocaine.) Something of this nature happens all the time in art. A self-aware artiste bores his audience by trying to convey a reformatory message, then he showers contempt on them claiming they are all dumb addicts of fun.

The triumph of Udta Punjab is that it is wary of sermon, and never disrespects the power of entertainment.

The urination scene is the only portion of the film that was cut before it was released for public viewing. The chief of the Central Board of Film Certification, Pahlaj Nihalani, in the way of crawling when his political masters only asked him to bend, had wanted many cuts. The creators of the film fought back in court and won their right to preserve almost everything. In their defence of the film, the artistes were forced to claim that it is a product of high morality. That is not entirely true, fortunately. It is a work of commercial art whose primary goal is to entertain, which includes unsettling and moving us. In the process it conveys a moral tale because morality is an exquisite plot device and indispensable if you want to complete a popular story. In fact, it is hard to entertain us without being moral. Not all of us, of course. Some men in the hall where I watched the film, in Gurgaon, laughed aloud when a girl recounts her rape.

Even so, nothing reforms society as entertainment can.

In Udta Punjab, a singer trapped in coke addiction and the adoration of fools, is liberated when a woman who is fleeing from a drug cartel gives him purpose that is beyond seeking pleasure. It is a ruthless story, hence unpredictable. The drug addiction among the youth of Punjab promoted by a sick political system is the brooding tension derived from indisputable facts. The singer, too, promotes drugs by glorifying them in his hugely popular songs. That, too, is derived from reality. In the real

world, such powerful influences are countered by activism, which is pitifully inadequate. The war against drugs requires the full force of commercial cinema, which is what Udta Punjab provides, and it does so entirely because it did not set out to reform, it set out to entertain. Nihalani's cuts would have impoverished the film. He wanted all mentions of 'Punjab', 'MP', 'party' and 'Parliament' removed, which would have made the film look lame and unconvincing, and deprived it of people and concepts that we accept everyday as despicable evil. He wanted the deletion of "visuals of scratching/itching side portion of Sardar", from a song.

It is a beautiful moment, at once comic and tense, that creates a sense of danger as a girl walks down a village lane. Everything that offended Nihalani, including the expletives and the fact that a dog is called 'Jackie Chan', entertain or affect us pushing us towards accepting the moral of the story. This is beyond the capabilities of 'social-message' cinema. As in journalism, in art, too, there is an infestation of activism. The social agenda and the high moral ground have become substitutes for artistic talent. Mediocrity so often survives in cinema and literature as morality. It does survive in other forms, too, but the type of ordinariness that has the glow of ideology has properties of a disease. People tend to collect their own. As a result activists collect more activists and entrench themselves in some parts of art, condemning the entertaining, the dramatic, the funny, the beautiful and the stylish as lesser beings. The

talented among the young grow up having false notions about art. It would be years before they extricate themselves from the lie, before they realise that in the core of art is talent, not grouse. Can there be anything more lowbrow than the self-righteous whine that you are better than the world. "The primary task of a writer is to write well. (And to go on writing well. Neither to burn out nor to sell out.)" wrote writer Susan Sontag, "Let the dedicated activist never overshadow the dedicated servant of literature — the matchless storyteller." It is true though that she herself is often referred to as an activist. The moral lament of activism is so infectious that it has spread beyond art and journalism. For instance, it has led the tech industry astray. The Silicon Valley billionaires, when they wish to conquer India, unconsciously assume the role of activists. The efforts of Google and Facebook to connect the

billion among Indians who do not have access to the Internet is foolishly couched in social service. There is often this obtuse talk of a farmer who would check crop prices online; a poor woman who would get medical advice over the Internet, a bright dark girl who would learn about the world on Wikipedia. The Internet captured the world because it was fun. That would be the same reason why it would spread among the poor. Billionaires, bureaucrats and politicians tend to overlook the fact that fun, too, is a fundamental right. Prime Minister Narendra Modi even managed to make the spacefaring Elon Musk seem boring. After a visit to Tesla's campus, Modi tweeted "Enjoyed discussion on how battery technology can help farmers." Politicians, who use entertainment to lure voters, know the power of entertainment. Fun, like good commercial cinema, has transformative powers. That is why they are so often a system against fun.

Corruption Charges Against Kejriwal Are BJP's Answer To Punjab



Ashutosh

An FIR has finally been registered against Arvind Kejriwal in a case of corruption. The charges are that he did not take action against the corruption of Sheila Dikshit, the former Chief Minister of Delhi. The moot question is who has registered the FIR? The Anti-Corruption Bureau or ACB, which was forcibly taken over by the Modi government in June 2015, within three months of AAP forming the government in Delhi. The ACB was with the Delhi government for more than 40 years. Sheila Dikshit has been accused of indulging in corruption in a contract for water tankers by the Jal Board, of which she was Chairperson.

When the AAP government was formed, an investigation was ordered in the water tanker scam and a report was submitted in August 2015. But by then the ACB had been taken over by the central government and an officer

of the police rank of Joint Commissioner, Mukesh Meena, was made its chief. Mr Meena himself is accused of the "Pardas scam". A complaint is already pending against him but no action has been taken yet. Since his appointment, the ACB has been left redundant and no serious case has been pursued.

In his first term that lasted 49 days, Arvind Kejriwal had filed three FIRs against Sheila Dikshit and also against Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani, the then Petroleum Minister Murli Deora, and Law Minister Veerappa Moily in the KG Basin case. All these cases were handed over to the ACB. After his resignation, for a year there was President's rule in Delhi, but there was no movement in these cases; since June 8 2015, the ACB reported to the Modi government, and again no action was taken. So if Arvind can be faulted for inaction and an FIR lodged against him,

then why should a similar FIR not be lodged against the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi in the Ambani and Sheila Dikshit cases, and also against M L Khattar, the Chief Minister of Haryana, for not processing any action against Robert Vadra? The BJP had created much hullabaloo over the issue of Vadra's allegedly corrupt land deals in Haryana and promised action.

The FIR against Arvind is part of a bigger conspiracy.

All of a sudden, three cases were raised by BJP. The bill related to the Office of Profit of 21 MLAs, passed by the Delhi Assembly, was rejected by the President. It had been lying with the Modi government for a year without any action. Then the Premier Bus Service scam matter was raised and Transport Minister Gopal Rai, who has been undergoing a serious treatment for his disabilities, was targeted, and then came this water tanker issue. Gopal Rai was relieved of his duty from the transport department on his own request, but it was made out that he had indulged in corruption and was penalised. The BJP created lot of hungama over AAPs 21 MLAs and behaved as if the membership of these 21 MLAs had been cancelled. The truth is that the matter is pending with the Election Commission and it will take some time to resolve. Meanwhile, there is this FIR against Arvind Kejriwal. All this

happened in a matter of two weeks.

This needs serious dissection and analysis. This has to be understood with a different perspective. A government which has come to power with an unprecedented mandate on the issue of Zero Tolerance for corruption is being blamed for corruption. This is the same government which in record time took strong action against more than 50 officers on account of corruption when the ACB was reporting to it. This is the same government which sacked its own minister who was seen to be asking for six lakhs as a bribe in an audio clip. This clip had not appeared in the media; the opposition had no inclination about it. Yet, he was fired and the matter was referred to the CBI. The CBI on the other hand has not done any investigation since then. This is the same government which is completing government projects at a cost that far lower than allocated in the budget, unlike other governments who escalate the costs multiple times. This is the same government that is constructing "mohalla clinics" at the cost of 20 lakhs whereas the earlier government had spent five crores per primary health center of the same size and facilities. The list is endless. And all these are verifiable facts.

(Contd on page 20)

Can we have some silence, please?

Noise is the new garbage in our life. What we urgently need is a meditative state for our society

Sound has taken over our lives in unimaginable and unwelcome ways. If there is a marker of contemporary public life in India, it is the predominance of noise and a loss of silence. It is almost as if we believe that it is only through making noise, and being surrounded by it, that we know we are alive.

Public space in India should come with a statutory warning: harmful to your ears and hence, harmful to your peace of mind. Driving on the roads is as much about the constant sound from all species of horns. Travelling in trains has now become a mental extension of ménage à trois. We are forced to listen to other people's private conversations, their music preferences and movie tracks. On a recent train trip to Chennai, I was assaulted by multiple sound fronts: an old man in front of me playing Vedic chants on his mobile, a man in my row loudly discussing what I felt were illegal business practices, a girl behind me on the phone given to sudden and loud bursts of giggles, and a woman nearby who loudly played Sai Baba bhajans perhaps in the hope that her co-passengers too would share in her ecstasy. As if this cacophony was not enough, two small children created havoc running around and screaming at the top of their not-so-tiny voices, with their parents watching with an indulgent smile. None of these people thought that there was something unwelcome in this public display of their private preferences.

Only in India?

When I see this, I am tempted to say 'Only in India'. But perhaps we are not fully to blame. There is something within the intrinsic nature of sound that makes it essentially about the freedom to spread without constraint. But there must be something peculiarly 'us' in this tendency to be surrounded by noise. For instance, when I visit some houses, the soundscape I am in is this: the TV is playing loud film songs, there is a CD player belting out bhajans in the next room, there is the

sound of guns and bombs going off in the computer game in another room, and then all of us trying to conduct a conversation above these simultaneous sonic blasts.

Sundar Sarukkai
After watching IPL matches on TV, I finally got to see one live — the recent final in Bengaluru. The ground was lush, smothered under bright lights. But it was the sound which greeted me when I entered the stadium. Loud, thumping music reverberated all around and it seemed as if the stadium was an open-air pub. I thought the music would stop once the match began. Alas, the final was really about music and dancing in the stands; the cricket was actually incidental. Between balls and between overs there was loud, rhythmic music, and loud comperes screaming into the mike: "Are you having fun?"

Fun, somehow, seemed to be directly proportional to the noise. We all shouted back "Yes" and then were told to whistle, to make odd noises, and wave our flags. We did all that like obedient monkeys. Any time the crowd was comparatively silent, there was the anxious scream — "Are you having fun?" — followed by the thundering noise of screams and snippets of songs. We were as scared as the compere that we were perhaps not having fun. Having paid substantially for the tickets, we would not be denied our 'fun'.

Except that I suspect most of us had little clue about what fun was. Fun had been reduced to some loud beats, flashing lights, voyeuristic glances at cheerleaders, and not sitting in silence. There was nothing spontaneous about this fun. So many young spectators next to me were tired and jaded. But when the compere shouted into the mike, they jumped up. We danced and waved flags in tune with the music and not

the game.

Unfortunately, this malaise has spread deeper. In FM stations, there is as much noise as there is music. We can't listen to a song without mindless chatter and artificial screams of joy and excitement. We can't have a radio jockey who is actually not scared of pauses and silence in between. We don't have a private radio station which can, without apology or in the depths of the night, play classical music of any kind. Most TV serials seem to be a constant auditory assault, where actors don't speak their lines but instead scream it out to the accompaniment of shrill music.

The art of silence

Noise is the new garbage in our life; verbal, visual and mental noise. It is produced and discarded, both equally effortlessly. We may have lost the art of being in silence, and to appreciate subtle sounds. This constant immersion in noise, this constant anxiety to state 'we are here' through loud sounds, this indifference to the effect of 'our' sounds on

others around us — all these have serious consequences to the health of a society and not just to that of the individual. I think it is reasonable to suggest that our language changes when we constantly speak loudly. The language of aggression is a language of the loud. Certain words can be uttered only when it is loud.

Silence is the price we pay for this immersion in noise. Today silence has negative connotations. Being silent is seen as being in a state of depression or being anti-social. Silence is used as a form of punishment, whether in the school or at home. Aggressively promoting oneself seems to be the new mantra for survival in our society and silence mitigates this 'virtue'.

If meditation is the search for silence within the individual, what we urgently need is a meditative state for our society. And the first step towards this is to perhaps speak softly and think gently — at least in the public domain.

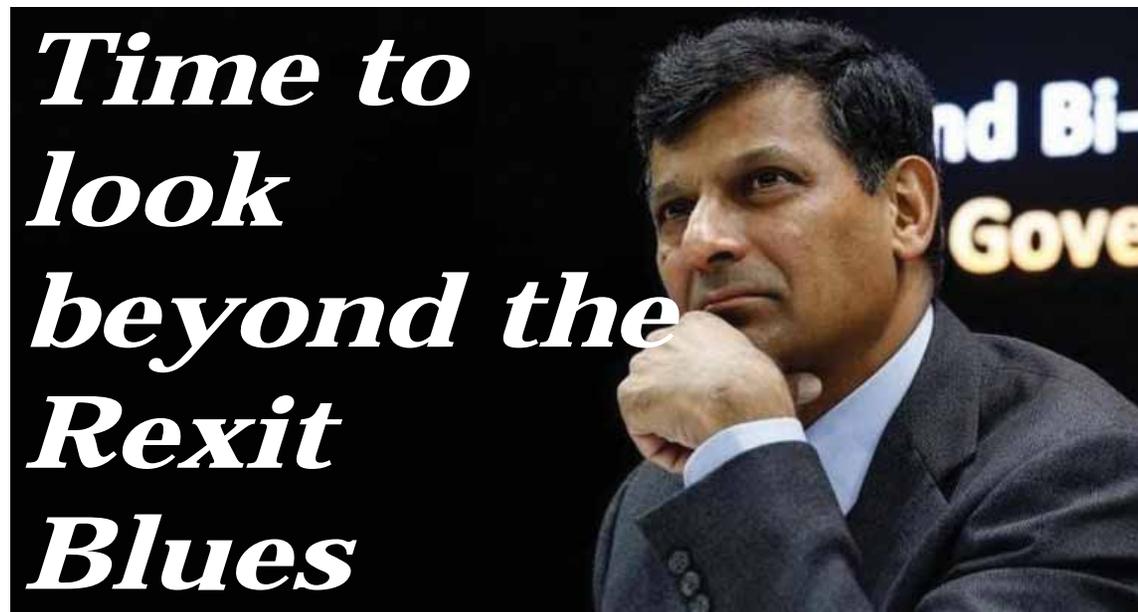
Time to look beyond the Brexit Blues

In an eventful week during which the world will watch Britain's vote on whether it would stay in Europe or not, one thing that India's uneasy markets could have done without was a local factor that added to the uncertainty. But then came RBI governor Raghuram Rajan's sudden weekend announcement that he will not seek a second term after his tenure ends in early September. It should have been a Monday of Mayhem as 'Brexit' would have been compounded by the 'Rexit' factor as Mr Rajan's exit was

perceived to be. However, with both the rupee and stock indices holding steady on Monday, there is hope yet that India's economy will survive short-term shocks. Deeper questions hang in the air: Are individuals more important than institutions? Can the central bank be the prime agency in determining the fate of the world's fastest growing major economy amid forecasts of a good monsoon after two years of drought? The answer thus far seems to be that India can overcome short-term hiccups and perception problems, thanks to its

fundamental strengths. It is important to understand Mr Rajan's policies as a product of the circumstances under which he took over his job. Battling local inflation amid the world's worst recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s was a challenge for both him and his predecessor, Duvvuri Subbarao. We may sound some ifs and buts on how harsh his policies should have been or not with regard to the mountain of bad loans (non performing assets) that India's commercial banks were stuck with, but if he had not tried a tough clean-up, he

might have been seen as erring on his own principles. This is the man who as IMF's chief economist argued a decade ago that risky instruments were polluting global finance — and thus predicted the global crisis of 2008. Looking back, he has brought inflation under control, and has cut interest rates over the past year by 1.5 percentage points. His safety nets for the rupee are also justifiable as export markets have not been sound and oil prices continued to rule high until early this year. A lot would now depend on whom the Modi government names as Mr Rajan's successor. On current indications, it does not seem to be in a hurry to do so and may wait until the end of August. That is an uncertainty the economy could do without. We hope the successor is named sooner and would be a credible figure who can please domestic businesses and foreign investors alike. Both the government and RBI need to move fast to end the long-drawn crisis of non-performing assets (NPAs) keeping India's public sector banks in limbo or worse.



