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The Kashmir killings could have been avoided?



(Agencies) When security forces in Indian-administered Kashmir killed a prominent militant leader in a gunfight last week, they would have surely anticipated a civilian blowback in the Muslim-dominated valley.

After all, the young, social-media savvy Burhan Wani had become the mascot of a new generation of home-grown rebels fighting Indian rule in the region - there are close to 100 local militants in Kashmir

today, four times as many as in 2011, Indian intelligence estimates. Wani's ability to "recruit [people] into militancy from the grave will far outstrip anything he could have done on social media," tweeted Kashmir's former chief minister and opposition leader Omar Abdullah after the killing.

Yet, when Kashmir predictably erupted in fury over the killing, a familiar, bloody script played out once again.

Five days of clashes between protesters and security forces following Wani's killing have left at least 36 people dead and some 1,500 people, mostly aged 16-26, wounded. The curfew entered its fifth day on Wednesday, making this the worst siege the valley has faced since two popular uprisings in 2008 and 2010 in which 200 people, mostly civilian protesters, died in clashes with the security forces.

Many believe last weekend again saw

security forces using excessive force as they tried to control the protests. Security personnel say they are forced to open fire in the face of dire mob provocation. But allegations that the forces are trigger happy in Kashmir have never gone away. "The fact is that they used disproportionate force at the weekend, when the majority of deaths happened," says Shujaat Bukhari, editor of Rising Kashmir newspaper.

(Contd on page 26)



Nitin Gadkari, Indian Minister for Roads, Transport, Highways & Shipping visited New York

(By a staff reporter) New York – Nitin Gadkari, Minister for Roads, Transport, Highways and Shipping, was in New York from July 12-14, 2016. During his 2 days New York leg of the tour, Hon'ble Minister visited the New York City State Transport Department to discuss with the USA dignitaries and experts and identify areas of mutual cooperation in the field of intelligent transport management, city traffic management and control center

and other technology-based transport solutions. Mr. Gadkari also held a series of interactions with investors at the meets organized by the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, Business Council on International Understanding and Goldman Sachs etc. The interactions with the investors are to follow up the deliberations at the Maritime India Summit in Mumbai where a large number of US companies had evinced keen interest in promoting bilateral cooperation with India in

Maritime sector. Besides, the delegation led by Hon'ble Minister would have detailed deliberations with the participating US companies for technology cooperation in road and highway building, road engineering, innovations in automobile sector, road safety and green fuels. The Minister also interacted with local electronic and print media based in New York and some members of the Indian Community, in an event organized by Indian Consulate on July 13th.



South Asian Spelling Bee announces Atlanta and Charlotte winners



(By a staff writer) New Jersey- The South Asian Spelling Bee, sponsored by Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual) continues its legacy in its ninth year. In the Spelling Bee's quest to find the best spellers in the South Asian community, families arrived this past weekend to participate in the day long regionals in Atlanta and Charlotte. In the Atlanta Regional, Sreeniketh Vogoti (13) of Saint Johns, Florida was the regional champ, Navya Murugesan (14) of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was the first runner up, and Pavani

Chittemsetty (10) of Bentonville, Arkansas, was second runner up. In Seattle, Snehaa Ganesh Kumar (13) from Folsom, California was named regional champ, Siyona Mishra (12) from Orlando, Florida was first runner up, and Akshra Paimagam (13) of Charlotte, North Carolina, was the second runner-up. The South Asian Spelling Bee is designed to attract top talent and new spellers and to encourage participants as young as five to interact with other spellers; gain stage confidence; acquire camera savvy; and compete for coveted prizes and titles.

Three men shot at during Facebook Live streaming in US



(Agencies) New York: In a bizarre incident, three men in the US who were streaming a video on Facebook Live ended up recording their own shooting. The video of the shooting that took place in the Berkley neighbourhood of Norfolk, Virginia, was posted online and immediately went viral, RT.com reported on Wednesday. In the video, three men were seen with

one of them, T.J. Williams, streaming a video of himself and his two friends in a car while listening and rapping along to hip-hop music.

About five minutes and 40 seconds into the video, gun shots were fired, immediately throwing Williams back and the phone to the floor of the car, the report said. After over 20 gunshots are fired, a voice is heard, saying, "Call the ambulance, please," before going on to say "there's three of us shot". "Stay relaxed, stay calm, stay relaxed," another voice is heard over sounds of gasping.

"Don't go to sleep, stay relaxed.

It's gonna be all right, they coming to get you," the voice added. The Norfolk police department confirmed the shooting. The Facebook video has been shared over 1,000 times. The men were taken to Sentara Norfolk General Hospital. "Update to shooting on BAINBRIDGE BLVD. 3men taken to SNGH for treatment. 2 w/ life threatening injuries, 1 w/ non life threatening injuries," The Norfolk Police Department tweeted. In a related incident, a 28-year-old man was gunned down while he was filming some lighter moments with friends for

Facebook Live in Chicago recently. According to CBS News, Antonio Perkins, father of three children, was live-streaming a video option when the shooting occurred in the background. Perkins, also a documented gang member, was fatally struck in the neck and head and fell to the ground. He was taken to a hospital where he was declared dead. According to the police, the shooting was gang-related. This is a third incident in Chicago where someone filming a Facebook Live video has been shot at. In March, a 31-year-old was also shot at while making a Live video. He later survived.



Bastille Day Massacre

Gun and truck terror attack leaves at least 80 dead in Nice

(Agencies) At least 80 people have been killed and more than 50 injured after a truck mowed down crowds for more than a mile before the driver got out and sprayed crowds with bullets in a terror attack during the Bastille Day celebrations in the French city of Nice.

Identity documents belonging to a 31-year-old French Tunisian were found in the truck according to security sources.

The source said: 'The identification of the truck driver is still underway.' The recovered documents indicate the man is a resident of Nice.

One eyewitness described seeing 'bodies flying like bowling pins' and 'hearing noises, cries that I will never forget' as the horror unfolded on a busy promenade at around 10.30pm last night.

The truck driver was said to have shouted 'Allahu Akbar' — God is greatest — before being shot dead by police. Pro-ISIS groups have been celebrating the attack but as yet the terror group has not officially claimed responsibility.

Guns and grenades were later found inside the truck, which mounted the pavement at approximately 40mph and steered directly towards hundreds of people watching a fireworks display. Anti-terror police swooped in as the city was put on lockdown and residents were warned to stay indoors for their safety. Gunshots rang out in the streets, with gunmen targeting hotels and cafes in the port city in the south of France. Addressing the nation, French

President Francois Hollande said several children were among the dead. He said it was 'undeniable' the massacre was a terrorist attack.

He said there were 80 victims dead, including children with a further 20 people gravely wounded.

Eyewitnesses say there was an exchange of gunfire in the aftermath of the incident before the driver was shot dead. ISIS has claimed responsibility for the attack, according to unconfirmed reports in the French media. Guns and grenades were later said to have been found inside the truck, which mounted the pavement at approximately 40mph and steered directly towards hundreds of people watching a fireworks display.

Anti-terror police swooped in as the city was put on lockdown and residents were warned to stay indoors for their safety. Gunshots rang out in the streets, with gunmen targeting hotels and cafes in the port city in the south of France. One witness called

Antoine said: 'We were at the Neptune beach and a firework display had just finished. That is when we saw a white lorry. It was going quickly at 60-70 kilometres an hour.'

The gunman jumped out of the truck after ploughing through the pedestrians and began opening fire, witnesses said. Officials said the driver was shot dead near the scene. A second suspect is thought to be on the run.

Eyewitness Wassim Bouhlel said that he saw a truck drive into the crowd and then witnessed the man emerge with a gun and start shooting.

'There was carnage on the road,' Bouhlel said. 'Bodies everywhere.'

Anti terrorist police have taken over the investigation into the attack according to the French interior ministry.

France's ambassador to the United States, Gerard Araud, said last night's incident was a 'terrorist attack'.

Addressing a Bastille Day

reception in Washington, Araud said: 'Our democracies - France, the United States, our other partners, we are besieged, we face a terrible threat.'

As a result of last night's attack, France has extended the state of emergency in the country for a further three months. He said the driver has been shot dead by police. They are currently hunting for a second attacker, according to reports.

French media reports said that as well as the dead, a further 15 people were critically injured and dozens more wounded.

Nice prosecutor Jean-Michel Prette said bodies were strewn about along the road.

The Gendarmerie Nationale tweeted: 'Emergency operation in progress. Keep calm and avoid downtown area. Follow the official accounts to be informed.'

Bodies could be seen lying on the floor by the beach, as the police and other emergency services tried to deal with a mass panic.

British holidaymaker Esther

Serwah, 59, was staying in a hotel a short walk from the scene. She said she had been on her way to the Promenade des Anglais for dinner with her daughters when people started screaming at her.

Mrs Serwah, from Surrey, said: 'I was just walking to the Promenade and then I saw everybody running and I just didn't know what was going on.'

'People were screaming at me in French but I didn't understand.'

'Some people were lying on the streets dead and people were running over the bodies.'

'Everybody was saying it's a terrorist attack. It's just horrible, horrible, horrible.'

'I'm in shock. I'm still shaking.' European Council president Donald Tusk said Europe stands united with the French people in the battle against violence and hatred, while Belgian foreign minister Didier Reynders both described the attack as 'barbaric'. US President Barack Obama has condemned what appears to be 'a horrific terrorist attack' and has directed his officials to provide any assistance required by the French government.

He said: 'On behalf of the American people, I condemn in the strongest terms what appears to be a horrific terrorist attack in Nice, France, which killed and wounded dozens of innocent civilians.'

'We stand in solidarity and partnership with France, our oldest ally, as they respond to and recover from this attack. 'We know that the character of the French Republic will endure long after this devastating and tragic loss of life.'



I Suspect The Chinese Hand Behind Kashmiri Separatist Militancy



(Agencies) Kashmiri militant Burhan Wani, who was killed recently, is being hailed as a hero by many people. However, I regard him as only a pawn who was being used by some people. But which people? Some say it was the Pakistanis, but in my opinion it was the Chinese. So let me explain my views. Separatist Kashmiri militants are obviously getting arms, supplies and other kinds of help from some government. Arms and supplies do not fall from the sky. The question is which government?

Now, here we have to rely on some conjecture. We obviously will not get direct proof. But we can draw logical inferences and put two and two together. After all, apart from direct evidence there is also circumstantial evidence. Pakistan had earlier allied itself to America, but after Modi took India firmly into the American camp, Pakistan had to seek a new sponsor. The only second super power in the world today after the collapse of the Soviet Union is China, and so now Pakistan has allied itself to

China. Today, the established super power of the world, the USA, and the rising super power, China, are on a collision course, as is evident from their disputes over the South China Sea, etc. The question is: who will control South Asia, with its markets, raw materials and cheap labour? Politics is concentrated economics, and so to understand politics, we must go behind it and see the real economic forces at work. After years of economic growth, China has gone down from being the world's chief growth engine to becoming its biggest risk factor. While the Chinese still claim a growth rate of 6% in their GDP, more reliable sources say that the real growth rate is about 3% -- a far cry from the double digit figures of growth of the Chinese economy for over a decade. So to relieve their distress, the Chinese

desperately need more markets for their goods, as well as cheap raw materials to lower their cost of production.

Of the two super powers, China is more dangerous to world peace. A rising super power is always more aggressive and expansionist than an established one. For example, Hitler's Germany, being a rising super power in the 1930s and 1940s, was more dangerous than the Western powers. Today, China has a huge foreign exchange reserve, estimated at US\$3.23 trillion in January 2016. This is a huge amount of hot money, hungrily looking for investment opportunities, markets to infiltrate and capture, and cheap raw materials. Indeed it has grabbed many opportunities in Asia and Africa, including some in India. So the victim

of imperialism up to 1949 has itself become an imperialist now. The fight between the USA, which is facing a recession, and China, whose economy has slowed down considerably, for control over South Asia, is now spilling over into India and Pakistan. Modi has taken India firmly into the American camp. His recent visit to USA is only a culmination of the process started earlier. So, China is making its own counter moves. It is dominating Nepal, has come closer to Pakistan, and is likely arming the anti-Indian insurgency in Kashmir and the Northeast, in an attempt to carve out of India an area of its own influence and control. Earlier, Pakistan was under the grip of Americans. But, as stated earlier, now that Modi has taken India firmly into the American camp, the Pakistanis, too, must find a new master, and the Chinese are the best bet.

How Prashant Kishor And Priyanka Gandhi Could Change UP Politics Forever



(Agencies) There is no denying that all eyes will be trained on the upcoming assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh. Given that these elections are the veritable semi-finals before the 2019 general elections, the stakes are high for all the players, not least of all the Congress party, which just about managed to scrape by in the Gandhi family bastions of Rae Bareilly and Amethi in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. Come 2019, does it stand the slightest chance in Uttar Pradesh? Cue

the dramatic entry of Priyanka Gandhi and the backstage machinations of ace strategist Prashant Kishor. While some commentators are saying that Kishor has bitten off more than he can chew by taking on the task of reviving the Congress's fortunes in UP, his track record is impressive. He helped script a stupendous victory for Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the general elections and then engineered Nitish Kumar's win in the Bihar assembly elections last year. His strategy for the

Congress's resurgence in Uttar Pradesh is simple and two-pronged: attract Brahmins and make Priyanka Gandhi the face of the party's campaign. There's plenty of scepticism regarding both strategies, but whoever has closely followed Kishor's way of functioning knows that he has an incredible ability to create a wave -- a "hawa" to use Hindi parlance. Both his past campaigns are reflective of this. Already, the "leaks" about Priyanka being the Congress's chief ministerial candidate in UP are dominating column inches. Kishor's deft moves have brought the Congress back into the limelight where it was earlier not even being considered a bit player. But what next? Is this just "hawa" or will the winds of change really blow for the Congress? If Priyanka's name is indeed announced as CM candidate or the leader of the campaign, how will it change the shape of the

upcoming elections? Let us look at some factors. Simply put, Priyanka is as popular a leader that the Congress will be able to muster up. None of their current leaders from the state has either the stature or the popularity to lead a campaign in the country's most significant state. Priyanka on the other hand is massively popular and will give a big boost to the workers' morale. At a time when theatrics rule the charts of domestic politics, Priyanka's good Hindi, witty comebacks and great oratory skills will come in handy during the elections. Kishor has already made an army of more than 10,000 freshly identified workers who'll be trained by his team to campaign at the booth level. Let's face it. However many political obituaries of the Gandhis are written and howsoever much there may be a clamour to get rid of the dynasty, the family has staying power. Anybody who has

followed the history of Indian politics will agree that without the Gandhis, the party would be fragmented into multiple regional outfits. Remember the infamous tenure of Sitaram Kesari as the Congress president, when many prominent leaders like Arjun Singh, Madhavrao Scindia, ND Tiwari etc deserted the party to form their own? They only returned when Sonia Gandhi took over as the Congress president. Besides, a Gandhi holding the reins of state elections would give out a strong signal that they don't shy away from responsibilities and only focus on national politics. And not to mention, Priyanka bears a strong resemblance to her grandmother Indira Gandhi. Why should this matter? This is INDIA. Dedicated cadres who encourage people to vote in favour of a party are just as essential to success as big leaders and grand rallies. Over the years, the cadres of the UP Congress have become extremely disillusioned, with many switching allegiance to other mainstream parties. With Priyanka's entry, not only will she be able to galvanize the whole party machinery but also give them confidence that they actually stand a chance of winning. Besides, it is also widely believed that the call for Priyanka to play a prominent role has the backing of more than 600 block chiefs out of the party's 620 -- they are convinced that she can be a game-changer.

K2 Overdose Spike in New York: At Least 130 Cases This Week Alone

(Agencies) Almost as soon as the young man crouching on a trash-strewn street in Brooklyn pulled out a crumpled dollar bill from his pocket and emptied its contents of dried leaves into a wrapper, he had company. A half-dozen disheveled men and women walked swiftly to where the young man was rolling a cigarette of a synthetic drug known as K2 to wait for a chance to share. The drug has been the source of an alarming and

sudden surge in overdoses -- over three days this week, 130 people across New York City were treated in hospital emergency rooms after overdosing on K2, almost equaling the total for the entire month of June, according to the city's health department. About one-fourth of the overdoses, 33, took place on Tuesday along the border of Bedford-Stuyvesant and Bushwick, the same Brooklyn neighborhoods where, despite a heightened

presence of police officers, people were again openly smoking the drug on Thursday. In response to the overdoses, the city is sending a health alert to emergency rooms and other health care providers warning about the drug. The outbreak comes after officials this spring lauded what they described as a successful campaign to severely curb the prevalence of K2. On Thursday, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo announced that the State

Police would step up enforcement against the drug and aggressively go after merchants who illegally sell it. The same day, just steps from where people were using the drug, clusters of police officers patrolled beneath the elevated subway tracks along a stretch where, the day before, five bodegas had been raided. K2 is typically sold by convenience stores, though the raids did not turn up any.

A Fight to Make 'We Shall Overcome' and 'This Land Is Your Land' Copyright Free

(Agencies) The song has rung out at marches and vigils throughout the country over the last week: "We Shall Overcome." With its message of solidarity and hope, and its legacy as a civil rights anthem, "We Shall Overcome" has become a symbol of peaceful protest. Along with Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land," it is so deeply woven into the country's fabric that it is considered an American treasure, akin to a national park or a presidential monument. Both songs are considered private property, however, since each of them enjoy copyright protection. But that status could soon change, through a pair of lawsuits that seek to have the songs added to the public domain, where they would join "Happy Birthday to You," a formerly copyrighted classic recently ruled to be among the creative works available for any and all to use as they choose. While money is at the heart of almost every copyright case, the lawsuits over "We Shall Overcome" and "This Land" also

have a decidedly political tinge — they seek to decide who gets to co-opt the message of songs that were written in service of a particular point of view. According to Nora Guthrie, a daughter of Woody Guthrie, having the copyright for "This Land" has let her prevent the song from being exploited in ways that her father — well known for his Communist sympathies — would never have approved of, including what she said were attempted uses by Ronald Reagan, the National Rifle Association and the Ku Klux Klan.

"Our control of this song has nothing to do with financial gain," Ms. Guthrie, the longtime keeper of her father's cultural legacy, said in an interview. "It has to do with protecting it from Donald Trump, protecting it from the Ku Klux Klan, protecting it from all the evil forces out there." Others see the fact these songs are copyrighted at all as anathema to the spirit in which they were created. Adding these songs to the public domain, where they could be freely

adapted and built upon by new generations — and where they would generate no royalty payments — is "just part of the folk tradition," said Mark C. Rifkin, a lawyer for the firm Wolf Haldenstein Adler Freeman & Herz, which has represented the plaintiffs in all three suits. "And I don't think Woody would be bothered by it at all," Mr. Rifkin said. The presence of copyright protection for very old works can surprise people outside of the industry. The estate of George Gershwin, for example, still maintains rigorous control over his 1935 opera "Porgy and Bess," stipulating that the piece should be performed by all-black casts. Legal experts say that such cases show the difficulties in determining the proper limits of copyright, which is meant to encourage creators by giving them limited monopolies over their works. Yet the terms have gradually increased with the lobbying of corporate owners. "We can respect the rights of creators, but creators are often in the position of building on other



works, and there has to be freedom for that, too," said James Boyle, a Duke University law professor and the author of "The Public Domain: Enclosing the Commons of the Mind." As an example of art that builds freely on pre-existing work, Professor Boyle pointed to the tradition of folk music — exactly the realm from which "This Land" and "We Shall Overcome" grew. The tension is heightened when

it comes to material considered essential heritage. The family of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has used copyright to prevent his "I Have a Dream" speech — delivered at the March on Washington in 1963, where "We Shall Overcome" was most famously performed — from appearing in documentaries. Yet they also once allowed it to be used in a cellphone commercial.

