



The South Asian



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Voice of South Asian Community Since March 2002

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Tiger is Back



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Canada is Facing a Housing Crisis

So severe is the housing crisis that the country, which is known for welcoming immigrants, is planning to put a cap on the number of international students.



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Downfall of New Jersey
Senator Bob Menendez



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'Territorial
Integrity Can't be
Cherry-picked'

*Jaishankar's Fiery Message
to Pak, China at UNGA*



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Taliban controls world's best
performing currency this quarter



(News Agency) -Billions of dollars from humanitarian aid and rising trade with Asian neighbors has propelled Afghanistan's currency to the top of global rankings this quarter - an unusual spot for a poverty-stricken country

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India Must Double Down on
Empowering Armenia To Stop
Azerbaijan-Turkey-Pakistan Nexus



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BJP's Maneka Gandhi says
'ISKCON Biggest Cheat,
sells cows to butchers'

"False Information", says ISKCON

(Sai Bureau)-A video of Bharatiya Janata Party MP Maneka Gandhi saying the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is the "biggest cheat in the country and

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India Canada News Update

Cancellation of OCI registration to suspension of visa

(Sai Bureau)-Amid the soaring ties with Canada, the country's Defence Minister has called "India" an important partner. "We understand that this can be, and has proven to be, a challenging issue with respect to our relationship with India. But at the same time, we have the responsibility to make sure that we conduct a thorough investigation and get to the truth," Bill Blair told Global News. The statement has come after a top US diplomat in Canada confirmed that there was "shared intelligence among Five Eyes partners" that had prompted Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's offensive allegation against India in the killing of a Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil. A high-ranking Indian security official has said that Canada has not shared any concrete evidence with India until now via diplomatic or intelligence channels that link India to the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Here are the top-10 developments on the India-Canada row:

1. The Indian government is in the process of cancelling the registration of dozens of OCI card holders for carrying out pro-Khalistan activities and anti-India



propaganda.

2. Canadian Defence Minister Bill Blair has urged India, and Canada to start talking to find a common ground in view of the recent strain in relations.

3. A group of people staged a protest against Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau at the Jantar Mantar here, accusing him of supporting Khalistani separatists.

4. Canada to implement a 'foreign policy

reset', shedding off its 'middle-power approach' and focussing more on 'Indo-Pacific diplomacy', Japan Times reported. Notably, a similar episode also led to a deteriorating trend in China-Canada relations, the report stated.

5. The US Ambassador to Canada said it was "shared intelligence among Five Eyes partners" that led the Trudeau administration to make the claim of a potential link between "agents" of the

Indian government and the killing of separatist Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar.


6. The growing tensions between India and Canada have raised concerns among Indian parents whose children are studying in Canada with many stating that not only they are worried but their children are also unable to focus on their studies in Canada.

7. Indian probe agency has confiscated the properties of an alleged Khalistani militant Gurbatwant Singh Pannu whom it accuses of terror activities in India.

8. Last-minute airfares in India-Canada routes have gone through the roof. Direct flights between New Delhi and Toronto have crossed ₹1.46 lakh. It is more than ₹1.01 lakh on the Toronto-Delhi route.

9. India temporarily suspended visa services in Canada. BLS International, a visa processing firm, carried a notice from the Indian mission in Canada stating visa operations had been suspended till further notice.


10. Canadian authorities have not stopped issuing visas to Indian nationals looking to enter the North American country.




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IT'S OVER
Trump's Spell Over GOP Breaks With McCarthy Meltdown
The ex-president has endorsed the congressman for the Speaker role, but that hasn't been enough to sway the skeptics

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Protests in France Against Immigration
Thousands of protesters took to the streets in Paris to demand an end to the influx of migrants from North Africa and the Middle East.

What is atmospheric river that is driving heavy rains, floods to US?
Scientists picked up the phenomenon revealing something remarkable occurred in the United States

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Vice is going bankrupt
The network's financial problems have led to the sale of its assets and the possibility of liquidation.

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Army Major, wife arrested for torturing, stripping, throwing hot water on minor maid

(News Agency) - A Major of the Indian Army and his wife in Assam's Dima Hasao district were arrested for allegedly torturing their minor domestic help.

The Army personnel has been identified as Major Shailendra Yadav and is currently posted in Himachal Pradesh's Palampur. He married Kimmy Ralson of Haflong two years ago when he was posted in Dima Hasao.

Following Major Shailendra Yadav's transfer from Haflong in Assam to Himachal Pradesh, Kimmy Ralson

took the minor with her from Sankijang village to assist with household chores.

However, Kimmy Ralson allegedly subjected the child to severe abuse. Allegations include instances of physical torture, scalding the minor with hot water, and forcibly removing

her clothing. The girl recently returned to her family in Haflong on September 24, reported India Today NE. Major Shailendra Yadav and Kimmy Ralson were presented before the additional court of the Haflong judicial magistrate, which ordered their judicial custody.

The minor is currently receiving medical care at Haflong Civil Hospital in Assam.

Dima Hasao Police registered a case (Haflong PS Case No.74/2023) under Section 326 (voluntarily causing grievous hurt), 374

(unlawful compulsory labor), 354 (assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 506 (criminal intimidation), 370 (buying or disposing of any person as a slave), and 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of Indian Penal Code (IPC).



Half-naked and bleeding, 12-year-old seeks help after being raped, shooed away

(News Agency) - A 12-year-old girl, semi-naked and bleeding, was seen walking on the streets in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain on Monday. The minor was allegedly raped and dumped near the city's Dandi Ashram.

In visuals captured on CCTV cameras, the girl is seen walking in a residential area. A rag barely covers her. She



approaches a man standing outside his home for help, but is shooed away.

The girl was later admitted to a hospital in a critical condition and further referred to Indore for treatment.

"A case has been registered and a special investigation team (SIT) has been formed to identify and catch the culprits at the earliest. The medical

examination of the minor confirmed rape," senior police official Sachin Sharma said.

The Madhya Pradesh Police has detained one person in connection with the case.

The girl was not able to tell us exactly where she was from. But her accent suggests she is from Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh, he added.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) issued a notice to Ujjain Police over the minor's rape. The panel sought details of the initial report filed by police and asked them to comply with the

guidelines mentioned in the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

NCPCR chairperson Priyank Kanoongo said that the most unfortunate part of the incident was that for so many hours nobody stepped up to help the minor. This reveals a dark side of society, the NCPCR chairperson said.

'Deeply concerned' US's fresh message for India on Trudeau's allegations over Nijjar killing

(News Agency) -The United States has once again said that it was "deeply concerned" by the allegations made by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau regarding India's possible involvement in the killing of banned Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF) chief Hardeep Singh Nijjar and called for continued probe into the matter. Addressing a press briefing, department of state spokesperson Matthew Miller also said the US has "publicly - and privately" urged India to cooperate in the Canadian investigation. "We are deeply concerned by the allegations referenced by (Canadian) Prime Minister (Justin) Trudeau. We remain in close contact with our Canadian partners," Miller told reporters on Monday (local time).

"We believe it's critical that Canada's investigation proceed and that the perpetrators be brought to justice. And we have publicly and privately urged the Indian Government to cooperate in the Canadian investigation," he added.

Tensions between India and Canada have escalated after Trudeau alleged that India was behind the killing of Nijjar. India has rejected the allegations, calling them "absurd and motivated." Nijjar, a designated terrorist in India, was killed in Canada's Surrey on June 18.

US Representative Jim Costa calls for a



probe Meanwhile, US Representative Jim Costa called for an investigation into the killing of Nijjar. In a post shared on X, formerly known as Twitter, Costa said, "I am very concerned about reports that Canadian Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar was assassinated, and I have requested an official briefing as a member of the House Foreign Affairs committee. We must fully investigate this crime to determine who should be held accountable."

Late last week, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US was "deeply concerned" about the allegations made by Trudeau about the Indian government's

involvement in the killing of the Khalistani terrorist. He said the US wanted to see accountability and called it "important" that the investigation runs its course and leads to the result. Blinken said that the US has engaged directly with the Indian government. He said that the US is consulting "very closely" with Canada and coordinating on the issue. Asked about the US's engagement with India and Canada amid the diplomatic row, Blinken said, "We are deeply concerned about the allegations that Prime Minister Trudeau has raised. We have been consulting throughout very closely with our Canadian colleagues, and not just consulting, coordinating with them

on this issue.""And from our perspective, it is critical that the Canadian investigation proceed. And it would be important that India work with the Canadians on this investigation. We want to see accountability, and it's important that the investigation run its course and lead to that result," he added. Blinken refused to give details regarding the diplomatic conversations that the US had with both nations. He said that the investigation must move forward and be completed. Blinken said, "I'm not going to characterize or otherwise speak to diplomatic conversations that we've had. We've been engaged directly with the Indian government as well. And again, I think the most productive thing that can happen now is to see this investigation move forward, be completed. And we would hope that our Indian friends would cooperate with that investigation as well."

"More broadly, you've heard me speak to this. We are extremely vigilant about any instances of alleged transnational repression, something we take very, very seriously. And I think it's important more broadly for the international system that any country that might consider engaging in such acts not do so. So, it's something that we're also focused on in a much broader way," he added.

'Engine was running': 'Drunk' staffer blames loco pilot for Mathura train mishap

Sachin, the railway staff who entered the engine, blamed loco pilot Govind Hari Sharma, saying who left the train before him. Sachin alleged that the Govind kept the engine running, which is why the throttle was pushed forward and the train moved forward rapidly, when he kept his bag.

(News Agency) - A preliminary investigation into the electric multiple unit (EMU) train mishap in Mathura on Thursday revealed that the railway staffer who boarded the engine was allegedly drunk at the time and was looking into his mobile phone. He had placed his bag on the throttle, causing the throttle to shift, which made the train accelerate at a high speed, a joint report of the investigation said.

However, Sachin, the railway staff who entered the engine, blamed loco pilot Govind Hari Sharma, who left the train before him. Sachin alleged that the Govind kept the engine running, which is why the throttle was pushed forward and the train moved forward rapidly, when he kept his bag.

Sachin claimed that when he asked for the engine cabin key from loco pilot Govind, he told him that the key was in the cabin itself. "Even before the



emergency brakes could be applied, the train broke the stopper and pillars and climbed onto the platform," he said.

On Tuesday night, the train arrived at Mathura station at 10:49 pm, the probe report said. Within a minute of Sachin entering the cabin, it started

moving, broke the dead end and half of its portion climbed onto the platform.

According to the report, it was Sachin who accidentally triggered the train throttle, causing it to accelerate and climb onto the platform. Sachin was an Electrical Transmission Line (ETL)

employee and was allegedly drunk when he entered the engine cabin. Notably, Divisional Railway Manager Tej Prakash Agrawal suspended five persons, including Sachin, in connection with the incident. Of the other four, Harbhajan Singh, Brajesh Kumar, and Kuljeet are technical staff and Govind Hari Sharma is a loco pilot. The Crew Voice and Video Recording System (CVVRS) revealed that the ETL staff had boarded the EMU after it reached the platform. He was looking at a mobile phone when he entered the engine cabin, and then placed his bag on the throttle. Agra Railway Division Manager TP Agarwal said that normally, after the arrival of the train, the keys of the engine cabin are given to the support staff already present there, which is why Sachin had the key. Due to this incident, rail traffic at Mathura Junction was affected for about 16 hours.

UP school teacher asks Muslim student to slap fellow Hindu classmate, arrested

A school teacher in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar was arrested and suspended for instructing a Muslim student to slap a Hindu classmate.

(News Agency) - A school teacher in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar was arrested and suspended from school on charges of asking a Muslim student to slap a Hindu fellow mate in the class. The incident happened on September 26, when a Class 5 student was asked some questions by the teacher, identified as Sajishta. As the boy was unable to answer the teacher's question, she allegedly asked a Muslim fellow student to slap the boy. The matter came to light after the Hindu student showed signs of depression and confined himself to his home. Upon being asked by his father, the 11-

year-old boy narrated his entire ordeal and a case against the teacher was registered on September 27. Following investigations, the police, on September 28, arrested the teacher, while the school authorities suspended her from her duties. This comes a month after a First Information Report (FIR) was registered against a private school teacher in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar after she instructed children in a class to slap their Muslim classmate. A widely shared video of the incident, which sparked much outrage, showed children taking turns striking a crying Muslim student with the teacher looking on.

Army to issue tender for buying 400 new artillery guns

(News Agency) - As part of its major modernisation plan, the Indian Army will soon issue a tender to buy 400 new howitzers, an artillery weapon, under a Rs 750 million deal. For this, the Army will fully rely on Indian firms. A proposal has been moved to buy the artillery, as part of the indigenously designed, developed and manufactured (IDDM) category. The purchase would give a major boost to the domestic firms in the sector, top defence sources told India Today. In the last decade, four contracts have been concluded for procurement of 155 mm howitzers. These gun systems have already been inducted and a number of regiments are being equipped with these weapons. These gun systems include -- Dhanush, Sharang, Ultra Light Howitzer (ULH) and K-9 Vajra Self Propelled Guns. The Dhanush Guns are an electronic upgrade of the Bofors Guns, while the Sharang Guns have been up-gunned from 130 mm to 155 mm calibre. The Seven and Five regiments have already been equipped with Self-Propelled guns.

155 mm will be the standard calibre of all artillery guns in the future, with automated systems and assemblies. The emphasis is on development of new technologies in sighting systems, ammunition manufacturing, metallurgy, and networking of guns.

Pregnant woman set on fire by mother, brother in Uttar Pradesh's Hapur

(News Agency) - A 23-year-old woman was allegedly set on fire by her family members in Hapur district of Uttar Pradesh after she was found to be pregnant, police said on Friday. The incident took place in Nawada Khurd village. The woman, who is in critical condition after sustaining over 70 per cent burns to her body, was referred to a higher center for treatment. The woman's mother and brother were taken into custody by the police. According to police, the woman, who is



unmarried, had physical relations with a young man from the same village and became pregnant. When her family members came to know about this, they were angered. On Thursday, September 28, the woman's mother and brother took her to a nearby forest where they sprinkled petrol on her and set her on fire. The victim suffered severe burns and was rushed to the hospital. Additional Superintendent of Police (Hapur) Rajkumar Aggarwal said a case of attempted murder against the girl's mother and brother was lodged and investigation into the matter is on.

What Biden's latest outlandish immigration action tells us about the next one

The Biden administration recently issued yet another outlandish immigration action, but most Americans likely did not realize it. I'm talking about the Department of Homeland Security's decision to extend and "redesignate" Temporary Protected Status for more than 700,000 illegal aliens from Venezuela that the Biden administration has already allowed into the U.S. For many Americans, this may sound like a niche policy decision that only immigration policy experts care to discuss. That's what the Biden Administration is counting on. Don't be fooled, this is the epitome of an America Last policy.