British voters just unleashed an economic and political tsunami



Prime Minister David Cameron has quit as prime minister but said he would stay on for three months
It is the first time any of the 28 member states has requested to leave the EU in its 59-year history
The result sent the pound plummeting, US markets down 550 points, Asian markets into turmoil
Scotland, which voted overwhelmingly to stay in, is expected to now demand another independence referendum
London was pro-Remain, but much of North of England, Wales and the Midlands voted to leave the bloc
Ukip leader Nigel Farage hailed a 'victory for real people' and called it Britain's 'Independence Day'

British Prime Minister David Cameron said he would resign as prime minister after Britain voted narrowly to leave the European Union.

Mr Cameron tried to reassure businesses around the world that Britain's economy was fundamentally sound but world markets were thrown into turmoil on Friday after the final vote was announced.

Donald Trump arrived in Scotland on Friday morning and said the British people had 'taken back their country' and added: 'It's a fantastic thing'.

Initial polls had the 'remain' camp winning by a knife-edge. But the final count saw a narrow victory for 'leave' as the nation split 52-48 in favor of becoming the first ever EU member state to request an exit.

The historic result sent the British pound plummeting to a 31-year low, one of its biggest one-day falls in all time, dropping from about \$1.50 to below \$1.35.

US markets were expected to open down 550 points on Friday morning. Trading in Tokyo was halted after stocks plunged nearly 7 per cent, while South Korea's Kospi tumbled about 4 per cent. Crude oil prices also took a hit.

More than \$137 billion was wiped off the FTSE 100 this morning - the biggest fall in UK history - with London's premier index plunging 458 points to 5,880 - down 7.19 per cent - as experts warned of more carnage to come.

The collapse is far greater than Britain suffered after the political crises in 1978, 1992 and 2009.

Bank of England Governor Mark Carney said they were prepared to deal with the market volatility.

Canadian-born Carney said the bank had 'engaged in extensive contingency planning' and he was in close contact with Chancellor of the Exchequer,

George Osborne.

European Parliament President Martin Schulz said the EU assembly would hold an emergency session on Tuesday and Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel said that after 'the blow' of Britain voting to leave, the whole European project

needed a rethink.

EU President Donald Tusk, from Poland, said it was 'a historic moment but for sure not a moment for hysterical reactions'.

Tusk, who had earlier warned

that Brexit could 'end Western political civilization', said on Friday: 'Today on behalf of the 27 leaders, I can say that we are determined to keep our unity as 27.'





As results poured in, a picture emerged of a sharply divided nation: Strong pro-EU votes in the economic and cultural powerhouse of London and semi-autonomous Scotland were countered by sweeping anti-Establishment sentiment for an exit across the rest of England, from southern seaside towns to rust-belt former industrial powerhouses in the north.

Nigel Farage, leader of the U.K. Independence Party (UKIP), said June 23 should be considered Britain's 'Independence Day'.

But in a remark that could prove controversial after pro-Europe MP Jo Cox was shot dead last week, Mr Farage said the country was separating from the EU 'without a single bullet being fired'.

Mr Cameron, who called the referendum to placate the conservative anti-Europe wing of his party, backed the 'remain' campaign and was left with no option but to resign after the vote.

In an emotional resignation

speech outside the prime minister's official residence, 10 Downing Street, he said: 'I held nothing back. I was absolutely clear about my belief that Britain is stronger, safer and better off inside the EU.'

'I made clear the referendum was about this and this alone – not the future of any single politician including myself.'

'But the British people have made a very clear decision to take a different path and as such I think the country requires fresh leadership to take it in this direction.'

Choking back tears, Mr Cameron said he would not depart immediately and would seek to calm the markets over the coming 'weeks and months'.

But he said a new Prime Minister should be in place for the Conservative Party conference in October.

New York-born Boris Johnson, who led the Brexit campaign, will be the overwhelming favorite to take over.

'I will do everything I can as Prime Minister to steady the ship

over the coming weeks and months but I do not think it would be right for me to try to be the captain that steers our country to its next destination,' he said.

'This is not a decision I have taken lightly but I do believe it is in the national interest to have a period of stability and then the new leadership required.'

'There is no need for a precise timetable today but in my view we should aim to have a new Prime Minister in place by the start of the Conservative Party conference in October.'

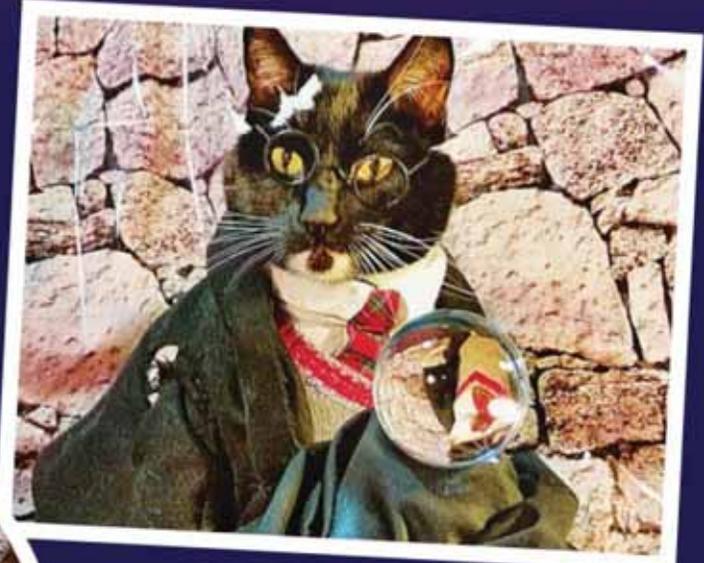
The repercussions of the vote continued with prominent Irish nationalist politician Martin McGuinness demanding a referendum on whether Northern Ireland should stay in the UK or unite with the Republic of Ireland, which remains in the EU.

McGuinness, who is Deputy First Minister in Northern Ireland, said: 'The British government now has no democratic mandate to represent the views of the North in any future negotiations with the European Union and I do believe that there is a democratic imperative for a 'border poll' to be held.'



PHOTOS: CARTEL NEWS

FELINE FASHION



Designer Nathan, who goes by the online name Freyu, has taken cosplay to an extraordinary new level, by creating hilarious handmade outfits for his two trained cat models. Laugh-out-loud pictures capture Nak and Fawkes dressed in many of their 50 outfits, which stretch across movies, TV shows and comics. In an outfit that would make Comic Con goers green with envy, Fawkes, is dressed up as Jon Snow from *GoT*.

Plane lands at South Pole in daring winter medical rescue

(Agencies) WASHINGTON: After flying through dangerous dark and cold, a rescue plane landed on Tuesday at the South Pole to evacuate a sick worker from a remote US science station, federal officials said.

The plane arrived at the South Pole after a daring 1,500-mile, nine-hour trip from a British base on the Antarctic peninsula, according to the National Science Foundation, which runs the polar outpost.

The plane's crew — a pilot, co-pilot, flight engineer and medical worker — will rest and wait for at least 10 hours. Then if weather conditions are favourable, the plane will refuel and return to Rothera, said agency spokesman Peter West. After that the sick worker will be taken out of

Antarctica for treatment.

"It went all according to plan," West said from Arlington, Virginia.

A second worker is also ill, but officials have yet to decide whether that patient will also fly out, West said. The science foundation will not identify the workers, who are employees of Lockheed Martin which handles logistics at the station, nor their medical conditions.

There have been three emergency evacuations from the Amundsen-Scott station since 1999. Workers at the South Pole station are isolated from February through October, the coldest and darkest months when it's too risky for routine flights.

The latest mission is pushing the limits of what is acceptable, said Tim

Stockings, operations director at the British Antarctic Survey in London. He said being prepared is key.

"The air and Antarctica are unforgiving environments and punishes any slackness very hard," Stockings said. "If you are complacent it will bite you." "Things can change very quickly down there" with ice from clouds, high winds and snow, he said.

The first day of winter in the Southern Hemisphere was on Monday — the sun will not rise at the South Pole till the first day of spring in September. A South Pole webcam showed the station in the distance during the landing. There was some light because of the full moon and the ability of the camera to operate on low light, West said.

Intruder Alert. Oz Woman Finds 16-Foot Python in Her House

(Agencies) An Australian woman had an uncomfortably close encounter with a 16-foot python that she found stretched out from her living room to her guest bedroom - it looks as frightening as it sounds. Tina Hibberd from Queensland, which is partly covered in rainforest, found that the massive reptile had slithered in uninvited on June 19 at 4.30 am. She called the snake removal services for help and then took a picture of the 30 kg python that had made itself at home.

Ms Hibberd also made a video of the snake, whom she named Monty, wrapped along the hallway to her bedroom.



Neither Office, Nor Profit

Previous judicial pronouncements suggest AAP MLAs may be on a safe wicket



(Agencies) The concept of "office of profit" (OoP), aimed at safeguarding the independence of the legislature by insulating its members from the influence of the executive, hit the headlines once again on account of a petition seeking the disqualification of 21 Aam Aadmi Party MLAs in Delhi

In the absence of any definition, our understanding of what an OoP is depends on past judicial pronouncements. Accordingly, there are two indispensable ingredients of an OoP: One, there should be an office and two, the office should carry some profit. The benchmark definition of an office, quoted in Kanta Kathuria vs Manak Chand Surana, reads: An "office has an existence independent from the persons who filled it, which went on and was filled in succession by successive holders".

In U.C.Raman vs P.T.A.Rahim and Ors, the Supreme Court categorically stated thus: "The word 'profit' has always been treated equivalent to or a substitute for the term 'pecuniary gain'". The principle that an "office" should have "receivables" attached to it for it to qualify as an OoP, has been upheld in other cases as well.

Tested against these established principles, prima facie, the 21 MLAs are on a safe wicket. It is not difficult to decipher that the position they are appointed to doesn't exist independent of them and hence cannot be treated as an "office" per se. The order appointing them does not provide for any "receivables", profit or pecuniary

benefit.

Those who concluded that the 21 MLAs under the scanner do not pass muster should not forget the fact that they already have protection by way of The Delhi Members of Legislative Assembly (Removal of Disqualification) Act, 1997, as amended in 2006. The said act grants immunity to the office of parliamentary secretary (PS) to the chief minister. The argument that the 21 MLAs are designated as PSs to ministers and not to the chief minister and hence are not protected under existing law is unlikely to be sustained judicially since the "first among equals" is a minister first.

This understanding leads to a logical question: Why was the law amended by the Delhi assembly in June, 2015 if the MLAs are secure even otherwise? Going by the surrounding high-decibel noise and energy sapping quasi-judicial proceedings that are on before the Election Commission of India (ECI), perhaps, the government of Delhi correctly apprehended harassment and went for what was considered to be an unambiguous shield.

Then why did the Union government recommend withholding of the presidential assent to the amendment that was cleared an year ago? With no official word spelt out as yet, the media "sourced" two broad reasons. One, the perceived breach of a law that restricts the

number of ministerial berths in Delhi to 10 per cent of the total membership of legislature and two, the unacceptable provision of retrospective effect to the law. It is not going to be a pleasant task to defend these reasons.

Delhi witnessed the so-called "breach of 10 per cent law" almost continuously since the legislative assembly was revived in the early 1990s. The scenario is no different in many other states. Such attempts to usurp a federal right guaranteed under the Constitution through legal opinions are bound to be construed as preposterous, if challenged. With a similar law enacted by the Parliament, with retrospective effect in 2006, having been found to be sound by the Supreme Court in the Consumer Education & Research vs Union Of India & Ors, the second reason too may not find any judicial backing.

The current cacophony calls for correctives, though. When the Supreme Court precluded the need for a preliminary inquiry before referring to any complaint under Articles 103 and 192 to the head of the state, the political waters were not so very turbulent.

To remove possible misgivings about the adjudication procedures, the ECI deserves to have the benefit of rules framed specially to deal with matters referred to it under Articles 103 and 192.

Jaitley snubs Subramanian Swamy, backs his top economic aide



(Agencies) The government on Wednesday expressed "full confidence" in chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian, in an apparent snub to BJP MP Subramanian Swamy whose recent criticisms of top policymakers have led many to question the acceptable limits of public discourse in India.