Anonymous GOP donor pledges \$5 million if Trump releases tax returns



(Agencies) An anonymous donor has promised to give \$5 million to a veterans charity of Donald Trump's choosing if the presumptive Republican presidential nominee releases his tax returns, political operative and Clinton backer David Brock plans to announce Wednesday. The Manhattan billionaire has long refused to release his tax returns, arguing that he cannot do so because he is currently being audited by the Internal Revenue Service. Trump has said he will release the tax documents after his audit is complete, although the IRS said in February that there is no rule prohibiting the real estate mogul from doing so earlier than that. A release previewing a conference call with Brock scheduled for

Wednesday says the \$5 million challenge "represents an opportunity to fill in some of the unknowns about Trump including how much he has made off of potentially fraudulent ventures and how much he's actually paid in taxes. "What we do know about Trump's taxes shows that he's gone to great lengths to pay as little as possible," the release continues. "Meaning that he is avoiding paying his fair share and shifting that burden to other taxpayers."

Trump's November opponent, presumptive Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, released eight years of tax returns in July 2015 and has attacked Trump for not doing the same. "[Trump] needs to release his tax returns. The only two we

have show that he hasn't paid a penny in taxes," she said on NBC's "Meet The Press" on May 22. "It may be that he hasn't paid — ever — any federal income

tax. That's why we want to see his tax returns." Trump said in May that he expected his audit to be complete before election day, at which point he will "gladly" hand over

his tax returns. He told ABC's George Stephanopoulos that the media is "not going to learn anything" once those documents are released, however.

For The Record

(Agencies) Let me start by saying that addressing gossip is something I have never done. I don't like to give energy to the business of lies, but I wanted to participate in a larger conversation that has already begun and needs to continue. Since I'm not on social media, I decided to put my thoughts here in writing.

For the record, I am not pregnant. What I am is fed up. I'm fed up with the sport-like scrutiny and body shaming that occurs daily under the guise of "journalism," the "First Amendment" and "celebrity news."

Every day my husband and I are harassed by dozens of aggressive photographers staked outside our home who will go to shocking lengths to obtain any kind of photo, even if it means endangering us or the unlucky pedestrians who happen to be nearby. But setting aside the public safety aspect, I want to

focus on the bigger picture of what this insane tabloid ritual represents to all of us.

If I am some kind of symbol to some people out there, then clearly I am an example of the lens through which we, as a society, view our mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, female friends and colleagues. The objectification and scrutiny we put women through is absurd and disturbing. The way I am portrayed by the media is simply a reflection of how we see and portray women in general, measured against some warped standard of beauty. Sometimes cultural standards just need a different perspective so we can see them for what they really are — a collective acceptance... a subconscious agreement. We are in charge of our agreement. Little girls everywhere are absorbing our agreement, passive or otherwise. And it begins early. The message that girls are not pretty unless they're

incredibly thin, that they're not worthy of our attention unless they look like a supermodel or an actress on the cover of a magazine is something we're all willingly buying into. This conditioning is something girls then carry into womanhood. We use celebrity "news" to perpetuate this dehumanizing view of females, focused solely on one's physical appearance, which tabloids turn into a sporting event of speculation. Is she pregnant? Is she eating too much? Has she let herself go? Is her marriage on the rocks because the camera detects some physical "imperfection"? I used to tell myself that tabloids were like comic books, not to be taken seriously, just a soap opera for people to follow when they need a distraction. But I really can't tell myself that anymore because the reality is the stalking and objectification I've experienced first-hand, going on decades now, reflects the warped way we calculate a woman's worth.

(Contd on page 21)

Regain the peace, swiftly

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti need to demonstrate that they are in sync with the pain of the bereaved and the anger in Kashmir.

Once again Jammu and Kashmir is engulfed in tragedy. The death of a young militant, Burhan Wani, has given rise to violent protests across south Kashmir. The 21-year-old had become an icon for radicals on the social media and reports of attendance at his funeral vary from 30,000 to 150,000. Over 30 people have died in the past three days and hundreds have been injured, including policemen. Kashmir is on the boil as it was six years earlier, and the governments in the State and the Centre appear as unprepared as they were in 2010.

This time, however, the two governments have responded more swiftly than in 2010. Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti has begun a series of meetings with civil society groups and appealed to religious organisations and dissidents to help end the violence. Her MLAs have been directed to visit their constituencies. Essential supplies are being rushed to the Valley. Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh has called two emergency meetings on the situation and the Prime Minister, National Security Adviser and Home Minister are monitoring it hour by hour. Whether anyone in the two governments has spoken to the families of the civilians and policeman killed during the protests is unclear.

Need for restraint

For the security forces the situation is more difficult. With few tools at hand, they need to exercise maximum restraint. Protesters are setting fire to police stations and attacking security installations; the police are not in a position to deter them with effective barricades, tear gas or water cannon. The pellet guns that were acquired in 2010-11 as 'non-lethal' weapons are, when fired in proximity, lethal. Given these shortfalls, it is unrealistic to expect that they will be able to ensure that there are no casualties, which means that the Central and State governments need to take a very serious look at what other means they have to ensure that no more deaths or grievous injuries ensue.

Should the Army work with the police forces to deter attacks through more effective barricades? Or would such a step invite even greater protest? The Army's withdrawal to the barracks, leaving local security to the police, took several years

to achieve and was an important step in security reform. Unfortunately, with limited retraining or equipment for their new tasks and operating in a political and administrative vacuum, the police were hapless. It is worth exploring whether the Army can undertake the limited role of advising and aiding the police forces to exercise maximum restraint, provided such a role would be restricted to the present situation alone.

Undoubtedly the most important step that can be taken is to seek public engagement in halting the cycle of protest-death/injury, as Ms. Mufti is now doing. But de-escalating public anger will take more than appeals. In 2010, the visit of an all-party parliamentary delegation and the subsequent appointment of a group of interlocutors, of which I was a member, began the thaw, but the absence of follow-up after our mission was completed in late 2011 soon vitiated the fragile peace that had been achieved.

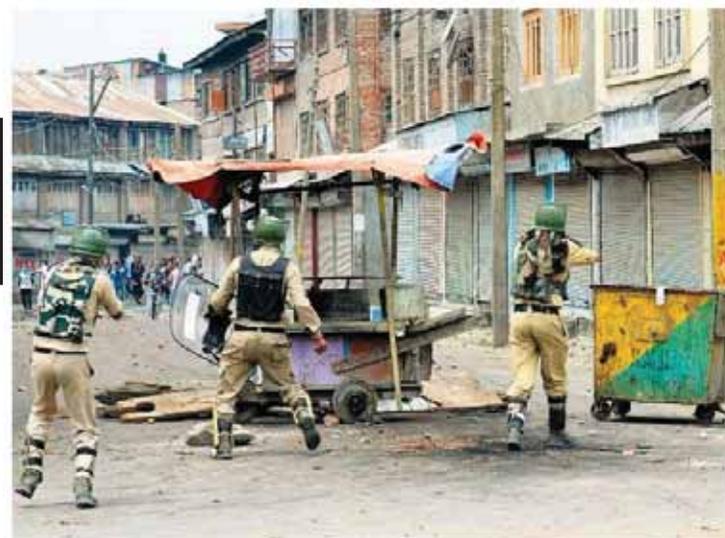
Since then the State has witnessed successive waves of trouble, from natural disasters to intense cross-border shelling and displacement of people, to terrorist attacks and communal unrest. The failure to deliver by the Peoples Democratic Party-Bharatiya Janata Party (PDP-BJP) coalition that took office in 2014 compounded the situation,

given that they had fought a bitter electoral contest. It was expected that they would reassure the electorate by choosing a grand gesture to implement their Common Minimum Programme, but instead they were mired in controversy over Article 370, the beef ban, sloganeering Kashmiri students in the rest of India — these are all issues on which the two coalition partners were seen to be at loggerheads.

Discussion in Parliament

This is the context that the PDP-BJP government will have to overcome if it wishes to do more than contain the violence temporarily. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Mufti need to appear in sync with the pain of the bereaved and the anger of the Valley. They have an upcoming opportunity — Parliament will soon be in session and the situation in Jammu and Kashmir should surely be discussed, with Mr. Modi and Ms. Mufti briefing MPs on necessary steps to be taken, especially outreach. An all-party MPs' delegation could be asked to visit the Valley immediately and report to Parliament. Though there will be cynicism about such a visit, given that few of the MPs followed up on their 2010 all-party visit, Kashmiris will be open to reversing this opinion if there is follow-up this time.

How serious the challenge



will be is demonstrated by the fact that there was violence in Kupwara and Handwara in end April, just over two months ago, that public attendance at militant funerals has grown exponentially, that the State's Jamaat-e-Islami has re-radicalised and that a new generation of Kashmiri youth has taken to militancy (I include stone-pelters).

In the aftermath of the terrible deaths in 2010, the government did take steps to address challenges that were present then. The Rangarajan Committee's recommendations resulted in a large number of training and employment programmes for Kashmiri youth, but the programmes were implemented with so little knowledge or regard for the Kashmiri cultural and political background that they proved to be a costly failure and, moreover, they actually increased the Kashmiri sense of alienation exponentially.

Three lessons

Looking back, there are three major lessons to be

learnt from the past 15 years. First, from Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, that empathy and symbolism are key to a breakthrough in Kashmir. Second, from Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, that raising expectations for a peace process and then failing to follow through will further exacerbate the situation. And third, from the past two years, that neglect is never benign in situations like the one in J&K.

Applying these three lessons to the present crisis would require taking the following three steps: first, a statement of empathy from the heart by Mr. Modi; second, follow-through on the coalition's Common Minimum Programme; and third, visible, close and ongoing cooperation between the coalition partners towards a resolution of the Kashmir issue. Though influential groups in Pakistan will continue to impede all such initiatives, their powers to do so will progressively weaken if the Indian government perseveres. Can the political will be summoned this time?

This time in Africa

Drawing a link between Indian and South African cultures during his four-nation visit to Africa, Prime Minister Narendra Modi referred to the journey from "Gujarat to Durban" as one "through the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (globalism) to Ubuntu", the last a Zulu word that expresses the core of humanism. The evocative reference imbues the historical links between India and African nations with a unique warmth. But Mr. Modi also made it clear that this visit was more than about words. In an interview to a South African newspaper, he outlined his focus areas: energy, food and maritime security. His stops at Mozambique, South Africa,

Tanzania and Kenya were accompanied by discussions on securing lines of coal and natural gas and funding capacity-building in energy production. In Tanzania and Mozambique, in particular, there were discussions on enhancing the export of pulses to India to meet a demand shortfall. As he travelled along the southern coast of Africa, Mr. Modi spoke to his hosts in detail about shoring up maritime ties as part of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and linking India's own "Sagar-Mala" outreach for Indian Ocean islands with the South Africa-authored "Operation Phakisa", that focusses on Africa's combined strengths in blue economies and ocean governance. India has been

slow to upgrade ties with Africa, and it must chart its own trajectory without competing with, or being inhibited by, China's formidable presence in the continent. China's current hold in trade and investment in Africa is three times India's, and South Africa, for instance, has a key role in promoting the Maritime Silk Route programme as part of the One Belt One Road initiative. Mr. Modi's visit to these four countries in southern and east Africa should, therefore, be seen as a work in progress. Africa is a continent of 54 countries, and each has diverse reasons to improve ties with India — from sharing low-cost technologies and pharmaceuticals, building on the Solar Alliance and

renewable energies, and growing markets for each other's goods. For instance, 84 per cent of India's imports from the Sub-Saharan region still come from raw materials and natural resources, not consumer or processed goods. However, if there was one message that Mr. Modi could have emphasised more, it was the concern over racism in India that students and others from Africa often face. As he spoke in Durban to the Indian community on the history of racism that Indians and Africans had fought together for many decades, a line about India's commitment to fight the remaining vestiges of racism domestically would not have been out of place. The omission is, in fact, also a reminder that the outreach to African countries needs to be sustained back home in Indian cities too, in the true spirit of "Ubuntu".

How The West Failed Iraq Testing the Rule of Law in the South China Sea

Chilcot report underlines that Western policymakers didn't tread lightly or with humility

As the invasion of Iraq was about to commence in March 2003, Colonel Tim Collins addressed his men of the 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment gathered on the Iraq-Kuwait border: "We go to liberate, not to conquer... We are entering Iraq to free a people and the only flag which will be flown in that ancient land is their own... Iraq is steeped in history..... Tread lightly there." But lightly the coalition forces did not tread on history and the results are for all to see.

The UK has released the results of an inquiry by Sir John Chilcot, a retired civil servant and diplomat, into the decision-making that led to the Iraq war. It criticises British policymakers, including the then Prime Minister Tony Blair, for exaggerating the strength of intelligence on Iraq's purported weapons of mass destruction programmes, not properly preparing for the conflict, and failing to exhaust diplomatic options before resorting to the use of force. The report concludes that the British government accepted inaccurate assessments and poor planning from Washington and deliberately inflated the threat posed by Iraq in the weeks preceding the invasion. The invasion was planned "before the peaceful options for disarmament had been exhausted". All in all, it is a damning indictment of the UK's role in the war against Saddam Hussein.

Yet, the Blair government is cleared of one of the most controversial charges: That it deliberately manipulated or "sexed up" the case. The inquiry concludes that "there is no evidence that intelligence was improperly included in the dossier or that Number 10 improperly influenced the text". Blair has responded by maintaining that he "made the right decision and the world is better and safer" but that he has "more sorrow, regret and apology than you may ever know or can believe". The Chilcot report itself is unlikely to change any views either about Blair or the Iraq war. But the Iraq war and its aftermath has had a highly deleterious impact on the self-confidence of the UK as a nation. The Iraq adventure was meant to be the first step towards the transformation of the entire region as an answer to the Islamist radicalism being spawned by its authoritarian regimes. The neo-conservatives seemed to have succeeded where the liberals and the realists of yore had failed — in blending American values with American national interests. The Iraq war confounded most ideological categories and shattered a lot of myths about the use of force as liberals found it hard to oppose a war that would remove a genocidal regime. After all, liberals had been advocating a global interventionist agenda throughout the '90s. The realists meanwhile found themselves isolated in a post-9/11 strategic environment where their argument for maintaining a balance of power as the best way to serve American

national interests in the Middle East was fast losing currency.

The idea that democratisation of the Middle East would be the best antidote to Islamist extremism seemed like an idea whose time had come. Ideas, however, have strange ways of manifesting themselves in reality. Today, democratisation of the region is on no one's agenda. Instead, the authoritarian regimes of the region — Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria — are all stronger than before, with repression at an all time high. The Shia-Sunni rivalry is at its most ferocious with this year's Ramzan one of the bloodiest ever. Iraq continues to struggle for survival burdened with an incompetent political elite and lack of interest from regional and global powers.

If the US-led coalition would have been successful in giving a modicum of stability to Iraq, and left with a region relatively at ease with itself, the mistakes of American and British policymakers would have been viewed in a kinder light. The West, however, decided to leave Iraq with various factions fighting each other for political spoils and an entire region in turmoil as a result. In the aftermath of the failed Bay of Pigs fiasco, Arthur Schlesinger complained to John Kennedy, "We not only look like imperialists... we look like stupid, ineffectual imperialists, which is worst of all." Post-Iraq, the West has been looking precisely like a "stupid, ineffectual imperialist." As a result, domestic politics in London is now becoming so inward-looking that even Western Europe looks a part apart from middle England.

History has a brutal way of making arrogance recognise its importance. Treading lightly is often the best alternative, something Collins remembered but Western policymakers did not.

How China reacts to the sweeping legal defeat over its claims to the South China Sea will tell the world a lot about its approach to international law, the use — measured or otherwise — of its enormous power, and its global ambitions. So far, the signs are troubling. Beijing has defiantly rejected an international arbitration court's jurisdiction over a case brought by the Philippines and insisted it will not accept Tuesday's pathbreaking judgment. The unanimous ruling, by a five-judge tribunal in The Hague, was more favorable toward the Philippines and broader in scope than experts had predicted. It said that under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, China had no legal basis to claim historic rights over most of the waterway, which is rich in resources and carries \$5 trillion in annual trade. The panel also faulted China for its aggressive attempts to establish sovereignty by shipping tons of dirt to transform small reefs and rocks into artificial islands with airstrips and other military structures. China's neighbors fear that it intends to use these outposts to restrict navigation and the rights of others to fish and explore for oil and gas. The Philippines filed the case in 2013 after China took control of a reef known as Scarborough Shoal. The case accused Beijing of interfering with fishing, endangering ships and failing to protect marine life. Manila also asked the tribunal to reject China's claims to sovereignty within a so-called nine-dash line that encompasses much of the South China Sea and appears on official Chinese maps. The judges ruled for the Philippines on most claims in its complaint: China had indeed violated international law by causing "irreparable harm" to the marine environment, endangering ships and interfering with Philippine fishing and oil exploration. Further, China had illegally built an artificial island on Mischief Reef, complete with a military airstrip, in waters belonging to the Philippines. The Law of the Sea treaty sets rules for establishing zones of control over the oceans based on distances to coastlines. In addition to China and the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei, Indonesia and Taiwan all claim parts of the South China Sea. The tribunal is authorized to deal with maritime disputes, not the underlying land claims to the islands, reefs and rocks that are also contested. The decision is the first international ruling on the disputed maritime issues in the South China Sea. There are serious concerns about what will happen next. The tribunal has no authority to enforce its ruling, and China, which boycotted the legal process, threatens to use force to protect the maritime interests the court has now declared illegal. What this means in practice is not clear. Given China's stake in peaceful trade with the rest of the world, it would be foolish for President Xi Jinping to take provocative actions that could inflame regional tensions and conceivably lead to a military confrontation with its neighbors or the United States. Retaliatory measures — further island-building at Scarborough Shoal, for instance, or declaring an air defense zone over large portions of the South China Sea — would be risky. In fact, the ruling offers a fresh opportunity to address maritime disputes in a peaceful manner. China's ambassador to the United States, Cui Tiankai, condemned Tuesday's ruling but said Beijing remains open to negotiations. Nations in the region have often gone wobbly in the face of pressure from Beijing. At this critical moment, despite competing interests of their own, they need to join the Philippines in endorsing the tribunal decision and then proceed, if necessary, with their own arbitration cases.