To understand why I am sounding the alarm, it is important to understand the historical misuse of Temporary Protected Status by various administrations since Congress created it in 1990. Under the law, the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security may designate a country for Temporary Protected Status if there is an ongoing armed conflict, an environmental disaster, or there are "extraordinary and temporary conditions." Importantly, such conditions must prevent nationals of that country from safely returning home. Despite the name and congressional intention, there is nothing temporary about Temporary Protected Status. Here's why. Once the secretary designates a country, nearly every illegal alien in the U.S. from that country receives a work permit, an exemption from deportation, a Social Security number, and the ability to obtain a driver's license. Prior to President Trump, administrations of both political parties would continuously extend the designation, and the benefits that come with it, using increasingly absurd justifications such as the existence of "coffee rust" for one country. The "redesignation," meaning advancing the cutoff date for eligibility, is blatantly unlawful and functions to benefit the illegal aliens who made it into the U.S. after the initial designation. The Biden administration's abuse of Temporary Protected Status has reached another level. There are currently 16 countries with Temporary Protected Status. This includes restoring the designations for the six countries the Trump Administration properly terminated but activist courts interfered with until the change of administrations. The Biden Administration is also responsible for five new designations, by the far the most that any administration has done in under three years. In fact, the Department of Homeland Security has "redesignated" every country except one when it has come up for review. This is nothing short of amnesty by executive fiat.

In fact, it appears that Temporary Protected Status was always the end game of the Biden administration's open border policy. Step one was literally throwing open the border by terminating the Remain in

Mexico policy, mass releasing illegal aliens into American communities, and gaslighting the American people by denying that there is a crisis. Once the optics of millions of illegal aliens surging across the southern border became too damaging politically, the administration moved to phase two, which was rerouting illegal immigration under the guise of "lawful pathways." Specifically, this step involved the parole program the Department of Homeland Security created to fly 30,000 inadmissible aliens per month into the U.S. from Venezuela, as well as from Cuba, Haiti, and Nicaragua. This is a clear abuse of this authority. This policy is being challenged in court, and I believe the Biden administration knows it is going to lose. And that's where the devious third phase, Temporary Protected Status, comes into play. Everything about the Venezuela decision smacks of political impropriety. Based on my experience dealing with Temporary Protected Status decisions as acting secretary, the Venezuela decision should have been made in January 2024, roughly 60 days before the March 2024 expiration. So why is the administration so out in front of this one by several months? It seems to me the Biden administration expects the courts to strike down its parole programs as unlawful, which would make all of those illegal aliens subject to deportation. And though this administration isn't removing anyone, the next America First administration will. In an effort to launder the unlawful parole program and obstruct the next administration's ability to easily remove illegal aliens, DHS "redesignated" Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status to cover the approximately 472,000 illegal aliens who the Biden Administration allowed into the U.S. since the initial designation in 2021.

Expect this weaponization of Temporary Protected Status to continue. The day after the Venezuela decision, DHS "redesignated" Afghanistan's Temporary Protected Status. Although the additional roughly 15,000 illegal aliens from Afghanistan that will now be covered are far lower than Venezuela's, this is the beginning of a failing, and failing, administration's plan to designate new countries for Temporary Protected Status and to "redesignate" existing countries. Before the Trump Administration, less than 500,000 illegal aliens had Temporary Protected Status. Under President Biden, the count is at least 1.5 million. The cartels and human traffickers are definitely applauding this new policy as they can easily market to vulnerable migrants the high likelihood of eventually being covered by Temporary Protected Status if they can make it into the U.S. before the Biden administration ends.

By Chad Wolf

South Asia, now open to business

Can the current optimism about India's economic prospects - its impending emergence as the third-largest economy with growing financial resources and a major technological hub - rub off on the rest of the Subcontinent? The recent visits to Delhi by Nepal's Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe highlight the shifting currents in South Asian regionalism. Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi's recent travels to Delhi, Colombo, and Male and a surprising visit to Sri Lanka by French President Emmanuel Macron last week underline the new external impetus to the Subcontinent's economic integration. But the pessimistic discourse on South Asian regionalism is trapped in two old propositions. One, South Asia is the least integrated region and insufficiently connected to the world. The second is the belief that the road to regional integration in the Subcontinent must necessarily run through the SAARC - the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. The first proposition has been true for a long time, and the second has become irrelevant to the region's future. Let us briefly review the two and how new forces are producing significant change on the ground.

The post-colonial and partitioned Subcontinent deliberately chose economic autarky and devalued regional integration. Endless conflict reinforced the lack of political appetite for cross-border commercial engagement. Worse still, the trans-regional connectivity inherited from the British Raj steadily withered as the newly-independent economies focused on import substitution.

The liberalisation and globalisation of the South Asian economies, which began in the 1990s, saw the injection of the language of regionalism in the

Subcontinent and a new interest in trade and connectivity. Economic reform, however, was uneven across the region and tentative even in the capitals, with some support for change. And it was hard to mobilise support for cross-border connectivity projects amidst multiple political disputes among the South Asian sovereigns that exacerbated the region's security challenges. The 21st century has seen considerable improvement within the Subcontinent and in the connections between South Asia and the world. The share of intra-regional trade in the Subcontinent's trade with the world has grown from about 2 per cent in 1990 to about 6 per cent today, but is nowhere near the potential or the achievements of other parts of Asia. But the direction is clearly positive. The fact that SAARC is moribund - the last summit was held in 2014 - has not meant any progress in regional economic integration. In an ideal world, the SAARC would be the vehicle for reconnecting the region. But Pakistan is not interested in such an outcome; its priority for the last three decades has been to wrest concessions from India on Kashmir. It is in no mood to open its economy for mutually beneficial cooperation with India. That has not come in the way of the rest of the region moving forward - through bilateral, sub-regional, and trans-regional mechanisms outside of SAARC. A successful SAARC is not a precondition for thriving economic regionalism. That brings us to three new factors that are accelerating regional economic integration. One is the renewed pressure to undertake economic reform. The recent economic crises in Sri Lanka and Pakistan are compelling the elites in Colombo and Rawalpindi to embark on serious and painful economic change. Whether they succeed or not, the two will not remain the same.

By C Raja Mohan

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As Canada Messes Up Indo-Pacific Strategy, China Has Last Laugh

Canada has long accused China of meddling in its domestic affairs, and the charges range from election interference to money laundering to counterfeiting and so on. The allegations go as far back as a 1997 report from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), which warned of a collaboration between Chinese Communist Party (CCP) officials, criminals, mafia and business tycoons to infiltrate Canadian businesses, to steal intellectual property rights and to interfere in the management of the country. While many of the Canadian accusations, along with the evidence, have been missed by the world media at large, Meng Wanzhou's arrest in 2019 made global headlines. The RCMP, on a warrant from US officials, arrested Huawei executive Meng, the daughter of the company's founder. Meng, the Chief Financial Officer of Huawei, was accused of violating US sanctions on Iran. China retaliated and unleashed hostage diplomacy, arresting two



Canadians in China on charges of espionage. The crisis in Canada-China relations lasted till 2021, when Meng's case was dismissed.

In November last year, Canada unveiled its Indo-Pacific strategy with a sharp focus on China. The strategy not just outlines the China challenge with concerns about Chinese strategic and motivated investments, coercive approaches, arbitrary application of laws, and military capabilities, but it also plans to review all existing mechanisms and structures with China and diversify its investments in the region. The India-Pacific strategy

identifies India as a critical partner and delves into specific areas for enhancing cooperation. However, all came to naught as Canada unleashed accusations against India this month, without offering any evidence of New Delhi's role in exterminating a so-called Canadian citizen on its soil. While India has condemned the baseless allegation, and Justin Trudeau hasn't provided any evidence in seven days, let alone concrete evidence, China laughs the last laugh.

As disinformation and propaganda abounds, tracking the most dominant narratives in state-controlled societies with

complete surveillance of social media - as is the case in China - becomes useful in order to understand the discourse. The news website of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), even before Trudeau levelled his allegations against India, published several articles on deteriorating ties between India and Canada and noted that Trudeau's visit to India for the G20 summit was extremely low key. It also said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's accusations of terrorist activities on Canadian soil are targeted at India's minority community - the Sikhs. Clearly, the narrative equates Sikhs with terrorist outfits in Canada - something that India has never said. The same website also has articles on the postponement of a Canadian trade delegation to India. While the fact is true that the delegation's visit was postponed, the narrative pushed out again by the articles on the so-called news website is that India was concerned about Sikhs in Canada, which is entirely untrue. Both Huanqiu and its English

version, the Global Times, have come up with several "commentaries" on how the India-US partnership is unravelling, and how India needs to understand it can never be treated as an equal partner by the West. What is implicit is that India should give up its sovereignty-related disputes with China and join hands with it in a campaign against the West. What is conveniently ignored, as is the case in all propaganda, is that India has always preferred to stay neutral, even in the most difficult situations, and has relied on its own strengths to navigate crises in international politics. The "India way", which has time and again been mentioned in the context of the G20, is attempted to be flushed away. Guanacha, a nationalist website based in Shanghai, follows the same narrative as those pushed out by Huanqiu and Global Times, and paints a picture that India's partnership with the West is based only on balancing China and nothing more.

Dr. Sriparna Pathak

Democrat hypocrites in sanctuary cities do this when migrants actually show up

By Jason Rantz

While the Biden administration still refuses to acknowledge the migrant crisis, it's impossible for them to hide the impact their disastrous border crisis is having on Democrat-run sanctuary cities and states.

Customs and Border Protection sources confirmed to Fox News that the total migrant encounters for fiscal year to date 2023, at 2,388,350, have surpassed the 2022 total of 2,378,944, setting a new record. With fiscal years running from October to October, this puts migrant crossings at over 9,000 a day on average, according to Griff Jenkins, who is embedded at the border.

Many of these migrants made New York their end destination, upending the quality of life in a city already struggling with untenable crime, drug use and homelessness. Mayor Eric Adams warned that this crisis will



"destroy New York City," with Gov. Kathleen Hochul warning migrants not to come to her state. While I sympathize with New Yorkers - or Chicagoans, Denverites and others - who have to live with the crisis, voters hold some of the blame. They embrace radical left politicians who proudly signaled their support for asylum seekers. They just never thought anyone would take them up on their sanctuary offers. During the Trump presidency, you couldn't

swing a dead cat without hitting a Democrat proudly declaring their city, county or state a sanctuary for illegal immigrants, a safe haven for immigrants seeking a better life - an escape from poverty or conflict in their home countries. Some jurisdictions established laws or policies for the first time during the Trump administration, while others strengthened pre-existing ones.

But they virtually all had the same effect: An influx of illegal

immigrants took these sanctuaries up on their offers for shelter and freedom, putting a strain on local resources. Accepting so many unvetted illegal immigrants led to an increase in preventable crime and negatively impacted the quality of life for residents.

Denver codified its sanctuary status on Aug. 28, 2018, after community activists demanded protections against Trump's immigration policies. The Public Safety Enforcement Priorities Act prevented city employees from sharing information about a resident's immigration status, prohibited the sharing of information for the purposes of immigration matters, and forbade law enforcement from detaining an illegal immigrant for the sole purposes of turning them over to federal immigration officials.

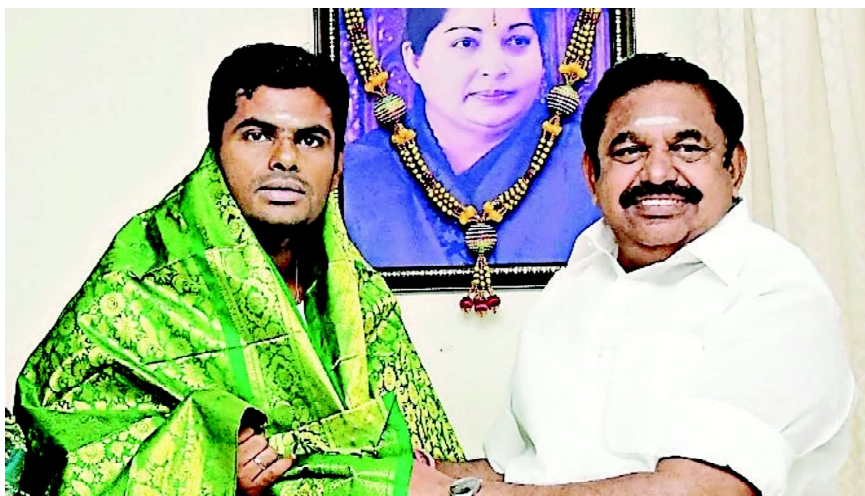
"Last year we watched as our new president called us rapists, drug

dealers and criminals. Our children cried in fear as our new president threatened to separate their families and build a wall of deportation," Councilman Paul López, one of the sponsors of the bill, explained while holding back tears in a nearly 15 minute self-aggrandizing speech ahead of the bill's passage.

Lopez and the others extolled what they treated as the most historic civil rights bill in the city's history. It was a nauseatingly rehearsed performance of left-wing theatrics, filled with calculated pauses that feigned thoughtfulness. It was nothing more than performative politics. "Look, there's never anything false about hope, right? Our movement needs these allies. We need allies to stand in this gap, and we usually refer to civil rights and human rights as something in history books. But it's not in history books.

NDA unravels in Tamil Nadu

The decision of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) to leave the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) is likely to impact the BJP's electoral prospects in Tamil Nadu. Though the other parties in the NDA such as Pattali Makkal Katchi are yet to reveal their stand, the NDA will shrink as a coalition since the AIADMK has been its mainstay. In contrast, the Secular Progressive Alliance (SPA) led by the DMK is a formidable coalition: It includes the Congress, the Communist parties and the main Dalit outfit, Viduthala Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK), that have pockets of influence across the state. In the 2019 general election, the SPA won 38 of the 39 Lok Sabha seats, and two years later, won the state assembly polls with 159 of the 234 assembly seats. Between the general election and assembly polls, the



AIADMK had narrowed the gap with the DMK, and the NDA was expected to put up a good fight against the SPA in the upcoming general election. However, the AIADMK has concluded that it is better placed outside the NDA umbrella. The AIADMK's departure from the NDA is the

result of ideological contradictions that had developed with the alliance. The BJP state leadership, particularly current chief K Annamalai, has been pursuing an aggressive Hindutva agenda as part of the party's plan to expand its footprint in Tamil Nadu. This led the party to

attack the icons and rationalist ideals of the Dravidian movement. Over the past few months, Annamalai has made controversial remarks about Periyar E V Ramaswamy and CN Annadurai, key figures in the Dravidian movement. The recent controversy over Sanatana Dharma has also

polarised the state with the BJP leadership criticising the Dravidian movement. The AIADMK, which was formed following a split in the DMK in 1972, claims the legacy of Periyar and Annadurai, could not have condoned these comments that questioned the foundational beliefs of the party. Interestingly, the BJP refused to rein in its party chief despite numerous appeals from the AIADMK. The silent endorsement of the hard ideological line followed by the state leadership suggests that the BJP may be willing to risk marginalisation in the short term to pursue its long-term goals in Tamil Nadu. Its tactical alliances in the past with the Dravidian outfits were limited to electoral goals - the central leadership had avoided confrontation with the Dravidian movement's rationalist politics. That phase seems to have ended. For now.

No place for hate speech



The five-day special session of Parliament in the new premises was historic for passing the Women's Reservation Bill. Over two days, members across the party spectrum debated the Bill intensely, and in the end, a near-consensus emerged in its favour. Parties agreed to disagree over the demand for a sub-quota for other backward classes (OBCs) but refused to let their differences in opinion spoil the positive atmosphere that prevailed

in the House. It was a fine demonstration of all that is good and great about India's democratic system. But the same historic session was spoiled by Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) two-time MP from South Delhi, Ramesh Bidhuri, with an appalling verbal assault on Danish Ali, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) MP from Amroha, Uttar Pradesh. When interrupted while addressing Parliament during a discussion on Chandrayaan-3,

Bidhuri threatened and hurled communally charged slurs at Ali. Forget Parliament, the kind of words uttered have no place in a civilised society.