Finance minister Arun Jaitley came to his top adviser's defence after Swamy accused him of encouraging the opposition Congress to "become rigid" on the proposed Goods and Services Tax (GST), and acting against India's interest during his time in the United States.

Swamy's earlier diatribe had been directed at central bank governor Raghuram Rajan, and many saw that criticism as contributing to his decision not to seek a second term after September.

Jaitley's comments on Wednesday were the strongest yet against Swamy that not only backed the two top policymakers but also asked politicians to desist from personal attacks targeting officials.

"The government has full confidence in the chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian and his advice to the government from time to time has been of great value," Jaitley said at a press conference in New Delhi.

"I would also add one more fact from the point of view of discipline of Indian politicians. To what extent should we attack those the discipline and constraints of whose offices prevent them from responding? And this has happened more than once."

Swamy had accused Rajan of wrecking the economy, alleging he was "mentally not fully Indian" since he held a US green card. Both Rajan and Subramanian have worked at the International Monetary Fund. While Rajan was appointed by the previous UPA government, Subramanian was brought in by the NDA government in October 2014.

Jaitley rejected suggestions that the government had not spoken out for Rajan when Swamy had targeted him, asserting that he as well as BJP president Amit Shah had spoken on the matter.



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Pakistani internet sensation Qandeel Baloch in new row over selfie



(Agencies) Pakistani internet sensation Qandeel Baloch was at the centre of a fresh row on Wednesday after an influential cleric's membership of a top religious body was suspended for posing for selfies with her. Baloch took social media by storm when she posted three selfies of herself with Mufti Abdul Qavi on her Facebook page. One of the images showed Qandeel playfully posing with the Mufti signature hat on her head, while he was seen holding a cell phone to his ear. Another picture showed Qandeel posing with Qavi sitting next to her. After the images were widely shared on social media, the religious affairs ministry suspended Qavi's membership of the Ruet-e-Hilal Committee, a key panel of clerics. Talking to the media, Baloch said Qavi had invited her to meet him in a hotel for 'iftar'. She said Qavi had been persuading her to meet him for quite some time and that the cleric had publicly professed his liking for her. The Mufti said, 'I want to see you before the Eid moon,' said Baloch, who also claimed the scholar had "proposed" to her during the meeting. In response, Qavi said it was Baloch who had requested the meeting. He said Baloch had promised to fast during the entire holy month of Ramzan. She also said she wanted to meet cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan.

Pakistani qawwali singer Amjad Sabri shot dead in Karachi



(Agencies) Renowned qawwali Amjad Sabri was shot dead on a busy street in Karachi on Wednesday as he was on his way to perform at an iftar in Pakistan's financial hub.

Two unidentified gunmen shot at the windscreen of Amjad's car as it drove off a bridge in Liaquatabad Market area. The 45-year-old was hit by three bullets.

Amjad was the scion of the great Sabri Brothers, known for their qawwali singing around the world. His killing was widely condemned across the country.

"Two attackers riding a motorcycle intercepted his car and targeted Amjad Sabri, who was driving," Sindh police chief Allah Dino Khawaja told reporters

soon after the incident.

Amjad was rushed to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, where he was pronounced dead on arrival. "Amjad Sabri expired on the way to the hospital. He was shot three times," police surgeon Rohina Hasan said.

The Sabri family rose to fame in the 1970s, when the dynamic duo of Ghulam Farid Sabri and Maqbool Ahmed Sabri redefined the old genre of qawwali singing. Amjad took over the reins from his father Ghulam Farid and uncle Maqbool and took the family name forward, carving a more popular and less niche identity for himself and his family. Some of the most famous works of the Sabri Brothers include "Tajdar-e-Haram" and "Bhar Do Jholi",

both of which were performed by Amjad for modern audiences.

But Amjad was embroiled in a controversy in 2014, when he was asked by a court to respond to blasphemy charges following the airing on television of a controversial song-and-dance routine set to a qawwali about the wedding of the Prophet Mohammed's daughter to his cousin. Police officials said it is too soon to ascertain why Amjad was killed. While other public figures, most notably Punjab Governor Salmaan Taseer, were killed for allegedly committing blasphemy, police said this may possibly not be the reason for Amjad's murder. No group claimed responsibility for the killing.

Hindus in Pakistan protest sale of Om-inscribed shoes

(Agencies) Hindus in Pakistan's Sindh province are protesting the sale of shoes inscribed with sacred religious symbol 'Om' and described the actions of shopkeepers selling them as "unfortunate" and "blasphemous". The patron-in-chief of the Pakistan Hindu Council (PHC), Ramesh Kumar Vankwani, said that they have lodged protests with the Sindh government and local authorities in Tando Adam Khan after the sale of such shoes was brought to the notice of his community. "Since the last three years on the occasion of Muslim Eid festival, some shopkeepers in Tando Adam are offering shoes on which Hindu religious holy name 'Om' is displayed. Its purpose is just to insult the sentiments of local Hindus,"

Vankwani said on Sunday. He added the sale of such shoes was an insult to the Hindus in Pakistan as it is blasphemous to use the sacred word 'Om' on shoes. "The pictures of these shoes have been circulated on the social media by concerned members of the Hindu community and we demand they be removed from the shops immediately," Vankwani said. Pakistan Hindu Seva, a group working for religious harmony in Pakistan, alleged that Zeb Shoes, owned by Farman Ahmed in Tando Adam, is selling the sandals and must be barred from doing so as it is "hurting the sentiments" of the community and "spreading hatred". It also urged the locals of Tando Adam to address the issue by remaining "within the jurisdiction of



law to avoid any violence". "As 'Om' is the sacred religious symbol of Hinduism which talks about the oneness of God, let's protect this oneness peacefully for the progressive and positive face of Pakistan. Let's appeal the authorities concerned to take notice of the matter immediately to override any expected mistrust within the locals," a statement released by the group said.

France supports India's bid ahead of NSG meet as China plays hardball

(Agencies) A day ahead of a crucial meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), China on Wednesday changed tack on India's entry into the elite club, saying only applications of countries that signed an atomic non-proliferation pact will be considered.

This is seen as a hardening of stand after Beijing had said on Tuesday there was still "room for discussion" on countries such as India.

Neither India nor Pakistan, which also wants to get into the club of countries controlling trade

in sensitive nuclear technology, has signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). Present NSG rules allow only NPT signatories to apply for membership. "Deliberation on the entry of specific countries is on the agenda of the Seoul plenary meeting (June 23-24). However, it is worth noting that the meeting is only to deliberate on the entry application of countries that are state parties to the NPT," the Chinese foreign ministry said in a statement.

"As for the entry of non-NPT countries, the group has never

put that on its meeting agenda."

The United States has already put its weight behind India, and on Wednesday France reiterated its support, saying New Delhi's entry will help better regulate nuclear trade.

"In line with its active and long-standing support to India's entry to the NSG as a full-fledged member, France calls on its members... to take a positive decision," the French foreign ministry said in a statement.

Meanwhile, foreign secretary S Jaishankar flew to Seoul on Wednesday to shore up New

Delhi's efforts to join the NSG despite the stonewalling by China, which has pushed for India's application to be considered along with that of Pakistan. NSG members held three rounds of unofficial discussions on the entry of India and Pakistan into the group, the Chinese statement said. "Although parties are yet to see eye to eye on this issue, such discussions help them better understand each other. China hopes to further discuss this issue and will play a constructive role in the discussions," it

added. A senior Western diplomatic source noted there had been an "evolution" in China's stance even in the past 24 hours.

Diplomatic sources said India will have scored a victory even if it manages to get its application on the agenda so that the matter is open for discussion by the NSG at a subsequent stage.

The sources pointed out that when New Delhi got a waiver from the NSG's rules in 2008, following the India-US civil nuclear deal, this was based on the country's commitments and track record on non-proliferation.

Coimbatore couple dupes more than 90 people of Rs 1.80 cr in real estate fraud, arrested

(Agencies) Coimbatore: The economics offences department of Coimbatore city police has registered a case against a couple who was involved in a real estate fraud and cheated more than 90 people to the tune of Rs 1.80 crore.

Residents had petitioned the department officials last June stating that a couple, posing as real estate agents, promised them plots at cheap rates.

"The couple said that they had started a company named 'Kovai Land Bankers' and they were selling plots at 5.5 lakh each. We had to pay them Rs 1 lakh while the rest of the amount would be arranged through loan," said one of the residents.

People who had paid the deposit became worried when the plot was not handed over to them. When they



visited the office located at Ramanathapuram near Carmel Garden school, they found that it was shut. So they decided to lodge a complaint. C Chandraseelan, who is investigating the case, said they had got a tip off that the couple was staying at a lodge in Gandhi Puram. They reached the spot and arrested them. The duo have been identified as Muthu Kumar, 29, from Trichy and Sindhu, 37, from Chennai. They had

worked together at Starland, a firm in Coimbatore. They started this business, posing as brokers. They would tell approach sellers, offering their help to sell their plots. They would pose as developers of these same plots, and sell them off. They collected Rs 1 lakh from each buyer and have cheated more than 90 people in a similar manner. The sites shown were located in Tharal avenue, Thendral avenue and Thaalayur avenue. They advertised in local news channels, distributed pamphlets, displayed advertisement boards and also issued advertisements in leading dailies," said Chandraseelan. So people believed them. "Both of them have been arrested and remanded to judicial custody. They have been lodged in Coimbatore central prison," said the investigating officer.

Loose cannon puts BJP in a tough spot

(Agencies) NEW DELHI: The ruling BJP is in a fix over how to deal with Subramanian Swamy as he trained his guns on CEA Arvind Subramanian on Wednesday even though the government as well as the party came to the defence of the economist, saying they did not agree with Swamy's opinion and that it was his personal view.

The party was categorical in refuting Swamy, saying that it does not agree with its Rajya Sabha MP's criticism of the CEA and termed it as "completely his personal opinion", while finance minister Arun Jaitley expressed his confidence in the CEA and said that "his advise is of great value" to the government.

"The party does not agree with his (Swamy's) views. This is completely his personal opinion," BJP secretary Srikant Sharma said at a press conference in New Delhi after the Rajya Sabha MP demanded that the CEA be sacked. Speaking on the controversy, Union urban development minister M Venkaiah Naidu said it is an individual's view and not that of the party. "Party has not said anything. Government has not said anything... the question is that you cannot gag everybody in democracy. If party says anything then I can react, if government says anything then I can react on that," he said.

Madhya Pradesh CM's onion plan turns Rs 100-crore tear-jerker

(Agencies) Bhopal: Lakhs of quintals of onion procured by the Madhya Pradesh government following a hurried announcement by the chief minister to buy the vegetable at Rs 6/kg are likely to rot and trigger a revenue loss of around Rs 100 crore. The knee-jerk announcement followed a sudden

agrarian distress over an onion glut in the state. And while the government grapples with inadequate storage facilities to stash mountains of onion, citizens are being forced to buy the vegetable at Rs 15-20 in the open market. With the monsoon onslaught expediting

onion decay, the government has now invited tenders for large-scale sale. While only half the expected quantity has been procured, at least 1.5 lakh tonnes are being kept in the open due to lack of storage infrastructure even as farmers are still queuing up at all 64 procurement centres

For over 600 NRIs, realty dream turns sour

(Agencies) GURGAON: Virendra Jain, an NRI businessman based in the US, was in India in 2010 for his daughter's wedding when he came across a newspaper advertisement about a real estate project promising assured returns.

Upbeat about the growing Indian economy, Jain invested Rs 60 lakh in commercial real estate project Spire Edge of AN Buildwell in Manesar hoping to get fixed rental income and return to India.

But his dream of returning to his motherland with guaranteed fixed income has been dashed in a long-drawn legal battle with the developer. He curses his decision to invest in real estate in India and is now forced to make several unscheduled trips to this country to pursue his legal fight against the developer.

"I will now think several times before finally returning to India and make any investment in this country," said Jain. Jain is not alone. There are over 600 NRI investors who are struggling to get their property several years after investment in the Spire Edge commercial project that was launched in 2008.

"We never thought that some



people could cheat us in a place like Manesar, barely 50 km from the national capital, and no action will be taken against the accused," said Pradeep Sharma, another NRI investor based in Singapore, who had invested Rs 55 lakh to purchase commercial space in the project.

He claimed that his complaints to the Prime Minister's Office, Haryana Chief Minister's Office went unheard. "Prime Minister Modi urges NRIs to invest in India, but with a situation like this, where investment is not safe, no one will invest in India," he said. Jain alleged that the developer had lured NRI investors with aggressive marketing with the promise of assured returns. "I have come across 40 people in the US alone, who have invested in Spire Edge," he said.

Beware of Immigration Fraud

Only licensed attorneys and individuals accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals are authorized to provide immigration legal advice. Find a trusted and reliable licensed attorney or organization by calling the **New York State Office of New Americans hotline 1-800-566-7636**. **Bad immigration advice can have very serious negative consequences and cause permanent damage to your current or future immigration case.**

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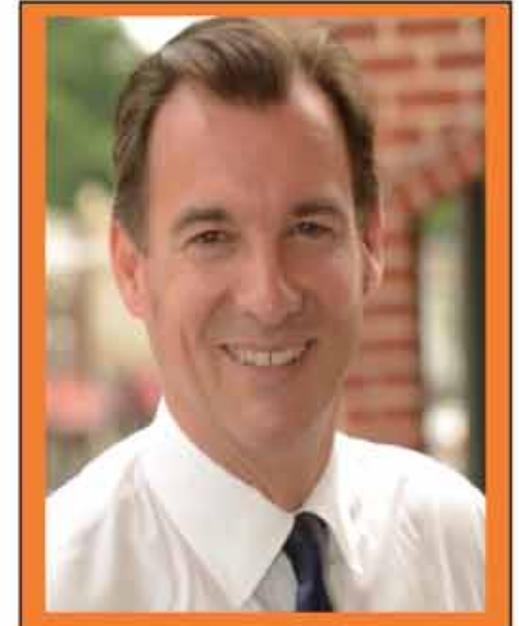
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Corruption Charges Against Kejriwal Are BJP's Answer To Punjab

This is not the first attempt of the Modi government to try and tarnish the image of the AAP government. In the month of December 2015, the CBI raided the office of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Till date, no evidence of any wrong doing has been found by the CBI. In fact, the court is very angry with the CBI. The special judge has observed, "CBI has been unable to show, till date, even prima facie that the frozen accounts have any direct links with the commission of alleged crime...There appears to be no

compliance of section 102(3) CrPc by CBI in present case." The court was so peeved with the conduct of the CBI that it even threatened to move a contempt proceeding against them. The special judge was mysteriously transferred later.