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Decoding The Myth Of Burhan Wani - And What Delhi Is Ignoring Again

Mihir Swarup Sharma

A sea of people came to the funeral of Burhan Wani, the photogenic 22-year-old Kashmiri jihadist killed last week.

The crowd at Wani's South Kashmir hometown of Tral appeared largely peaceful; but, elsewhere, violence broke out. At least 21 people were killed over the weekend and, it's important to note, almost half of the 300 injured were members of the security forces. Government offices have been attacked across the state; Kashmir looks to be on the edge of another major eruption.

And such an eruption has been coming for some time. New Delhi largely wasted a decade of uneasy quiet, imagining that it meant that peace had returned to the Valley, and in the years since 2008, as anger has built up, it has shown itself bereft of any ideas other than those that it used to quell militancy in the 1990s. Vajpayee's new beginning, when he promised to treat Kashmir with "insaniyat", has been betrayed by New Delhi's complacency.

As the Valley's mourning of Wani's death shows, New Delhi has been fooling itself if it thinks Kashmir is moving towards "normalcy" - or that it is edging towards acceptance of its place within the Indian state. The wounds of the 1990s were deep; the state was angry, but it needed time to recover. Yet those wounds stayed open, and so the state stayed angry. In fact, a whole new generation arrived, even angrier, and radicalised itself on Facebook.

In the age of Facebook and Twitter, grievances do not die out on their own; they need to be addressed. New Delhi imagined that young Kashmiris, who weren't exposed to the violence of the 1990s, might be better disposed to the Indian state than their parents or elder brothers. But life for a young man in the most militarised area in the world is a series of humiliations, some petty, some not. The occasional horrific incident - the rapes and murders that are the inevitable consequence of any security force being granted legal impunity - would reverberate across their blogs, their Twitter timelines, their Facebook pages. Nor could the memory of crackdowns and curfews die when anyone with a mobile phone could go online and uncover the excesses of the

past. Worst of all, if they sought on the other side of the ledger for some act of restitution by the Indian state, there was not one that they could find.

And so you had boys like Wani, boys who left home at 15 to become militants, and then seemed to spend most of their time arranging themselves artistically with guns for photos they would then post online. This is not to minimise the threat that boys like Wani posed as they turned into men; it is to emphasise it. The life of a militant, however ersatz in some cases, was being glamorised once again. And, meanwhile, politics continued to be cynical and unchanging; "soft" separatists got into bed with the Sangh Parivar; geriatric fundamentalists took Indian handouts while brutally imposing Islamism on what may once have been, in the dim past, a nationalist struggle; and New Delhi kept on making plans guaranteed to prevent Kashmiris from feeling secure, especially about their land - suggesting it be handed over to temple trusts earlier, and to retired soldiers

now. But not as many were being killed, so people thought Kashmir was "normal".

This is nonsense. Kashmir will not be normal till it is treated like it is normal. It is not going to be normal while it is the most militarised part of the world, with one soldier for every 15 or so residents. It is not going to be a normal Indian state while basic Indian rights are suspended, and those omnipresent soldiers know they are above the laws that constrain them in the "mainland". It is not going to be normal, or even slightly Indian, till the state holds itself accountable for its actions, the way it would in other parts of India.

The legend that grew around Wani, true or not, underlines these truths. Here is the legend: that Wani, a 15-year-old schoolboy, "good in studies", the son of a schoolmaster, saw his elder brother beaten up by men in the uniforms of the Indian state and ran away - to pick up a gun, and return as a jihadist. Note why this story resonates: an "educated" boy, not someone without prospects; the elder brother, who should be a



protector, rendered helpless; the feeling of helplessness turned into power once you have a gun. There's a reason why Wani became the first homegrown Kashmiri jihadist to be famous across the Valley for over a decade. Remember who he was killed with, too: his lieutenant was a former "surrendered" militant, who picked up a gun again two years ago. Do these stories sound like they're from a place becoming more peaceful?

New Delhi's enforcers, it seems, are unable to understand the power of a story. They did not understand that ending a story like this with a "martyr's death" would multiply its power manifold. According to Muzamil Jaleel in The Indian Express, they had decided to kill Wani already; they waited only for the Chief Minister's party to win an election in Anantnag, and then they moved in on where Wani was. If

they understand only one way to deal with the Wanis of the world, then this unimaginative stupidity will prove our undoing.

With the Congress' trademark clunky triteness, its spokesman Abhishek Manu Singhvi tweeted: I cannot mourn a man who took up arms against my state. Well, don't - nobody expects you to. But if that's your first reaction to a hundred thousand mourners in Kashmir, then you're at best missing the point, and at worst a liberal cynically playing to a hyper-nationalist gallery. If New Delhi's politicians do not seek to even understand what drives stories like Wani's, what gives them into blood-soaked legends, and how legends moved that mob of mourners, then they should quit and go back to jobs where they are capable of more coherent thought.

(Contd on page 20)

Government May Ignore Desi Critics, But What About US?

Yashwant Sinha

India's annual growth rate in the two years since the present government assumed office has been impressive. It was 7.2% in 2014-15 and 7.6% in 2015-16. In the last quarter of 2015-16 it was 7.9% which was a matter of great joy and celebration. The method of calculating the GDP was changed by the government when it came into office in 2014. Instead of calculating growth in terms of increase in production, we shifted to calculating it in terms of the value added. According to this formula, the growth rates of 2012-13 and 2013-14 were also revised upwards from 4.5% to 5.6% and 4.7% to 6.6% respectively. The Congress party did not challenge the new formula because it provided great relief to it because it considerably upped the growth rate as far as the last two years of its regime are concerned. Others did not challenge it because it was consistent with international practice. But today, a debate is raging about the validity of the latest figures released by the Department of Statistics. What are the issues being debated? The first - and perhaps the most important - is regarding the role played by the so-called 'discrepancies' in the calculation of GDP. Obviously the 'discrepancy' figure which was less than Rs. 30,000 crore a year ago has gone up to Rs. 1,40,000 crore in 2015-16, and it is this increase which has bloated the growth figure of the last quarter. The second is that if the 'discrepancies' are

taken out, then the growth figure sinks to 3.9%. The third is that there is a big contradiction between the growth figures when looked at from the demand side and from the supply side. The supply side shows a growth of 7.9%, and the demand side shows a growth of 5.4%. The fourth factor which baffles analysts is that if industrial production is not growing, if exports are down month after month, if the banks are distressed and NPAs (non-performing assets) are increasing, if private sector investment is not picking up, if agriculture is in distress and if the services sector is stagnating, then where is this growth coming from?

Now the US has joined the chorus and its State Department has said that though India is one of the fastest growing countries in the world, the depressed investor sentiment suggests that the 7.5% growth rate maybe overstated.

So even if we do not take domestic critics seriously, we cannot let our best friend, namely the US, remain unconvinced? The desis can get lost, but the government of India cannot ignore the sentiment in Washington. It has to come out with a clarification, and preferably at the political level, because that is where the celebrations are the most joyful.

The task is enormous. The Chief Statistician of the Government of India had promised a month ago that he would release the supply use table (SUT) to clear the data discrepancies. However, they would be only

for the years 2011-12 and 2012-13. Such data release in whatever form for 2015-16 should also be released simultaneously so that it can also be scrutinized by the experts. We cannot allow the confusion to continue for years.

When I was a district officer in the late 60s of the last century, we were called upon to collect and submit various growth statistics to the state headquarters for compilation and onward transmission. We used to collect these figures from the Revenue Department employee at the village level. He used to do it on the basis of 'eye estimation', specially as far as agricultural statistics were concerned. It can easily be guessed how reliable would such estimates be. Since I was aware of this fundamental weakness in the collection of our statistics, in my budget speech of 1999, I proposed that the whole issue of collection, compilation and retrieval of statistics be looked at afresh. We appointed a committee under Dr Rangrajan to examine the whole issue and give us a report. He did so and some institutional and administrative changes have been made on the basis of that report. But when I was chairing the standing committee on Finance during the last Lok Sabha, we used to examine the functioning of the Department of Statistics also. At times we were aghast at some of its bloopers.

Politicians Like Smriti Irani Use Feminism When Convenient



When I was finishing my PhD and starting to look for a job, a senior academic chose to give me this unsolicited advice - 'You should seriously consider applying to the US. Look at how many boxes you will tick on an equal opportunities form.' It did not really matter what I worked on, or whether that was any good at all, or indeed why on earth the same boxes could not be ticked on that equal opportunities form in the UK itself, where I was doing my PhD. What I took him to mean was that by being a certain kind of person, I was primarily a series of tokenism opportunities.

One of the boxes I would have ticked, and still do on equal opportunities form, is that of gender. And for the existence of that box, mandatory on any such form, we have the early and second-wave feminists of the last century to thank. Many of their achievements - such as the right of women to work, to vote, and control their bodies have become commonsense and for many women, part of the reality they can take for granted. But too often we wake up to developments which reveal the precariousness of these hard-won achievements.

A recent piece on this website raised a good and important point about pro-women credentials of our women politicians amidst rampant misogyny in our society. What Barkha Dutt notices about Smriti Irani's casual misogyny towards her and more concerted misogyny towards a political rival found resonance in current British politics. The Tory Brexiteer Andrea Leadsom claimed that being a mother made her a much more suitable Prime Minister than her rival in the Conservative Party leadership battle Theresa May, who has nephews and nieces, but no children of her own.

Notwithstanding the political storm that has followed since that ultimately resulted in her withdrawal from the contest, Leadsom's pronouncements on the worthiness of her opponent would have only been ever more excoriating had May not been married, or then was not heterosexual, or indeed then had not been in a long-term relationship. That this is even a political claim, made by a woman of privilege, against another woman of privilege, in a leadership contest of a mainstream political party in

a western democracy in 2016, beggars belief. (But then very little in the UK of the last two weeks has come with self-explanatory packaging.) What can possibly explain the politics of our women leaders and their clearly anti-women conduct?

Too many recent developments such as these seem to indicate that all that the first and second wave feminists fought for has now gone out of the window, or more accurately, become hostage to expedient and/or token feminisms. While a

number of women today hold public office simply or primarily because of their gender - from all-women panchayats to Pratibha Patil's presidential tenure - others, who self-identify their position as meritocratic, from Smriti Irani to Andrea Leadsom, expediently use their status in the opposition, and are seldom rooted in a feminist politics. Tokenist reckoning at least makes a nod to history and its wrongs, and has the advantage of (re)distributing some of the goodies of power, privilege, and opportunity to people who have in the past been neglected or actively kept away from the mainstream. At its substantive best, such kind of thinking results is driven towards social justice and in its fullness represents the ideal behind reservations, for example. At its worst, it is lip-service and empty of either intent or content, and mere box-ticking (think Pratibha Patil again).

Expedient politics is different. Regardless of their individual trajectories, for women like Leadsom and

Irani, it is sometimes useful being a woman. Neither Irani in India nor Leadsom in the UK would have quite had the career they have had in the absence of the foundational work of feminist politics, of which they are undoubtedly beneficiaries. The success (as well as the failure) of that foundational work lies in being able to forget that history. While they are often quick to seek refuge in the space created by feminist politics and point out any hostile interlocution as misogyny (and on many occasions, it is indeed so), at the same time, the irony of scarcely thinking twice before running down the sisterhood themselves, accusing them of not being the right wholesome, pre-feminist throwbacks, is entirely lost on them. This is because theirs is an expedient feminist position, where the history, politics, and the values of feminism is incidental to their pursuit of power and privilege, and unlike even the tokenist kind, is not anchored in any ideal other than being self-serving.

'India Is A Hindu Nation,' PV Narasimha Rao Told Me

Mani Shankar Aiyar

The high-profile launch of the talented young 32-year-old historian Vinay Sitapati's biography of PV Narasimha Rao, Half-Lion, has restored to public focus the issue of the Babri Masjid. It is an issue that never really went away from the lived experience of the minority Muslim community despite the efforts of the ruling Sangh Parivar and much of India's Hindu middle class to put it all behind us. The shelving of the Liberhan Commission report was part of that effort to let sleeping dogs lie, and leave it to the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court to decide when - if ever - to stir the pot again.

We now have before us PVNR's defence of himself, Sitapati's explanation of PVNR's action - or inaction - and Cabinet Secretary Naresh Chandra's intervention in the Q&A session that followed the launch. The issue also took up a fair amount of TV time and newspaper space. I am not sure there remain any further angles to be explored.

The principal justification that is advanced for President's Rule not having been invoked against the Kalyan Singh government in UP before Black Sunday, 6 December 1992, is that Article 356 does not provide for an apprehended or prospective breakdown of constitutional governance; it is argued that it can only be invoked after it is established that the constitutional machinery has indeed broken down. And the authority to certify this is the President's representative in the state capital, namely, the Governor of the state. Since the Governor never recommended

President's Rule and the Chief Minister was pledged in the Supreme Court to protecting the mosque, the Prime Minister of the day, goes the argument, could not have taken it upon himself to proclaim President's Rule when the structure was still standing.

There has been further embellishing of this argument by underlining that neither the cabinet nor any of its committees explicitly authorized the union government to recommend President's Rule. Attention has also been drawn to the National Integration Council not having passed any resolution or taken any recorded decision to overthrow the Kalyan Singh Raj.

To put this defence of PVNR in perspective, it is necessary to look closely at the wording of Article 356. While it certainly mentions the "receipt of a report from the Governor", the article also says "or otherwise". In other words, there is no legal or constitutional obligation to await a report from a recalcitrant Governor to determine whether "a situation has arisen in which the Government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution". The union government may make such a determination. Given that PVNR was repeatedly warned by his parliamentary and cabinet colleagues of the nefarious plans being hatched for the destruction of the mosque, most especially by former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar on the floor of the House as early as July 1992 that building materials and demolition equipment had arrived and was being stored

in the vicinity of the mosque, it cannot be said that there was no imminent threat to the mosque. The apprehensions of secular Indians were further stoked by notorious slogans like, "Ek dhakka aur do/Babri Masjid toh do" and "Ram ki saugandh ham khaate hain/Mandir wahin banayenge" - "wahin" relating to the merab of the mosque where the garba griha of the mandir was proposed to be located. I had joined a large number of fellow MPs in signing a petition we submitted to the Prime Minister after Chandra Shekhar's shock information, seeking his immediate intervention to protect the mosque. Why then could the Prime Minister not have taken pre-emptive action within the framework of the extant wording of Article 356? There would have been no danger of his government falling because the numbers of MPs seeking such action was far more than the votes of the votaries of destroying a place of worship to accommodate another place of worship.

There was an immediate precedent on which PVNR could have relied to make his own judgement. In January 1991, the Chandrashekhar government had concluded that the Tamil Nadu Governor, SS Barnala, was colluding with the state government and the LTTE to the detriment of national security. The union government decided that, in the absence of a recommendation from the Governor to proclaim President's Rule, they could "otherwise" come to this conclusion and recommended President's Rule to Rashtrapati Bhawan. (Contd on page 20)

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South China Sea ruling a shot in the arm for India, a damning indictment of Beijing, say experts

(Agencies) New Delhi The verdict of The Hague, rejecting China's claims to economic rights across large swathes of the South China Sea, is a damning indictment of Beijing. Its significance also lies in its stunning clarity - it leaves China with absolutely no room for re-interpretation. For India, it was a sweet verdict, because it was recently stifled by China at the Nuclear Suppliers Group. So the verdict by the UN-appointed international court of arbitration was greeted with much satisfaction by New Delhi. China said it neither accepts nor recognizes the tribunal's verdict India's comment after the verdict was measured, but it was chiding China, for sure. "Sea lanes of communication passing through the South China Sea are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development. As a State

Party to the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea), India urges all parties to show utmost respect for the UNCLOS, which establishes the international legal order of the seas and oceans" the external affairs ministry said in a statement. Simultaneously, India's statement was also a reminder that India took an adverse UNCLOS ruling on the chin to resolve a maritime boundary issue with Bangladesh two years ago. The MEA stated, "India supports freedom of navigation and over flight, and unimpeded commerce, based on the principles of international law, as reflected notably in the UNCLOS. India believes that States should resolve disputes through peaceful means without threat or use of force and exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that could

complicate or escalate disputes affecting peace and stability."

It was a strong criticism of China's decision to disregard the award and continue as before. As expected, when China rejected the ruling it cited 2,000 years of history. "China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea shall under no circumstances be affected by those awards." Shyam Saran, former foreign secretary said, "It's a damning indictment. Of course they can up the ante. But what does it do to them? They would appear as a rogue state if they fail to abide by international law." Former NSA, Shivshankar Menon said he expects China to continue its aggressive expansionism in the South China Sea in the near future. "They cannot be seen to be backing down." Dr Mohan Malik, professor of Asian security in



Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies Hawaii, said the verdict would be beneficial for India, too, not just for the Philippines. "The verdict is a welcome development for India's economic (especially oil exploration in the South China Sea off Vietnam) and strategic interests. It provides legal

and diplomatic cover for increased Indian naval engagement with other south-east Asian countries," he said. The Hague's verdict could be a shot in the arm for other claimants like Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam etc.

Terrorists switch tactics, lob grenades at securitymen from behind stone-pelters



(Agencies) New Delhi : As a fresh cycle of violence is witnessed in Jammu & Kashmir after the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Burhan Wani, the security agencies are noticing a switch in tactics, with terrorists now taking shelter behind stone-pelters to lob grenades at security personnel, increased terror activity in outlying areas of towns and a new sense of belligerence among protesters.

According to intelligence sources, during the protests over the past few days in J&K, it has come to light that terrorists were using stone-pelting mobs as a shield to lob grenades at police and security forces. It was this trend that was highlighted by J&K chief minister Mehbooba Mufti on Tuesday when she blamed the latest round of unrest on "vested interests". This tactic serves as a double-edge weapon as it not only targets the security personnel but exposes them to a situation where self-defence may lead them to fire at the protesters, resulting in fatalities among impassioned youth. "Deaths of young men

have a spiralling effect, leading to further protests against use of force and giving terrorists a reason to fan popular sentiment against the security forces in J&K," said an intelligence officer. Another new trend visible to the security establishment is that while towns are relatively quiet, outlying areas have become the new terror hotbeds. This is where more terrorists are hiding and being engaged in encounters by counter-terror forces, the officer said.

Interestingly, while the latest round of protests are not huge as far as number of protesters are concerned, they are turning out to far more violent. "The belligerence of protesters is a bigger problem than their numbers. It has been noticed while the strength of the protesting mobs may not be huge, they are more belligerent in engaging the security forces in a confrontation," a top officer of the security establishment said and pointed to recent incidents of violent mobs setting fire to police stations and CRPF pickets and even pushing a policeman along with his vehicle into the Jhelum river. "This shows that if there are indeed 'outsider' elements instigating the mobs, they have succeeded in convincing the protesters to be more belligerent and destructive," said the officer.