On Friday, the Speaker warned Bidhuri of action if he repeated the offence even as Ali wrote to the presiding officer asking that the matter be referred to the privileges committee. A warning is too light a punishment for comments that reek of Islamophobia and qualify as hate speech. The worrying

aspect is that the lawmaker's comments echo a disturbing but growing trend that has roiled the country in recent times, poisoning minds and polarising society, sometimes culminating in violent flashpoints. Allowing the lawmaker to get away with a rap on the knuckles will only serve to normalise hate speech, which already gets free rein on social media platforms.

Despite instructions from the Supreme Court, law enforcement

agencies have either been lax in registering suo motu complaints in incidents involving hate speech or simply looked the other way. And when uttered by someone from the party in government, such comments also cause enormous damage to India's relations with the Islamic world, which is crucial to Delhi's economic and security architecture.

BJP president JP Nadda has issued a show cause notice to Bidhuri, and he needs to make an example of Bidhuri so that the message goes down to the party ranks that it does not approve of abusive conduct, against political opponents or non-Hindus. That would also demonstrate that the party walks the talk of "Sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas, sabka prayas". But the issue goes beyond one man, one party, and one instance.

Hate speech, in any form, and irrespective of either provenance or provocation, needs to be combated at every level. Political parties should draw a red line when it comes to it. The government should consider legislation on it. Law enforcement agencies should be proactive in dealing with it. And Parliament, which in a democratic system such as India, towers over everything else, needs to lead

Saving less, buying more

RBI's monthly bulletin released earlier this week published data on flows of household financial assets and liabilities. The data shows that net financial asset flows -- it measures assets and liabilities incurred over a year rather than their total stock - of households saw a sharp fall as a share of GDP in 2022-23. A large reason behind the fall in this number during 2021-22 and 2022-23 is on account of first, forced savings during the pandemic, and later, pent-up demand with restoration of economic normalcy. However, the 2022-23 number is much lower than what this share has historically been. Is there a larger macroeconomic message in these numbers? A two-part series published in this paper has shown that the latest numbers cannot be used to argue that there is a crisis at hand for Indian households or financial institutions that have lent to them. The series also shows that India's growth boom



in the 2000s also saw a growth in ratio of household debt to GDP.

If India's relatively rich households are indeed borrowing more and saving less - one will have to wait for a few

years to decide whether the 2022-23 number is an aberration - then it is likely to generate tailwinds for consumption demand in the short- to medium-term. Anecdotal reports of a boom in premium housing,

passenger cars and even high end contact intensive service markets support such a prognosis. This is good rather than bad news for the economy as a whole. To be sure, it is worth asking another question in

the wake of the latest RBI data. Is a section of India's population, especially among the young formal sector workers, now spending beyond its means - perhaps at the cost of saving for retirement rather than running the risk of not being able to repay their debt - under the influence of what is called "demonstration effect" in economics? Anecdotal evidence, once again, supports such an argument. While such a behaviour can support consumption driven growth in the short- to medium- term, it may create a crisis in the long-term when this cohort retires without enough in retirement funds.

It is important to note that fiscal policy, through decisions such as the new tax regime which increases disposable incomes if investment related exemptions are not claimed, is nudging younger workers to consume more. This could have played a role in the fall in net financial asset flows as well.

Trudeau Politicises Diplomacy to Salvage His Career, Jeopardises India-Canada Ties

By: Amarjeet Verma

In the complex world of international diplomacy, where words can shape the destinies of nations, a single misstep can have disastrous consequences. Recently, Canada stumbled down this dangerous path when it levelled very serious allegations against India, accusing it of complicity in the death of a Canadian citizen of Indian origin, a designated terrorist by the Indian government. The fallout from this incident not only soured diplomatic relations between the two countries but also exposed Canada's blatant hypocrisy and disregard for established diplomatic norms.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau fired the opening salvo with his startling accusations against India in the Canadian Parliament last Monday. He alleged India's involvement in the murder of a Canadian citizen without providing a shred of evidence to support his claims. The move was not only ill-advised but also had the potential to disrupt the delicate fabric of international relations. A country like Canada, which claims to be a human rights



and due process champion, should have been more cautious before making such serious allegations.

Trudeau's questionable timing of these allegations cannot be ignored. At home, he faces growing pressure from the opposition over runaway inflation, soaring home unaffordability, government involvement in scandals and corruption and record public debt. With no clear solution to these pressing domestic issues in sight, Trudeau's accusations against India seem like a convenient diversionary tactic, a way to divert public attention from the pressing issues

plaguing Canada.

The decision to invite Jaspal Atwal, a designated Khalistani terrorist, as part of Trudeau's entourage to India in the past further underscores the inconsistency in Canada's approach to extremism. Trudeau's defence of farmers' protests in India, while taking a different stance on trucker protests in Canada, exposes his double standards.

Trudeau's allegations against the Indian government for its alleged involvement in the death of a known terrorist lack substantial evidence. But it is known to all, that it conveniently ignores substantial evidence of Chinese meddling in

Canadian internal affairs. This double standard raises questions about the credibility of Canada's position and commitment to global security.

The Government of Canada has consistently turned a blind eye to act upon the detailed lists of designated terrorists and extremists provided by the Government of India. Despite receiving concrete evidence several times from the Government of India, Canada has not taken any action, and let the India-centric extremism or separatist protests, ruckus and mayhem run its course. Instead, they inexplicably expect India to act on their allegations without a shred of evidence, a demand that smacks of hypocrisy.

Trudeau has always given his political agenda precedence over foreign relations. This discrepancy between his words and actions undermines Canada's credibility on the global stage and raises concerns about the country's leadership.

It is also crucial to ask how Canadian citizens can demand a separate state in India, in the name of freedom of expression and

freedom of protest, when they should be focusing on the unity and stability of their own country. While most Sikhs in Canada are law-abiding citizens, there is a faction that supports the Khalistani agenda and violence and finds a safe haven there. Numerous plots have been foiled in the past and tragic incidents such as the Air India bombing serve as stark reminders of the potential consequences of supporting extremism and terrorism.

Furthermore, Canada's rush to seek support from its allies, including the United States, the United Kingdom and Europe, reveals its inability to deal independently with the consequences of its actions. This not only reflects poorly on Canada's diplomatic capabilities but also undermines its international standing.

One important aspect that deserves more scrutiny is Canada's handling of the revelation of the identity of an Indian intelligence officer. In diplomatic circles, all countries secretly send intelligence officers to their embassies or high commissions abroad.

India Must Double Down on Empowering Armenia To Stop Azerbaijan-Turkey-Pakistan Nexus

By: Shubhangi Sharma

On Sunday, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met his Armenian counterpart against the backdrop of a cataclysmic fate being meted out to Armenians in Azerbaijan. With all its focus on Ukraine, the international community has turned a blind eye toward an ethnic cleansing underway, elsewhere. More than 120,000 ethnic Armenians are being driven out of their homeland, the Nagorno-Karabakh region, at the hands of Azerbaijan. Yet, not a single global power has stepped up to prevent this tragedy from unravelling.

So much for the West's sanctimonious sermons or Russia's intimidating temerity. For all they care, one may describe the current state of affairs as Azerbaijan having a free pass to do as it pleases with the Armenians.

Last week, backed by Turkey, Baku launched a lightning offensive on the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave where the breakaway Republic of Artsakh resides. The government in the region has been asked to disband. The Lachin corridor connecting Armenia to the region has been blockaded by Azerbaijan since last year's winter, causing acute food shortages. Electricity and gas supplies, which pass through Azerbaijan-controlled territory, have also dried up. War and deadly bomb blasts targeting civilians are further driving away ethnic Armenians, who fear an impending violent takeover by Azerbaijan. Streams of thousands of Armenians are fleeing a region that they have called home for millennia.

The conflict is a gruesome lesson on the geopolitical tussle that grips the Transcaucasian region leaving numerous casualties and injustices in its wake. While the world has let Armenia down, India has a bigger role to play.

THE WORLD LETS ARMENIA DOWN

Armenia is ready to take in all the refugees and Azerbaijan, having finally won over the Armenians, is all set to establish complete control over the mountains of Nagorno Karabakh. In fact, the matter is already a done deal as Azerbaijan finds itself in a geopolitical sweet spot.



Russia, tied up in Ukraine and geopolitically invested in Azerbaijan, is only playing the role of a mediator with its peacekeeping forces having done little to stop Baku's advances. This is despite Russia being a Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) ally of Armenia, whose immediate territory is also under attack. Iran, an ally of Armenia, is sitting out this conflict as well. This is because the European Union will let Baku's excesses slide, as it views Azerbaijan as an alternative source of gas to fall back on since the decoupling with Russia.

The catch here is that a quarter of Azerbaijan's gas fields are owned by Russia and moreover, it does not have the resources to fulfil even part of Europe's needs, making it a convenient indirect source of Russian and Iranian gas. Meanwhile, the United States is too invested in defeating Russia through Ukraine than in preventing an Armenian tragedy from unfolding. And by extension, Turkey, which supported Azerbaijan with arms and mercenaries against the Armenians, is relishing this victory. Azeri President Ilham Aliyev said to his troops that "the fact that Azerbaijan is right is not questioned by major international actors". This is true. And it has emboldened Aliyev to rub Armenia's nose on the ground. Meanwhile, Armenian Prime Minister Nicol Pashinyan has grown vocal over Russia's inaction and failure to come to Armenians' rescue despite being a CSTO ally.

WHAT AZERBAIJAN WANTS

The breakup of the USSR led to the formation of the independent states of Armenia and Azerbaijan among thirteen other nations.

While Nagorno Karabakh was completely inhabited by ethnic Armenians after a long war amid the fall of the Soviet Union, the territory is officially recognised to be part of Azerbaijan. During the war, thousands of ethnic Armenians and Azeris were massacred or displaced as violence escalated to its peak.

Since then, peace remained fragile until a complete breakdown in

2020, when Azerbaijan initiated the second Karabakh war taking over vast swathes of land and closing in on the Lachin corridor which connects with the Armenian border. Armenian resistance, however, is verging on complete exhaustion with its border areas under attack by Azerbaijan.

Not only does Baku want to establish control over Nagorno-Karabakh, but it also seeks to cut through the southern part of Armenia to connect with the Azeri exclave of Nakhchivan and establish an uninterrupted corridor between itself and Turkey, continuing the centuries-long tradition of nibbling away at Armenian territory.

AWIN FOR TURKEY-PAKISTAN-AZERBAIJAN NEXUS

A cruel narrative is being weaved by Azerbaijan and its Turkish backers. According to them, this mass exodus of Armenians is voluntary and none of them have

been asked to leave. But they are not being assured either of safety or security as Azerbaijani armed forces march on. Instead, bomb blasts and civilian killings even as the Armenians leave, paint a different picture. Having faced brutal persecution at the hands of Turkic Islamic forces for centuries, the Christian Armenians know better than to stay back at their mercy.

Even as Turkey continues to deny it, the Armenian genocide executed by the Ottoman Empire amid World War I is not lost on the world. Over 1.5 million Armenians were killed in their systematic erasure from eastern Anatolia. Forcefully Islamised, thrown into the frontlines as cannon fodder or sent into death marches in the Syrian Desert, were some of the ways in which Armenians were uprooted from their homeland, making way for an ethno-nationalist Turkish state.

Learning from Himachal floods



This monsoon season has been disastrous for Himachal Pradesh. The relentless rain and subsequent floods coupled with landslides have destroyed public infrastructure on an unprecedented scale. The losses are estimated to be over ₹12,000 crore. Already under financial stress, the state is now searching for funds to undertake the humongous task on its hands - rehabilitation of 3,000 families whose dwellings were washed out and rebuilding of battered roads, bridges, drinking water and irrigation projects and hydel power plants. So far, the state has got only ₹600 crore from the national disaster fund corpus. That explains chief minister (CM) Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu's desperate plea to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to declare the Himachal floods a national disaster, on the lines of the 2013 Kedarnath calamity, to help the state receive a bigger tranche of central assistance. Towards this end, he has

also demanded that the criteria for aid in the disaster relief manual should be changed. While the Centre is yet to take a call on Himachal's case, CM Sukhu, in an interview with this newspaper on Monday, touched upon a larger, and more significant, point: The man-made factors that accentuated a rain-induced calamity, and the lessons the state should learn. Complete disregard for structural engineering and load-bearing capacity of soil strata while building houses on hilly terrain and construction in the bed of nullahs and rivers ensured that the cost of floods would be enormous. Himachal has now banned construction on 45-degree inclines and slicing of hills for private development. The real test, however, will be if the authorities can ensure compliance. The challenge before the administration is also to adapt developmental aspirations to the specific ecology of the region.

White Is Always Right: What West's Moral Bombast on Terrorist Nijjar Tells Us

By: Sreemoy Talukdar

On July 31, 2022, a retired physician residing with his grandkids in Kabul, was seated on the balcony of his house, enjoying the morning sun. As the CIA would later reveal, Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al Qaeda, liked to read alone in the morning. To know what happened next, let's quote from a press statement released two days later by the Pentagon.

"Zawahiri was killed in an over-the-horizon operation in downtown Kabul, where he was residing as a guest of the Taliban. The house was struck by two Hellfire missiles in a precision, counterterrorism operation at 6:18 a.m. Kabul time on Sunday. Zawahiri was the only casualty..."

His death deals a significant blow to al-Qaida (sic) and will degrade the group's ability to operate, including against the US homeland."

New York Times called Zawahiri "one of the world's most-wanted terrorists", while Al Jazeera referred to him as an "Egyptian surgeon." Maybe it is a matter of perception.

Interesting to note on that very day, August 2, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cheered the CIA drone strike on Zawahiri, congratulating the US for carrying out an extrajudicial, unlawful killing of an Egyptian national on foreign soil. In a tweet Trudeau, devoid of any moral compunctions that he has shown over the killing of a Khalistani terrorist, claimed, "The death of Ayman al-Zawahiri is a step toward a safer world." It is said that hypocrisy is the price vice pays to virtue. The escalating diplomatic crisis between India and Canada reveals the blatant duplicity that lies at the heart of the West's 'rules-based order' that runs on the unwavering principle of 'White is always right'.

When it comes to the West, their enemies are "terrorists" who enjoy no human rights, nor do the nations where they find shelter have any claims to sovereignty. After killing ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in Syria, Donald Trump boasted: "He died like a dog... God bless America." The West clapped in unison.

These "rules" click in place, however, when a member of the



Global South is affronted. While the West's concerns are "non-negotiable", and the "terrorists" they are going after are traced to the far corners of the earth and hunted down accompanied by instant justification of their actions by the Western media - even legitimate concerns of, say, India "are subject to the rules set by the West" that never seem to match the bar.

Suddenly, the terrorists who carry out targeted killings, fund terror and narcotics networks and carry out secessionist activities are mere "community activists", "plumbers", "temple leaders", "fatherly figures" living an honest life and victims of state repression. As Seema Sirahi wrote on 'X', these are rules-based order with Western characteristics.