In the last few weeks, the timing has been cleverly selected and the happenings beautifully choreographed. It was done in the context of Punjab and Goa elections that are to take place in the beginning of 2017, where AAP has decided to contest. In Punjab, the

Huffington Post in a survey has predicted that AAP can get 94 to 100 seats out of 117. This is a huge number. Another survey has also said that AAP can get more than 85 seats. Similarly, in Goa, after Arvind Kejriwal's rally on May 22, AAP is the talk of the town and has emerged as a very strong alternative to the BJP. It is a warning signal to the established political parties, especially to the BJP and Mr Modi. In Delhi, AAP replaced BJP, rather wiped out the BJP. The BJP which had 32 seats in 2013 was reduced to 3 in the 2015 elections. In Punjab, the BJP is a partner in the Akali government and in Goa, it is heading a corrupt and unpopular government. If AAP replaces BJP as it did in Delhi, then the message will be loud and clear. The 2014 parliamentary elections showcased and confirmed by several state elections that Indian polity

is moving towards a presidential form of electioneering. The BJP got 282 seats at a pan-India level and 73 seats out of 80 seats in UP. This was a vote for Modi, not for the BJP. There are other examples too in History. In 1989, V P Singh emerged from nowhere and became the Prime Minister. He vanquished the most powerful Prime Minister this country has ever seen. Rajiv Gandhi had 405 MPs in 1984. Modi is a very shrewd politician. He wants to nip in the bud any such possibility.

If AAP wins Punjab and Goa with a massive majority like it did in Delhi, then AAP will emerge as a very strong force in other states too. It is already getting very good response in Gujarat, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. The victory in Punjab and Goa can break the myth that AAP is a one-state wonder and its victory in Delhi a fluke.

These victories will herald the beginning of a new-age politics and can severely damage Modi's chances for a second term in 2019. Modi knows that AAP's USP is clean politics and honest administration. The people of India are sick and tired of corruption and corrupt politicians. Modi knows this and that is why he has always projected himself as a non-corrupt person. But he can't claim the same about his colleagues and his governance. In fact, corruption has increased. Corrupt corporate houses and politicians are flourishing. Misuse of investigating agencies is rampant. And in this context, Arvind's image and AAP's reputation as a clean party can prove to be his nemesis. So, the attempt is being made to tell the whole world that Arvind and AAP are no different, they are the same as others.

2017 UP Assembly election

When he changes his party, he finds patrons in all the parties. In the 2009 Lok Sabha elections, his contest against BJP stalwart Murli Manohar Joshi was seen as a fixed match, meticulously planned to trigger communal polarisation. In fact, the contest helped Joshi to win the election on the basis of communal consolidation, though he initially faced stiff resistance from within the BJP's local organisation.

With the 2017 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections drawing near, Samajwadi Party chief Mulayam Singh Yadav appears determined to capitalise on the muscle power of Ansari brothers in eastern UP – with the merger of Mukhtar Ansari's Quami Ekta Dal (QED) with the Samajwadi Party (SP).

Apparently, in a region that borders with Bihar, power flows through the barrel of guns and deft equations of castes and community. And there are all indications that suggest that Mulayam Singh Yadav is desperately trying to harness a judicious mix of guns and caste/community consolidation to win the state Assembly election.

In the social calculus of eastern UP, Yadavs and Muslims form a sizeable social block of nearly 30 percent of the electorate. The SP's eagerness to rope in the Ansari brothers is solely guided by its lust for accretion of votes.

There is a lurking fear in the entire region that the SP have lost its Muslim votes on account of a series of small riots in the area, and because of the state government's image of being a 'non-performer'. It seems that the deficit in governance is sought to be bridged by inducting Muslim gangsters into the party's fold.

The return of Ansari brothers into mainstream UP politics would define a political trend in Uttar Pradesh. It seems that all political

parties have been vying with each other to win over the gangsters, who claim to have a strong caste or communal social base.

Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav's expression of 'righteous indignation' is meant to appease to the urban middle class, his support base in the 2012 Assembly elections. Within hours of the QED-SP merger, Akhilesh removed senior minister Balram Yadav, the one believed to have negotiated the merger.

In sharp contrast to his father, Akhilesh has carefully cultivated his image as a 'suave young leader', who is not associated with people with a rap sheet – in a party often accused of unleashing "goondaraj", every time it comes to power in UP. Remember the manner in which he threw out notorious western UP gangster DP Yadav from the party, on the eve of the 2012 Assembly elections.

In his four-and-a-half year regime as chief minister, Akhilesh has frittered away substantial amounts of his goodwill with the urban middle class. He is seen to be at helm of the country's largest state, without any clear sense of direction.

This is the precise reason why party president Mulayam Singh Yadav has resorted to his methodology of mobilising support on caste/communal lines. Ironically, Ghazipur and neighbouring Azamgarh – known as communist bastions in the not too distant past – would turn into a battle-field of gangsters, irrespective of their affiliation with political parties. Like Sarjoo Pandey in the nineties, senior leaders cutting across the party lines would describe their criminals as revolutionaries. Ghazipur is once again weaving a powerful socio-political narrative for the Hindi heartland, with a difference.

Supreme Court Tie Blocks Obama Immigration Plan

refusal to consider Judge Merrick B. Garland, the president's nominee to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court created by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. "If you keep on blocking judges from getting on the bench, then courts can't issue decisions," Mr. Obama said. "And what that means is then you are going to have the status quo frozen, and we are not able to make progress on some very important issues."

The case, United States v. Texas, No. 15-674, concerned a 2014 executive action by the president to allow as many as five million unauthorized immigrants who were the parents of citizens or of lawful permanent residents to apply for a program that would spare them from deportation and provide them with work permits. The program was called Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Residents, or DAPA.

Mr. Obama has said he took the action after years of frustration with Republicans in Congress who had repeatedly refused to support bipartisan Senate legislation to update immigration laws. A coalition of 26 states, led by Texas, promptly challenged the plan, accusing the president of ignoring administrative procedures for changing rules and of abusing the power of his office by circumventing

Congress.

"Today's decision keeps in place what we have maintained from the very start: One person, even a president, cannot unilaterally change the law," Ken Paxton, the Texas attorney general, said in a statement after the ruling. "This is a major setback to President Obama's attempts to expand executive power, and a victory for those who believe in the separation of powers and the rule of law." The court did not disclose how the justices had voted, but they were almost certainly split along ideological lines. Administration officials had hoped that Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. would join the court's four-member liberal wing to save the program.

The case hinged in part on whether Texas had suffered the sort of direct and concrete injury that gave it standing to sue. Texas said it had standing because it would be costly for the state to give driver's licenses to immigrants affected by the federal policy.

Chief Justice Roberts is often skeptical of expansive standing arguments. But it seemed plain when the case was argued in April that he was satisfied that Texas had standing, paving the way for a deadlock.

Mr. Obama said the White House did not believe the terse ruling from the court had any effect on the president's authority

to act unilaterally. But he said the practical effect would be to freeze his efforts on behalf of immigrants until after the November election. He also predicted that lawmakers would eventually act to overhaul the nation's immigration system.

"Congress is not going to be able to ignore America forever," he said. "It's not a matter of if; it's a matter of when. We get these spasms of politics around immigration and fear-mongering, and then our traditions and our history and our better impulses kick in."

White House officials had repeatedly argued that presidents in both parties had used similar executive authority in applying the nation's immigration laws. And they said Congress had granted federal law enforcement wide discretion over how those laws should be carried out. But the court's ruling may mean that the next president will again need to seek a congressional compromise to overhaul the nation's immigration laws. And it left immigration activists deeply disappointed. "This is personal," Rocio Saenz, the executive vice president of the Service Employees International Union, said in a statement. "We will remain at the front lines, committed to defending the immigration initiatives and paving the path to lasting immigration reform."

British voters just unleashed an economic and political tsunami

Look for lots of soothing statements Friday morning from the Bank of England and the European Central Bank, as well as heads of state, as leaders try to calm the financial markets and limit the damage from the vote.

But make no mistake: A Brexit represents nothing less than the partial splintering of the world's largest political union and trading bloc — an \$18 trillion economy. Many fear that other European countries will now hold their own exit referendums, leading to a chain reaction that will reverberate across the Atlantic. The Brexit vote could also break apart the UK, scramble transatlantic political unity amid growing tensions with Russia, and complicate U.S. trade ties.

It could even hit the U.S. economy, warned Harvard professor and former Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers.

"The economy is more fragile to a negative shock than at anytime since the second World War," Summers told POLITICO. "Always before when had a downturn there was room for monetary policy action to counteract that. Today there is essentially no such room."

In addition to volatility hitting U.S. markets, the surprise win for the Leave side is likely to ripple through the 2016 presidential campaign. The Brexit vote became largely a referendum on elites and immigration, the same themes likely Republican nominee Donald Trump has put at the center of his bid for the White House. Trump, who spoke favorably of Brexit, is likely to seize on the results as vindication — but it could also highlight concerns that a glib reality TV star might not be ready to handle the demands of the Oval Office.

The result could also suggest that polls showing a lead for presumptive Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton are underestimating the extent to which voters across Western democracies are fed up with career politicians and concerned about Islamic terrorism and immigration. UK polls and online betting markets heading into the Brexit vote appeared to show a small but solid lead for Remain, similar to the leads Clinton holds in most U.S. surveys.

The larger issue for the Clinton campaign will be potential economic fallout from the UK's decision to leave the EU. Indeed, if the economic predictions leading up to Thursday's vote turn out to be accurate, get ready for a Brexit-fueled economic slowdown that could bleed into the presidential race.

The U.S. economy grew just 0.8 percent in the first three months of 2016, and even President Obama acknowledges frustration with the pace of recovery, even as he embarks on a legacy-polishing campaign to change the narrative around his economic stewardship.

Clinton — who has at times distanced herself from her former boss's economic record — is counting on the economy improving the rest of the year to help her hold the White House for Democrats for another term. And the U.S. Federal Reserve is largely out of ammunition to try and fight a fresh downturn.

A new recession, if it happens, could hand Trump a political gift — allowing him to bash Obama and by extension Clinton for driving the U.S. economy into a ditch. Never mind that Obama lobbied against a Brexit, and Trump recently said he "would personally be more inclined to leave, for a lot of reasons like having a lot less bureaucracy."

But bad economic news could just as easily expose Trump's

lack of fluency with financial markets, reinforcing Clinton's recent attacks on him as unfit to have his finger on America's economic button.

The success of the "Leave" campaign represents a major failure for Prime Minister David Cameron, who first called the referendum to satisfy anti-EU forces within his party and then tried unsuccessfully to persuade voters to stay in the EU. Conservative Party leaders — including those who opposed his efforts to keep Britain in the EU — have asked him to stay on as leader for the time being, but his days are numbered.

The vote will now trigger a two-year disentangling process where London and Brussels will negotiate the terms of a messy divorce. For U.S. companies that use the UK as a launching pad into Europe, the coming months will bring hard choices about whether to stay or go. While the U.K. will negotiate some sort of new trading arrangement with the European Union, the "Leave" vote almost certainly means that British

access to the European single market will be severed — a huge problem for U.S. companies in England that serve the European market.

With the United Kingdom on the way out of the European Union, negotiations over a giant U.S.-EU trade accord known as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) — already foundering — may be dead.

Regardless, Obama, and his successor, will face a difficult choice: Do they carry through on Obama's warning in April that a Brexit would put the United Kingdom "at the back of the queue" for a new U.S. trade deal? Or do they cut a deal with the United Kingdom, as some Republicans have suggested in recent days?

Obama traveled to London in April at Cameron's request to urge the Brits to vote "Remain" and argued that Britain is more influential inside the EU, and a more valuable partner for the United States. Now, administration officials and congressional

leaders will be forced to reconsider, again, whether the U.S.-UK special relationship is as important as it once was.

Indeed, while U.K. "Leave" leaders like Nigel Farage were proclaiming Britain's "Independence day" by early Friday, Richard Haas, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, tweeted: "If #Brexit happens, June 23 will not be remembered as Britain's Independence Day but as the beginning of the end of the U.K."

Moreover, Britain's decision to leave weakens Europe as a whole at a time when Russian President Vladimir Putin, eager to get his country out from under Western sanctions, is trying to poke holes in the European Union and weaken transatlantic unity. Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) said earlier this week that he can understand British concerns about over-regulation from Brussels. "But," he told POLITICO, "I think Putin is licking his chops at the breakup of the European Union."

But The Bus Is Packed!

To begin with, there are deep divisions between party leaders and their voters. Even more paradoxical is that the main worry for Asian voters, considered key to the way the vote goes, is immigration: immigrants themselves, they are concerned about East European immigrants competing for jobs their children now have. Every day, at community centres and shopping areas in London's Asian enclaves of Hounslow, Southall, Ealing, Heston and Harrow, first-generation immigrants gather in groups to share family news, gossip, parathas and discuss the rising cost of housing and the latest deals on consumer items.

I approach one group at the Treaty Centre in Hounslow, a popular shopping centre, and start a conversation about the referendum. They clearly seem confused about the issues, but express anger at the way East Europeans, mainly from Poland, have swarmed in and been given council housing and benefits. They complain that rather than spend locally what they earn or get from the generous dole, the East Europeans send it back to families in Europe. Some MPs, too, have openly asked why a Bulgarian taxi-driver should be allowed to claim benefits for children living in another country.