Denied water, tribal woman in UP digs her own well

(Agencies) Lucknow: A tribal woman in Uttar Pradesh's parched Bundelkhand has dug a well almost single-handedly for 40 families after her upper caste neighbours denied them access to a hand-pump. "We are tribals and lived in Duddhi village. But we were not allowed to use the hand-pump by the upper caste residents. Arranging for a pot of drinking water was an everyday battle we had to face for the quest of survival," said Kasturi. About five years ago, she felt she could no longer take the insult anymore. "I told my sons that I will move to another place. In a few days I made a hut near a forest area." Even her children criticized her move to relocate. "Everyone thought that I have lost my balance. Some in fact started calling me names," she said. "Though I was happy, the problem of drinking water persisted." The only source of water for Kasturi was a jhir (oozing water from rocks) which involved collection of water drop by drop. "This was not a permanent source and often an entire day was needed to collect a pot of water," said activist Amit Soni, who works for the Saharia tribe to which Kasturi



belongs. Kasturi decided to dig the well when she went without water for two days. She started digging at different places but failed. "Each time I thought I would not take it further but then I had no option." In January, she attempted again but was not alone this time. Her sons, daughters-in-law and daughter joined her. "By April, about 40 tribal families were on the job. In the mid of June, a 25 feet deep well was ready but there was no water. Still we decided to dig it further thinking that rain water would be conserved during monsoon. However, a week later, we hit a rock and water oozed out."

6-year-old dead as dad shoves onion in throat as punishment

(Agencies) AURANGABAD: A six-year-old choked on an onion allegedly shoved into her throat by her father as punishment for not being able to count from 1-15 in the right sequence. Later he buried the body in the village graveyard. The incident occurred on July 9 in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district. The family lived at Belapur village, on the outskirts of Aurangabad city. It was only discovered on Monday night after the girl's mother mustered the courage to go to the police. Accused Sanjay Kute (32) was arrested on Tuesday morning. The girl, Bharti, was a student of first standard at the village-based zilla parishad school where she was admitted earlier this month. Detailing how the crime occurred, the police said Kute, a labourer, was supervising her studies on Saturday night around 9.30pm, when Bharti, who was learning numbers from 1 to 15, skipped 12 and



jumped straight to 13 after 11. Kute flew into a rage, slapped her, and when she cried, he picked up an onion and stuffed it into her mouth. But it went deeper, and Bharti suffocated and fell unconscious. Kute took his daughter to Bajaj Hospital where she was declared brought dead.

Kashmir on boil: PM calls for peace, Mehbooba Mufti slams 'vested interests'

(Agencies) New Delhi: On a day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi appealed for peace in Jammu & Kashmir, the Centre's efforts to stabilise the situation in the volatile border state got a boost with chief minister Mehbooba Mufti refusing to succumb to pressure and blaming the unrest on "vested interests". Mehbooba on Tuesday appealed to parents in J&K not to allow anybody "to play with the future of their children" as she asserted that violence achieves nothing but bloodshed. In her first televised address since violence erupted in Kashmir, she said, "While certain quarters are only interested in playing politics over the dead bodies of the youth, it is the family members of these slain youth who have to live with this pain forever." Commenting on the unrest, she said, "Unfortunately, some elements are hell bent upon fomenting trouble, mayhem and bloodshed in Kashmir for their vested interests and are playing with the lives of the innocent youth by instigating them to indulge in extreme violence resulting in a vicious cycle of

frenzy and bloodshed." She said while hundreds and thousands of people may be attending the funerals of the slain youth, not many bother to visit these anguished families later to help them out of difficult circumstances. "The government is, however, alive to the abject condition of such distressed families. We will try to work out a mechanism to ensure a secure and dignified living for the kith and kin of the victims of violence," she said. Mehbooba's cooperation with the Centre's efforts to tackle the situation in J&K came in for appreciation during the review meeting chaired by the prime minister here on Tuesday. Home minister Rajnath Singh, while briefing Modi, also mentioned the positive impact of appeals made by Sonia Gandhi and Mamata Banerjee for peace in the Valley. On Tuesday, the prime minister too appealed to the people of J&K to maintain peace. "He (PM) has appealed to the people of J&K to maintain peace so that the situation can normalise. He (PM) also expressed hope that no innocent person



should face any kind of inconvenience or loss," said minister of state for PMO, Jitendra Singh. Meanwhile, Rajnath has put off his visit to the US, scheduled to start on July 17, to oversee efforts to restore normalcy in the Valley and also brief Parliament on the violence when it convenes on July 18. During the review meeting attended by Rajnath, finance minister Arun Jaitley, defence minister Manohar Parrikar, foreign minister Sushma Swaraj and national security adviser Ajit Doval, Modi questioned the projection of Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Burhan Wani as a "hero" in a section of the media,

despite the fact that he faced 15-16 police cases, most of them registered under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act. "He was working to disintegrate the nation, not to mention his armed attacks on sarpanchs, police parties and Rashtriya Rifles personnel. Besides, he was uploading videos on social media calling J&K youth to join militancy, apart from endorsing the idea of khilafat influenced by outfits like the Islamic State," said a J&K police official. Stay updated on the go with Times of India News App. Click here to download it for your device.

Raj Babbar Appointed Uttar Pradesh Congress Chief



(Agencies) New Delhi Actor-turned-politician Raj Babbar will lead the Congress as state unit president in the slog overs ahead of crucial assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh to be held early next year. Mr Babbar, 64, is a Congress spokesperson and represents Uttarakhand in the Rajya Sabha. He was once a member of the Samajwadi Party and joined the Congress some years ago, famously defeating Dimple Yadav, the wife of UP chief minister Akhilesh Yadav, in a by-election in 2009, to win a Lok Sabha seat from the state. Ghulam Nabi Azad, senior Congress leader in charge of UP, announced Mr Babbar's appointment rejecting suggestions that he is an "outsider." "Raj Babbar was born in UP and has been a member of Parliament from UP in both houses," Mr Azad pointed out, also naming three vice presidents in UP including controversial politician Imran Masood, who was jailed in 2014 for a hate speech against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said the party would announce its candidate for chief minister only once the campaign for UP begins and also refused to talk about a lead role in it for Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, daughter of Congress president Sonia Gandhi, amid speculation over her hour-long meeting with Mr Azad at his residence this afternoon.

Islamic State Readies For Fall Of 'Caliphate'

(Agencies) Even as it launches waves of terrorist attacks around the globe, the Islamic State is quietly preparing its followers for the eventual collapse of the caliphate it proclaimed with great fanfare two years ago. In public messages and in recent actions in Syria, the group's leaders are acknowledging the terrorist organization's declining fortunes on the battlefield while bracing for the possibility that its remaining strongholds could fall. At the same time, the group is vowing to press on with its recent campaign of violence, even if the terrorists themselves are driven underground. U.S. counterterrorism experts believe the masscasualty attacks in Istanbul and Baghdad in the past month were largely a response to military reversals in Iraq and Syria.

Such terrorist acts are likely to continue and even intensify, at least initially, analysts say, as the group evolves from a quasi-state with territorial holdings to a shadowy and diffuse network with branches and cells on at least three continents. Indeed, while the loss of a physical sanctuary would constitute a major blow to the Islamic State - severely limiting, for example, its ability to raise money, train recruits or plan complex terrorist operations - the group's highly decentralized nature ensures that it will remain dangerous for some time to come, according to current and former U.S. officials and terrorism experts. "Where al-Qaida was hierarchical and somewhat controlled, these guys are not. They have all the energy and unpredictability of a populist movement," said Michael Hayden, the



retired Air Force general who headed the CIA from 2006 to 2009. Islamic State officials, in public statements and in interviews, insist that the group's "caliphate" project remains viable while also acknowledging that military setbacks have forced a change in strategy.

"While we see our core structure in Iraq and Syria under attack, we have been able to expand and have shifted some of our command, media and wealth structure to different countries," a longtime Islamic State operative, speaking through an Internet-based audio service, said in an interview. "We do have, every day, people reaching out and telling us they want to come to the caliphate," said the operative, who agreed to speak to a Western journalist on the condition that his name and physical location not be revealed. "But we tell them to stay in their countries and rather wait to do something there." But signs of desperation are mounting weekly inside the caliphate, which shrank by another 12 percent in the first six months of 2016,

according to a report last week by IHS Inc., an analysis and consulting firm. A series of communiques issued in the Islamic State's Syrian enclave last month closed down Internet cafes in one province and ordered the destruction of TVs and satellite dishes in another. The orders, billed as an effort to eliminate a tool for "disseminating infidel beliefs," effectively cut off access to news from the outside world. More signals of a coming downfall are contained in statements issued by Islamic State officials over the past six weeks, a period that saw the group's fighters retreating across multiple fronts, from Fallujah in central Iraq to the Syrian-Turkish border. A remarkable editorial last month in al-Naba, the Islamic State's weekly Arabic newsletter, offered a gloomy assessment of the caliphate's prospects, acknowledging the possibility that all its territorial holdings could ultimately be lost.

Decision On RBI Chief Looms, The Boxes PM Modi Will Seek To Check



(Agencies) As Prime Minister Narendra Modi prepares to pick a new Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor, he will need to juggle competing demands from within his own party, the economy's need for more stimulus and investors' demands for an independent thinker. Global and Indian investors are on edge with reports that Prime Minister Modi could select the new governor of the RBI within 48 hours. Outgoing RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan stunned financial markets last month by announcing he would step down in September after a single three-year term to return to academia.

Dr Rajan was held in high esteem for defusing a currency crisis, cutting interest rates and overhauling the way the RBI operates, including introducing inflation targeting. But his sudden exit after persistent criticism from BJP law-maker Subramanian Swamy and right-wing affiliates has raised questions about the RBI's independence. That has made the choice of the next RBI governor critical. Of the candidates widely seen as on the short-list, three insiders - current Deputy Governor Urjit Patel and former Deputy Governors Rakesh Mohan and Subir Gokarn - would likely easily pass that muster, and are seen by markets as ensuring

both policy continuity and the RBI's independence.

"The candidates from RBI (Gokarn, Mohan, Patel) would have been considered steady hands that would

continue current Governor Raghuram Rajan's inflation targeting framework (and be the least disruptive)," BNP said in an email to clients on Tuesday. Less certain is State Bank of India chair Arundhati Bhattacharya. She is a career commercial banker with no economics background, but may be seen as an ideal candidate with the inside know-how to best deal with \$130 billion in non-performing loans weighing on the banking sector. But PM Modi will also need to reconcile market demands with those from forces within his own administration. As with previous

governments, PM Modi and Finance Minister Arun Jaitley are bound to prefer somebody who is more accommodating on interest rates, especially given the new governor's term should run through the government's re-election in around three years. Dr Rajan was widely seen as hawkish on inflation, though the RBI has cut rates by a total of 150 basis points since last year. Recently he turned more stubborn on the prospects of further easing, complaining Indian banks were not passing along most of the RBI's rate reductions to companies and

consumers. Meanwhile, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the ideological mentor of the ruling BJP, is keen on a candidate who does not seek the limelight - an accusation often thrown at Dr Rajan by some officials. On Monday, some media reports said that PM Modi's policy adviser Arvind Panagariya was a potential surprise front-runner. His candidacy could raise uncertainties in markets because of his perceived closeness to the Prime Minister. He is also seen as close to the RSS and BJP President Amit Shah.

Over-75 Minister Najma Heptulla Resigns, Minister Who Bought Time Goes Too

(Agencies) New Delhi : Union ministers Najma Heptulla and GM Siddeshwara resigned on Tuesday, a week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi made big cabinet changes. Dr Heptulla was above 75 years in age - the ceiling for holding a cabinet post according to the unwritten rules of the party. Sources said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah had allowed a graceful exit to Dr Heptulla, who was out of the country on July 5, when five other ministers had to submit their resignations. In a statement, Ms Heptulla said she had resigned for personal reasons, and added, "I will always be available for any responsibility given to me in future." Mr Siddeshwara, a BJP leader from Karnataka, had been replaced in the council of ministers by another leader from his party -- Ramesh Kandappa Jigajinagi. He had been asked to resign earlier, but he bought more time from party

chief Amit Shah citing his birthday. "I told them I can't possibly come to Delhi on that day," Mr Siddeshwara had told NDTV last week, confirming that he had requested the

Mr Siddeshwara - junior minister for Heavy Industries - will be taken over by Babul Supriyo, who was the junior minister for Urban Development. The only member

above 75 in the cabinet now is Kalraj Mishra. A powerful Brahmin face from Uttar Pradesh, he is continuing in view of the next year's assembly elections in the state, sources said. Five other ministers were dropped during the huge reshuffle of July 5 -- during which PM Modi had inducted 19 new ministers. At the time, the Prime Minister had swapped a series of key portfolios in his cabinet.

The biggest change was Smriti Irani leaving the Education Ministry to Prakash Javadekar, the sole member of the government to have been promoted to the cabinet. With today's resignations, the council of ministers now has 76 ministers against the permissible limit of 82.



party not to embarrass him by forcing him to cancel the public meeting scheduled that day and come to Delhi to resign.

Dr Heptulla, the Minority Affairs Minister, was replaced by Minister of State Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, who has been given independent charge. The portfolio held by



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Arvind Kejriwal's Wife Sunita Takes Voluntary Retirement From I-T Department

(Agencies) New Delhi : Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita has taken voluntary retirement from the Indian Revenue Service (IRS), after serving for nearly 22 years in the Income Tax department. Mrs Sunita, last posted as Commissioner of I-T in the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) in Delhi, had sought VRS earlier this year and an official order has now been issued by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the

cadre controlling authority of the department, officials said. The order, accessed by media, said her VRS would be effective from July 15. "She will be able to enjoy her pension benefits as she has served over 20 years in service," a senior official said. However, sources close to the Delhi Chief Minister said, "Sunita feared of victimisation by the Centre amid the ongoing tussle between the AAP government and the BJP-led Union government on several issues, and hence she sought

VRS." 51-year-old Sunita, a 1993-batch IRS officer, had met Kejriwal, a 1995-batch IRS officer, during a training programme at Bhopal after which they decided to get married. As per records, she holds a Masters degree in Zoology. When Kejriwal contested against Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Varanasi during 2014 Lok Sabha polls, Sunita had taken a long leave from office. "She knew her service compulsions, so could not campaign openly for him.



Soon, e-visa for another 36 countries

(Agencies) New Delhi : Riding high on the success of the e-tourist visa scheme, the Union tourism ministry plans to extend online visas to 36 countries including Iran, Italy, Egypt and Nigeria among others. According to sources, the proposal has been sent for approval to the ministry of home affairs. If accepted, 186 countries will now be able to access online visa to travel to India.

Among the countries that have been shortlisted are: Iran, Egypt, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Maldives, Italy, Nigeria, Turkey, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan and Morocco. The online visa scheme that was launched in November 2013 has been steadily expanded and has become a popular alternative for tourists. Tourism ministry data shows that during January-June 2016, a total of 4,71,909 tourists arrived on e-tourist visa as compared to 1,26,214 during January-June 2015, registering a growth of 273.9%. The high growth may be attributed to introduction of e-tourist visa for 150 countries in February 2016 as compared to 76 countries earlier, the ministry said. A total of 36,982 tourists arrived in June 2016 as compared to 15,557 during the same period last year registering a growth of 137.7%. A statement by the ministry

said that the e-visa facility was most popular with the United States, that drew the maximum number of tourists (23.22%) followed by UK (14.16%), China (6.91%), Australia (5.59%) and France (4.10%) in May 2016. New Delhi was the favourite port of arrival in June with 42.15% using the airport,

followed by Mumbai airport which was used by 22.94% of the tourists. Others that followed were Bengaluru airport (9.95%), Chennai (9.80%), Hyderabad (3.76%), Kochi (3.52%), Kolkata (2.72%), Ahmedabad airport (1.16%), Tiruchirapalli airport (1.15%) and Thiruvananthapuram airport (1.08%).



Source: Union tourism ministry

E-VISA BOOST FOR INDIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY



India Asks All To 'Show Utmost Respect' On South China Sea Verdict



(Agencies) New Delhi: India on Tuesday asked all parties involved in the South China Sea row to resolve the dispute through peaceful means without threat or use of force and "show utmost respect" to the verdict by a UN-backed tribunal. India's reaction came after the tribunal ruled that China has no legal basis to claim "historic rights" to islands in South China Sea. "India supports freedom of navigation and over flight, and unimpeded commerce, based on the principles of international law, as reflected notably in the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea). "India believes that States should resolve disputes through peaceful means without threat or use of force and exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that could complicate or escalate disputes affecting peace and stability," the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement here. "Sea lanes of communication passing through the South China Sea are critical for peace, stability, prosperity and development. As a State Party to the UNCLOS, India urges all parties to show utmost respect for the UNCLOS, which establishes the international legal order of the seas and oceans," it said. Ruling out against China in a bitter row over territorial claims in South China Sea, the Permanent Court of Arbitration "concluded that there was no legal basis for China to claim historic rights within the sea areas falling within the 'nine-dash line'." Asserting that it "does not accept and does not recognise" the ruling, China rejected the verdict as "null and void". China asserts sovereignty over almost all of the strategically vital waters in the face of rival claims from its Southeast Asian neighbours.

Graphic novels now go to school, teach strip by strip

(Agencies) New Delhi : Students learn about everything from conquering Everest to Steve Jobs' genius through these books. If a picture is worth a thousand words, the graphic novel is worth even more because it tells epic stories, ranging from the Mahabharata to Marx. The power of sequential art to tell serious stories and genres is on display at a month-long exhibit in the capital titled "Telling Stories Through Pictures", put together by Campfire Graphic Novels. Comics may be seen as a non-serious form of storytelling, but a graphic novel from a similar genre is infotainment that makes overbearing texts more compelling.



The expo contains a step-by-step guide on how a graphic novel is put together — from writing an original novel to abridging a complex work or concept visually. Girija Jhunjhunwala, director, Campfire Graphic Novels, says a graphic novel is different from a comic book. For one, it is not a series. It also removes excessive use of 'effects' and handles intellectually more mature themes.

There's a lot that graphic novels can teach, and the CBSE recommends

titles like Conquering Everest, Mother Teresa – Angel of the Slums, Steve Jobs - Genius by Design and Krishna – Defender of Dharma for Class VII and VIII students. Teachers use them as a supplement to text books to teach mythology, history and even concepts in Mathematics. Wafa Hamid, an assistant professor at the Lady Shri Ram College for Women, says she used Jaya, an Illustrated re-telling of the Mahabharata, by Devdutt Pattanaik, to teach the epic to students of literature. "Classical literature is rooted in retelling of folklore orally. There are many versions of the Mahabharata. Exploring the retelling through graphic novels not only makes it more relatable because of the visual appeal but also illustrates the process of re-telling that the oral tradition is based on to the students."

Europe In Their Hands

: Theresa May, Angela Merkel Draw Battle Lines For Brexit Clash



other European Union leaders at late night Brussels meetings. Under the Lisbon Treaty, a deal on Britain's departure from the EU must be concluded with the European Council, which groups leaders of the 27 other member states. Merkel's role, however, is crucial. After Britons voted for Brexit on June 23, she met the leaders of France and Italy to plan the way ahead for the EU, showing that its biggest member states - rather than its institutions - want to determine this. Both women, who have been married for decades, saw off male challengers on their way to the top. Merkel defeated her more flamboyant predecessor, the Social Democrat Gerhard Schroeder, at the ballot box in 2005. May, who has been British interior minister for the past six years, will become prime minister simply because Conservative members of parliament elected her leader of the ruling party. But the woman who has declared "I'm not a showy politician", is also replacing a less cautious politician in the pro-EU Cameron, whose gamble in calling the

referendum failed.