The same Trudeau who celebrated the taking out of Zawahiri, became the protector-in-chief of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar due to domestic political compulsions. Even though New Delhi had shared with Ottawa a dossier containing relevant details of over a dozen criminal cases filed against Nijjar and intelligence on other terrorist activities he had been involved in against India over two decades, the Trudeau regime kept ignoring the evidence, kept cold-shouldering extradition requests and virtually gave Nijjar a free hand to make Canada the staging ground for a revival of the Khalistani movement aimed at violently ripping India apart.

As AEI's Michael Rubin points out in 1945, while "Within the United States, Pakistan's efforts to promote a Khalistan separatist narrative largely manifest themselves in a few gadflies and conspiracy-addled activists... In Canada, however, the campaign has grown more malevolent. Khalistani militants regularly extort money from the Sikh business community under threat of violence. Their tactics mirror what the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and Tamil Tigers did in the 1980s and 1990s among the Kurdish and Tamil diasporas in Europe."

Evidently because Khalistanis were getting political protection, even encouragement from the Canadian political establishment. Nijjar's Khalistani antecedents were well-established. Dossiers on him shared with Ottawa by New Delhi, which are now emerging in the public domain, paint an unflattering picture.

No matter what the Canadians would have the world believe, Nijjar was a terrorist, an extortionist, a racketeer and a murderer. He ran militant camps in Mission Hills, British Columbia, where he trained Khalistani extremists on using AK-47s, sniper rifles, and pistols, and was designated as an 'individual terrorist' under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act by India's Ministry of Home Affairs in 2020.

According to reports in Indian media quoting from the dossier

prepared by Indian intelligence, Nijjar was radicalized by Pakistan-based KTF (Khalistani Tiger Force) chief Jagtar Singh Tara and cultivated by the ISI. His activities are a long, exhaustive list of targeted assassinations of political leaders and cops, ransom and kidnappings carried out through the KTF module whose members were spotted, trained, funded and operationalized by Nijjar. Videos abound in social media of Nijjar boasting about the 'Khalistani legacy' of assassinating former Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi. Along with gangster-turned-terrorist Arshdeep Singh Dala, whose agents killed a local Congress leader in Punjab's Moga district last Wednesday, Nijjar also operated an immigration racket and extorted money from businessmen in Punjab. The NIA lodged several cases against him, the Interpol had a notice issued against his name and he also carried a cash award on his head. Former Punjab chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh, a soldier and a military historian, writes in Indian Express that "Government of India has on quite a few occasions raised the issue of Canada providing shelter to anti-India elements in that country. Those involved in heinous crimes of terrorism and killing are provided 'political asylum' there. When I met Trudeau as Chief Minister of Punjab on behalf of the Government of India in February 2018 at Amritsar, I handed over a

list of nine A-category terrorists to him for action. But the Canadian government chose to ignore the list completely."

Nijjar's acquiring of Canadian citizenship is an equally intriguing story. Reports in Indian and Canadian media reveal that Nijjar fled to Canada in 1998 on a forged passport in the name of 'Ravi Sharma', but his application for political asylum through fabricated stories of police torture was rejected by the Canadian authorities on grounds that the doctor's report misspelt injuries as "intesticals". The 'honest plumber' proved quite resourceful in a foreign land. He arranged for another application within 11 days of that setback by entering a "marriage agreement" with a divorced Sikh woman. This application, too, was rejected over suspicion that it was fake. The 'community activist' then lodged another appeal, and to quote from Canadian media outlet Globe and Mail, "Neither Balraj (his son) nor Pannun (his lawyer) could say what exactly happened next, and there are no public records that detail precisely how he became a Canadian citizen. But federal immigration minister Marc Miller confirmed this week that Nijjar acquired Canadian nationality on May 25, 2007 (Miller first said this took place in 2015 before correcting the date)." Nothing to see here.

Incidentally, Nijjar, whom an Interpol notice calls a "key conspirator" in the 2007 bombing of a cinema in Ludhiana, has also been named in the plots to kill Hindu religious leader Kamaldeep Sharma in Jalandhar and a temple explosion in Patiala. Why was this criminal mastermind being shielded from deportation to India and was even receiving protection from Canadian intelligence officers, with whom he had regular meetings?

Worth noting that though Canada consistently rebuffed Nijjar's extradition attempts despite both country being signatories of a treaty, the Khalistani terrorist was put on a 'no-fly' list by Ottawa in 2017-18, a move replicated by the United States in 2019.



Denigrating Sanatana Dharma Is Entirely Unacceptable

By: Sachida Nand Jha

In an entirely insinuating move made by an utterly ignorant mind which obviously knows little about dharma and seems to be excessively obsessed with the political opportunism of the abominable kind, which he has displayed in his downright denigration of Sanatana Dharma, Udhayanidhi Stalin equates our faith with bacterial and viral diseases and exhorts his supporters to eradicate it from India like diseases are supposed to. International Working President of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Alok Kumar, made the most befitting remark about this shockingly provocative statement that Stalin is daydreaming about doing what Mughals, Missionaries and the British could never dare during a span of more than a thousand years.

An international organisation dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Sanatana Dharma, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), was established in 1964 and since then has expanded its activities globally with a focused aim and objective to protect and promote Sanatani Hindu culture, traditions, and values. The organisation has been consistently advocating for safeguarding the interests of Sanatani Hindus worldwide and simultaneously organising various social and cultural activities to strengthen Sanatani Hindu identity. Its incumbent president, in particular, has made a notable contribution for the genuine assertion of our identity, with a potent comment on the ongoing controversy created by a self-proclaimed strategist of so-called social justice. Stalin actually revealed the mindset of a political

opportunist who preferred to rush in where angels fear to tread and thus generated a heap of mess and enormous unrest all around. Violent attacks on peaceful pilgrims in the Mewat region of Haryana followed with an absolutely insulting insinuation, rather overt condemnation of Sanatana Dharma, has to be put into perspective precisely because of the fact that there has been a deep-rooted continuing contempt for Hindus in our country, including its academic institutions. Ideologically driven activists, academicians and scholars harbour serious misgivings about the rationale behind our faith and never mince words to cast aspersions on its relevance and its very existence, since they mistakenly believe that it is a bundle of obscure practices, superstitions and regressive traditions. As a matter of fact, the insidious ecosystem created by imported secularism and pseudo-social justice that was earlier making a farcical distinction between Hinduism as inclusive and Hindutva as exclusive has indeed been instrumental in aggravating the problem of misperception.

It, in turn, triggered the prejudiced reception of Sanatana Dharma in certain influential pockets of post-colonial India. For instance, even the Indian judiciary appears to be more liberal in its reception of other faiths as is evident from the fact that in the case of Nupur Sharma, the Supreme Court of India said that she had ignited the whole country and so should apologise to the nation. Surprisingly, the same court of India is completely quiet on the unacceptable, uncouth utterance of an

opinionated politician who has been enjoying political power, peddling the idea of selective, family-oriented, pseudo-social justice.

Precisely due to this pervasive perpetual prejudice against Sanatana Dharma and its practitioners in post-colonial India, the narrative of innocent victimhood of Hindus developed during the four decades of the early 20th and late 21st centuries. Such narratives did draw upon the indisputable fact that Sanatani Hindus have been at the receiving end for a long period of time because of their predominantly tolerant nature. They have suffered immeasurably on account of their peaceful, non-violent attitudes and their indifference to strengthen themselves with those measures that can protect them from the physical and verbal onslaught of the kind we have recently witnessed.

Nationalist organisations like VHP rightly emphasise the need to make masses internalise such narrative as deeply as possible. They have actually done a great deal to make us understand that we need not feel apologetic about putting all our acts together for the assertion of our Sanatani Hindu identity since it is inclusive in its approach and universal in orientation. It is actually a commonwealth of all those sacred beliefs, sects, customs and traditions which have an unwavering respect for the land called Bharat and a deep reverence for its rivers, hills, and mountains, regardless of their different ways and methods of doing prayers and displaying devotion to their respective deities.

Sanatana Dharma's significance lies precisely in the fact that it sincerely sensitises us to acknowledge and appreciate the idea that human beings are not masters of the universe which colonial knowledge systems have made us erroneously believe, but an integral part of nature. The life and livelihood of human beings are inseparably interlinked with the environment. This awareness is central to the doctrine of Sanatana Dharma that proactively entrusts us with the responsibility of forging a harmonious relationship with nature outside to maintain ecological stability.

This profoundly insightful and universally purposeful idea has been identified, underlined and successfully foregrounded through the concerted efforts made by VHP. Where people earlier used to feel very reluctant to identify with Sanatani Hindu identity, they are now willingly coming forward to embrace and celebrate it. Due to thoughtfully planned and carefully executed attempts of nationalist organisations such as VHP, Hindutva has become a dominant, decisive and phenomenal force and its political reach, presence and influence has increased manifold.

This centrality of Hindutva, its popularity and increasing influence, and indeed its spectacular growth in India is what the anti-Sanatani mindset finds extremely difficult to digest. People with such a mindset are upset and angry about the fact that the masses are no longer misled by their rhetorical flourishes. Instead, they openly support, vote and elect those who align themselves with the

philosophy of Sanatani Hindu identity. Successive setbacks at the national level of electoral politics have turned the fraudulent practitioners of pseudo-social justice hostile to the very concept of Sanatana Dharma which essentially empowers the quintessence of social justice.

Forcibly generating as it does such fictitious hostility between Sanatana Hindu identity and the idea of social justice is a premeditated political manoeuvre of the supporters of blatant caste politics whose foundation has been irreparably damaged by the proponents of nationalist politics.

The staunch believers, ardent admirers, and proud followers of Sanatani Hindu identity have reinstated the national pride by successfully organising G20 meetings and exhibiting to the whole world that India, that is Bharat, is entirely capable of making major interventions in the functioning of advanced economic enterprises, climate change and international relations of the contemporary globe.

The likes of Stalin need to be categorically told that Sanatana Dharma and social justice are not inherently opposed to each other. In fact, they are inextricably intertwined with one another. As such, it is an incredible source of spiritual strength which sustains us all. It awakens the idea of self and directs us to our roots, beliefs and timeless traditions, generating a sense of pride and tremendous joy and ecstasy in the cultural continuity of our country. We are children of the same Bharat Mata, so we should live with brotherly love and affection, and act in unison for the growth of our beloved nation.

Manipur conflict rages on amid Myanmar civil war

By Maj Gen Ashok K Mehta (ret'd)

The euphoria in India over the success of the G20 summit has led to a strategic neglect of conflict-ridden Manipur. The fallout in the North-East has been exacerbated by gross inaction on the part of the Centre and the state government. The 28-month-old civil war in Myanmar has partly fanned the Manipur flames, resulting in over 200 people being killed, thousands displaced and 4,000 weapons stolen, besides an influx of refugees from Myanmar. Ethnic cleansing has partitioned Manipur - a Kuki-free Imphal valley and Kuki-inhabited hill areas devoid of Meiteis. The acute polarisation has sparked fears of a revival of insurgency, given the access to weapons, mostly taken from state armouries.

Lt Gen PC Nair, Director General, Assam Rifles, said last month: "The situation is unprecedented... we have never faced a situation like this." This happened after Union Home Minister Amit Shah, on March 25, withdrew the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from 16 out of 39 police stations in four districts of Imphal to demonstrate normalcy, a move



that has not been reversed.

Former Chief of Army Staff Gen MM Naravane said: "Insurgency has drastically reduced - almost nil," allowing for a rebalancing of the Army towards the north and the transfer of operational responsibility in the North-East to the Assam Rifles, a departure from the norm, except during the wars of 1965 and 1971.

The civil war in Myanmar between the military junta and the forces opposed to it - the National Unity Government (NUG) and the Resistance - is in its third year. The main theatre of fighting is the Sagaing region and Chin state, close to Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur. As the junta has lost control of these areas, it is resorting to aerial bombing, including the use of napalm and

looting and burning of villages. This has resulted in nearly 60,000 Chin, Kuki and Zomi refugees fleeing to Mizoram and Manipur, some of whom are NUG legislators. Because of the porous 1,600-km-long border with Myanmar and the free movement regime of 16 km on either side, arms, narcotics, gold and precious stones are being smuggled into Manipur.

Remember the Golden Triangle? Drug trafficking is nothing new for Manipur and even security personnel are allegedly involved in it. In February 2013, a Colonel Moreh in Manipur with Mae Sot in Thailand has been held up due to fighting in the Sagaing region. Jaishankar met Myanmar Foreign Minister Than Swe at the

opener. A UN report states that since 2021, there has been a 33 per cent increase in poppy cultivation in Manipur. Meiteis allege that this is a cash crop for the Kukis. But according to the Goa Chronicle, every community has a stake, including the Muslim Pangals.

The Myanmar conflict has seriously hampered India's Act East Policy, which is designed to advance trade and interaction with ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). Earlier this month, Foreign Minister S Jaishankar told the media, "India's most ambitious infrastructure projects are with Southeast Asia, but they are facing big challenges because of a breakdown in Myanmar's internal security system." The nearly two-decade-old multimodal Kaladan project, which transits through insurgency-infected Rakhine state en route to Mizoram, has been periodically blocked by the Arakan Army. The India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway project connecting Moreh in Manipur with Mae Sot in Thailand has been held up due to fighting in the Sagaing region. Jaishankar met Myanmar Foreign Minister Than Swe at the

ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting this month and told him about the perilous effects of the fighting and airstrikes close to the India-Myanmar border.

The People's Defence Forces (PDF) of the NUG are heavily invested in the Sagaing region and dominate it. With the civil war stalemated and the prospects of conflict resolution bleak in view of a divided ASEAN, Delhi should review its policy of putting 'all eggs in the junta basket'. Indian agencies should cultivate Chin National Front and Arakan Army to facilitate the construction of its infrastructure projects. Further, reviving contact with the democratic forces and establishing communication channels with the NUG/PDF, including the supply of weapons, are viable options.

But it is Manipur, the pivot to India's Act East Policy, which requires immediate treatment, even if it is akin to shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted. The Central and state governments allowed Manipur to bleed, permitting the seeds of new insurgencies to be sown and putting the Army, Assam Rifles and other security forces in unsavoury predicaments that challenged their impartiality.

The Canadian PM Just Got Played On Canadian Soil

By Namrata Brar

I first met Gurbatwant Singh Pannun in 2013 in New York as an NDTV journalist when he was trying to get Sonia Gandhi arrested based on a court warrant, at Sloan Kettering Hospital. The lawyer for Sikhs for Justice, projecting himself as a "human rights" activist, was named a terrorist by the Indian government in 2020.

Over the years, it astounded me that a man of such vicious hate against India, who was inciting violence in Punjab and had filed cases against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal, could be allowed to operate with such impunity in the US under the guise of free speech. He used every trick in the legal playbook to bring alive the 1984 Sikh genocide and tie it to the Khalistan cause, frequently bringing busloads of paid protestors outside the United Nations to espouse a

preposterous narrative of a Canada-sponsored Sikh independent state and a Punjab Referendum by 2020. Incidentally, his partner at his Jackson Heights law office was Pakistani. By 2019, Pannun signed off his emails as the spokesperson for the KKRF, the Kashmir Khalistan Referendum Front. The head of the Sikhs for Justice's Canadian Chapter was Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Nijjar's killing and the resultant rift between India and Canada expose a disturbing reality. A global power is playing a covert game.