Jessie (Jaswinder) Singh, a retired bus driver, speaks for

fellow pensioners when he says, "We sacrificed a lot and worked hard when we came here just to give our kids a good education. They speak the language, are fully integrated, have good jobs. But they are unable to compete with white-skinned immigrants from Europe who don't speak the language but are willing to work for lower wages!" The other big worry, expressed by leaders like Priti Patel, is that faceless European bureaucrats in Brussels will have a greater say in British policies impacting communities and traditions. Priti Patel and other 'Leave' campaigners also harp on the fact that laws are being tweaked to prevent skilled Asians—IT workers, skilled professionals, chefs—from coming to Britain. There's some scare-mongering too, with extreme scenarios being aired: the pound will be replaced by the euro; cars will have to be driven on the right-hand side of the road.

'Leave' campaigners recently marshalled 80 business and community leaders of Commonwealth background to write to Cameron: "Whilst EU citizens enjoy freedom of movement and no restrictions on their stay in the UK, those coming to the UK from outside of the EU face greater restrictions.... Families

of second- or third-generation immigrants from the Indian sub-continent ask, 'Why do we have to jump so many hurdles just to bring in relatives for a wedding?'" They point to difficulties in bringing in priests for their temples and gurudwaras. Samir Thukral, who owns a popular Indian restaurant in Knightsbridge, points to the problems he has in getting chefs from India owing to EU restrictions and says he may have to shut shop.

Despite contrasting arguments, most Brits of Indian origin are expected to vote against Brexit. According to the British Election Survey, 51.7 per cent of Indian-origin voters will vote for the official 'In' campaign, though the gap is narrowing daily as the campaign heats up. Immigration was the issue most likely to affect how the British, and not just Asians, will vote. Forty-nine per cent said it would influence their decision, while among 'Out' supporters, it is the primary issue for 72 per cent. Even among white-collar workers, immigration is the scare factor, with visions of thousands of Europeans coming to a comparatively prosperous Britain and taking jobs and availing of public services and benefits.

In Asian-dominated enclaves, the fear of an immigrant invasion from the EU is palpable. Patel

recently argued on a BBC programme that second-generation immigrants will bear the brunt of new migration as they tend to live in the same areas and compete for the same low-skilled jobs and housing. However, from my conversations with a cross-section of people in Hounslow and Ealing, it is clear that a large section of the British-Indian community is still unsure about which way to vote. In a recent poll of British Indians, nearly 17 per cent of respondents said that they "don't know", with experts saying that their decision could shift the outcome of the referendum. The new data indicates that ethnic minority voters could hold the balance of power, with white voters evenly divided.

At a dinner in a friend's house in upper class Kensington, I ask Dev Patel (not the actor, but a financial analyst with Barclays) what his views are. He sees the irony of being born in an immigrant family and now wanting to pull up the drawbridge on others, but justifies himself, saying, "I have skills that mean I have earned the right to live here and contribute to the economy. I strongly oppose people coming in who neither have roots here nor even the expertise I have, but will be able to compete with me because of some quota system drawn up in Brussels."

'Kolkata least expensive for expats, Mumbai most'

(Agencies) Kolkata: Kolkata is India's least expensive city for expatriates while Mumbai continues to be the most expensive, closely followed by New Delhi and Chennai, an annual survey by a leading global HR consultancy has shown. Among the metros, Bengaluru is comparatively easier on the pocket for foreigners though not as cheap as Kolkata. According to Mercer's 2016 Cost of Living Survey, Hong Kong tops the list of most expensive cities for expatriates, pushing Luanda, the capital of Angola, to second position. Zurich and Singapore remain in third and fourth position while Tokyo stands fifth, up six places from last year. At number six, Kinshasa, the capital of Congo, has appeared for the first time in the top 10, moving up from its previous rank of 13. Mumbai (82) is India's most expensive city followed by New Delhi (130) and Chennai (158). On the other hand, Kolkata (194) and Bengaluru (180) are the least expensive among those ranked. Mumbai is ranked higher than even Seattle (83), Frankfurt (88), Canberra (98), Berlin (100) and Istanbul (101). The data helps Mercer derive the cost



of living allowance for expatriates coming into the country. Data is collected each year in March and the rankings are released in May-June. Ruchika Pal, principal India practice leader, global mobility at Mercer said, "Each year we analyse ten categories like goods and services and housing which together impact the cost of living in any city. Since three years, Mumbai has been ranked more expensive than Delhi on five parameters, which includes alcohol and tobacco, personal care items, eating out, eating at home which

includes groceries, poultry and meat, as well as transportation. Petrol is more expensive in Mumbai which fuels the cost of living." Mumbaikars know only too well how difficult it is to buy or rent a home in the city. Mercer's survey confirms that the cost of rentals is 18% more expensive than Delhi. New Delhi and Bangalore have become more expensive over last year and their rankings have gone up. Bengaluru has witnessed the highest jump in ranking owing to a surge in the price of food and personal care items.

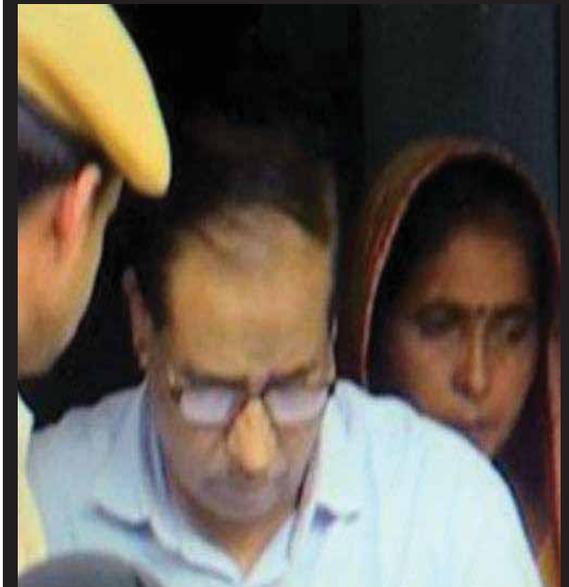
Ex-BSP MLA lives by the roadside, literally

(News Agencies) Garhshankar (Hoshiarpur, Punjab): As pre-monsoon showers hit Garhshankar town in Punjab's Hoshiarpur district, Shingara Ram Shahungra and his family start looking for tarpaulin sheets to cover their belongings lying by the side of the road. As the family settles down under the sheets on iron cots put on wet earth, it is difficult to imagine that Shahungra had been a BSP MLA from Punjab, not one but twice! The family had been living illegally in an irrigation department house for the past few years. The

government finally decided to evict him on Sunday, making him perhaps the only ex-MLA in a rich state like Punjab who never built a fancy house for himself in all these years. "I am looking for a place to rent with my meagre MLA pension of Rs 20,000 a month, but till then I will be living under the skies," he says, even as his wife starts making chapattis on the footpath, her kitchen for the time being. Their two sons help out in the cooking. The family uses the washrooms of one of their neighbours. Interestingly, Shahungra was MLA in

1992 and 1997 from the Garhshankar general category seat while he belongs to the scheduled caste. "I was thrown out of BSP after I sided with Kanshi Ram's family when they were trying to reach him in his last days," Shahungra says. Gandhi Canal executive engineer Vijay Gill said that the department had earlier got a decree for his eviction and then orders from a civil court in 2005. "Our attempts to get the house vacated were foiled but we got it vacated with a magisterial order and police help," he said.

Bihar toppers paid Rs 20 lakh each for results, confesses ex-BSEB chairman



(News Agencies) Patna: Former Bihar School Examination Board (BSEB) chairman Lalkeshwar Prasad Singh confessed to having taken Rs 20 lakh from a cheating racket kingpin to help each unworthy student become a topper, police said on Wednesday. Singh also took Rs 4 lakh for granting affiliation to each shady intermediate college, police said. Singh and his ex-MLA and ex-professor wife Usha Sinha were sent in a three-day police custody on Wednesday. Patna SSP Manu Maharaaj said Singh, during his tenure as BSEB head, granted affiliation to over 100 colleges. Both were arrested from Varanasi on Monday for their alleged involvement in the cheating racket, allegedly headed by now-jailed college principal Bachcha Roy, that helped students top this year's BSEB class XII exam. Roy also paid on the behalf of parents, as government grants to his college in Vaishali district, where many fake toppers wrote their papers, increased, police said. The scam came to light on May 30 when two toppers, Ruby Rai and Saurabh Shreshta, looked clueless during a media interview about the subjects they had excelled in. "Police may include in the FIR the name of Rajiv Kumar Prasad Ranjan, director of Bihar Higher Secondary Education. He was a member of the board which granted affiliation to these colleges," the SSP said.

Police said Singh engaged his son-in-law Vivek Kumar, son of former Magadh University vice-chancellor Arun Kumar, in printing confidential documents of the BSEB. "Police on Wednesday raided Arun Kumar's house in Patna but he was not found there," the SSP said. Sinha was yet to be quizzed, the SSP said. She was on Thursday dropped by the JD (U) and removed from a Patna college where she worked in violation of rules and court orders.

India loses bid to join Nuclear Suppliers Group

Although the Swiss government had assured India of its support when their President met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it raised questions against India's participation.

"China doesn't support Pakistan or India to enter NSG until they follow rules established by members. NSG consensus is in favour of the Non Proliferation Treaty, hope India will join NPT first. The meeting on Thursday was an effort to find consensus on non-NPT state applications, but differences remain," said Wang Qun, Director General (Arms Control Department), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China and their interlocutor in Seoul.

"...Our stand on the NPT is

well known. There is thus no contradiction between the NPT and India's closer engagement with the NSG," said Vikas Swarup, Spokesperson, Ministry of External Affairs.

In 2008, India had obtained a waiver from the NSG to have civil nuclear cooperation with countries bilaterally, despite not being a signatory of the NPT and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The waiver immunises India's nuclear facilities from NSG's control and its ability to conduct commerce on nuclear energy.

Fight against climate change

The government also highlighted that an "early decision" on India's NSG application

"remains in larger global interest" of energy security and combating climate change. In fact, the MEA stressed on the fact that its application has gained momentum in view of the India's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) in the climate change agreement that was signed in Paris.

"An early positive decision by the NSG would have allowed us to move forward on the Paris Agreement. India's NSG membership would advance energy security and make a difference to combating climate change. We are confident that the NSG will recognise these benefits as it deliberates further on this issue," Swarup added.

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After an intense two-year competition, a consortium led by a Spanish company in severe financial distress learned that its rock-bottom bid of \$3.1 billion had won the worldwide competition to build a new set of locks for the historic Panama Canal.

The unlikely victors toasted their win at La Vitrola, a sleek restaurant in an upscale neighborhood east of downtown Panama City. Within days, executives of the four-nation consortium,



authority is a power center unto itself, a government within a government.

The canal authority says that while any large, complex project is bound to encounter unexpected problems, the new locks are sound and safe.

"We can have a difference of opinion over one point or another," said Roberto Roy, the president of the canal's board of directors. "The one thing over which we cannot disagree is that the canal is

The New Panama Canal: A Risky Bet

How a \$3.1 Billion Expansion Collided With Reality

Grupo Unidos por el Canal, flew to Europe to begin planning the project.

This time, there would be no champagne. Disputes quickly erupted over how to divide responsibilities. Some executives appeared not to fully grasp how little money they had to complete a complex project with a tight deadline and a multicultural team whose members did not always see things the same way.

Internal arguments soon gave way to bigger problems. There would be work stoppages, porous concrete, a risk of earthquakes and at least \$3.4 billion in disputed costs: more than the budget for the entire project.

Seven years later, and nearly two years late, the locks have finally been declared ready to accept the new generation of giant ships that carry much of the world's cargo but cannot fit in the original canal. To mark the occasion, Panama has invited 70 heads of state to watch on Sunday as a Chinese container ship becomes the first commercial vessel to attempt the passage from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific through the larger locks.

For more than 100 years, the canal has been a vital artery nourishing the world economy, a testament to American engineering and one of the signature public works of the 20th century. The new locks, built by Panama without help from

other governments, were sold to the nation and the world as a way to ensure that the canal remained as much of a lifeline in the hyperglobalized 21st century as it was in the last.

But when the speeches and the celebrations end, one inescapable fact will remain: The expanded canal's future is cloudy at best, its safety, quality of construction and economic viability in doubt, an investigation by The New York Times has found.

In simple terms, to be successful, the new canal needs enough water, durable concrete and locks big enough to safely accommodate the larger ships. On all three counts, it has failed to meet expectations, according to dozens of interviews with contractors, canal workers, maritime experts and diplomats, as well as a review of public and internal records.

The low winning bid, a billion dollars less than the nearest competitor's, made "a technically complex mega-project" precarious from the outset, according to a confidential analysis commissioned by the consortium's insurer. "There is little room in the budget for execution errors or significant inefficiencies," the analysts, from Hill International, wrote in 2010, adding, "This is a high-risk situation."

Among the biggest risks is the concrete that lines the walls of the six mammoth locks punctuating the path between the seas.

Last summer, water began gushing through concrete that was supposed to last 100

years but could not make it to the first ship. The Hill analysts had warned that the consortium's budget for concrete was 71 percent smaller than that of the next lowest bidder. The budget also allotted roughly 25 percent less for steel to reinforce that concrete.

Then there is the lock design. Tugboat captains say they cannot safely escort the larger ships because the locks are too small with too little margin for error, especially in windy conditions and tricky currents. In fact, in a feasibility study obtained by The Times, the Panama Canal Authority had earlier concluded that the tugs needed significantly more room.

The tugboats themselves are a problem, especially the 14 new boats purchased from a Spanish company, mostly for the expanded locks. To maneuver safely, they must be precisely controlled, but according to captains, they are so unstable that they operate best going backward, something that cannot be done while towing ships through the canal.

"The Spanish tugs are perfectly awful," said Iván de la Guardia, the head of the tugboat captains' union. Confidential documents obtained by The Times show

that the canal authority bought the tugboats for \$158 million from a company later represented by the son of Jorge L. Quijano, the canal's administrator. The new locks exist for one reason: so that huge "neo-

Panamax" ships can move far greater quantities of cargo through the canal. For them to do that, the waterway must remain deep enough so that fully laden ships do not hit bottom. But canal officials discounted warnings that they needed new sources of water, and during a recent drought, shippers had to significantly lighten their loads.