Merkel and May agree on one thing: in the Briton's words "Brexit means Brexit". Merkel has insisted the result of what was officially an advisory referendum must be respected. Beyond that, battle lines are already being drawn. May says Britain will not rush to trigger the formal divorce proceedings under the Lisbon Treaty. Merkel, however, wants Britain to make its intentions clear more quickly. On Tuesday, Merkel put the ball in May's court. "We must now wait until Britain says what relationship it envisages with the European Union and then we will lead, in our interests, the best negotiations for our citizens in the 27 member states," she said. The chancellor wants to retain strong links with Britain, Germany's fifth-biggest trading partner for goods, but her bigger priority is to hold together the remaining EU members. British diplomats who have worked with May in Brussels rate her highly, saying she is one of the best prepared and best

informed ministers to negotiate with their EU partners. Their European counterparts agree. "She knows Brussels well, she knows the people and how things work here," said one EU official who deals with justice and home affairs. "She has always been prepared for the meetings, active in intervening, she knows the file." Another senior EU official familiar with negotiations in which May has taken part described her as "very professional, very well respected". All the indications are May will prove a tough negotiator. "She won't be an easy partner for the EU," said the senior EU official, adding that May does not change her tune easily. "She's been extremely consistent, very persistent." A quiet 'remain' campaigner, May must now get the best terms she can. Her biggest task is to retain British access to the EU's single market while restricting immigration from the bloc. EU leaders say market access can come only with a commitment to the free movement of people - just what British voters rejected. Yet May has a record of negotiating compromises with the EU in such apparently black or white situations. As interior minister, she opted back into a European arrest warrant system and cross-border information sharing despite Britain's 'opt out' on EU justice and home affairs policy.

(Agencies) Berlin / Brussels: Both are pastors' daughters who excelled as academics before rising to the top of their conservative parties. Now Theresa May and Angela Merkel, equally firm but pragmatic, will go head to head to determine Britain's future relationship with Europe. Two years the German chancellor's junior, May is highly regarded among European officials who largely welcomed news that she will become British prime minister on Wednesday after David Cameron bows out. "Very disciplined" is how one

senior German official who has worked closely with May described the Oxford University-educated daughter of a Church of England vicar. She has "excellent" relations with French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve, a source in Paris said. Described by one veteran British conservative as a "bloody difficult woman", 59-year-old May will need to muster all the goodwill she can in Europe.

Her task is to deal with the negotiating clout and stamina of Merkel, who in 10 years as chancellor has regularly outlasted



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NASA TESTS DEEP SPACE ROCKET



A BOOSTER for the most powerful rocket in the world has been fired up in the Utah desert. The key component of NASA's Space Launch System successfully fired up for its second qualification ground test at Orbital ATK's test facilities in Promontory, Utah.

It is the last full-scale test for the booster before SLS's first uncrewed test flight with NASA's Orion spacecraft in late 2018, a key milestone on the

agency's Journey to Mars. Crowds gathered to watch the successful test. 'This final qualification test of the booster system shows real progress in the development of the Space Launch System,' said William Gerstenmaier, associate administrator for the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate at NASA Headquarters in Washington. 'Seeing this test today, and experiencing the sound

and feel of approximately 3.6 million pounds of thrust, helps us appreciate the progress we're making to advance human exploration and open new frontiers for science and technology missions in deep space.' The booster was tested at a cold motor conditioning target of 40 degrees Fahrenheit - the colder end of its accepted propellant temperature range.

GET YOUR SPOOK ON



Horror In The Bylanes in collaboration with Lightcube Film Society will be hosted from June 29 to September 7.

By Radhika Bhalla

GET ready to be scared off your pants this Wednesday! Greenr Cafe and Store — a vegetarian health eatery in Shahpur Jat — is hosting the first-ever horror-thriller film festival, *Horror In The Bylanes* in collaboration with Lightcube Film Society from June 29 to September 7. Every Wednesday at 7pm, a

new horror, thriller and drama film based in the city will be screened at FF 416, Shahpur Jat. Tickets would ₹350 per show, which includes screening, a non-alcoholic drink, a bite, discussions, and cheap thrills. The schedule is available at Lightcube.in and their Facebook events page for 'Horror in the Bylanes: A Series of Urban Horror Films'.

'India Is A Hindu Nation,' PV Narasimha Rao Told Me

The President issued the required proclamation. The decision has never been challenged or suo moto overturned by the Supreme Court. It constitutes valid action under the Constitution.

There was nothing to prevent PVNR from doing the same. Indeed, that is exactly what he did when faced with the aftermath of the destruction of the Babri Masjid. He did not wait for reports from Governors of BJP-ruled states. Of his own accord, in retaliation for the outrage at Ayodhya, he simply had all these state governments dismissed. If he could have taken such action and got away with it after the demolition of the mosque, what prevented him from doing so before to protect the mosque? It seems to be an absurd interpretation of Article 356 of the Constitution to say the mosque had to be destroyed before the central government could step in to save it!

PVNR's supporters say he could not have recommended the dissolution of Kalyan Singh's government without cabinet approval. Of course, he couldn't. But the moot point is the Prime Minister never took such a proposal to the cabinet. He initiated discussion in cabinet/cabinet committees, but never presented a specific proposal to recommend that Kalyan Singh be deprived of his rule. He wanted the blame to fall on, or, at the very least, be shared by his colleagues in government. If anything went wrong, he wanted to ensure that the blame would fall on someone else's head.

Similarly, when the National Integration Council gave him the full authority to take whatever action he deemed fit, he chose not to exercise that authority to recommend President's Rule. There is no reason to doubt that his cabinet colleagues and NIC would have gone along with such a proposal.

Indeed, the hard-core secular element in the cabinet that had been publicly clamouring for decisive action would have been left with no alternative but to enthusiastically go along with such strong action, whatever the consequences.

The basic reason for PVNR's hesitation was his mind-set. He genuinely believed that this was not a political problem but a religious one. That is why he recruited an army of sadhus and sants to intermeditate between his government and Hindutva forces to persuade them to desist from illegally demolishing the mosque. Interestingly, he made no effort to contact the Shiv Sena or the Bajrang Dal that eventually provided the demolition mob. He just blinded himself to the political dimension. So profound was his commitment to religious appeal rather than political action that after the mosque was brought down, he justified his performance to the Congress parliamentary party by saying that in ancient times, kings always consulted sadhus and sants. He had only followed tradition. But, he ruefully added, once the King had made up his mind, the sadhus and the sants followed the King. Alas, this had not happened in Kalyug. I could barely believe my ears. Had I been elected to a 20th-century parliament or appointed to a durbar dating back to Vedic times?

That evening, I publicly remarked that the Prime Minister had proved that "death was not a necessary condition for rigor mortis to set in". The remark reached his ears. But I do not think that surprised him. For earlier in October 1992, when I was in the midst of what a BJP spokesman described as a "nautanki" - my 44-day Ram Rahim yatra from Rameshwaram to Ayodhya between Gandhiji's birthday (2 October) and Nehru's (14 November) - PVNR summoned me to Delhi from Bhubaneswar. He told me he had no objection to my yatra but disagreed with my definition of secularism. Taken aback, I asked where I had gone wrong in my understanding of secularism. "Mani," he patiently explained, "you don't seem to realize that this is a Hindu country." I was astonished. I had thought ours was a secular country! So, I was left muttering, "But, Sir, that is exactly what the BJP says". He chose not to answer and let me return to my yatra.

On 14 November, as I was about to leave with about a hundred Congress workers from

Faizabad to Ayodhya, the police stopped me, politely informing me that Section 144 had been proclaimed over Ayodhya. I insisted on nevertheless proceeding there. They said they would then have no alternative under the law but to arrest me. I was bundled into a police van along with my colleagues and detained for a few hours at the police station. The press were allowed to meet me and I told them I was delighted to be arrested, for if one person campaigning for peace and harmony was being prevented from violating Section 144, the same action must be taken against the hordes threatening to besiege Ayodhya. With three weeks still to go to 6 December, a cordon could easily have been thrown around a radius of say 50 km around Ayodhya. That, as far as I am aware, was not even considered.

At about 5 am on the cold morning of 3 December, I was woken with the phone ringing shrilly. I was amazed to learn the PM wanted to talk to me. When I was put through, PVNR spoke as if he was in the middle of a conversation already taking place. "I have tried everything," he pleaded, "but they are betraying me". I could hear the choked tears in his voice. I offered to come across immediately. "Now" he asked incredulously. "Give me 20 minutes," I said and rushed across.

I was led into his private residence at 3, Race Course Road (the only time I was ever admitted there). He had composed himself. He asked what I suggested be done. I said it was too late to push back the lakhs of kar sevaks, but if we were to arrange a series of flights to Faizabad airport for all MPs who were against the barbarism threatened in neighbouring Ayodhya, TV cameras would show the country the clear divide between those who wanted to preserve a secular India and those who were bent on its destruction. He, I suggested, might be the last to address the meeting. He asked if I would draft a speech for him. I readily agreed. That was the last I heard of it.

The dithering continued to the end - except that the idol of Ram lalla that had been removed to facilitate the demolition was restored to its place, while nothing whatsoever was done for 36 hours - 36 hours! - from which thousands were to die, a tragic blow to our national identity from which the country is still to recover. PV Narasimha Rao was indeed a half-lion when it came to economic reforms, but only half a man when it came to the Babri Masjid.

Rockie Gajwani, real estate executive accused of spending embezzled funds on coke and strippers

the amount of money he had taken from Company's bank account. The former high-flying Vornado Realty Trust executive allegedly stole the money shortly after he was picked to run Trevi Retail, a New York City-based company backed by private equity firm Principal Enterprise Capital that scooped up some \$200 million in Manhattan properties under Gajwani's reign. He was let go in 2013 on suspicion that he took the money, according to reports from that time. GAJWANI, 52, of Darien, Connecticut, is charged with one count of wire fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison; one count of money laundering, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison; and three counts of tax evasion, each of which carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison. The maximum potential sentences in this case are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant would be determined by a judge. The allegations contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

3 members of an Indian family killed in accident in Long Island

The elder Gavais were visiting the U.S. from India, Suffolk County police said. Geyer, who was pronounced dead at the scene, allegedly had a blood alcohol level twice the legal limit, as per media reports. Both vehicles caught fire following the collision. Chandan was pronounced dead when he was taken to the local hospital. His parents were pronounced dead at the scene. The report said Gavai was in the U.S. on a work visa and was employed with an IT firm. Gavai's 32-year-old wife suffered life-threatening burns and head injuries. The couple's 11-month-old son survived the crash and is being treated for non-life-threatening injuries. The report said family members were expected to begin arriving from India this week to make funeral arrangements and to care for the baby. Geyer (25), was driving a pickup truck when he lost control and slammed into Gavai's car, Suffolk County police said.

Decoding The Myth Of Burhan Wani - And What Delhi Is Ignoring Again

Nor do you have to sympathise with Wani's decision to become a jihadist to try and figure out who he was and what led him to the choices he made - for that is essential to understanding how to prevent others from following him. This is patently obvious; yet to India's most stubborn "nationalists", who would be outraged if they underwent half the humiliations that most Kashmiris endure stoically and non-violently, see even this realist case for understanding as, well, another symptom of that dreaded disease, anti-nationalitis.

After all, why bother to understand? Flood a few thousand more troops into

the Valley, shoot more people, declare more curfews, look again away when tortures and rapes happen. Did we not, using overwhelming force and abandoning our principles, crush this anger when it was last expressed?

But a lot has changed since the 1990s. For one, Pakistan has been relatively uninvolved this time around. (So far, that is - let's hope they're smart enough to resist the temptation to meddle.) For another, global jihad is qualitatively and quantitatively different from what it was in 1991. And finally, there are young Kashmiris all over India's cities now, even in our

smaller towns.

It may be too late to get this generation of Kashmiris to see themselves as Indian; but it is perhaps not too late to make them believe that taking up arms is not worth it. Threatening them with a sure death will not make that happen - if we have learnt anything from observing the growth of global jihadism, then we have learnt that it is now a cult of death. Asaduddin Owaisi, speaking passionately against ISIS in Hyderabad last week, made this explicit, saying that the problem was that young Muslims were dying,

instead of living, for Islam.

No, if this incipient intifada is to be prevented, we need something different. We need a touch of understanding - understanding that making people feel that they are occupied, that subjecting them to humiliations at the hands of representatives of the Indian state, that allowing state violence without accountability, has dangerous consequences. We need a touch of imagination - imagine if, instead of ending Wani's story with a martyr's death, we had ended it by showing him up as the preening, immature thug he no doubt was?

Obama: America 'not even close' to solving police, community issues

He said he wanted Americans to have an open heart so that they can learn to look at the world through each other's eyes, and Wednesday's meeting followed that theme. He said Wednesday it was key to set up the "kind of respectful conversations we've had here" across the country.

"The conversation that took place around this table is very different than the one that you see on a day-to-day or hourly basis in the media," Obama said. But Obama also said the "bad news" was that making progress is hard. "We're

not even close to being there yet, where we want to be," he said, noting the "diversity of views around the table."

The nearly three dozen people invited to the White House included some police organizations that have little regard for Black Lives Matter, a group they blame for inciting violence against police officers. White House officials acknowledged that enhancing the trust that has been frayed in so many communities will be a job for future presidents, but they said Obama was determined to get all sides to commit to steps they can take to improve

relations. Those attending the meeting included Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana and Mayor Chris Coleman of St. Paul, Minnesota, the two locations where police shootings sparked protests around the country. Mayors from Los Angeles, Newark, New Jersey, and Anaheim, California, also attended. From the administration, Attorney General Loretta Lynch joined the president. Also on the list were Mica Grimm, with Black Lives Matter Minnesota, and DeRay Mckesson, who was

arrested Saturday in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on a charge of obstructing a highway. Police said Mckesson "intentionally" placed himself in the road after protesters were repeatedly warned to remain on private property or the curb. Mckesson was released from jail Sunday. The Rev. Al Sharpton also attended.

"Going forward, I want to hear ideas from even more Americans about how we can address these challenges together as one nation. That means you," Obama said earlier Wednesday on Facebook.

National poll Trump tightens gap with Clinton

Nearly three in four voters overall—73 percent—said it made a "big difference" as to which candidate gets elected in November, with nearly eight in 10 Democrats and Republicans expressing that sentiment.

The poll comes on the same day Trump was shown to be leading or tied with Clinton in the three critical battleground states of Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania, where the former secretary of state had once enjoyed larger advantages.

In a four-way ballot test featuring Libertarian nominee Gary Johnson and Green Party candidate Jill Stein, Clinton's advantage widened somewhat to five points, 40 percent to Trump's 35 percent. Johnson took 10 percent, while Stein earned 5 percent, 2 percent said they would vote for someone else and 9 percent said they were undecided when presented those choices.

Neither Trump nor Clinton is seen favorably by more than six in 10 registered voters. On

the issues, voters are split on which candidate they trust more to handle terrorism, with 47 percent choosing Clinton, 46 percent supporting Trump and 5 percent who volunteered that they would trust neither. Clinton holds double-digit advantages over Trump on matters concerning immigration, the treatment of Muslim Americans, issues related to the LGBT community, gun violence, as well as the personal attributes of being more

experienced for the job, caring about "people like you" and having the "temperament to be president." On who would be best to handle the separation of church and state, voters preferred Clinton to Trump, 46 percent to 42 percent; and on gun violence, Clinton also leads 50 percent to 43 percent. Trump, meanwhile, holds smaller leads among voters who were asked which of the two major candidates would be better at creating jobs (48 percent to Clinton's 44 percent), and is "more

honest and trustworthy" (40 percent to 35 percent). Voters are exactly split on which candidate they feel is closer to them on the issues, as well as who would better handle negotiating fair trade policies for the United States. Marist conducted the survey from July 5-9, polling 1,249 adults with an overall margin of error of plus or minus 2.8 percentage points. Among the 1,053 registered voters surveyed, the margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Stay out of politics, Supreme Court tells Governors

Who should or shouldn't be leader of a party is a political question to be... resolved by the party itself. The governor cannot make such issues a matter of his concern." The court said a governor "cannot have overriding authority over

representatives of the people..."The court rejected the governor's justification for advancing the assembly session to take up a motion for the speaker's removal. "The participatory role...of governor, in the matter concerning the

removal of speaker, can neither be under stood nor accepted, and may be considered unwarranted," the bench said. "The governor isn't a guide or mentor to the speaker. The governor can't require speaker to discharge

his functions in the manner he considers constitutionally appropriate. Both governor and speaker have independent c o n s t i t u t i o n a l responsibilities." Criticizing Rajkhowa for advancing the assembly

session from January 16 to December 14 to decide a motion moved by rebel Congress MLAs, the bench said the governor has no role in the process for the speaker's removal.

"Constitution doesn't en join upon the governor the authority to re solve disputes within a party , or between rival parties," the bench said. "But it's beyond the scope of the governor's authority to engage through his constitutional position, and exercise his constitutional authority , to resolve the same," it said rebuking Rajkhowa for appearing to side with the Congress dissidents.

The court said the only circumstance when a governor could exercise his discretionary powers under Article 174 was on the event of the council of ministers losing confidence of the House. It found that the governor never said in his reports that Tuki had lost majority. Hence Rajkhowa couldn't have used his discretionary powers to suo motu advance the assembly session.

For The Record

This past month in particular has illuminated for me how much we define a woman's value based on her marital and maternal status. The sheer amount of resources being spent right now by press trying to simply uncover whether or not I am pregnant (for the bajillionth time... but who's counting) points to the perpetuation of this notion that women are somehow incomplete, unsuccessful, or unhappy if they're not married with children. In this last boring news cycle about my personal life there have been mass shootings, wildfires, major decisions by the Supreme Court, an upcoming election, and any number of

more newsworthy issues that "journalists" could dedicate their resources towards.

Here's where I come out on this topic: we are complete with or without a mate, with or without a child. We get to decide for ourselves what is beautiful when it comes to our bodies. That decision is ours and ours alone. Let's make that decision for ourselves and for the young women in this world who look to us as examples. Let's make that decision consciously, outside of the tabloid noise. We don't need to be married or mothers to be complete. We get to determine our own "happily ever after" for ourselves.

I have grown tired of being

part of this narrative. Yes, I may become a mother some day, and since I'm laying it all out there, if I ever do, I will be the first to let you know. But I'm not in pursuit of motherhood because I feel incomplete in some way, as our celebrity news culture would lead us all to believe. I resent being made to feel "less than" because my body is changing and/or I had a burger for lunch and was photographed from a weird angle and therefore deemed one of two things: "pregnant" or "fat." Not to mention the painful awkwardness that comes with being congratulated by friends, coworkers and strangers alike

on one's fictional pregnancy (often a dozen times in a single day).