Whether or not Justin Trudeau ratchets up the diplomatic offensive by going public with electronic evidence that reveals an Indian hand will be largely irrelevant, given the loud silence of Big Brother, south of the border. The boilerplate statements by the National Security Advisor pale when you compare them with its topmost leader President Joe Biden in the same week lauding the India-US business corridor. The strongest

steel is forged on the hottest fire, and there is no greater friendship than one sealed to counter the primary adversary.

There is a rise of a new breed of Khalistan advocates who can, ironically, buy legitimacy from Western democracies who consider themselves champions of justice. Let aside Pannun, with his direct ties to the ISI, a far more nebulous order is shaping with charismatic leaders like Jagmeet Singh, the 42-year-old criminal defence lawyer who has risen to be the first non-white leader of a major Canadian federal party. The skateboarding Tik Tok star who was voted by GQ as the most stylish politician, can deliver eloquent speeches appealing to the new generation of Canadians, merging Sikh spiritual beliefs rooted in social justice, climate change and liberal values, yet embracing a toxic Khalistan commentary.

It is an undeniable fact that the pain of the November 1984 genocide can never be erased when the

ruling party in India at the time did nothing to protect innocent Sikhs from being massacred and promoted the perpetrators to the highest positions in government. However, multiple Indian governments in the last 25 years have tried to recognize the horrific wrongs and made an outreach to the Sikh community.

Nonetheless, leaders such as Jagmeet Singh are reigniting inter-generational Sikh trauma buttons masked in persuasive rhetoric. But how can the Canadian Prime Minister himself be so short-sighted? It is no secret that Singh has been pulling Trudeau's strings on the Nijjar killing, as he provides 24 seats to the political leader who, despite a 63% disapproval rating, is clinging to a moonshot attempt for a fourth term as Prime Minister. But does the Canadian PM, whose failure to act against Chinese interference in Canadian elections that caused him public ire, realize he is once again playing into the hands of that very global

power?

The Khalistan movement, funded by Pakistan's ISI whose recent bankruptcy has turned it into a proxy for Chinese intelligence is pushing Trudeau into a quagmire of his own making, acting publicly against a key strategic ally and compromising his country's long-term geopolitical interests for a short-term victory at the polls.

The key premise of Sun Tzu's Art of War is to "subdue an enemy without fighting." The Chinese government is a master of misdirection using subversion tactics, internal meddling and stoking other countries' vulnerabilities. It is now directing its resources and proxies to driving fissures in the coalition of global democracies that are forming against it. This elaborate smoke and mirror scheme of deception must be called out.

Mr. Trudeau, you just got played.

India-Canada rift needs careful handling

The trajectory of the bilateral relations will impact Delhi's ties with the US, other G7 countries

By Shyam Saran

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has literally set the cat among the pigeons. Trudeau has declared that there are 'credible allegations' about the involvement of agents of the Indian Government in the June 18 killing of a Canadian Sikh, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, outside a gurdwara of which he was the head. Nijjar had been declared a terrorist by the Indian Government and had a bounty on his head. It would be out of character, however, for the Indian State to be involved in his murder, which has all the hallmarks of gang warfare. The unsavoury antecedents of Nijjar support such a conclusion. Whatever be the truth of the matter, India has taken a reputational hit, which is all the more damaging, coming so soon after a successful G20 summit. Relations with Canada, a Commonwealth country with a large Indian diaspora and a key partner in any Indo-Pacific strategy, have hit rock bottom. In dealing with this crisis, India must take a sober view of the following aspects: One, while the US, UK, western Europe and Japan consider India an indispensable partner in countervailing China's expanding

power, there are limits to this partnership. What may be ignored in the context of relations with China may not be the case when a fellow NATO ally and G7 partner is involved. This was abundantly clear in the statement made by US NSA Jake Sullivan on the issue: "There is not some special exemption you get for actions like this. Regardless of the country, we will stand up and defend our basic principles. And we will consult closely with our allies like Canada as they pursue their law enforcement and diplomatic process."

India has dismissed the allegations of its involvement in the killing as "absurd and motivated." This does not mean the end of the story. Being in the public domain, India's response must go beyond angry denials and excoriating Trudeau for ignoring terrorist activities which a section of the Canadian Sikh population has been involved in. This has a long history. However, in the present case, the Indian narrative should really have focused on the criminal gangster activities indulged in by the likes of Nijjar. The emphasis on Nijjar's politics and his indulgence in violent and terrorist activities

may sound as a justification for his killing among elements which are already deeply prejudiced against the Modi government. Whatever information our agencies have on such criminal activities, which are sometimes pursued under a camouflage of political activism, could be shared with Canada and our other Western partners.

India has rightly and firmly rejected the allegations made by Trudeau. It has done the appropriate thing by expelling a Canadian diplomat in response to a similar action taken by Canada. However, it is in the interest of neither country nor in the interest of India's close and expanding partnership with its Western partners to let matters escalate. The partnership with the US and other Western partners cannot be insulated from what happens in the India-Canada relations. And if there is a spillover of the worsening relations between India and Canada into our ties with our key Indo-Pacific and European allies, this will be a welcome bonus for our main adversaries, China and Pakistan. There is a domestic political dimension which is even more important. In putting the Trudeau government in the wrong and



attacking a section of the Sikh population in Canada for its support to Khalistan, this rhetoric must not be allowed to alienate the large majority of Sikhs in Canada and other foreign countries and, most importantly in India, among whom the Khalistan movement has no takers. There may be a temptation to highlight this threat, but this may have unintended collateral consequences.

It is easy to see what personal interest Trudeau may have in raking up this issue and targeting India. One, there is an investigation underway of foreign interference in Canadian domestic politics which may spotlight the Trudeau government's reluctance to confront Chinese activities in the country. The latest incident may help deflect attention from that

well-documented indulgence.

Two, the Trudeau government is dependent for its survival on the support of the ethnic Sikh political party, the New Democratic Party (NDP), which has several pro-Khalistan elements. Trudeau's allegations against India may have been triggered by his need to keep the NDP firmly in his camp at a time of his sharply diminishing political popularity.

Three, there is an element of personal pique against India due to what he perceived was a cold shoulder given to him on his previous visit to India in 2018. Trudeau himself described the visit as "a visit to end all visits". It may be this personal antipathy to India which may have tipped the balance in favour of his going public with his outrageous allegations.

Artificial intelligence has prospects and perils galore

By KP Singh

IT is impossible to escape the ubiquitous impact of artificial intelligence (AI) as the '4th Digital Revolution' is sweeping through the whole planet. AI applications such as Apple's Siri, Amazon's Alexa, the virtual nurse, voice and facial recognition techniques, language convertor, grammar auto correction tools and driverless automobiles are all around us. Deep learning algorithms have made it possible for the machines to gauge even the mood and sentiments of their users. Developments in the field of AI have surpassed the human imagination.

John McCarthy, one of the 'founding fathers' of AI, defined it as 'the science and engineering of making intelligent machines, especially intelligent computer programmes' that can think and act like humans, understand things rationally and ultimately start behaving like human beings. Strong artificial intelligence, though an entirely theoretical concept so far, is moving towards developing supermen who would surpass human intelligence and ability.

AI systems have made many tasks easy and human life better than ever before; but this is only the tip of the iceberg, with most of it hidden beneath the surface, and the civilisation looks like the Titanic on a collision course



with it. Public response to AI reflects two extremes: some optimistically imbue it with an aura of seduction and magic, whereas others view it as a robotic villain that takes over the world in science fiction stories. Both viewpoints appear to overlook the practical realities.

AI is data-driven and algorithm-monitored; it relies on the speed of computers in reading and processing data, recognising patterns and storing them in memory for comparison within a fraction of a second. At the same time, it can inherit biases from the training data, leading to unfair or discriminatory outcomes. Since algorithms are written by humans, they are susceptible to be

corrupted by the personal prejudices, cultural biases and knowledge constraints of the designers.

AI systems often operate as 'black boxes'; it is difficult to understand their decision-making processes, which are crucial, especially in financial matters. AI systems are vulnerable to cyberattacks and adversaries can manipulate them from remote locations, resulting in serious privacy and security concerns. International and domestic rules and regulations to address such issues have not yet been developed.

AI fields do not understand gender and ethnic contexts, which can limit their perspectives and create biases in applications. Moreover, AI systems function in isolation of the surrounding environment, which many a time plays a very crucial role in decision-making.

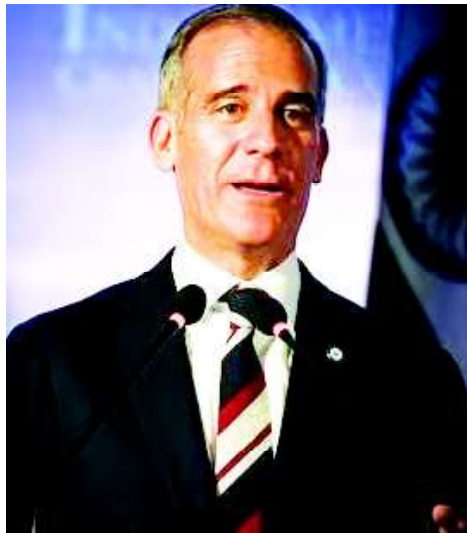
With the increasing use of AI systems, disruption of the precarious balance in the job market is inevitable; old jobs would be replaced by new ones, which would be concentrated in communities with high level of education and availability of capital. AI has the potential of worsening the divide between the haves and the have-nots; it may trigger unprecedented level of unemployment among the lower strata of society, resulting in social instability.

Kashmir issue to be resolved by India and Pak, not 3rd party: Eric Garcetti

(News Agency) -Days after the US envoy to Pakistan made a low-profile visit to Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), the US ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti, said on Tuesday that the Kashmir issue can only be resolved by New Delhi and Islamabad. Donald Blome, the US ambassador to Pakistan, made a multi-day visit to Gilgit-Baltistan that concluded on Sunday. He toured different parts of the strategic region and met several officials, including a minister and the deputy speaker of the local assembly. In October last year, India formally protested to the US after Blome visited PoK and repeatedly referred to the region as "Azad Jammu and Kashmir".

When Garcetti was asked by reporters about Blome's visit to Gilgit-Baltistan, he replied: "Look, it's not my place to react to the United States ambassador in Pakistan but I know he's been before, and we've had obviously part of our delegation in Jammu and Kashmir during the G20 as well." Garcetti added, "We'll stay engaged but this is an issue, we very religiously note, that has to be something that is resolved between India and Pakistan, not by any third party, including the US." There was no immediate reaction from Indian officials to Blome's visit to Gilgit-Baltistan.

Earlier this month, Blome became the first senior US diplomat to visit the strategic port of Gwadar in southwestern Pakistan since 2021. Blome met local officials and the Pakistan Navy's regional commander. Gwadar port is part of the China-



Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which also has several projects in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Blome's back-to-back visits to Gwadar and Gilgit-Baltistan prompted a local opposition leader, Kazim Mesum, to allege in the regional assembly that the envoy's "mysterious activities" were part of the US's "containment policy" for CPEC. "The ambassador visited areas [through] which the CPEC route will pass," Mesum was quoted as saying by Dawn newspaper.

However, a spokesman for the US embassy in Islamabad said the purpose of the envoy's visit was to explore opportunities for strengthening Gilgit-Baltistan's climate resilience. Noting that the region is particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, the spokesman said Blome's trips are closely coordinated with the Pakistan government. Garcetti was also asked about Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegation of a "potential link" between Indian government agents and the June 18 killing of Khalistani leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar though he declined to comment on specifics.

Trudeau triggered a diplomatic storm with his accusation, which India has dismissed as "absurd". The Indian side also said the allegation was aimed at diverting attention from Canada's failure to act against extremists and terrorists operating from its soil.

"It's not my place to speak on another country. As a matter of business, not just this, we don't talk about intelligence matters or criminal justice matters," Garcetti said in response to questions about Trudeau's accusation and reports of the US sharing intelligence with Canada on Nijjar's killing.

Responding to another question on the US accepting India's invitation for President Joe Biden to be the chief guest at next year's Republic Day celebrations on January 26, Garcetti said: "We can't speak to that yet. The invitation's been made but his [Biden's] schedule isn't made that far in advance."

From tanks to tractors: Pakistan army taking over 1 million acres of land to grow food

(News Agency) -The all-powerful army in Pakistan, which has ruled the country for nearly half of its independent history, is used to playing the role of both - the nation's guardian as well as its governing administration.

Now, the military is getting ready to don a new hat in an effort to wade the country out of its months-long economic misery.

According to a report in Nikkei Asia, Pakistan's army is taking over large swaths of government-owned land to grow food for the poverty-stricken masses.

However, the move has stoked concerns about the military's "pervasive presence" in a country facing economic collapse. The new food security push, which was launched earlier this year by a joint civil-military investment body, plans to boost crop production through army-run farms on leased state land, the report said.

According to the plan, the army will acquire up to 1 million acres



(405,000 hectares) of land in Pakistan's Punjab province. That's nearly three times the size of Delhi.

Those backing the plan have promised that it will generate better crop yields and save water. Something that Pakistan desperately needs amid depleting foreign exchange reserves and rising commodity prices.

Documents show that the army will be granted leases for up to 30 years to grow crops such as wheat, cotton and sugar cane, as

well as vegetables and fruit.

Around 20% of the profit generated from selling the crops will be earmarked for farming research and development. The rest will be divided equally between the army and state government, Nikkei Asia reported citing leaked government documents.

However, the plan is also facing challenges as well as criticism from various quarters.

Many have raised concerns that the military, which is already a powerful entity, could gain

massive profits from the food-security push and further deprive Pakistan's 25 million rural landless poor.

Critics told Nikkei Asia that the latest transfer could cement Pakistan's military as the country's single-biggest landowner.

"The job of the army is to protect against external threats and come to the aid of the civilian government when requested to do so. Nothing more, nothing less," Rafay Alam, an environmental lawyer, told Nikkei Asia.

Blueprint unclear What has added to the concerns is the ambiguity surrounding the blueprint.

It is still unclear when these farms will be fully operations.

Many details of the blueprint remain unclear, including when the farms will be fully operational.

According to documents seen by Nikkei Asia, most of the land is in the Cholistan Desert which is an arid region prone to water

shortages.

As much as 110,000 acres of additional land for transfer is in adjacent districts, the report said. Notably, the Lahore high court had earlier ordered a halt to the land transfer, but the decision was overturned by another bench in July.

It is also unclear if any of the land that will be transferred to the army was already being farmed or controlled by small landowners.

But the concern was dismissed by Fongrow, part of the Fauji Foundation investment group run by former Pakistani military officers.

Fongrow's manager was quoted as saying that most of the land that is being allotted is "barren". Thus, there is no question of farmers being displaced.

But this raises another question - how will ill-equipped army turn a desert into fertile agricultural land?

"Usually, army officers have very limited knowledge of farming ...

Justin Trudeau has a big crisis to manage, and it's not Canada-India ties

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is overseeing what has to be one of the worst diplomatic stand-offs with India over the Khalistani issue and the killing of terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. But amping up the anti-India rhetoric shouldn't be Trudeau's focus area, for the Canadian Prime Minister has a domestic crisis to take care of. Canada is facing a housing crisis. Even Trudeau's coalition partner, New Democratic Party chief Jagmeet Singh, is attacking him in public. Jagmeet Singh's support is essential for Trudeau to continue as Canada's prime minister till 2025.