Canal officials had assured the country that no new reservoirs were needed. Later, Mr. Quijano took to scolding Panamanians for using too much tap water, which comes from the same freshwater lake that supplies the canal. The consequences will be wide-ranging if the canal does not deliver as promised. American grain and soybean farmers and producers of liquefied natural gas, for example, may find it harder to sell to Asian customers.

Asian manufacturers may forsake the struggling ports on America's East Coast for those in the West. Or they, and ultimately consumers, will shoulder the added cost of going the long way around, through the Suez Canal.

At the same time, the canal's success may be undercut by external forces: chiefly the slowdown in global trade, especially from China.

At the center of the story is the Panama Canal Authority, which oversaw the design of the new locks and chose the winning bidder. In a small country dominated by an old-money elite, where the very lifeblood is the canal, the

a project that will bring an enormous amount of benefits to the public."

Mr. Quijano said that in tests this week, canal workers were "performing the lockages with a high grade of precision and have maintained the highest standards of safety." He added: "This is one of Panama's finest hours. The country is elated."

The consortium's chief executive, Giuseppe Quarta, said tests had proved the group's "technical ability in delivering a high-quality, fully functioning project."

A trouble-free canal would cast a favorable light on a country embarrassed by government scandal and by the Panama Papers, which brought a local law firm international ignominy for setting up secret offshore accounts for wealthy customers from around the world.

Even residents who privately criticize canal management are reluctant to speak up for fear of appearing unpatriotic.

Eldon Gath, a geologist based in the United States, discovered quickly just how sensitive some

Panamanians are about the canal. After Mr. Gath prepared a report for the canal authority noting the earthquake risk from faults under the canal, he recalled, Panama's president at the time, Ricardo Martinelli, went on the attack.

"President Martinelli told us we had insulted the republic," Mr. Gath said.

Indian Army warns Rs 40,000 crore Arunachal border road could be a liability if tensions break out with China

A 1,500km proposed highway along the China border in Arunachal Pradesh has hit a roadblock, with the Army raising fears that its proximity to China could make it a liability in case of a confrontation. The objection has irked the state government, and the matter could end up in a tussle between the home and defence ministries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Act East Policy, pushing for development in the neglected Northeastern states, could be severely affected now the Army is opposing the mega road project, which costs between Rs 30,000 and Rs 40,000 crore and would connect Tawang with Vijoy nagar, bordering Myanmar. While initial construction between Tawang and Dirang is done, the work ahead is yet to begin, sources said.

Sources said local leaders from the state will be writing a protest letter to the prime minister. "The matter has been brought to my knowledge and I will call a meeting of officials from home and defence ministry along with state officials to sort out the issues," said Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State for Home Affairs, who also represents Arunachal Pradesh.

The Army is sticking to the old tactic of not developing border areas to ensure minimal damage and to cut off easy access for the enemy in case of an infiltration. However, this creates hurdles in the home ministry's plan to

develop remote areas and resettle the local population. Sources said that since there is no infrastructure, locals have been pushed as far as 50 km from the border, posing a threat from Chinese forces who could claim it to be their territory in the event of a face-off. The road has also been planned

considering the large-scale migration of people from border areas and the need to push them back by creating all basic amenities. "They should be happy that the road is close to the border. It can be a boon for the troops for swift mobilisation," said an official.



Madhya Pradesh CM's onion plan turns Rs 100-crore tear-jerker

Bhopal: Lakhs of quintals of onion procured by the Madhya Pradesh government following a hurried announcement by the chief minister to buy the vegetable at Rs 6/kg are likely to rot and trigger a revenue loss of around Rs 100 crore. The knee-jerk announcement followed a sudden agrarian distress over an onion glut in the state. And while the government grapples with inadequate storage facilities to stash mountains of onion, citizens are being forced to buy the vegetable at Rs 15-20 in the open market. With the monsoon onslaught expediting onion decay, the government has now invited tenders for large-scale sale. While only half the expected quantity has been procured, at least 1.5 lakh tonnes are being kept in the open due to lack of storage infrastructure even as farmers are still queuing up at all 64 procurement centres



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Why phones used by hospital staff are hazardous to your health



(Agencies)The mobile phones used by hospital staff carry pathogenic viruses, which may be extremely harmful to your health, according to a disconcerting study by the Laboratory of Infectious Agents and Hygiene at the University Hospital of Saint-Étienne in France.

ESCMID, the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, has published findings that show viral RNA is carried on the mobile devices of hospital staff, potentially exposing patients to infection. Researchers tested the mobile phones and hospital cordless phones used by a selection of 114 healthcare workers. The presence of RNA from viruses such as influenza A and B, respiratory syncytial virus, human metapneumovirus, rotavirus and norovirus were found on 38.5% of phones.

While the majority of the healthcare staff (64 %) admitted to using their phones during work, 20% said they never carried out hand hygiene procedures before or after using their devices.

'Virtual heart' to help fight cardio-vascular diseases

(Agencies)A team of researchers has created a "virtual heart" that could help medical researchers study new drug therapies. Researchers from the University of California - San Diego have created a detailed computer model of the electrophysiology of congestive heart failure — a leading cause of death — that can simulate subtle changes from the cellular and tissue levels of the heart then show the results of the associated electrocardiogram (ECG). According to the results, published in the journal PLOS Computational Biology, the model can show what happens to the heart when the levels and flow of calcium, potassium and sodium ions are changed. At the organ level, the researchers created an anatomically detailed model of the heart which shows the big picture of what happens when various critical chemicals and electrophysiologic



components of a healthy working heart are tweaked.

The team also found that ventricular fibrillation, where the waves of excitation that pump blood out of the heart become fragmented and disorganized, can be caused by a heart failure-related slowdown in cellular processes at the top (basal) region of heart.

The researchers also used their model to plan a new drug strategy against this heart failure form of fibrillation

Human brain map soon to fight abnormalities

(Agencies)A team of researchers has developed the first scalable method to identify different subtypes of neurons in the human brain.

The research lays the groundwork for "mapping" the gene activity in the human brain and could help provide a better understanding of brain functions and disorders, including Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, schizophrenia and depression.

By isolating and analysing individual human brain cells, researchers identified 16 neuronal subtypes in the cerebral cortex — the brain's outer layer of neural tissue responsible for cognitive functions including memory, attention and decision making.

"We are providing a unified framework to look at and compare individual neurons, which can help us find out how many unique types of neurons exist," said Kun Zhang, bioengineering professor at University of California-San Diego.

Researchers can use these different neuronal subtypes to build what Zhang calls a "reference map" of the human brain

— a foundation to understand the differences between a healthy brain and a diseased brain. "In the future, patients with brain disorders or abnormalities could be diagnosed and treated based on how they differ from the reference map. This is analogous to what's being done with the reference human genome map," Zhang noted.

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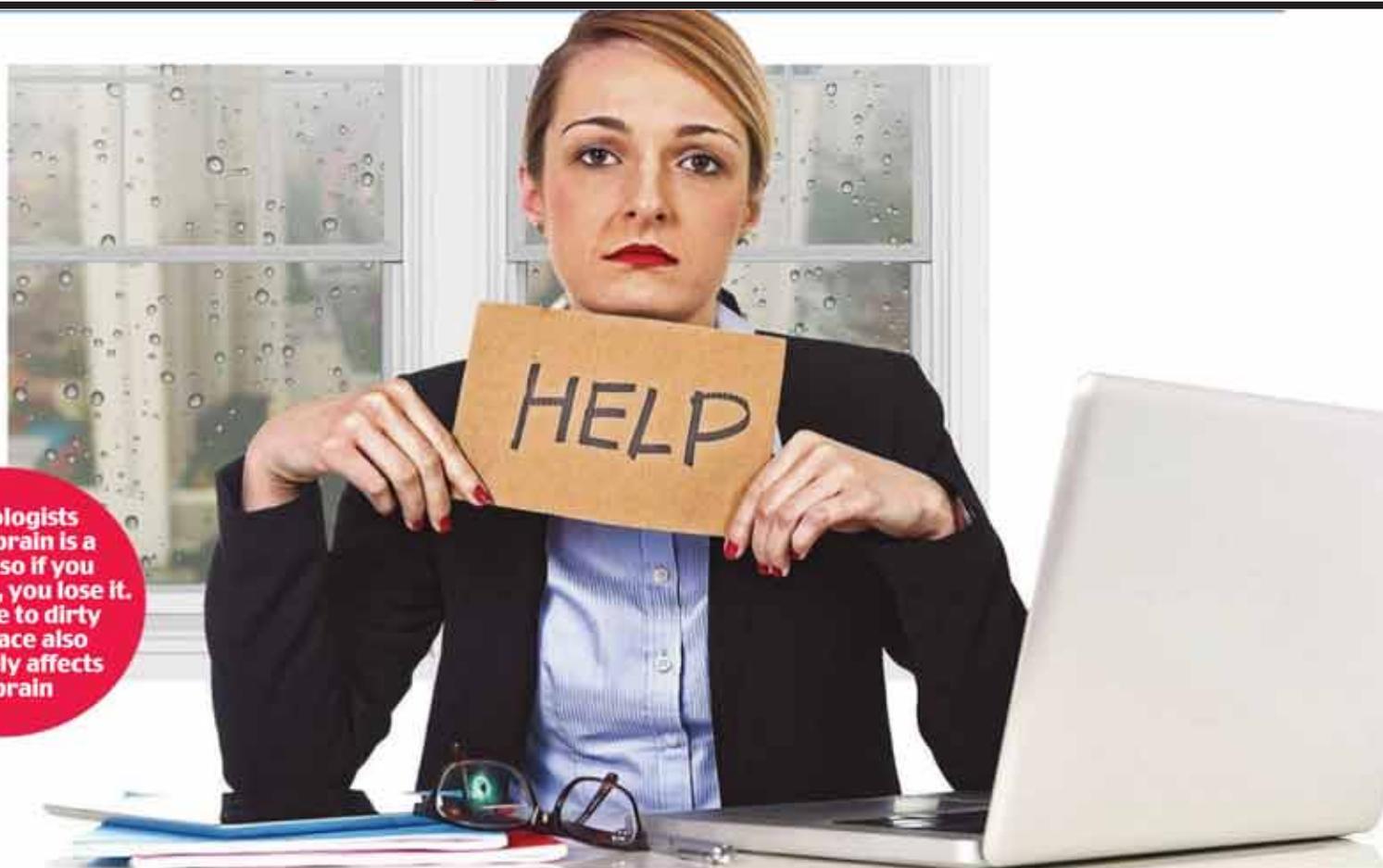
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WE've all had a boring job where every minute drags as we count down the hours until it's finally home time. If this isn't reason enough to make us reach for the job pages, a study has found a lack of stimulation can have a long term effect on the brain. Researchers at Florida State University found both having a dull job and a dirty working environment can have a long-term cognitive effect on employees.

In the past, researchers have been divided on whether it was working in an unclean workplace — facing exposure to agents such as mold, lead or loud noises — or working in an unstimulating environment that took the biggest toll on brain health as people aged.

Lead researcher Dr Joseph Grzywacz said the new study was significant because it

Psychologists say the brain is a muscle, so if you don't use it, you lose it. Exposure to dirty workplace also negatively affects the brain



A BORING JOB CAN REALLY MAKE YOU BRAIN DEAD

showed both can play an important role in long-term cognitive well-being.

He and his team used cognitive function data from almost 5,000 working adults participating in the 'Midlife in the United States' study.

Scientists examined individuals' workplaces and their ability to maintain and later use information they learned.

They also looked at their ability to complete tasks, manage time and pay attention.

They found greater occupational complexity — the learning of new skills and taking on new challenges — resulted in stronger cognitive performance in people, as they aged.

This was especially true with women.

Participants had also been asked about any memory issues they were experiencing.

"The practical issue here is

cognitive decline associated with ageing and the thought of, 'if you don't use it, you lose it,' Dr Grzywacz said.

The second result was those who had jobs that exposed them to a dirty working environment saw a cognitive decline.

"Psychologists say that the brain is a muscle [so if you don't use it, you lose it], while industrial hygienists point to chemicals in the work environment that may cause decline," he said.

There are real things in the workplace that can shape cog-

nitive function - some that you can see or touch, and others you can't.

"We showed both matter to cognitive health in adulthood."

Dr Grzywacz added: "Both of these issues are important when we think about the long-term health of men and women."

"Designing jobs to ensure that all workers have some decision making ability may protect cognitive function later in life, but it's also about cleaning up the workplace."

Daily Mail
(The study was published in the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*)

An algorithm that could predict ISIS's terror plot

A COMPUTER algorithm that can identify patterns in the social media activity of Islamic State supporters could provide clues about where terrorist attacks are likely to occur.

Scientists have found they can spot distinct behavioural patterns in the interactions between groups on social media, and it could even help them predict 'lone wolf' attacks.

Social media has been a key tool for organisations like ISIS to help them recruit supporters and coordinate their activities.

While law enforcement authorities have attempted to keep track of ISIS members using social media, they have tended to focus on monitoring the posts made by individuals.

Their attempts are often frustrated by the constant switching of accounts by ISIS supporters, which can make it



difficult to keep tabs on them.

But the new algorithm produced by Dr Neil Johnson and his team instead attempts to look for group behaviour as users interact on social media. It allowed them to identify the

key groups who were seriously discussing operational details like financing or avoiding drone strikes even though they shifted accounts as they were shut down.

Dr Johnson, a physicist at the

University of Miami said: 'It was like watching crystals forming.'

"We were able to see how people were materialising around certain social groups. They were discussing and sharing information - all in real-time."