From years of experience, I've learned tabloid practices, however dangerous, will not change, at least not any time soon. What can change is our awareness and reaction to the toxic messages buried within these seemingly harmless stories served up as truth and shaping our ideas of who we are. We get to decide how much we buy into what's being served up, and maybe some day the tabloids will be forced to see the world through a different, more humanized lens because consumers have just stopped buying the bullshit.

Make it Quick! Quick! Quick

Instant gratification is what everyone seems to hanker after today. You only have to achieve your aspirations, somehow!

We live today in a world of fast food, express delivery, time-bound programmes, and so on. We always want to be ready to go, and hit the road running. Recently my grandson aged three hit an iPhone on the floor angrily since he could not get his favourite song on YouTube soon enough upon pressing. Why are we in so much of a hurry? I am reminded of Albert Einstein, who was said to spend 55 minutes defining a problem and five minutes finding the solution.

Today we don't know whether there is problem at all, and if so what the problem is. We never realise that the quality of the solutions will be directly proportional to our understanding of the exact nature of the problem. Children, why even adults, need instant gratification. In two minutes they want noodles, and they want bajji mix or dosa mix that take as many minutes to prepare the said dishes, too.

Sans effort?

It is as if there is no need

anymore to learn poetry, or study different interpretations and comments. There is no need to understand key concepts of mathematics, physics and chemistry. You only have to achieve your aspirations, somehow. Haste induces fear, that is now taken as the normal. Life is not a series of projects to be completed in quick succession. It is just the opposite of the creative mind, which is fearless and expansive, capable of bringing out better results. Many people grow impatient when the Internet is slow: they just can't wait for a couple of seconds for a page to load. They can neither wait for the train to arrive nor the aircraft to take off. They can't tolerate their own child being cranky and tend to even hit the baby. When we take medicine for any disorder, it needs some time to act. We should actually have a warning on the packages of drugs: "Negative effects include a need for instant gratification and loss of patience." Today's children, born after the arrival of the smartphone on a large scale, are wired for pronounced

impatience. This resembles the 'chicken and egg' situation. In this fast world, websites are designed in such a manner that the customer is not made to wait even a second longer than necessary and is provided with all essentials in one go. Otherwise, another website is waiting to grab him or her. We have seen the days when parents were eagerly waiting for months for a post card to arrive with a crucial piece of information. Now we need quick results. 'Delivery the same day' is the promise put out by some e-commerce companies. People don't even mind paying extra to satiate their impatience. People don't wait even for two seconds for the video to load in a device.

Where impatience helps

But undeniably, impatience helps on certain occasions. Though enjoying every last bit of food is what is preferred, you can't do the same if the restaurant is about to close. You have to munch and gobble the tasty food as quickly as possible. You have to be fast in the examination hall to score the maximum marks, even when



your handwriting is not very beautiful and perfect. While you are in a foreign country, you learn the foreign language for essential communication. You cannot then be dwelling on learning all the tough grammar rules. The process should be very quick, to make you understood and intelligible. Some important words here and there, 'Welcome', 'Thank You', expressions for seeking directions, and so on, may make you fit to get along in an unknown land. Perfection, tense-matching and syntax structure need not necessarily take you very far. A woman will be considered wise if she can prepare a simple, quick lunch within 15 minutes with the available ingredients. In certain situations, the one who prepares expansive and delicious varieties in 90 minutes will actually be at a disadvantage. 'Slow and steady' winning the race may not be entirely applicable in today's life. Whether the advance of

technology has resulted in the 'quick-quick' tendency, or whether it has stemmed from the social compulsion for such sweeping developments, is debatable. A lot of really valuable things take time. A pregnant woman cannot expect a full-grown and healthy child before 37 weeks. Examination or election results cannot be announced immediately. Plantains take nearly four months to grow to maximum size. A child can crawl, walk, talk and go to school only upon reaching certain stages. Some diagnostic results take time to be known. Investments in stocks and shares need some time to yield results. Even idli batter takes eight hours to ferment. Is it not therefore wise to set aside our desire for instant gratification and move towards the best in life, that takes time and effort? Patience is worth the wait, since the pleasure we derive will be beyond compare.

The whole gamut in the transition from the teens to the thirties

As you join the bandwagon of those accelerating into the thirties, there are certain stages you cross and some worries you wrestle with.

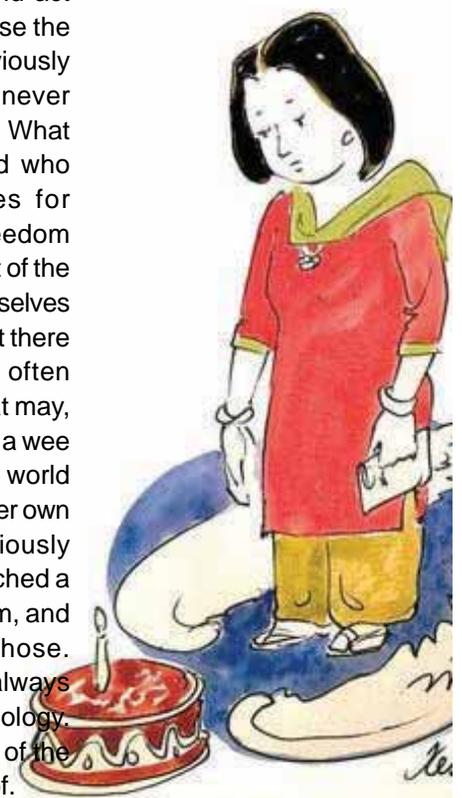
Being a teenager, I have often read about women in their late-twenties and cruising to the thirties lamenting about that very fact. I have heard a few of them speak about the shift that has come about in their responsibilities and perceptions. They crib of how frustrating it can be, leaving the blissful period of twenty-something. I could never make out, as in the case of everybody else my age, the reasons for such futile mourning. Teenage and the early twenties are always rose-tinted. Once knee-deep in the same age, the wave of realism strikes you. There are pointers to indicate an intended sarcasm, occasionally pushing the first thoughts of desperation in you: the actuality that you are as well joining the bandwagon of womenfolk

accelerating into the thirties. A child addressing you as an aunt, you may unintentionally smirk. Too many conversations on marriage and parenting and, of course, of dear husbands. Technically a gargantuan amount of bills to be paid and forms to be filled. All of it invariably suggests you are getting older and normally boring. The late-twenties represent an age when you would find a mixed set of women in your circle. Some are married with no kids yet, a few already have a kid, even two of them, a handful are not married at all, others are very focussed on their career and many are making crucial decisions, weighing their career on the one side and family life on the other. It is difficult for this diverse group of women to comprehend, leave

alone appreciate, each other given that they come from entirely dissimilar backgrounds. Past twenty-five is an age where we are strong in our ideologies and choices. We reach a point when our decisions matter more than others' perceptions of us. We maintain relationships with peers, friends and family even over troubling disagreements.

We learn to behave. Well, at least most of them. Frankly speaking, I wasn't quite enjoying my birthdays as much, over the last few years. 'Age is but a number' is an oft-heard phrase, and it is forgotten in the very next breath. Keeping oneself motivated over various personal goals was hard. The looming thirties distracted the vision. Many of us are asked to bottle up our energies, giggle less, slow

down the enthusiasm, and act our age. And when we raise the question why, there is obviously a reason that we must never overtly use our freedom. What are the boundaries? And who decides the boundaries for women? And why is freedom interpreted wrongly? Most of the ladies will not identify themselves with this idea currently, but there are still a few who are often questioned on it. Say what may, being a man is still at least a wee bit better in this part of the world than being the woman of her own will. The times are obviously brighter. Yet, it hasn't reached a crescendo for a lot of them, and this is known only to those. Choice and equality are always debated as a western ideology. To many a woman, either of the ideas is simply unheard of.



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What's next for Bernie?

Despite his forceful endorsement of Hillary Clinton, Sanders' role going forward remains unclear.

A few points of agreement have already been reached between the Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders camps as they look toward the general election.

The Vermont senator has locked down a major speaking slot at the Democratic National Convention later this month, according to people involved with the negotiations. And Clinton agreed to tack toward Sanders on her health care and education proposals last week.

But beyond that, Sanders' next steps — and the exact nature of the role he'll play in the general election — remain largely unanswered even after extensive negotiations in recent weeks.

One thing is certain: On Tuesday, at his joint rally with Clinton, he offered a forceful endorsement that surprised some of his most die-hard supporters — leaving some in tears on the Portsmouth High School gym bleachers.

Many Democrats on both sides of the Clinton-Sanders divide expected Tuesday's speeches from the candidates and their surrogates — environmentalist Bill McKibben and activist Jim Dean for Sanders, Gov. Maggie Hassan and Sen. Jeanne Shaheen for Clinton — to focus on the importance of unifying the party against Donald Trump, the presumptive GOP nominee. But, speaking before Clinton in the late morning, Sanders went significantly further, jabbing at the real estate developer while also embracing Clinton.

Twenty-two weeks to the day after trouncing Clinton by 22 points in this influential primary and battleground state, Sanders effectively took a version of his familiar stump speech and — in the policy sections where he excoriated Clinton as recently as weeks ago — inserted repeated instances of Clinton praise.

At times, it sounded like he was declaring victory by noting how close Clinton now stands to his positions: on raising the minimum wage, on education, on health care, on income inequality.

"Secretary Clinton has won the Democratic nominating



process, and I congratulate her for that," he said, bringing the crowd to its feet with the exception of a few stunned pockets of #BernieorBust true believers. "She will be the Democratic nominee for president, and I intend to do everything I can to make certain she will be the next president of the United States."

"It is no secret that Hillary Clinton and I disagree on a number of issues. That's what this campaign has been about, that's what democracy is about," he later added, pointing to the results of the Democratic platform negotiations as evidence of their unification. "Our job now is to see that platform implemented by a Democratic Senate, a Democratic House and a Hillary Clinton presidency. And I am going to do everything I can to make that happen."

Top Clinton aides watching the speech live thought Sanders, unaccustomed to publicly praising his rival, looked awkward and pained standing next to Clinton — who nodded assiduously throughout his roughly half-hour talk — even when they hugged between speeches. But the speech, punctuated by grimaces among staffers in both camps, struck enough of the right notes to make it incontrovertibly clear to liberals and establishment Democrats alike that Sanders is standing squarely behind Clinton, however long it took him to get there.

"It was a long approach but a relatively smooth landing," said David Axelrod, President Barack Obama's longtime lead strategist. "He did what was needed, making the case without

being disingenuous, and making it clear that he is fully invested."

"I don't think in the past I've ever seen a presidential nominee being so willing to embrace the other person and figure out how to work together to get policy enacted," added Maine Democratic Party Chairman Phil Bartlett. "So he's a great advocate who's brought out on the trail to make sure people understand how Hillary Clinton's policies are good on those issues, and why it's so important that she beat Donald Trump. I mean, I was impressed so much of his message was pro-Hillary — what she brought to the table — as well as all the drawbacks of a Trump presidency."

The most immediate question for Sanders' aides is the uncertainty surrounding the timing of his convention speech — Monday or Tuesday of convention week — leaving them looking at precedents of previous runner-up convention appearances (Clinton spoke on Tuesday eight years ago).

The campaigns are also negotiating which of Sanders' surrogates will get speaking roles, a process that has already caused some tension because of the anger that animated the closing months of the primary contest. Accordingly, some of Sanders' most prominent supporters — like former Ohio state Sen. Nina Turner, a Clinton backer-turned-harsh critic — are controversial figures within the former secretary of state's political orbit.

To officials and operatives close to Clinton, the prospect of

Sanders joining Clinton's campaign as a prominent surrogate is an attractive one, so they've been willing to cave to his wishes more than even some of Clinton's top backers expected. But concessions on health care and education policy are worth it, they figure, given Sanders' appeal with two demographic groups with which Clinton struggled to connect in contest after contest during the primary season: young people and working-class white men.

Eyeing polls that show Sanders backers widely supporting Clinton in a general election contest, their teams are largely looking past the immediate bitter reactions on Tuesday, when some New Hampshire supporters in the crowd pledged to vote for Green Party candidate Jill Stein and booed Clinton, echoing an angry chorus online that accused Sanders of being a sellout. Leading Democrats aligned with Clinton see their task now as determining exactly how Sanders, who on Tuesday pledged to travel to "every corner of this country" for Clinton, will make the pro-Clinton pitch to his core constituencies.

"What he says at the convention will be even more important [than Tuesday's speech], as he will have a much larger audience," said Axelrod. "But, clearly, he is in position to be a strong voice against Donald Trump, particularly on economic issues, where Trump is hoping to make inroads among white, working-class Democrats."

The Clinton campaign doesn't expect Sanders to hit the ground running as a high-profile surrogate hosting his own events for her anytime soon. And with polls showing Sanders voters flocking to her even faster than her supporters backed Obama in 2008, there's little need for him to make a hard sell to his coalition.

But as an important validator of her progressive credentials and a candidate with proven strength among younger voters, Sanders serves as a critical asset.

More than one month after clinching the nomination, Clinton is still laboring to persuade the youngest group of voters to trust her: A University of Chicago/Associated Press-NORC survey released on Tuesday showed that only about one-quarter of young white voters and roughly half of young Hispanic voters have a positive opinion of her.

Yet the people around Sanders remain divided over what shape his role should take, as many have long expected him to play the part of chief Trump attack dog and down-ballot cheerleader rather than traditional pro-Clinton surrogate. And since the senator himself has been singularly focused on winning concessions from Clinton on the platform in recent weeks, they have had little guidance on what he wants to do.

To some of his advisers, however, his likely role is obvious: campus ambassador, particularly in the battleground states where he won the primary.

Such an arrangement, which would let him speak to his most dedicated backers, is far from finalized, but it's gaining support among Clinton's close allies.

"There's a strong constituency in a number of states that are going to be battleground states, like New Hampshire. Places like New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Minnesota," said Florida Democratic Party Executive Director Scott Arceneaux, who is working closely with Clinton's campaign in that state. "Places where he did really well, I'm sure, will be some of the places he goes to help Hillary's campaign."



Hillary Clinton's Press Conference Phobia

What's more vexing, the media's insistence that Hillary Clinton hold a press conference—which she hasn't since December 2015—or Clinton's refusal to accede to their demand?

To hear reporters talk about it, Clinton's unwillingness to participate in a freewheeling but formal forum with reporters has risen to a central issue of the campaign, with everybody from the Washington Post to ABC News to New York magazine hectoring her about her press conference avoidance. Clinton isn't having any of it, insisting at the end of May in an appearance on Jake Tapper's CNN program *The Lead* that she's made herself plenty available to the media, giving nearly 300 interviews in 2016 alone. Yes, yes, said Tapper, interviews, but how about conducting an actual press conference?

Oh, I'm sure we will," Clinton blithely promised, a promise that five weeks later she has still not kept.

The simple explanation for why Clinton shuns the press conference can be found in Glenn Thrush and Maggie Haberman's 2014 *POLITICO* profile: She hates the media with a bloody passion, and maybe for good reason. Over

the course of her long career, reporters have scrutinized every aspect of her professional and personal life, and the dissection has soured her. Writing in *New York* recently, Rebecca Traister suggested that maybe Clinton "suffers from a kind of political PTSD." But is that really reason enough? Many politicians hate reporters and feel that they've been unfairly autopsied by them but still agree to press conferences. There has to be more to it than that.

The secretary's press conference phobia would make sense if she were bad at answering questions. But she's extremely good. You might not like her politics or the way she expresses them, but she has proved herself a competent rhetorician in the 2016 and 2008 presidential campaign debates, fielding questions and answering them competently. Likewise, she answered scores of tough, hostile and leading questions during the Benghazi hearings, exhibiting professionalism and occasional humor. Clinton "won" that encounter, wrote *Slate's* Jamelle Bouie. So what makes her so fearful about conducting an hourlong session with a couple dozen reporters?

But that's the nature of a phobia: What may look innocuous to one

person can be unsettling to the phobic. A debate can often provide a comfortable forum for participants because they know the rules and the format are designed to reduce conflict and promote civility. Candidates have every right to expect debate questions to be about policy and not the personal. It's like a game show or a big final exam for which the answers can be memorized. A debate is also a competition—candidates are often asked the same questions in serial fashion, giving them a chance to best their opponent.

Testifying at a congressional hearing may look like a hot-seat assignment, but they really aren't for a politician like Clinton: To begin with, she can dismiss all the questions from the Republican members as foolishly partisan. Second, no matter how difficult those questions might be, she knows that relief in the form of friendly questions from Democratic committee members are forthcoming.

Clinton thinks of her Republican Capitol Hill inquisitors as idiots, and idiots who can be dismissed. But a press conference is like a minefield to her. Reporters are malicious, presumptuous beasts beneath her contempt, forever judging her and

setting traps to destroy her. A press conference has no leader, no controlling authority to rule questions out of order, no policeman to hold back anarchy. The competitive pressures at a press conference are like those at a debate, only the questioners are in higher or more intense competition with one another. Journalists asking questions at a press conference hope to make news with their questions, even if the politician doesn't answer properly. Indeed, a tough question that is dodged in a press conference can often be more newsworthy than a question adequately answered. If debates are about closure, press conferences are about conflict.

This chaos brings out the worst in Clinton, who craves and thrives in more controlled environments, something she's very aware of. Jorge Ramos unsettled Clinton with a couple of press-conference-style questions at the March 2016 Univision debate, asking repeatedly if she would drop out of the race if indicted for her email indiscretions.

"Oh, for goodness—that's not going to happen. I'm not even answering that question," a flustered Clinton said, as Ramos pursued her.

The Ramos line of questioning—uncommon for a debate—probably brought back to Clinton memories of the 20-minute raking she took at the hands of the media at the March 2015 press conference she gave at the United Nations following the *New York Times* report that she had used a private email server while secretary of state. Clinton, who had not held a press conference in two years, gave fidgety, anxious, legalistic responses to the email questions. Evidentially, that press conference traumatized Clinton. It also damaged her presidential campaign roll-out by placing her in a combative role once again, thereby spoiling her ambitions to make a new introduction to the voting public as a "relatable" presidential candidate.

"I think at some fundamental

level she's nervous about the spontaneous give-and-take of news conferences, fearful of their potentially anarchic nature, afraid of somehow losing control," says Mark Feldstein, a journalism professor at the University of Maryland. "Not that she should be—she's smart and knowledgeable and good on her feet. But she clearly doesn't enjoy the journalistic parry-and-thrust the way FDR and JFK and her husband did."

Clinton's press conference performances suffer because, perhaps, she takes them and everything else too seriously. Donald Trump relieves the press conference pressure by making jokes, insulting individual members of the press corps, and slaloming through questions with his brilliant non sequiturs. Clinton has fewer such arrows in her quiver, making it difficult for her to dissemble when reporter attempt to pin her down. She's just too damn professional for her own good.

It's hard to see her conquering her phobia: Her avoidance of the media leads 1) reporters to further distrust her, which 2) leads to more coverage that she regards as negative, which 3) confirms her bias that reporters will never give her a fair shake, so why bother?