So severe is the housing crisis that the country, which is known for welcoming immigrants, is planning to put a cap on the number of international students.

But who exactly is to blame for the housing crisis in Canada - the immigrants, the biggest chunk of whom is from India, or the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau? Canada is the second largest country in the world in terms of area, but has a population just over 3.87 crore. That means it has a population density of 4 persons per square kilometer. Compare that to India's population density of 481 per square kilometer or China's 151 and one can see that Canada is sparsely populated.

But there are two major factors behind the housing crisis in Canada. One which both opposition politicians and even Jagmeet Singh are pointing to - Canada simply isn't building enough houses.

Trudeau is under severe political pressure and Jagmeet Singh has lashed out against his government, blaming it squarely for the housing crisis.

The other reason, a more historical one, behind the shortage in housing units is that 87 per cent of the population is settled in four of Canada's 10 provinces and three territories. The concentration is such that 90 per cent of Canadians live within 160 km of the border with the United States.

Some parts of Canada are extremely cold and not welcoming to settlers. But it is the lack of house construction that is blamed majorly for the acute crunch in residential units.

WHAT POLITICIANS SAY ABOUT CANADA HOUSING CRISIS Leader of the opposition



and Conservative Party head, Pierre Poilievre, launched a scathing attack on Prime Minister Trudeau on the housing crisis in Canada during the first Question Period of the Canadian Parliament's fall session. "Eight years after he [Justin Trudeau] promised to make housing more affordable, he doubled the cost, doubled the rent, doubled mortgage payments, doubled the needed down payment... It took him eight years to cause this housing hell, how long will it take to fix it," asked Poilievre in Parliament. The opposition leader said Canada has built fewer homes in 2022 than it did in 1972. Poilievre also said that in 2023, housing construction in Canada was expected to drop further by 32 per cent. Trudeau isn't being attacked just by the opposition. Even his coalition partner and New Democratic Party chief Jagmeet Singh has attacked him over the housing crisis in Canada.

Jagmeet Singh said the Trudeau government, and not

international students, is to be blamed for the housing crisis.

"Justin Trudeau's housing crisis has left students struggling to find a home. Instead of blaming students, we must implement immediate solutions," Jagmeet Singh said on Tuesday.

WHY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE BEING BLAMED

The Canadian government says it gets in immigrants "to drive economic growth and resiliency". Though an undeclared policy, students' visa is a way by which Canada gets prospective permanent residents and citizens. This year, Canada is set to welcome 9 lakh international students. This is on top of the 5 lakh permanent residency (PR) it is granting in 2023. India is the biggest contributor when it comes to sending international students to Canada.

In 2022, Canada welcomed 5.5 lakh international students. Forty per cent of the total, at 2.26 lakh,

were from India. And there were 3.2 lakh Indians staying in Canada on student visas. But the pace of immigration has outpaced the construction of houses in Canada. So much so that Canada will be short by 35 lakh residential units by 2030. The pressure is already visible. Videos are circulating on the internet, showing homeless people pitching tents by the streets. Due to the housing crisis, Indian students who have got into private colleges are finding it difficult to find a shelter.

"The rise in international students in Canada hasn't matched with the provision of basic resources, including housing, mental wellness, basic health care among others," Manan Gupta, a regulated Canadian immigration consultant, tells IndiaToday.In. Gupta says that private colleges treat Indian students as "cash cows" and charge them three to five times the fee they take from Canadians.

These colleges don't have hostel facilities, unlike the reputed public universities of Canada, which provide boarding facilities for their students. The admission process is very rigorous for these universities and most students from India seek admission to private colleges in Canada. Because education is only secondary for them, the main aim is to get permanent residency (PR) after their course.

Canadian newspaper The Globe and Mail, in a report, blamed the "presence of more than 800,000 foreign students in Canada in 2022 for exacerbating the housing crisis".

STUDENTS ARE HELPING HOUSE OWNERS

International students aren't the problem but part of the solution, Indo-Canadian independent journalist Daksh Panwar, who is based in London, Canada, tells IndiaToday.In. The students are renting spaces, mostly basements, and helping home owners pay their mortgages, which have skyrocketed due to the rising interest rates. There would be widespread mortgage defaults in major metros, including the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Greater Vancouver Area and Calgary, if it were not for the international students present there in large numbers. "The students make up a substantial chunk of the population renting houses, subsidising homeowners' mortgages at a time when interest rates are sky high," says Daksh Panwar. In fact, international students are paying through their nose when it comes to house rent. An Indian student in Kitchener in Ontario province tells IndiaToday.In that he shares a basement with six others and his share of rent comes to \$450. The student who had gone to Canada from Punjab didn't want to be identified.

Taliban controls world's best performing currency this quarter

with one of the world's worst human rights records. The ruling Taliban, which seized power two years ago, has also unleashed a series of measures to keep the afghani in a stronghold, including banning the use of dollars and Pakistani rupees in local transactions and tightening restrictions on bringing greenbacks outside the country. It has made online trading illegal and threatened those who violate the rules with imprisonment. The currency controls, cash inflows and other remittances have helped the afghani climb around 9% this quarter, outpacing the likes of the Colombian peso's 3% gain, data compiled by Bloomberg show. The afghani is up about 14% for the year, putting it third on the global list, behind the currencies of Colombia and Sri Lanka. Yet the paring of the currency's

losses seen after regime change also belies the dramatic upheaval that persists on the ground with Afghanistan largely cut off from the global financial system because of sanctions.

Unemployment is rampant, two thirds of households struggle to afford basic items and inflation has turned into deflation, according to a World Bank report. Planeloads of US dollars arrived almost weekly from the United Nations to support the poor, some of up to \$40 million, for at least 18 months since the end of 2021. "The hard currency controls are working, but the economic, social and political instability will render this rise in the currency as a short-term phenomenon," said Kamran Bokhari, an expert in Middle Eastern, Central and South Asian affairs at the Washington-based New Lines Institute for Strategy

& Policy. Because of the financial sanctions, almost all remittances are now transferred to Afghanistan via a centuries-old Hawala money transfer system practiced in regions including the Middle East. Hawala is a key part of the sarrafs' business. The UN, which estimated that Afghanistan needs about \$3.2 billion of aid this year, has deployed about \$1.1 billion of that, according to the world body's financial tracking service. Last year, the organization spent around \$4 billion as half of Afghanistan's 41 million people faced life-threatening hunger. The World Bank forecasts that the economy will stop contracting this year, posting growth of 2% to 3% until 2025, though it warned of risks such as a reduction in global aid as the Taliban intensifies its repression of women. "Tightened restriction

on foreign exchange transactions and a very gradual improvement in trade is pushing up demand for the afghani," said Anwita Basu, head of Europe country risk at BMI in London. The afghani is likely to stabilize at current levels until the end of the year, she said. A stronger currency can help curb inflation pressure for critical imports for Afghanistan such as oil, particularly as crude prices approach \$100 a barrel. Mineral Resources The cash-strapped Taliban administration is seeking investment into the country's rich resources, including lithium, which are totally estimated to be worth as much as \$3 trillion. Chinese, British, and Turkish companies were involved in \$6.5 billion of contracts given out this month to build large-scale iron, ore and gold mines.

The Swift and Stunning Downfall of New Jersey Teflon Don

(Sai Bureau)- Micah Rasmussen knows what it's like to be on the wrong side of Bob Menendez. Back in 2003 as press secretary for Democratic Gov. Jim McGreevey, he pushed back against Menendez's favored candidate for the state Supreme Court, fellow Cuban Zulima Farber. Menendez, then a U.S. representative, deridingly called the governor's office "amateur hour" in the press because McGreevey did not put her on the bench, and he wanted to know why. So Rasmussen explained: Farber had a poor driving record that included unpaid parking tickets.

Menendez was unsparing in his response. "He called for my resignation and he wanted me fired because I dared to fight back on behalf of my boss," Rasmussen, now the director of the Menendez was unsparing in his response.

"He called for my resignation and he wanted me fired because I dared to fight back on behalf of my boss," Rasmussen, now the director of the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics at Rider University, said in an interview. "To me it indicates he can hit you but you're not allowed to hit him."?

Menendez seems to still believe he's wrapped in Teflon, insisting in a press event Monday that he's not resigning his Senate seat after being indicted for the second time on bribery charges. But his remarkable half-century run in politics looks all but finished after a young, straitlaced prosecutor matter-of-factly laid out the depth of his latest alleged corruption on Friday.

The accusations were so egregious, and showed such a staggering pattern of venality, that loyal Democrats who lavished praise and donations on him for years, even as he faced previous corruption charges, had no choice but to jump ship. By 5 p.m. Friday, Gov. Phil Murphy called for Menendez's immediate resignation, and many others followed. By Saturday morning, another fellow Democrat, Rep. Andy Kim, said he's running for Menendez's seat. It marked a steep and swift fall - and one that Menendez still seems not to

recognize. He unleashed a lengthy and defiant statement Friday suggesting he is a political target and that his ethnicity is a motivating factor. He did so again Monday in his native Union City, saying that "prosecutors get it wrong. Sadly, I know that."?

Menendez's response offers a window on an operating style that made him an extraordinarily powerful politician, one with papal status back home in the Garden State: Walk with a chip on your shoulder, attack your opponents, never back down. He's simply hard-wired differently. Most people who escaped prison through a hung jury might think twice before jaywalking. Menendez instead threatened his opponents right after the mistrial, won another term a year later and, several people who know him said after Friday's indictment, seemed emboldened by it all. But there was one strikingly notable difference when he stood before dozens of reporters Monday insisting he'll prove his innocence and remain in office. He didn't have his friend and fellow senator Cory Booker there (and



Booker would call for Menendez's resignation Tuesday). He didn't have Gov. Phil Murphy there. He didn't have a single person of statewide influence at his side. All he had was a partial response to the indictment and the familiar offensive tactic that his opponents "see a political opportunity for themselves."?

"That worked for him as long as he got away with it, and he got away with it for a long time," Rasmussen said. "Now all of

a sudden that's not working for him anymore, and that's what happens to a bully."?

In Hudson County, where Menendez grew up, politics is famously a blood sport ruled by bosses. Just east of Union City, in Weehawken, Aaron Burr fatally shot Alexander Hamilton in a duel. A few blocks south is where Jersey City Mayor Frank "I am the law" Hague infamously reigned for more than three decades. In Union City alone - 1.3 square miles of concrete and pavement in the shadow of Manhattan - two consecutive mayors were convicted of corruption and for many years it was a mob outpost.?

The son of Cuban immigrants raised in a tenement in the notoriously ethics-challenged county, Menendez made his name early as a young Union City school board member who turned on his mentor - the city's mayor - and wore a bulletproof vest to court to testify against him. The vest was no dramatic flourish. Menendez had not only turned on former Union City Mayor William Musto, but essentially the city government and mob bosses, alleging public corruption (Musto was convicted of racketeering but won reelection a day after being sentenced to prison; his immediate successor, Robert Botti, was convicted and sentenced in a bid-rigging scheme.)?

"I didn't need anyone to tell me to protect myself," Menendez has reportedly said. Menendez may have feared for his life then, but it had only just begun politically. Menendez gained local clout as mayor and became a sort of folk hero at home once he moved on to the state Capitol in Trenton, where he was a representative, and then to Washington, D.C. For the last 17 years, he has served as an immensely powerful senator. He became known as an effective legislator who mastered constituent services. Even as the powerful chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee - where he dealt with dictators and globally consequential matters like Iranian nuclear deals - Menendez recognized the power of local retail politics. On just one day in August, for example, he held a press conference on funding for a new hospital program, held

a round table with farmers and appeared with families of drug overdose victims to push legislation to crack down on fentanyl.?

"If you ever followed Bob Menendez in any of the parades ... the guy is the pope," said one Democratic official close to the meeting among Murphy and state leaders following the indictment. "People are coming up to him, taking pictures, hugging him. People just see him as what their children can become."?

Sure, he'd gathered clouds of corruption the higher he rose, and even stood trial on charges of bribery in 2017. But that ended in a hung jury and Menendez pushed a Trumpian narrative that his political opponents were after him. Walking scot-free from a corruption trial on a technicality cost him exactly zero political capital. In fact, New Jersey's Democratic machinery quickly rallied around him for a reelection bid he'd win a year later. As one North Jersey operative put it, Menendez's continued involvement in Hudson County politics made him both a powerful senator and de facto county boss.?

"He was able to raise money, he had deep reach, he could back up threats that he made. So that obviously extended the length of his influence and power," the operative said.?

And in perhaps the clearest example of his sustained influence after the trial, Menendez effectively installed his son, Rob Menendez, a lawyer with no political experience, in Congress with no opposition and the full backing of state party leaders.??

The killer instinct that made Menendez one of the most powerful and enduring politicians in a notoriously cutthroat state has never been far from the surface. In what has become a famous example of Jersey's vindictive brand of politics, Menendez stood outside the federal courthouse in Newark after his 2017 mistrial and issued a warning to his rivals.?

"To those who were digging my political grave so they could jump into my seat," he said, "I know who you are and I won't forget you."?

'Territorial Integrity Can't be Cherry-picked': Jaishankar's Fiery Message to Pak, China at UNGA

(News Agency) -Speaking at the General Debate of the 78th session of UNGA in New York, the EAM said respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs cannot be exercises in "cherry-picking". "Nor must be countenance that political convenience determines responses to terrorism, extremism and violence. Similarly, respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs cannot be exercises in cherry-picking when reality departs from rhetoric, we must have the courage to call it out," he said. Interim Pakistan Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar earlier raked Jammu and Kashmir in his speech at the UN General Assembly. India told Pakistan to shut down terror infrastructure in the country and reminded

Pakistan's government of its own abysmal record of minority rights violations. Indian and Chinese troops remained in a standoff at specific friction points in eastern Ladakh since May 2020 when 20 Indian soldiers were killed in the Galwan Valley clash. As many as 19 Corps Commander-level talks have been held between the Indian Army and the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) but they have remained inconclusive. Slamming the West, the EAM said the days of a few nations setting the agenda and expecting others to fall in line are over.

"At a time when East-West polarisation is so sharp and the North-South divide is so deep, the New Delhi summit also affirmed that diplomacy and dialogue

are the only effective solutions," he said.

Jaishankar said India has evolved from era of non-alignment to a 'Vishwa Mitra' (a friend). "This is an occasion to take stock of our achievements and our challenges even while sharing our aspirations and goals. Indeed, in regards to both, there is much that India has to share," he said. "Our vision- One Earth, One Family, One Future sought to focus on the key concerns of the many, not just the narrow interest of a few. In the words of PM Modi, it was to bridge divide, dismantle barriers, and sow seeds of collaboration that nourish the world, the unity prevails over discord and where shared destiny eclipses isolation. New Delhi G20 declaration articulates our ability to do so," he added.