In a paper published in the journal *Science*, the researchers describe how

Helps spot behavioural patterns on social media

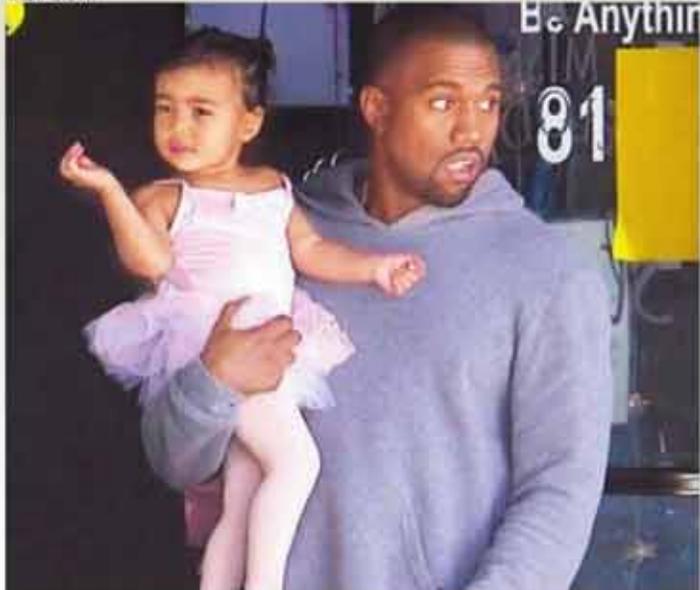
they were able to apply mathematical equations used in chemistry and physics to watch pro-ISIS groups develop. They searched through a year's worth of posts on Russian social networking site Vkontakte - which has 350 million users - for pro-ISIS statements in a range of different

languages. They then used hashtags and other key words to sift through the posts to find those that were interacting together. They identified 196 pro-ISIS groups operating during the first eight months of 2015, found most of the 108,000-plus individual members of these self-organised groups probably never met.

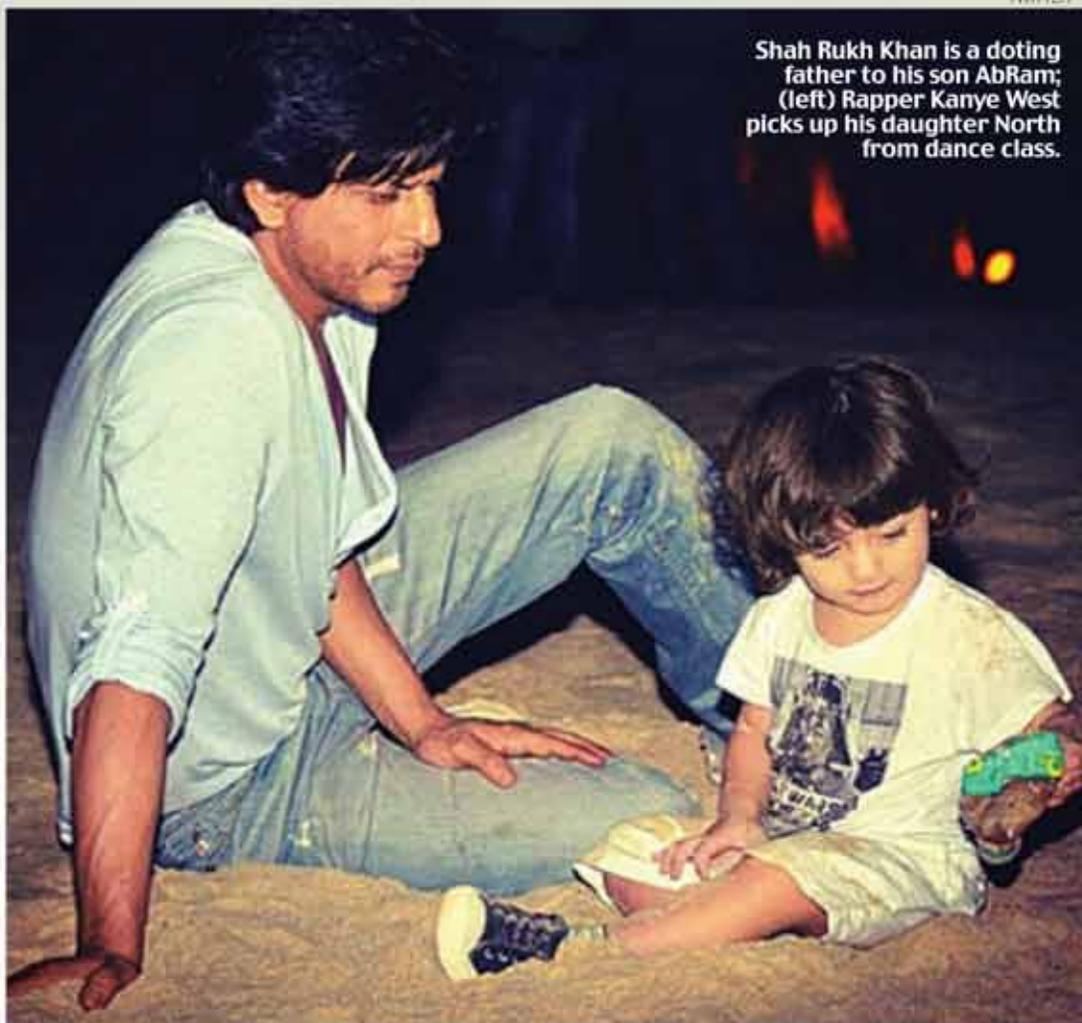
But they found that these groups, or aggregates, coalesced and proliferated prior to the onset of real-world events. Dr Johnson said: "So the message is - find the aggregates, or at least a representative portion of them, and you have your hand on the pulse of the entire organisation, in a way that you never could if you were to sift through the millions of Internet users and track specific individuals, or specific hashtags."

Daily Mail

INSTAGRAM



Shah Rukh Khan is a doting father to his son AbRam; (left) Rapper Kanye West picks up his daughter North from dance class.



TWITTER

FUN, FIT and fashion forward — fatherhood is gaining a new meaning and it is getting the nod of approval from all quarters. The ‘Dapper Dad’, quite like the ‘Yummy Mummy’, is light years away from his old image of the strict, stoic, emotionally withdrawn and generally clumsy father.

The new dad is celebrating his personal power and fatherhood while keeping a keen eye on dressing, and he doesn't command respect with his briefcase but a baby carrier strapped proudly on to him.

Naturally, he is a confident figure as he displays his softer side in public and runs behind his litter to tie their laces or slide down a swing. Bollywood is rife with examples of such ‘complete men’, dads that flex their muscles and carry the kids with equal ease. Shah Rukh Khan has long been an example of the doting dad, both on and off-screen, with his kids Aryan, Suhana and three-year old son AbRam. While works and career continue, social media is witness to his adoration for the kids with a number of pictures posted online. He is smart, funny and hugely successful, but it is King Khan's engagement with his children that adds to his charm as an actor and celebrity status.

Joining him are new-dads Imran Khan who can always be seen on-duty with his daughter Imara, and Aamir Khan with his son Azad. Meanwhile, old-timer Anil Kapoor is always there with praise and support for daughter Sonam. These main men have got their eye on the prize yet take out time to look after their pack, while looking sharp and being dressed to the nines. The same men who once flaunted their single status appear all the more appealing as they take on the role of the father figure.

In fact, there's something fascinating about the bad boy being whipped into shape by a two-foot-toddler. Who would have thought that expletive belting rapper Kanye West would be temporarily soothed into submission by daughter North West. Kanye has been spotted ferrying her around for dance class, with his tutu-adorned daughter and her tiny shoes in tow. While the three-year-old may boast a wardrobe of custom made dresses by Oscar de la Renta and Roberto Cavalli, dad Kanye has been making a splash in the fashion scene with his line ‘Yeezy’ and brand collaborations.

The confident man displays his softer side in public with ease, taking care of his children while keeping his eye on the ball

Even world leaders have secured a spot on the map as they let their guard down in public and show their true self, responding to the whims and demands of their children. US President Barack Obama paints a loving picture as he shares a joke with his daughters Malia and Sasha, or goes biking with them on vacation. He even stated in April this year that his kids helped him change the perception on marriage equality for same-sex couples, and thus created a culture of respect for his children in the eyes of millions of followers across the world. Needless to say, the head of state has

not only charmed people with his quick-wittedness and magnetic presence, but also with the importance that he bestows upon his wife and kids, which further increases his own eminence.

It's not about a big bank balance or the sturdy appearance in a suited look anymore. As the rules of the game change, and we exert our choice on what we consider worthwhile instead of following old values, the men in our lives are being valued differently too. And as science proves, it's the men who let slip a hearty laugh, a playful look and an affectionate gaze that truly catch our attention. Yes, it is time to make way for the ‘Dapper Dad’.

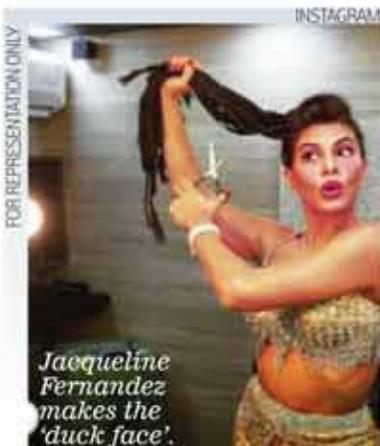
The writer is a fashion critic and stylist

MAKE WAY FOR THE DAPPER DAD

INSTAGRAM



Actor Imran Khan flaunts his body and lounges in the pool with daughter Imara.



Jacqueline Fernandez makes the ‘duck face’.

POUTS CAN CAUSE WRINKLES

IN AN article reported in *Daily Mail*, it has been revealed that common facial expressions like the pout can cause serious wrinkles over time. According to Dr Anjali Mahto, a consultant dermatologist at the Cadogan Clinic in London, the ‘duck face’ pout can impact lips the same way as smoking 60 cigarettes a day can. She states, “Repetitive action may mean the

development of perioral lines — those little smokers’ lines — especially around the top lip. If you've taken up selfie-posting later in life, be aware that older skin forms wrinkles in as little as a few months.” She adds that other faces to avoid include raising the eyebrows as it leads to furrows, scrunching up the chin in a sulk, frowning, and wrinkling the nose.



Alia Bhatt

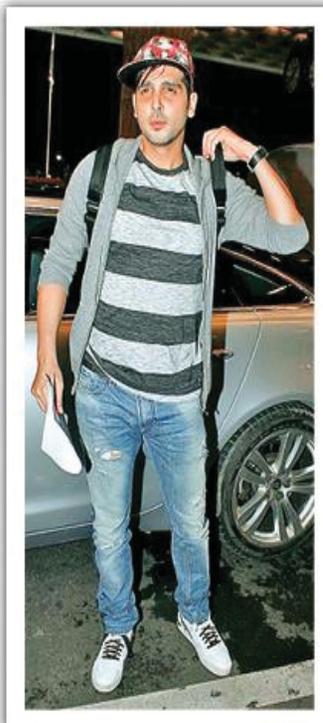
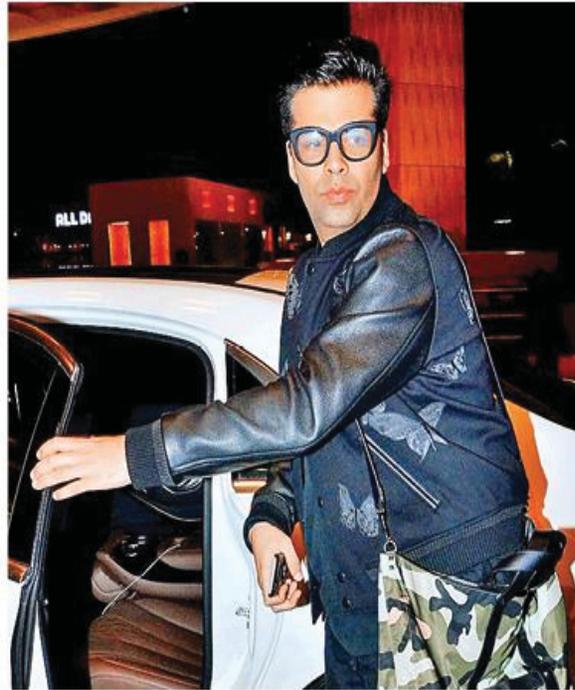
NOT SO FLATTERING FLAPS AFTER ALL

ACTRESS Alia Bhatt has been on good fashion footing of late, what with the promotions for her current movie. Yet for one of the press meets, she turned up in a white *Victoria Scandale* dress that wasn't as convincing a look. As two flaps poked out from her sculpted waist, the style seemed slightly out of place but Bhatt saved the day with her beaming smile, cute hairstyle and strappy metallic heels. Well done on the attempt nevertheless (we've seen way too many actresses wearing same-old, hackneyed dress styles, TBH).

Salman, Karan, Huma and others set to spread Bollywood fever in Spain during IIFA



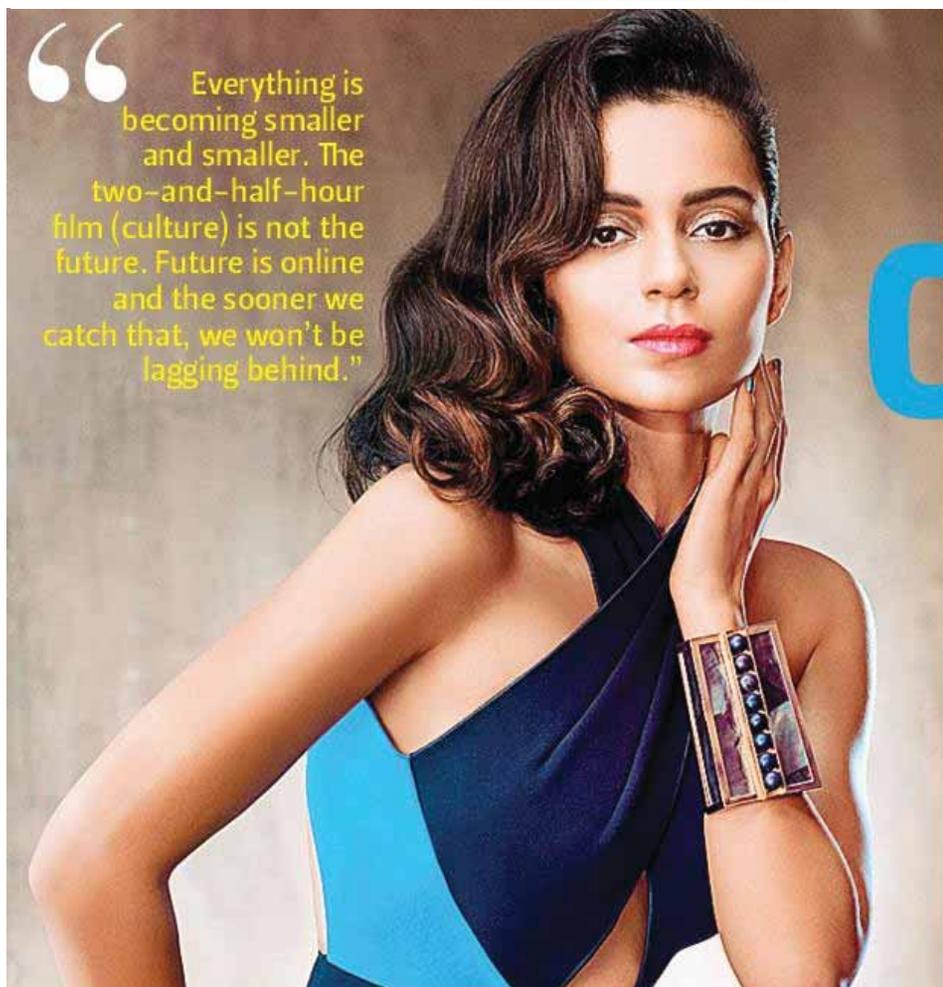
Actors Salman Khan, Huma Qureshi, Ameesha Patel, filmmakers Karan Johar and Kabir Khan departed for Madrid, Spain for IIFA 2016. The award ceremony, which has travelled to several continents over the years, will mark its 17th edition this year in the European city, which is hosting the three-day gala. DP



Did you know Taapsee Pannu wrote her own dialogues for Tadka?