But Clinton's inability or unwillingness to tolerate the mundanity of a press conference speaks to a psychological weakness that is almost unprecedented in modern American politics. Even Richard Nixon, whose justifiable hatred of the media became the stuff of legend, still faced the press hounds on a regular basis. Nixon had so much confidence in his ability to direct the political agenda that he was willing to battle and sometimes defeat the media. If you can't face down the press jackals, how can you possibly be a good president? Where is Hillary Clinton's courage?

A huge earthquake may be building beneath Bangladesh, which can turn urban areas in eastern India into "ruins", a new study has warned. Scientists said they have new evidence of increasing strain where two tectonic plates underlie the world's largest river delta. They estimate that at least 140 million people in the region could be affected if the boundary ruptures; the destruction could come not only from the direct results of shaking, but changes in the courses of great rivers, and in the level of land already perilously close to sea level. The newly identified threat is a subduction zone, where one section of earth's crust, or a tectonic plate, is slowly thrusting under another.

Massive 9.0 Earthquake Lurking Under India, Bangladesh: Study

All of earth's biggest known earthquakes occur along such zones; these include the Indian Ocean quake and tsunami that killed some 230,000 people in 2004, and the 2011 Tohoku quake and tsunami off Japan, which swept away more than 20,000 and caused the Fukushima nuclear disaster. Up to now, all known such zones were only under the ocean; this one appears to be entirely under the land, which greatly multiplies the threat.

The strain between the plates has been building for at least 400 years - the span of reliable historical records, which lack reports of any mega-quake, said lead author Michael Steckler, a geophysicist at Columbia University. When an inevitable release comes, the shaking is likely to be larger than magnitude 8.2 on the Richter scale and could even reach a magnitude of 9, similar to the largest known modern quakes, said Steckler. A giant plate

comprising India and much of the Indian Ocean has been thrusting northeasterly into Asia for tens of millions of years, researchers said. This collision has caused the Himalayas to rise to the north, bringing events like the 2015 Nepal quake that killed nearly 9,000 people. Bangladesh and eastern India sit atop a landscape vulnerable even to moderate earthquakes: the vast delta of the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers, researchers said. This is basically a pile of

mud as deep as 12 miles, washed from the Himalayas to the coast, covering the subduction zone. In a quake, this low-lying substrate would magnify the shaking like gelatin, and liquefy in many places, sucking in buildings, roads and people, said study coauthor Syed Humayun Akhter, a geologist at Dhaka University. "We don't have a good idea of its geometry, we don't know how far it goes down," said James Ni, a seismologist at New Mexico State University. He said that if researchers are right, and the slab is building strain, a quake would probably turn urban areas in eastern India "into ruins," and effects likely would extend into Myanmar and beyond.

Too Much Democracy

Brexit vote shows democracy can defeat itself

(Agencies) What is Brexit about? Is it about Britain leaving the European Union? Is it about the disruption this has caused in the world economy? Is it about hyper-nationalism and the fear of immigrants in general and Islam in particular?

It is, of course, all this, but Brexit is primarily about too much democracy. That might sound like a terrible thing to say yet recent events show us that

when democracy is given full rein, the results are often disastrous.

Who were the people who voted for Britain to leave EU? The voting pattern shows that many of them came from the depressed North East of England, its industrial centres, plus many smaller cities. It also shows that a large proportion of the "Leave" voters were older people. Those voting to "Remain" were predominantly young, plus

those in the large cities, notably London. The world's most powerful politicians and a large number of UK's intellectuals, all wanted the country to remain in the EU. It wasn't quite white collar versus blue collar, but the vote does suggest that those who saw the bigger picture and the more important issues involved, wanted to remain, while those bothered by the issues that affected them personally, opted



to leave. The "Leave" faction was also influenced by the inflammatory rhetoric by people who stoked fears of unchecked immigration. In the end, when people were given the option to

vote on a vital matter, their decision was ruled by emotion and not by logic. If popular referendums were held in India on some of our most important issues, what would be the likely results? To start with, India would cease to be a secular country; it would be a Hindu Rashtra, which would probably treat its minorities rather roughly. A referendum in Kashmir? We know where that would go. Similarly, if you jog your memory a bit, there was a time (in the 1960s) when a large number of Tamilians felt so alienated from the rest of the country that there was open talk of Tamil Nadu seceding.

Why the Kashmir killings could have been avoided

Security experts say India's forces - army, paramilitary soldiers, border guards - are not equipped to handle civilian uprisings. Most are trained to fight a foreign enemy. Killing their own people in Kashmir, one of the world's most militarised regions, makes them look like an occupying force. The police does not inspire much confidence either in Kashmir, or anywhere else in India: the force is run on the basis of 155-year-old colonial law and has seen almost no reform.

Nearly two decades after the uprising began in the region, the security forces still appear to be totally out of their depth in the use of modern, non-lethal weapons of crowd control. There has been a lot of talk about using water cannons, the malodorous "skunk" spray, noise

machines for example. The forces have picked on using "pellet guns" - a kind of shotgun - that have actually ended up causing serious eye injuries. Doctors say more than 100 people have received pellets in their eyes after the weekend clashes and it's feared that many may lose their eyesight.

'Complete impunity'

For the remainder, the forces have been resorting to firepower and tear gas. More than 100 people injured in the latest violence are suffering from bullet wounds. "Shoot to kill does not exactly help win the battle of hearts and minds in Kashmir," says one expert.

The Kashmir government - an uneasy marriage of convenience between the regional People's Democratic Party and the BJP - has

promised that policemen and security forces will be "made answerable" for incidents where excessive force has been used at the weekend. No-one in Kashmir believes that this will happen. There have been more than 20 official investigations into incidents of violence related to the insurgency in Kashmir since 1990, but the fate of the majority of them remains unknown. The previous government set up a probe after 120 people, mostly young civilian men, died in clashes with security forces in 2010. "No-one was prosecuted. No-one was tried in court. There's 100% impunity for security forces in Kashmir," says human rights activist Khurram Parvez. That is, of course, just one part of the

seemingly intractable problem that is Kashmir.

Last week's uprising again showed that without a political solution, the dispute in Kashmir will continue to fester. In a 2010 survey of Kashmiri attitudes, 81% of locals said the great problem was joblessness, while 68% spoke about corruption and 45% pointed to poor economic development. Still, 80% of them said the Kashmir dispute was "very important" to them.

And as Stephen Cohen of the Brookings Institution says: "Normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan would not make much of a difference if Kashmiri sentiments are not taken into account."



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For Coffee Drinkers, the Buzz May Be in Your Genes



(Agencies) Like most of my work, this article would not have been possible without coffee. I'm never fully awake until I have had my morning cup of espresso. It makes me productive, energized and what I can only describe as mildly euphoric. But as one of the millions of caffeine-loving Americans who can measure out my life with coffee spoons, (to paraphrase T.S. Eliot), I have often wondered: How does my coffee habit impact my health? The health community can't quite agree on whether coffee is more potion or poison. The American Heart Association says the research on whether coffee causes heart disease is conflicting. The World Health Organization, which for years classified coffee as "possibly" carcinogenic, recently reversed itself, saying the evidence for a coffee-cancer link is "inadequate." National dietary guidelines say that moderate coffee consumption may actually be good for you – even reducing chronic disease. Why is there so much conflicting evidence about coffee? The answer may be in our genes.

About a decade ago, Ahmed El-Sohemy, a professor in the department of nutritional sciences at the University of Toronto, noticed the conflicting research on coffee and the widespread variation in how people respond to it. Some people avoid it because just one cup makes them jittery and anxious.

Others can drink four cups of coffee and barely keep their eyes open. Some people thrive on it. Dr. El-Sohemy suspected that the relationship between coffee and heart disease might also vary from one individual to the next. And he zeroed in on one gene in particular, CYP1A2, which controls an enzyme – also called CYP1A2 – that determines how quickly our bodies break down caffeine. One variant of the gene causes the liver to metabolize caffeine very quickly. People who inherit two copies of the "fast" variant – one from each parent – are generally referred to as fast metabolizers. Their bodies metabolize caffeine about four times more quickly than people who inherit one or more copies of the slow variant of the gene. These people are called slow metabolizers.

With funding from the National Institutes of Health, Dr. El-Sohemy and his colleagues recruited 4,000 adults, including about 2,000 who had previously had a heart attack. Then they analyzed their genes and their coffee consumption. When they looked at the entire study population, they found that consuming four or more cups of coffee per day was associated with a 36 percent increased risk of a heart attack. But when they split the subjects into two groups – fast and slow caffeine metabolizers – they found something striking: Heavy coffee consumption only seemed to be linked to a higher likelihood of heart attacks in the slow metabolizers. "The increased risk that we saw among the entire population was driven entirely by the people that were slow metabolizers," said Dr. El-Sohemy, who is also on the science advisory board at Nutrigenomix, a personalized nutrition company. "When you look at the fast metabolizers, there was absolutely no increased risk."

The trend among fast metabolizers was quite the opposite. Those who drank one to three cups of coffee daily had a significantly reduced risk of heart attacks – suggesting that for them coffee was protective. Dr. El-Sohemy suspects that because caffeine hangs around longer in a slow metabolizer, it has more time to act as a trigger of heart attacks. But fast metabolizers clear caffeine from their systems rapidly, allowing the antioxidants, polyphenols and coffee's other healthful compounds to kick in without the side effects of caffeine, he said. Other more recent research seems to point in the same direction. In Italy, a team of scientists looked at hypertension in 553 fast and slow caffeine metabolizers. Once again, the subjects' genetic profiles predicted whether coffee was potentially harmful or healthful. Heavy and even moderate coffee drinkers were significantly more likely to have hypertension if they were slow metabolizers. But fast metabolizers saw

their risk of hypertension fall as their coffee intake rose. That is not to say that every coffee drinker should run out and have their CYP1A2 genes analyzed by one of the many direct-to-consumer genetic testing companies. Dr. Marilyn Cornelis, an assistant professor at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, said her research had identified many genes involved in caffeine metabolism, and that relying on only one or two genetic factors could provide people with a false sense of reassurance.

"There are clearly other genetic and environmental factors contributing to differences in caffeine metabolism," she said. "And these are not captured by existing tests." Nonetheless, this greater understanding of the link between coffee and genetics has opened up a wide new area of research. Scientists are now studying whether the CYP1A2 gene and others might mediate coffee's influence on breast and ovarian cancer, Type 2 diabetes and even Parkinson's disease.

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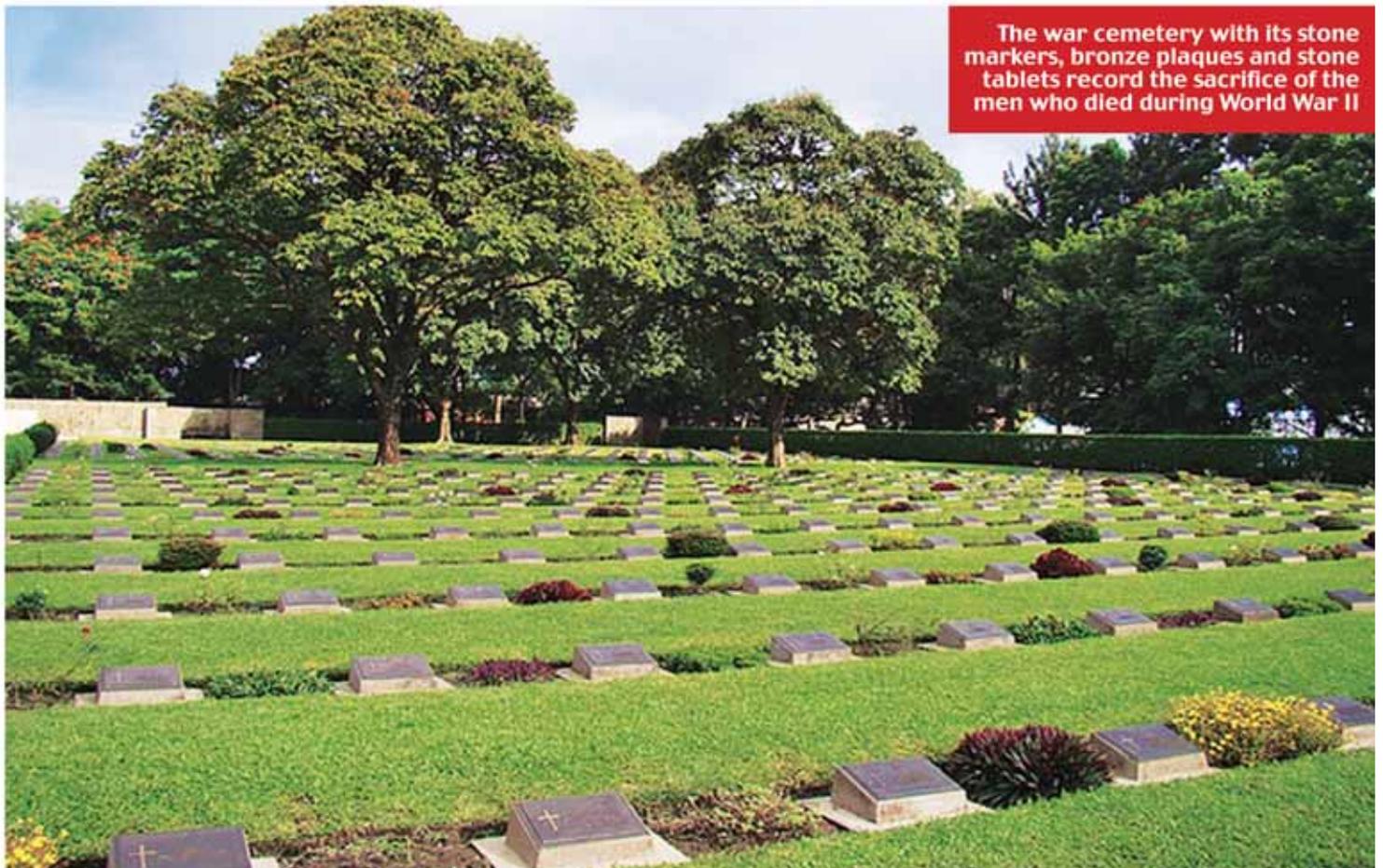
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The north-eastern hills of India are home to a Shangri-La called Manipur

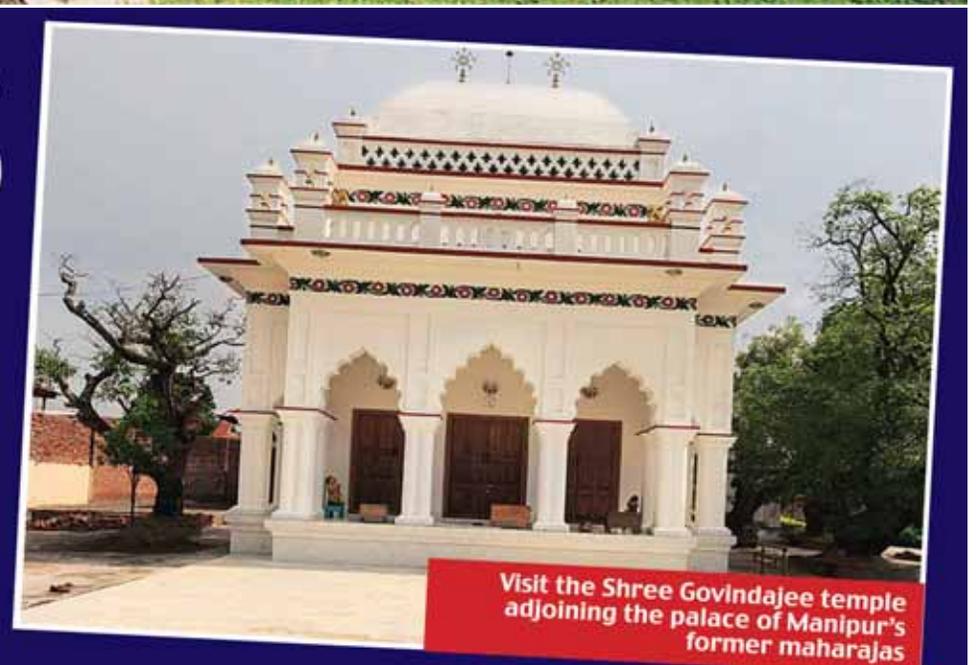
UNTOUCHED and undiscovered — this is Manipur's unique attraction. And it was to this little corner of paradise that we were headed. Lying in an oval valley encompassed by the most exotic blue-green hills, we were continuously greeted by the most magnificent vistas: cascading rapids, meandering rivulets and lush green grass that showcased a carpet of flowers.

Lying to the south of Nagaland, Manipur shares an international boundary with Myanmar on its west and south. "The Manipuris claim to have invented Polo," my daughter told me as we sped through the countryside on our way to Loktak



The war cemetery with its stone markers, bronze plaques and stone tablets record the sacrifice of the men who died during World War II

INDIA'S LITTLE JEWEL



Visit the Shree Govindajee temple adjoining the palace of Manipur's former maharajas

Lake that is about an hour's drive from Imphal. Indeed, the sturdy little ponies we had seen being ridden by the locals who were playing Sagol Kangjei was ample testament to this fact. "Sagol means horse and Kangjei hockey stick," informed my husband. "This indigenous sport was popular from the time the first Meitei King ruled Manipur between 33 AD and 153 AD. In fact, polo was first played in England as a modified form of this traditional Manipuri sport," he added. We were now almost at Loktak Lake — a saucer-shaped fresh water body that forms a rare ecosystem and is like a miniature inland sea. There was a gentle breeze blowing, tiny islands of grassy vegetation 'floated' on the water and a long, slender canoe bobbed about gently. If I were a painter I would have captured the sheer beauty of the surroundings, making the lone fisherman

casting his net in the water, the focal point of my canvas.

Sadly, I had to be content with my camera. We had some refreshment in a cafeteria in the middle of the lake before we headed onwards, but not before we had covered ourselves with mosquito repellent! Situated on the fringes of the Loktak Lake is the Keibul Lamjao National Park. And since we had an Inner Line Permit, we decided to pay this habitat of the endangered dancing deer a visit. The only 'floating' National Park in the world, Keibul Lamjao shelters a whole host of wildlife from the Hoolock Gibbon to the Clouded Leopard.

The park is perfectly placed: surrounded by marsh land, hills and of course the lake itself. We spotted the brow-antlered 'sangai' deer that is a much-loved creature in Manipuri folklore and dance tradition, in fact that's how it

got its name — the dancing deer! On our drive back we noticed that orchids seemed to grow everywhere — in the soil, on trees and on shrubs. In fact, the Central Orchidarium, which covers an area of about 200 acres, showcases over 110 rare varieties of orchids.

One morning we set off to see the Shree Govindajee temple, said to be a historic Vaishnavite centre. Adjoining the Royal Palace of Manipur's former maharajas, this is a simple, elegant structure with twin golden domes, a paved courtyard and a raised large congregation hall.