India Must Double Down on Empowering Armenia To Stop Azerbaijan-Turkey-Pakistan Nexus

On Sunday, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met his Armenian counterpart against the backdrop of a cataclysmic fate being meted out to Armenians in Azerbaijan. With all its focus on Ukraine, the international community has turned a blind eye toward an ethnic cleansing underway, elsewhere. More than 120,000 ethnic Armenians are being driven out of their homeland, the Nagorno-Karabakh region, at the hands of Azerbaijan. Yet, not a single global power has stepped up to prevent this tragedy from unravelling. So much for the West's sanctimonious sermons or Russia's intimidating temerity. For all they care, one may describe the current state of affairs as Azerbaijan having a free pass to do as it pleases with the Armenians.

Last week, backed by Turkey, Baku launched a lightning offensive on the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave where the breakaway Republic of Artsakh resides. The government in the region has been asked to disband. The Lachin corridor connecting Armenia to the region has been blockaded by Azerbaijan since last year's winter, causing acute food shortages. Electricity and gas supplies, which pass through Azerbaijan-controlled territory, have also dried up. War and deadly bomb blasts targeting civilians are further driving away ethnic Armenians, who fear an impending violent takeover by Azerbaijan. Streams of thousands of Armenians are fleeing a region that they have called home for millennia.

The conflict is a gruesome lesson on the geopolitical tussle that grips the Transcaucasian region leaving numerous casualties and injustices in its wake. While the world has let Armenia down, India has a bigger role to play.

THE WORLD LETS ARMENIA DOWN

Armenia is ready to take in all the refugees and Azerbaijan, having finally won over the Armenians, is all set to establish complete control over the mountains of Nagorno Karabakh. In fact, the matter is already a done deal as Azerbaijan finds itself in a geopolitical sweet spot.

Russia, tied up in Ukraine and geopolitically invested in Azerbaijan, is only playing the role of a mediator with its peacekeeping forces having done little to stop Baku's advances. This is despite Russia being a Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) ally of Armenia, whose immediate territory is also under attack. Iran, an ally of Armenia, is sitting out this conflict as well. This is because the European Union will let Baku's excesses slide, as it views Azerbaijan as an alternative source of gas to fall back on since the decoupling with Russia.

The catch here is that a quarter of Azerbaijan's gas fields are owned by Russia and moreover, it does not have the resources to fulfil even part of Europe's needs, making it a convenient indirect source of Russian and Iranian gas. Meanwhile, the United States is too invested in defeating Russia through Ukraine than in



preventing an Armenian tragedy from unfolding. And by extension, Turkey, which supported Azerbaijan with arms and mercenaries against the Armenians, is relishing this victory.

Azeri President Ilham Aliyev said to his troops that "the fact that Azerbaijan is right is not questioned by major international actors". This is true. And it has emboldened Aliyev to rub Armenia's nose on the ground. Meanwhile, Armenian Prime Minister Nicol Pashinyan has grown vocal over Russia's inaction and failure to come to Armenians' rescue despite being a CSTO ally.

WHAT AZERBAIJAN WANTS

The breakup of the USSR led to the formation of the independent states of Armenia and Azerbaijan among thirteen other nations. While Nagorno Karabakh was completely inhabited by ethnic Armenians after a long war amid the fall of the Soviet Union, the territory is officially recognised to be part of Azerbaijan. During the war, thousands of ethnic Armenians and Azeris were massacred or displaced as violence escalated to its peak.

Since then, peace remained fragile until a complete breakdown in 2020, when Azerbaijan initiated the second Karabakh war taking over vast swathes of land and closing in on the Lachin corridor which connects with the Armenian border. Armenian resistance, however, is verging on complete exhaustion with its border areas under attack by Azerbaijan.

Not only does Baku want to establish control over Nagorno-Karabakh, but it also seeks to cut through the southern part of Armenia to connect with the Azeri exclave of Nakhchivan and establish an uninterrupted corridor between itself and Turkey, continuing the centuries-long tradition of nibbling away at Armenian territory.

A WIN FOR TURKEY-PAKISTAN-AZERBAIJAN NEXUS

A cruel narrative is being weaved by Azerbaijan and its Turkish backers. According to them, this mass exodus of Armenians is voluntary and none of them have been asked to leave. But they are not being assured either of safety or security as Azerbaijani armed forces march on. Instead, bomb blasts and

civilian killings even as the Armenians leave, paint a different picture. Having faced brutal persecution at the hands of Turkic Islamic forces for centuries, the Christian Armenians know better than to stay back at their mercy. Even as Turkey continues to deny it, the Armenian genocide executed by the Ottoman Empire amid World War I is not lost on the world. Over 1.5 million Armenians were killed in their systematic erasure from eastern Anatolia. Forcefully Islamised, thrown into the frontlines as cannon fodder or sent into death marches in the Syrian Desert, were some of the ways in which Armenians were uprooted from their homeland, making way for an ethno-nationalist Turkish state.

A century has passed since, but Turkey's hostility towards Armenians remains. Since 2020, it has backed Azerbaijan's war and sent arms and Syrian mercenaries to tilt the scales in Baku's favour. Pakistan jumped in on the military campaign with its soldiers allegedly fighting for Azerbaijan as well. The Ankara-

Baku-Islamabad troika has enjoyed a free run over the South Caucasus and the impact of their violent geopolitical victory will reverberate in the foreseeable future.

WHERE INDIA COMES IN

India has a deep interest in the South Caucasus region. The active conflict has a bearing on the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) that passes through this region. However, just like most powers around the world, its reaction to the reprehensible hostilities by Azerbaijan has been muted. But New Delhi is not oblivious to the threat that emanates from this part of the world, especially with Azerbaijan backing Pakistan's claims on Kashmir. When it comes to India, the trio of Pakistan, Turkey and Azerbaijan are up to no good. The three countries engage in military drills and officially back each other's position on Kashmir, Cyprus and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Meanwhile, Armenia has wholeheartedly expressed support for India on the matter of Kashmir. Notwithstanding Baku's protests, India has been exporting arms to Yerevan including the Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher, which is the DRDO-developed equivalent of the American HIMARS rocket launcher. India has also exported the counter-battery Swathi radar systems to Armenia.

With the INSTC, its burgeoning energy needs, and Russia's presence in retreat, India's role in Transcaucasia is bound to deepen in the coming years. The troika of Azerbaijan, Turkey and Pakistan, however, threaten India's geopolitical foothold in the region. Armenia is as much a natural ally as it is a strategic one to India and must be boldly empowered by New Delhi to keep the ATP nexus in check.

BJP's Maneka Gandhi says 'ISKCON biggest cheat, sells cows to butchers'

it sells cows from its gaushalas (cowsheds) to the butchers" is going viral. In the video, widely shared on the internet, the former Union Minister and an animal rights activist is heard saying, "ISKCON establishes gaushalas and earns unlimited benefits for the same from the government, in the form of huge lands." In a scathing attack on the religious organisation, Maneka Gandhi said, "I recently visited their Anantapur Gaushala (in Andhra Pradesh) and did not find even a single cow in good condition there." "There were no calves in the Gaushala, which means all of them were sold off," Maneka Gandhi alleged. "ISKCON is selling all its cows to the butchers and no one else does this more than them. They are the ones who roam on the road chanting 'Hare Rama Hare Krishna' and say their entire life is dependent on milk," Maneka Gandhi was heard saying in the video. Here's what Maneka Gandhi said - However, ISKCON rejected Maneka Gandhi's allegations as

"unsubstantiated and false" and said they were "surprised" by the statements of the former Union Minister.

"ISKCON has pioneered cow protection in many parts of the world where beef is a staple diet," ISKCON's national spokesperson Yudhistir Govinda Das said in the statement.

"Many of the cows presently served in ISKCON's goshalas were brought to us after being abandoned, injured, or rescued from being slaughtered," the statement added. Later, in a video, ISKCON Public Relations Officer (PRO) Radharaman Das released a video, wherein he condemned Maneka Gandhi for her remarks and demanded proof supporting her statements. The ISKCON PRO also claimed that Maneka Gandhi did not visit the Anantapur Gaushala as the staff working there said they did not have information about her visit. Further, the ISKCON PRO also urged Maneka Gandhi to present a video of the Gaushala she claims to be in a miserable state.

India can resolve dog-human conflict like US and Netherlands without killing the canine

Dogs are eventually 'people' animals and any solution to a dog-related problem has to centre around people.



(News Agency)-The issue of street dogs has reared its head again, with their temporary removal in Delhi during the G20 summit as well as several incidents of dog bites in the NCR region. A significant number of neighbourhood conflicts these days revolve around the issue of street dogs. Since when did the dog, humans' so-called best friend, become such a hated enemy? Are we at all moving towards a more humane society or will conflicts over dogs only escalate?

In any conflict, each party is entitled to their viewpoint but things have to be settled within the legal framework even though this may come at a cost. The legal framework in India governed by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Animal Birth Control rules has been kind to our four-legged friends. The ABC rules incorporate the most humane methods of population control, which is "capture-sterilise-return". However, in a densely populated nation like ours, the gravity of the situation on account of diseases carried by dogs cannot be overstated. Between 2019 and 2022, India reported a staggering 1.6 crore cases of dog bite. Along with this, it is estimated that India witnesses 18,000-20,000 deaths annually due to rabies (Parliament

of India Data, 2023).

If countries like the US and the Netherlands have experienced success in controlling their stray/street dog populations, it can be attributed to attitudinal changes along with conducive civic circumstances. The Netherlands, for instance, claims to be completely free of stray dogs and also rabies. The country has reportedly been rabies-free since 1923, and its experience shows that once people understand the relationship between dogs and humans and the supporting legal provisions are made, change is fairly quick. Adoption from shelters was particularly encouraged through measures such as higher taxes on store-bought dogs.

The India story can be viewed in the context of several changes (socio-economic, political, and cultural) that have taken place in the past few decades. Social media, for instance, while having its advantages in connecting people and resolving issues, has also become instrumental in creating new conflicts or unnecessarily intensifying others. Another recent development is the increased construction and/or building of cemented roads due to which the muddy/sandy areas in the neighbourhood, which community dogs would use to rest and

also keep themselves cool in the summer months, have been taken away. Dogs get irritable in such circumstances, which makes them prone to biting. The typical reaction is that humans stop feeding such dogs as also others, or hit them and make all efforts to drive them away. Without proper shelter and adequate food, how is it possible to carry on? This hostility and media coverage ensures that the cycle of confrontation continues.

Community or private property?

A standard argument in favour of removal of dogs reflects the application of an "efficiency" criterion used by economists. If most people in a locality would like dogs to be removed, then removing them would increase the total welfare of society. However, efficiency arguments work best when purely economic considerations are involved.

From a broader perspective - in terms of maintaining a balance in nature (removal of dogs increases population of rats, monkeys, cats, and other species), and from the point of view of the environment and preserving "life" in general, an efficiency argument may not carry much bite. However, one must wonder how we amassed a stray dog population of 6.2 crore (State of Pet Homelessness Index of India, 2023). Is it due to the lax nature of the ABC rules that prevent mass culling of dogs? This is not completely accurate since a catch-and-kill policy can prove to be ineffective if new, possibly more aggressive dogs, take over the territories. A more effective way to control street dog population is to release the sterilised and vaccinated dogs back into their old habitat and lower the birth rates of the area on account of sterilisation.

Taiwan, India to seal pact on migration to overcome Taipei's shortage of workers

(News Agency)- India and Taiwan are looking to sign an agreement on migration and mobility as early as next month to help the island overcome a shortage of workers in areas such as manufacturing, construction projects and agriculture, people familiar with the matter said. The draft memorandum of understanding on migration and mobility was finalised after negotiations between the two sides after Taiwan expressed an interest in hiring Indian workers in several sectors, the people said on condition of anonymity. Firms from Taiwan are interested in hiring people from India's northeastern states, they said. The move coincides with growing trade ties between the two sides. Two-way trade has grown more than seven-fold from \$1.19 billion in 2001 to \$8.4 billion in 2022. India currently ranks as Taiwan's 14th largest export destination and 18th largest source of imports. The people said Taiwan currently faces a shortage of workers in four main areas - manufacturing, including factories, construction projects, household workers,



and agriculture and fisheries. India is among the countries that Taiwan is looking at to overcome the shortfall. Foreign workers in Taiwan are paid the same wages as local labour and have access to similar national healthcare facilities, the people said. The current monthly minimum wage in Taiwan is 26,400 New Taiwan dollars (about \$820). Among the reasons that Taiwan has focused on workers from

India's northeastern states is the similarity of culture and diet, the people said.

The signing of two memorandums of understanding on migration and mobility and traditional medicine figured in a recent meeting between Taiwan's Premier Chen Chien-jen and the new director general of the India Taipei Association, Manharsinh Laxmanbhai Yadav, who took up the position in August.

The MoUs and Taiwan's move to establish a new office in Mumbai are "both good steps and demonstrate there is great potential in the India-Taiwan relationship", Yadav was quoted as saying in a statement issued by the premier's office. While India and Taiwan don't have formal diplomatic relations, both sides established representative offices in each other's capitals in 1995. Besides the Taipei Economic and Cultural Center (TECC) in New Delhi, Taiwan set up an office in Chennai in December 2012 and recently announced plans to enhance its official presence in the country by setting up a new office in Mumbai. India has the India-Taipei Association (ITA) office in Taipei and these facilities on both sides function as de facto missions and are responsible for promoting cooperation in trade, investment, science and technology, tourism and education. The growth in India-Taiwan relations has coincided with New Delhi's ties with China falling to a six-decade low over the military standoff on the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Opposition's Poilievre more popular in Canada as Trudeau's domestic woes persist, shows opinion poll

Ipsos poll for Global News Canada shows 40% Canadians would vote for Poilievre if elections are held today, against 31% for PM Trudeau. Results published amid India-Canada diplomatic row.

(News Agency)- Canada's leader of Opposition and Conservative Party chief, Pierre Poilievre, is the most popular choice to lead the country if elections were held today, a new opinion poll conducted by market research and public opinion company Ipsos exclusively for Global News Canada has revealed.

The poll, which surveyed 1,500 respondents between 15 and 18 September, also showed that a majority of Canadians want Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to step aside as the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada and the New Democratic Party (NDP) to stop supporting the current minority government. The results of the poll were made public Thursday amid the ongoing diplomatic tensions between Canada and India over the killing of Sikh extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Canadian citizen, in June of this year. According to the poll, four in 10 Canadians (40 percent) would vote for the Conservative Party under Poilievre today, while only 31 percent would choose current Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

This is a significant shift from the last federal election held in 2021, when the Liberals won 160 seats with 32.6 percent of the total popular votes, while the Conservatives won the popular votes with 33.7 percent, but lost in the



number of seats due to Canada's first-past-the-post electoral system - where individual candidates with the leading number of votes are declared winners. According to Global News, Poilievre's popularity has increased by five percent since last year, while Trudeau's support has remained stagnant. It added that the main issues that matter for Canadians at the moment are cost of living, access to housing and inflation.

Trudeau's poll numbers are a far cry from the highs of 2015 when the Liberal Party reportedly won 39.5 percent of the popular vote and 184 of 338 seats in Parliament.

The Ipsos poll also found that 60 percent of Canadians think it's time for Trudeau to step aside as leader of the Liberal



Party and hand over the reins to someone else in the next election, scheduled for 2025. The percentage of those who had voted for this in December last year was 54 percent.

NDP leader Jagmeet Singh, who is in a governing arrangement with the Liberal Party, remains a distant third choice as PM for Canadians, with 22 percent picking him as their preferred choice. Year-on-year support for Singh has declined by four percent, the opinion poll revealed.