From singing to production, Bollywood actors are dabbling with different tasks at the same time. Actor Taapsee Pannu is not far behind. She has turned into a dialogue writer for her upcoming film Tadka. The actor, along with her co-star Ali Fazal was given the freedom by their director Prakash Raj, and they enjoyed the experience thoroughly. "It was slightly new for me but totally new for Ali to come up with your own lines. Prakash sir felt an actor, who understands and knows the character well should come up with a lot of lines by him/herself to make the character more real and believable for the audience than mouthing lines written by someone else all the time," says Pannu. As the dialogues were written by Ali and Taapsee, it gave a natural feel to the scenes being shot, and also looked like normal conversations which the audience could relate with really well," says a source. Pannu, who was last seen in the film Baby, alongside Akshay Kumar, enjoyed the experience of taking care of her own dialogues. "I loved this exercise and both Ali and I have tried to make our scenes look interesting and fun. Hope the audience enjoys them as well and hope I get to write for often."



“ Everything is becoming smaller and smaller. The two-and-half-hour film (culture) is not the future. Future is online and the sooner we catch that, we won't be lagging behind.”

FUTURE OF CINEMA

is internet movies, says Kangana

Actress Kangana Ranaut feels the future of cinema lies in making short films for the digital medium. At the launch of Shirish Kunder's short film Kriti, Kangana said: "It's hard to make a short film. I myself have made a short film (The Touch) and it's difficult." "Everything is becoming smaller and smaller and I feel the future of cinema is internet movies. The two-and-half-hour film (culture) is not the future... Future is online and the sooner we catch that, we won't be lagging behind." Kriti is written and directed by Shirish Kunder. It features Manoj Bajpayee, Radhika Apte and Neha Sharma in lead.

HRITHIK'S EX-WIFE SUSSANNE BOOKED FOR FRAUD WORTH RS 1.87 CRORE IN GOA: REPORT

Entrepreneur and designer Sussanne Khan has allegedly been booked by the Goa Police in a Rs 1.87 crore cheating case on Saturday.

The ex-wife of Bollywood actor Hrithik Roshan, Sussanne has been accused for falsely projecting herself as an architect by Emgee Properties, a real estate firm in Goa, the Times of India reported. Managing partner Mudhit Gupta said the company paid Sussanne Rs 1.87 crore in 2013 for "architectural and designing services", ANI reported. Sussanne however failed to deliver her designs within the stipulated time, and what she finally submitted was sub-standard, Gupta alleged.

Suspicious of her credentials, the company checked with the Council of Architecture and found that she

wasn't registered as an architect, Gupta further stated. Sussanne, 37, is known for her interior decoration and design skills and heads a few companies, including The Charcoal project, a high-end décor store based in Mumbai.

Emgee Properties' legal counsel Arun Bras de Sa also claimed that police were reluctant to file an FIR in the matter, but finally obliged when they approached the court. A case has reportedly been filed under Section 420 (cheating) of the Indian Penal Code. When contacted, Sussanne Khan simply stated, "I've already sent out my response to everyone. My PR people have sent it out." When asked to comment further on the matter, she said, "It's retarded and the response is already out there," without revealing any further details.



Why Independence Day Resurgence destroyed the world but left India alone



Las Vegas lies in ruins. Burj Khalifa has been uprooted and rudely thrown back at earth. London and Singapore have been reduced to rubble. Petronas Towers have been destroyed.

Only India and its landmarks continue to stand straight in the face of an unprecedented alien attack. You know what is our superpower? Our ability to take offence. According to a Mumbai Mirror report, 20th Century Fox – the makers of Independence Day Resurgence – decided not to show any part of India or its historical monuments being destroyed in the film. Their reason, and we quote, being "Well, Indians are too touchy. Keeping the sensitivities of all the religious groups and other activists in mind, the makers were asked to not shoot in

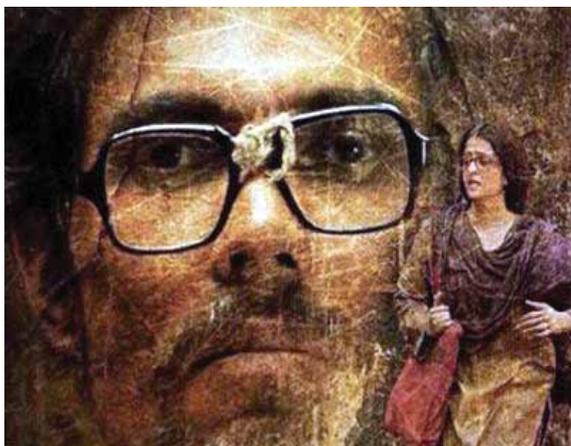
India or portray any prominent monuments being damaged." The report quotes a source from the production house saying, "There was also a request to only represent India on one of the film's posters, by showing an attack on the Taj Mahal. But this too was rejected." The film arrives June 24.

Maybe, the studio backing the Roland Emmerich film -- starring Liam Hemsworth, Jeff Goldblum, Bill Pullman and Vivica Fox -- decided not to mess with the wrong country keeping Pixels in mind. The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) had reportedly asked the production house backing the Adam Sandler movie to exclude the clip that shows the Taj Mahal being destroyed from the promo.

An insider said at that time, "Originally, the film had scenes that showed many monuments like the Eiffel Tower, Houses of London, and so on, being destroyed. However, the final cut of the film featured the Taj Mahal scene." The scenes were later taken off. Earlier, Pixels' director Chris Columbus had said about destroying the Taj: "It is the first real iconic thing to get destroyed in the film. There is a destruction scene prior to that but with Taj Mahal, you see that it is actually a game breaker. I had this visual image while designing these effects. It had nothing to do whether it was India or anywhere else. I just thought it will look really cool and awesome," he had said. That is, till India took offence.

'Sarbjit' makers eyeing the Oscar?

The Randeep Hooda - Aishwarya Rai Bachchan starrer 'Sarbjit' did fairly well at the box office and the film's co-producer Vashu Bhagnani



has complete faith in it. Reports claim that he has decided to send the film as one of the contenders from India for the Oscars. In the report, Bhagnani has been quoted as saying that they will send the film as an entry independently or in a race with other films. He further said that the makers will channelize their energy to make sure 'Sarbjit' is in the race to become India's entry to the Oscars this year. The producer also revealed that they will send the film as an entry for National Awards too.

Liz bares all to back Brexit

Actress posts picture of herself holding nothing but a Union Jack cushion as she urges social media followers to Leave

(Agencies) Actress Liz Hurley left little to the imagination as she encouraged Britain to vote Leave yesterday.

She urged her social media followers to go for Brexit by releasing a saucy picture of her smiling with just a Union Jack cushion to cover her modesty. The star wrote alongside the image: 'Vote tomorrow-whatever your persuasion. I'm for #Brexit & promise to neither gloat nor whinge. But VOTE!'

Miss Hurley, 51, uploaded the image, taken as a cover shot for the Mail on Sunday's You Magazine in 2011, to her Twitter and Instagram accounts where it was quickly 'liked' and retweeted thousands of times.

Some jokingly commented that the

picture alone was enough to make them vote Leave, while more critical Twitter users said the former model shouldn't have to be undressed to make her point.

On Twitter, Tasha Stevens said: 'I would say this is the ultimate campaign poster'. While a user under the name Mr T, added: 'Thanks Liz, I was going to vote remain (sic), but seeing you with that cushion, I am for Brexit. I am born anew in your wisdom.' Miss Hurley tweeted the picture a day after David Beckham pledged his support for the Remain campaign. The England footballing hero and his fashion designer wife said Britain should be facing the challenges of the world together with its allies.





But The Bus Is Packed!

The crowded-bus syndrome informs UK Indians' position. Immigrants themselves, they don't want more coming in.

(Agencies) Priti Patel represents the many paradoxes evident in the June 23 referendum in the UK on whether to stick with Europe or go it alone—to Brexit that is, as wordplay-loving Britain puts it. Articulate and engaging, she was appointed employment minister by prime minister David Cameron as Britain's first "UK Indian diaspora champ-ion". But she's now using that platform to undermine the Cameron-led 'Rem-ain' campaign and urging Asians to back 'Brexit'.

Arguing with passion and eloquence, she appears regularly on TV debates and tears into the government's "biased" immigration policy. In India, she'd have been sacked; but this is Britain, where such contradictions are the norm. Whether Labour or Conservative, every party has senior members opposed to the official line. As for the Brexit referendum, all polls in recent days have revealed even more contradictions. (Contd on page 21)

India loses bid to join Nuclear Suppliers Group

(Agencies) New Delhi : After a nail-biting two-day plenary session in Seoul, the elite Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) turned down India's membership bid despite an unprecedented diplomatic push by the government, with deliberations moving to a new dimension – the issue of including countries that are not party to non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

The main reason why India was unable to make it to the NSG's high table was because it is not a signatory to the NPT. Although it was China that mainly stressed on this point, other countries such as Austria, New Zealand, Ireland and Turkey also joined the chorus, sources told BusinessLine.

In a statement issued by the NSG, the grouping said

discussions on the issue of "Technical, Legal and Political Aspects of the Participation of non-NPT States in the NSG" were held.

The issue was discussed by the 48-nation nuclear bloc till late Thursday evening when a special session of the NSG was convened, which went on for three hours, to discuss the 'participation' of non-NPT members into the grouping. However, by Friday afternoon, as the day came to a close in Seoul, it was clear that India's membership bid had failed, sources said. Brazil had reservations over whether membership to countries can be granted on a non-discriminatory basis. Swiss volte face But, it was

Switzerland that sprung a surprise. (Contd on page 23)

2017 UP Assembly election

How a gangster will change UP's political narrative

(Agencies) In what is one of the best socio-political narratives of eastern UP – summarised in the form of an Urdu novel called 'Aadha Gaon' – celebrated novelist Rahi Masoom Raza often refers to Sarjoo Pandey as a seditious communist leader determined to overthrow the social order. Till the nineties, Pandey was indeed a powerful leader of Ghazipur, considered to be a strong bastion of the communist party of India (CPI).



But Pandey's greatest, and possibly gravest, mistake was to patronise the Ansari brothers – Afzal Ansari and his younger brother Mukhtar Ansari – giving them political legitimacy by inducting them into the party. Afzal became a legislator, while Mukhtar took to guns and emerged as the most dreaded gangster of the region. Police officers posted in Ghazipur during that time were left aghast, when a legendary figure like Pandey would often come up to them and justify Mukhtar's criminality in Marxist dialectics – describing it as a revolution against the

Bhumihar-Rajput landlords of Ghazipur, Varanasi and Ballia.

Mukhtar, an ace-shooter capable of bringing down a flying bird with a single shot, surrounds himself with marksmen possessing outstanding firearm skills, and a scant regard for life.

His name features in sensational cases of murder, extortion and property-grabbing all across eastern UP. Though lodged in Jail for more than a decade while on trial for murder (of a political rival), extortion and criminal intimidation, Mukhtar is wanted more by politics in UP, than he was by the police.

(Contd on page 20)

Supreme Court Tie Blocks Obama Immigration Plan

(Agencies) Washington DC — The Supreme Court announced on Thursday that it had deadlocked in a case challenging President Obama's immigration plan, effectively ending what Mr. Obama had hoped would become one of his central legacies. The program would have shielded as many as five million undocumented immigrants from deportation and allowed them to legally work in the United States.

The 4-4 tie, which left in place an appeals court ruling blocking the plan, amplified the contentious election-year debate over the nation's immigration policy and presidential power.

When the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case in January, it seemed poised to issue a major ruling on presidential power. That did not materialize, but the court's action, which established no precedent and included no reasoning, was nonetheless perhaps its most important statement this term.

The decision was just nine words long: "The judgment is



affirmed by an equally divided court."

But its consequences will be vast, said Walter Dellinger, who was acting solicitor general in the Clinton administration. "Seldom have the hopes of so many been crushed by so few words," he said. Speaking at the White House, Mr. Obama described the ruling as a deep disappointment for immigrants who would not be able to emerge from the threat of deportation for at least the balance of his term.

"Today's decision is frustrating to those who seek to grow our economy and bring a rationality to our immigration system," he

said before heading to the West Coast for a two-day trip. "It is heartbreaking for the millions of immigrants who have made their lives here."

The decision was one of two determined by tie votes Thursday — the other concerned Indian tribal courts — and one of four so far this term. The court is scheduled to issue its final three decisions of the term, including one on a restrictive Texas abortion law, on Monday. Mr. Obama said the court's immigration ruling was a stark reminder of the consequences of Republicans' (Contd on page 23)