No trip to Manipur is complete without a visit to Khwairamband Bazar — a unique all-women's market replete with the hustle and bustle of Indian market places. With vegetable and grocery stalls on one side and handloom stalls on the other, the market was alive with

colours of all descriptions and incessant chatter. We went to have a look at the war cemeteries. Managed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, stone markers, bronze plaques and stone tablets record the sacrifice of the men who died during World War II. If you're anything like me, a museum freak, do go to the Manipur State Museum; here you can get an overview of the state's rich tribal heritage and see the portraits of Manipur's former rulers. And try and visit Red Hill — a hillock about 16 km from Imphal — where a fierce battle took place between the British and the Japanese forces during World War II. As for shopping — well no visit is complete without a souvenir or two! And as looms seem to form an integral part of most Manipuri homes, I picked up a rather intricately-woven shawl and some interesting weed mats!



The RS 5 Cabriolet has the elegant look of Audi's other 5-series convertibles, and it is powered by a 450 hp V-8

(Agencies) SINCE its arrival, the Audi 5 series — the standard (A5) and sport (S5) coupés and convertibles — has presented some of the most subtle and elegant shapes on the road. It is a popular choice among technically-inclined, design-conscious drivers who value understatement almost as much as they value performance. Not too big and not too small, the A5 and S5 were conceived with the driver at the top of the mind. The cars fit like gloves and feel as much at home on twisting hill roads as they do on the highways.

It was only a matter of time before Audi provided an even more powerful model for the 5-series sporting set. First came the RS 5 coupé, and then the Cabriolet. Both 2014 RS 5 models replace the 3-litre, supercharged 333 hp V-6 of the S5 with a 4.2-litre, 32-valve aluminium V-8 that develops 450 hp at 8,250 rpm and 430 Nm of torque from 4,000 to 6,000 rpm. The coupé's base price is \$ 69,600; the Cabriolet's is \$ 77,900. The RS 5's mesh grille, flared fenders, and oval exhaust tips are the design elements that subtly distinguish it from the A5 and S5. The Misanored-pearl Cabriolet that Audi provided for a testdrive had optional 20-inch, five-spoke aluminium wheels, plus other trim and navigation upgrades that raised its price to just under \$ 90,000.

The interior offers few thrills — a notable exception being the available 505-watt Bang & Olufsen sound system — but no design faux pas. The 12-way power sport seats, which are also available on the S models, can be a welcome feature on long road trips. They certainly were on the test-drive, which covered the route from Los Angeles to central California's Monterey Peninsula in the US, and back after a visit to the annual classic-car fest at and around Pebble Beach. With the black-fabric roof down during the drive home along the highway, wind buffeting was minimal. With the top up and the car at speed, the cabin was dead quiet. The engine — which is mated to Audi's superb S tronic 7-speed dual-clutch transmission and delivers power through Audi's Quattro all-wheel drive — provides the RS 5 with plenty of speed. The car accelerates from zero to 100 kmph in 4.9 seconds on its way to 280 kmph. The V-8 revs like a banshee, and in sport mode the RS 5 sheds its diplomatic personality and demonstrates an alpha aggression that is more befitting of a single-purpose automobile.

SHOW OF RESTRAINT



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The Audi RS 5 Cabriolet displays its power only when provoked





BOHO BEAUTY

PADMA Lakshmi kept it casual for the *Ice Age: Collision Course* screening in New York City.

The 45-year-old *Top Chef* host slipped on an Indian patterned skirt and fitted black top for the Thursday screening at the Walter Reade Theater.

The former model was joined by Queen Latifah, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Cynthia Nixon and Michael Strahan.

Padma sported a red, blue and orange patterned maxi skirt with a skintight black corset-style top, adding layers of silver bangles.

The mother of one wore her dark brunette tresses loose with just a touch of makeup.

Queen Latifah, who voices Ellie in the film,

sported white denim bottoms with a green blouse and a matching cardigan.

The actress also played the character in previous *Ice Age* films, including *Ice Age 2: The Meltdown*, *Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs* and *Ice Age: Continental Drift*.

The musician, who pulled her light brown tresses back into a low bun, sported smokey eye makeup and glossy lips.

Queen Latifah, 46, looked great in her tan wedges, adding a silver watch and dangling earrings.

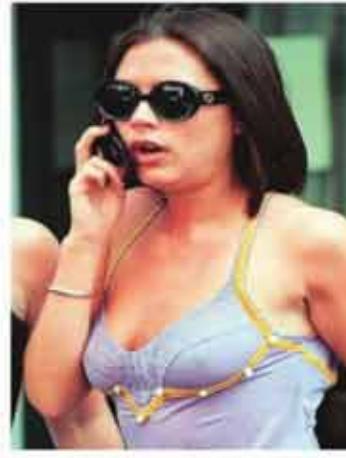
Also at the premiere was Jesse Tyler Ferguson, who voices Shangri Llama in the animated movie.

UPS AND DOWNS OF POSH'S, ER, CAREER

Told through changing size of her bust



Victoria at the premiere of *SpiceWorld*. Dr Maurizio Persico says her inflated look is not down to surgery, but a push-up bra.



Posh in 1997 with a delightfully pudgy face and no hair extensions. Most striking of all was her modest bosom, which appears to be a 34A cup.



She stuck to the Marbella Barbie look at a fashion party in 2005. Victoria had given up on music and was aspiring to be a designer.



Busting out of her bustier, Victoria was back with her former bandmates for the *Spice Girls* 2007 reunion tour.



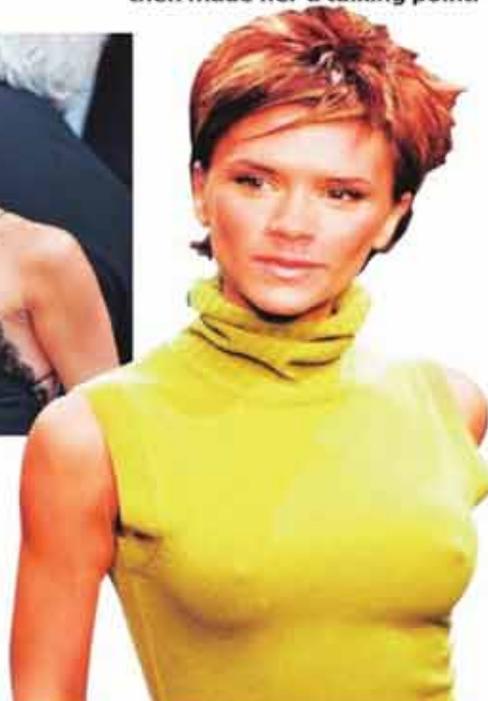
2001: Victoria's outfit leaves nothing to the imagination. Her eye-catching outfits & increased embonpoint had by then made her a talking point.



She was flashy & desperate for attention in 2003 as she was gravely trying to resuscitate her music career.



Upheaval as the family moved to London in 2013, David retired from football — and the bosom appeared to be on the up again. (R) The bra-less pixie look from 2000 came back with a bang.



YOU'VE heard of boom and bust. Well, pop star-turned-fashion designer Victoria Beckham has her own version. For the past two decades, her bosom has gone from pancake-flat to what she called 'torpedo bazookas' and back down, re-inflating again in recent weeks.

In the 20 years since the *Spice Girls* made 'Posh' famous, her bra size has gone from a modest A to an eye-stopping DD.

It seems that when the going gets tough she bolsters her confidence by enlarging her bosoms.

But Victoria, 42, appears at her most boyish when she's feeling happier.

With expert help, it is explained why these pictures reveal far more than you may think...

SULTAN WRESTLES WAY TO TOP

By **Vinayak Chakravorty**

SALMAN Khan has done it again on Eid. His latest release *Sultan* rode the extended festive weekend and a solo release status to rake in a whopping ₹180.36 crore domestic intake in its first five days.

The figure makes *Sultan* the highest weekend grosser of 2016 so far, and also assures it is only a matter of time for the Yash Raj Films production before it becomes a domestic blockbuster. The trade expects the film to cross the 200-crore mark in less than a week.

Early reports coming in show the film is also doing well in the overseas market, having grossed nearly ₹90 crore. *Sultan* has opened in 4,350 screens in India while the screen count abroad is 1,100.

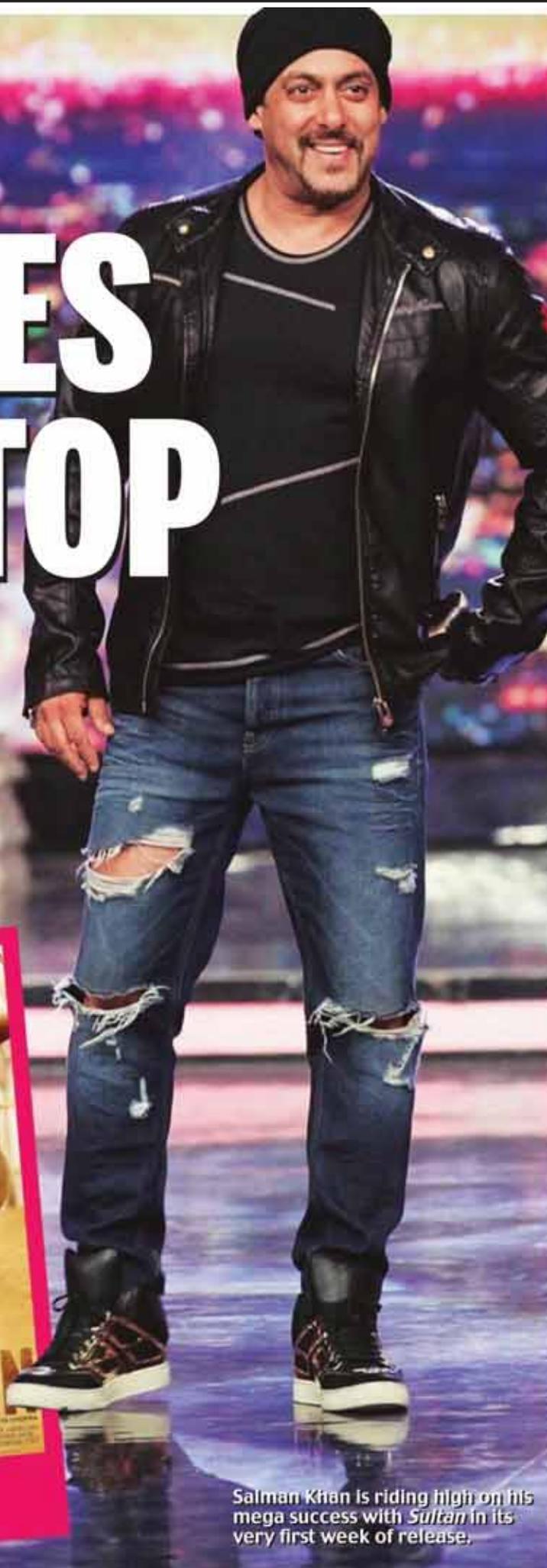
While on its domestic collection, a 180.36-crore figure means The movie has raked in over three times the money that *Housefull 3* collected in its opening weekend. The Akshay Kumar-Abhishek Bachchan-Riteish Deshmukh slapstick is this year's second highest weekend grosser so far, having made ₹53.31 crore in three days.

Sultan, of course, had the advantage of being a solo release over a five-day weekend, what with the film opening a day before Eid on Wednesday instead being a regular Friday release.

WITH the film marking Salman's return to the marquee for the first time since last year's Diwali release *Prem Ratan Dhan Payo*, the anticipation among fans base was frenzied.

Also, traditionally Eid has been Salman's lucky festival. Since 2009 when he released *Wanted* during the festival, he has delivered blockbusters such as *Dabangg*, *Bodyguard*, *Ek Tha Tiger* and *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* on Eid.

The good show of *Sultan* is joyous news for the film trade that is yet to see a clear blockbuster in 2016. The biggest hits of the year so far have been the



Salman Khan is riding high on his mega success with *Sultan* in its very first week of release.

Salman Khan's magic is working in Pakistan, too. His new film *Sultan* has collected Pakistani Rupees 15 crore in the five-day Eid weekend in that country. The figure overshadows the 7.6-crore weekend record that the Pakistani blockbuster *Jawani Phir Nahi Ani* set on Eid last year. *Sultan* opened across 75 screens and the advantage for the film in Pakistan, as in India, was the fact that Eid fell on a

Thursday this year. This allowed distributors Geo films to release the film on Wednesday, to cash in on an extended festive weekend.

Meanwhile other Eid releases in Pakistan have disappointed. A Pakistani thriller named *Sawaal 700 Crore Dollar Ka* opened poorly, as did the week's Hollywood releases — *The Legend of Tarzan*, *Ice Age: Collision Course*, *Finding Dory* and *The Secret Life Of Pets*.

Akshay Kumar films *Airlift* and *Housefull 3*, besides the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer *Fan*. Although these films are hits, they failed to scale a record-breaking high.

Incidentally, *Sultan*'s five-day India haul (₹180.36 crore) has already crossed the lifetime domestic collection of *Airlift* (₹127.8 crore), *Housefull 3* (₹107.7 crore) and *Fan* (₹85 crore).

The big question: Can *Sultan* become Bollywood's all-time biggest hit — a record Salman Khan has been eyeing forever? That record is currently held by the Aamir Khan blockbuster *PK*.

WELL-BEGUN

THE BEST OPENING WEEKEND GROSSERS OF 2016 IN THE DOMESTIC MARKET



Housefull 3: ₹53.31cr



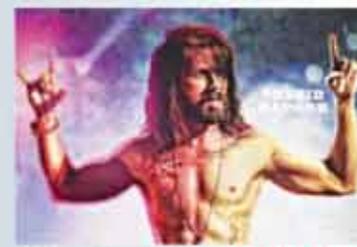
Fan: ₹52.35cr



Airlift: ₹44.30cr



Baaghi: ₹38.58cr



Udda Punjab: ₹33.80cr



Kapoor & Sons: ₹26.35cr



Ki & Ka: ₹25.23cr

(figures according to koimoi.com)

National poll Trump tightens gap with Clinton



(Agencies) Hillary Clinton's advantage over Donald Trump among registered voters nationwide has narrowed to just three points, within the margin of error, in the latest McClatchy-Marist poll released Wednesday. The presumptive Democratic nominee leads the presumptive Republican nominee by a count of 42 percent to 39 percent in a head-to-head matchup. More than eight in 10 Democrats and Republicans said they are supporting their respective parties' likely nominees, while independents are split. Clinton earned 36 percent support among independents, Trump took 33

percent, 23 percent said they would vote for neither, 2 percent said they would vote for someone else, and 6 percent said they are undecided. In Marist's previous national survey conducted in late March, Clinton led overall by nine points, 50 percent to 41 percent. On a regional basis, Clinton leads in the Northeast (50 percent to 38 percent) and in the West (46 percent to 33 percent), while Trump leads in the South (45 percent to 38 percent), and trails by one point against Clinton in the Midwest (41 percent to 40 percent).
(Contd on page 21)

3 members of an Indian family killed in accident in Long Island

The couple's 11-month-old son survived the crash and is being treated for non-life-threatening injuries.



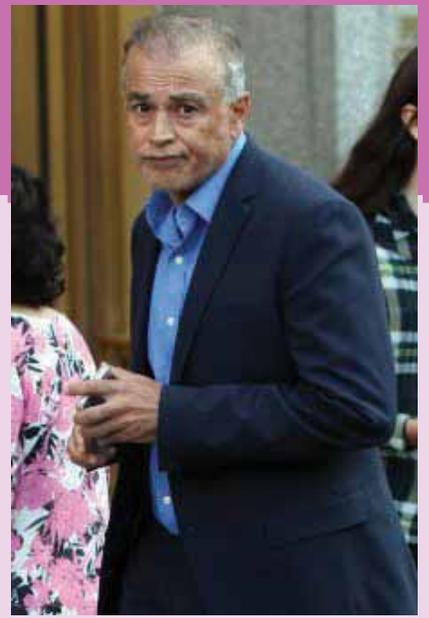
(By a staff writer) Suffolk County, Long Island- In a tragic incident, a 38-year-old Indian man and his parents, who were visiting from India, were killed when the vehicle they were traveling in was hit head-on by a pickup truck being driven by a drunk driver here. Chandan Gavai, and his parents Archana Gavai (60), and Kamalnayan Gavai (74), died when Gustave Geyer crashed into the family's car on Yaphank Middle Island Road in Long Island late July 4th Monday night.
(Contd on page 20)

Rockie Gajwani, real estate executive accused of spending embezzled funds on coke and strippers

(By a staff writer) New York- Office of The United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today the arrest of Rockie ROCKWELL GAJWANI on charges of wire fraud, money laundering, and tax evasion. GAJWANI was arrested this morning by USPIS and IRS agents in Connecticut, and was presented this afternoon in Manhattan federal court before U.S. Magistrate Judge Frank Maas. U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara said: "As the chief executive officer of a Manhattan real estate company, Rockwell

Gajwani was supposed to put the best interests of his company first. Instead, as alleged, he abused his position of authority to embezzle over a million dollars of company money. I thank the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and the IRS-CI for their work in this investigation."
It's accused in the court complaint that from October 2011 through March 2013, GAJWANI was the chief executive officer and president of Trevi Retail, a New York City-based company backed by private equity firm Principal

Enterprise Capital. During this period, GAJWANI took over \$1 million in company funds to which he was not entitled by, among other means, making wire transfers from the company's bank account to his personal bank account, writing company checks to himself, and making cash withdrawals from the company's bank account. To accomplish this scheme, among other means, GAJWANI took steps to conceal his true salary and to conceal from Trevi Retail ,
(Contd on page 20)



Obama: America 'not even close' to solving police, community issues

(Agencies) Washington – President Barack Obama, concluding a more than three-hour meeting Wednesday with community activists, politicians and law enforcement officials, said America is "not even close" to where it needs to be in terms of resolving issues between police and the communities they serve. Obama expressed optimism, however, and said the participants — who included members of the Black Lives Matter movement — agreed such conversations need to continue despite emotions running raw.



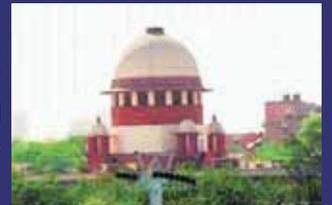
Obama has devoted his attention this week to the gun violence directed at police officers as well as shootings by police. The focus comes a few days after a black Army veteran killed five police

officers in revenge for police shooting black men in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and the Minneapolis suburbs. On Tuesday, Obama attended a memorial service for the

five slain Dallas officers and called the families of Alton Sterling in Louisiana and Philando Castile in Minnesota to offer condolences.
(Contd on page 21)

Stay out of politics, Supreme Court tells Governors

(Agencies) New Delhi: The Supreme Court has downsized governors' discretionary powers and told them: They are to shut their eyes and ears to political imbroglis,



even horse-trading, as long as the council of ministers headed by the CM enjoys a majority .Writing a note highly critical on Arunachal governor JP Rajkhowa's role in the state's political instability, a constitution bench of Justices J S Khehar, Dipak Misra, Madan B Lokur, P C Ghose and N V Ramana unanimously said: "Activities within a party, confirming turbulence, or unrest within its ranks, are beyond the governor's concern. "It's not 'within governor's realm to embroil himself in any political thicket... The governor must keep clear of any...horsetrading, and even unsavoury political manipulations, irrespective of the degree of their ethical repulsiveness. (Contd on page 21)