This month's opinion poll also found 53 percent of the respondents believe that the NDP should stop supporting the current Liberal Party government and trigger an election immediately.

Regional support for Poilievre

Poilievre leads across all the provinces and regions of Canada except for Quebec, where Trudeau has a slight edge over him, 34 percent to 23 percent, found the Ipsos poll.

The territories of Canada were not included in the poll.

In Ontario - the country's most populous province - Poilievre was preferred by 42 percent of the respondents, compared to the 38 percent who voiced support for Trudeau.

In Atlantic Canada (consisting of the provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island), Poilievre led over Trudeau by nearly 20 percent in preference.

This is significant because the Liberals swept the ridings (electoral district) in the Atlantic provinces in the 2015 elections.

Conservative leader calls for transparency

The poll results were published amid a diplomatic stand-off between Canada and India over the killing of Nijjar.

While Canada has accused India of being involved in the killing of Nijjar in June this year, India has denied the allegations and said "it is ready to cooperate... once any evidence is presented".

Active first day of bilateral, multilateral meetings for Jaishankar in New York

(News Agency)-External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had an active and packed first day of bilateral and multilateral meetings with his global counterparts and exchanged views on strengthening bilateral ties and issues of common concern as he arrived here for the high-level UN General Assembly session. Jaishankar hit the ground running shortly after landing in New York early Friday morning, beginning his hectic schedule for the day with the Quad Foreign Ministers meeting with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa. A joint readout of the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting issued after the meeting reaffirmed the group's "unwavering support for the United Nations, the enduring importance of upholding mutually determined rules, norms, and standards, and to deepen Quad cooperation in the international system".

Don't tell women what to wear: UN on France hijab ban at Olympics

(News Agency)-The UN asserted that it was opposed to most dress codes for women after France barred its Olympic athletes from wearing hijab during the 2024 Paris Games. "No-one should impose on a woman what she needs to wear or not wear," United Nations rights office spokeswoman Marta Hurtado said after French sports minister informed that the country's athletes would be barred from wearing headscarves during the Games. The rule is concomitant with the country's strict rules on secularism. French sports minister Amelie Oudea-Castera explained the government's decision saying that it was opposed to any display of religious symbols during sporting events. "What does that mean? That means a ban on any type of proselytising. That means absolute neutrality in public services,"



she told France 3 television, adding, "The France team will not wear the headscarf." Without referencing the minister's comments, Marta Hurtado said that the international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ruled out discriminatory practices.

"Any state party to the convention -- in this case France -- has an obligation to

... modify social or cultural patterns which are based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either sexes," Marta Hurtado said, pointing out, "Discriminatory practices against a group can have harmful consequences. That is why ... restrictions on expressions of religions or beliefs, such as attire choices, are only acceptable under really specific circumstances." This meant circumstances "that address legitimate concerns of public safety, public order, or public health or morals in a necessary and proportionate fashion," she said.

France's laws prohibit wearing of "ostentatious" religious symbols in state schools and by civil servants. The country outlawed full-face coverings in 2010 while in June France's Council of State upheld a ban on women footballers wearing the hijab.

"No Merger Until Air India Gets To Level Of Vistara": CEO

On the competition with IndiGo, Campbell Wilson said both airlines are addressing different segments of the market.

(News Agency) -Air India and the Centre are aligned on making India a civil aviation hub, like Dubai or Singapore, and this is part of the company's plan as well, the airline's Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Campbell Wilson has said.

In an exclusive interview with NDTV, Mr Wilson spoke on a range of issues and said he is upbeat not just about the direction that the company is going in but also what the future holds for Indian aviation. He also discussed safety, the airline's new aircraft, the timeline for the Air India-Vistara merger, and the battle with IndiGo, which is the other behemoth in Indian aviation.

Being a part of the government for a long time has instilled a certain culture in Air India and that is part of the reason that the civil aviation regulator had to take action against the carrier over safety issues, Mr Wilson said. He was answering a question on the recent suspension of the airline's Chief of Flight Safety for a month after an inspection found lapses in the carrier's accident-prevention protocol.

"There's a lot of reasons why Air India is what it is. It's had a long history, background as part of the government. That's imbued a



certain culture. And we are spending a lot of time bringing in people, bringing in training, bringing in systems, bringing in consequence management, and really demonstrating what world-class standards are in a safety environment," he said.

The MD emphasised that they are actively "plugging into" external bodies, like the International Air Transport Association and the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines, to ensure that the airline deeply understands the standards that are required.

"Promulgating them through an organisation that has been acting in a certain way for a long time takes time. And educating people

and reinforcing that standards that might have been acceptable in the past are no longer acceptable now requires constant attention. We're not sparing any effort in making this happen. It is disappointing that we have these episodes, but they have to be episodes that we learn from," he said.

Aviation Hub

Speaking to NDTV earlier this month, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia had said that India could not only become an aviation hub like Dubai, Doha or Singapore in the next five years or less, but it could also have multiple hubs, beginning with the Delhi airport, in different parts of the country.

When Mr Wilson was asked for his thoughts on this, and whether India could see people flying into Delhi on their way to other places, as opposed to doing so from Qatar or Dubai, Mr Wilson said, "I think it's not binary, you either don't or you do. Air India already carries people from Europe into Delhi and they connect onwards to Asia or Australasia. As a proportion of our total traffic, it's relatively small, but as we expand our frequency, as we improve our product, as the transit experience in Delhi improves, that will just get increasingly more."

"So it all really is a hub. Now, will it become the mega hub of the likes of others? In terms of volume of people, absolutely yes. But the structure will change because India has such a huge point-to-point demand, whether from city or whether from country going to somewhere else," he added.

The Air India MD pointed out that the international component of India's hub is almost certainly going to be smaller than it would be in a city-state, which doesn't have the supporting population that the country enjoys.

"But absolutely, we should have hubs, larger hubs in India. They can and, in my view, should be

more than one. It is a key part of Air India's future plan. And so we're fully aligned," he said.

Merger With Vistara

Air India needs to get to the level of Vistara, which was built on the latest technology and had new aircraft, before the merger of the airlines can happen, Mr Wilson said, adding that the new carrier will probably retain the 'Air India' name, which comes with a 91-year heritage and is known globally.

"We've said that the future airline will probably be called Air India. But we won't be merging Vistara and Air India until such time that we feel that Air India has reached the level that Vistara is at. With Vistara as part of the family, there's a lot we can learn from..."

I think part of the reason that Vistara has been successful is a very young airline that was built on latest technology, had new aircraft. And these are things that Air India will have in due course too," the Air India MD said.

"So it's inevitable, in my view, and we will not stop until Air India reaches at least Vistara's level. At the same time, Air India carries the name 'Air India', which is known and beloved around the world. And it has 91 years of history and heritage and recognition.

Yatra Online makes weak debut on Dalal Street, shares list at 10% discount

Yatra Online's shares were listed at Rs 127.50 per share on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), marking a 10.2 per cent decline from the issue price of Rs 142.

(News Agency) Yatra Online made a weak debut on Dalal Street as the company's shares were listed at a significant discount on Thursday.

Yatra Online's shares were listed at Rs 127.50 per share on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), marking a 10.2 per cent decline from the issue price of Rs 142. On the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), the listing price was Rs 130 per share, also reflecting a similar discount.

Yatra Online IPO from Shivani Nyati, Head of Wealth, Swastika Investmart Ltd, said, "Yatra Online Limited (YOL) made its debut on the stock markets today at Rs 127.5 per share, a discount of



more than 10 per cent from its IPO price of Rs 142."

"YOL's shares witnessed a negative listing. This is likely due to the company's high P/E valuation, its reliance on the airline ticketing business, and the

competitive nature of the travel industry. Overall, YOL is a risky investment, and investors who receive an allotment of this IPO should consider exiting their position," Nyati added.

The Yatra Online initial public

offering (IPO) was open for subscription from September 15 to September 20. During the IPO, the company had set the price range for its shares at Rs 142.

In terms of the allocation of shares, Yatra reserved at least 75 per cent of the shares for Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs), up to 15 per cent for Non-Institutional Investors (NIIs), and a maximum of 10 per cent of the offering was earmarked for Retail Investors.

The Yatra Online IPO consisted of a fresh issuance of shares worth Rs 602 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of up to 12.2 million shares by a promoter and existing investor.

The company plans to utilise the

net proceeds from the IPO for various purposes, including strategic investments, acquisitions, corporate needs, customer acquisition, technology development, and organic growth initiatives.

The book running lead managers for the IPO were SBI Capital Markets Ltd, DAM Capital Advisors Ltd, and IIFL Securities Ltd. Link Intime India Private Ltd served as the offer's registrar.

As of the IPO launch date, the Grey Market Premium (GMP) for Yatra shares stood at Rs 0, indicating that shares were trading at their issue price of Rs 142 in the grey market, without any premium or discount.

'Touchdown': NASA control room rejoices as first asteroid samples land on Earth

As large as a skyscraper, the asteroid is currently orbiting the sun 50 million miles from Earth.

NASA's first asteroid samples fetched from deep space parachuted into the Utah desert Sunday to cap a seven-year journey. This image taken from video provided by NASA TV shows the capsule released by the Osiris-Rex spacecraft lying on the surface near the parachute after landing to Earth. (AP) In a flyby of Earth, the Osiris-Rex spacecraft released the sample capsule from 63,000 miles (100,000 kilometers) out. The small capsule landed four hours later on a remote



expanse of military land, as the mothership set off after another asteroid. Scientists estimate the capsule holds at least a cup of rubble from the carbon-rich asteroid known as Bennu, but won't know for sure until the container is opened. Some spilled and floated away when the spacecraft scooped up too much and rocks jammed the container's lid during collection three years ago.

Japan, the only other country to bring back asteroid samples, gathered about a teaspoon in a pair of asteroid missions.

The pebbles and dust delivered Sunday represent the biggest haul from beyond the moon. Preserved building blocks from the dawn of our solar system 4.5 billion years ago, the samples will help scientists better understand how Earth and life formed.

Osiris-Rex, the mothership, rocketed away on the \$1 billion mission in 2016. It reached Bennu two years later and, using a long stick vacuum, grabbed rubble from the small roundish space rock in 2020. By the time it returned, the spacecraft had logged 4 billion

miles (6.2 billion kilometers).

NASA's recovery effort in Utah included helicopters as well as a temporary clean room set up at the Defense Department's Utah Test and Training Range. The samples will be flown Monday morning to a new lab at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston. The building already houses the hundreds of pounds (kilograms) of moon rocks gathered by the Apollo astronauts more than a half-century ago.

The mission's lead scientist, Dante Lauretta of the University of Arizona, will accompany the samples to Texas. The opening of the container in Houston in the next day or two will be "the real moment of truth," given the uncertainty over the amount inside, he said ahead of the landing.

Engineers estimate the canister holds 250 grams (8.82 ounces) of material from Bennu, plus or minus 100 grams (plus or minus 3.53 ounces). Even at the low end, it will easily surpass the minimum requirement of the mission, Lauretta said.

It will take a few weeks to get a precise measurement,

said NASA's lead curator Nicole Lunning.

NASA plans a public show-and-tell in October. Currently orbiting the sun 50 million miles (81 million kilometers) from Earth, Bennu is about one-third of a mile (one-half of a kilometer) across, roughly the size of the Empire State Building but shaped like a spinning top. It's believed to be the broken fragment of a much larger asteroid.

During a two-year survey, Osiris-Rex found Bennu to be a chunky rubble pile full of boulders and craters. The surface was so loose that the spacecraft's vacuum arm sank a foot or two (0.5 meters) into the asteroid, sucking up more material than anticipated and jamming the lid.

These close-up observations may come in handy late in the next century. Bennu is expected to come dangerously close to Earth in 2182 - possibly close enough to hit. The data gleaned by Osiris-Rex will help with any asteroid-deflection effort, according to Lauretta. Osiris-Rex is already chasing after the asteroid Apophis, and will reach it in 2029.

This was NASA's third sample return from a deep-space robotic mission. The Genesis spacecraft dropped off bits of solar wind in 2004, but the samples were compromised when the parachute failed and the capsule slammed into the ground. The Stardust spacecraft successfully delivered comet dust in 2006. NASA's plans to return samples from Mars are on hold after an independent review board criticized the cost and complexity. The Martian rover Perseverance has spent the past two years collecting core samples for eventual transport to Earth.

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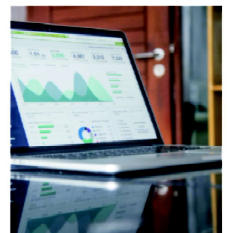
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Can you eat mangoes if you have diabetes? Only if...

Although mangoes are high in sugar content, they also contain lower carbohydrates, which could be beneficial for diabetics.

Millions in India are suffering from the chronic condition - diabetes. While type 1 diabetes is caused by an autoimmune reaction, type 2 diabetes is caused by various lifestyle habits.

The disease is a result in too much sugar in the blood (high blood sugar level) due to the pancreas either not able to produce enough insulin or cannot effectively use the insulin produced. In most cases, diabetics have to lower their sugar intake and have foods that have a low glycemic index i.e., foods that do not spike the body's blood sugar level. Most

fruits are discouraged from being consumed if you have diabetes.

In the summer season, mangoes are quite prominent and widely available. Most people think that diabetics cannot consume mangoes due to its high level of sugar content. However, according to experts, having mangoes in moderation can be quite beneficial for the body. Dr Pullela Srikar Krishna, Internal Medicine and Diabetologist, Apollo Clinics, told IndiaToday.in that in small quantity, mangoes can control the blood sugar level. "Diabetics with good sugar control can eat

mangoes in small quantities. Although mangoes are high in sugar content, they also contain lower carbohydrates," said Dr Pullela Srikar Krishna. Mango contains significant amount of vitamin E, K and B complex, and high in fibre including calcium, potassium and copper. Research has shown that mangoes have a significant role in the treatment of metabolic disorders. "Eating a mango every day could protect people against high cholesterol as well as diabetes," said Dr Krishna. But eating a lot of them can disbalance the blood sugar level. In fact, Dr Krishna advised not



to eat mangoes and not to consume it in the form of juice. "Diabetics should eat mangoes in moderation. They should check their sugar levels regularly. But they should not consume mango juice and only eat mangoes as a whole fruit.

Consuming raw mangoes with yogurt or rice helps to cut the sugar levels in the body," as per the expert.

Other summer fruits that diabetics can eat regularly include guava, papaya, kiwi, pear and cantaloupe.

The perils of indoor pollution: How it makes asthma worse

Indoor pollution is, sometimes, more harmful to the lungs than outdoor pollution.



Air pollution has been the leading cause of not only catalyzing but also causing asthma across the world. The situation is even grim in countries like India and China, which suffer regular bouts of pollution.

With over 300 million people suffering from this breathing disease across the world, studies have shown that particulate matter can cause various symptoms like coughing, breathlessness, and wheezing, especially when someone is asthmatic. Caused by the inflammation and narrowing of the airways in the lungs, this chronic disease is often

underdiagnosed or under-treated, particularly in low and middle-income countries.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), people who have under-treated asthma can suffer sleep disturbance, tiredness during the day, and poor concentration. While it is mostly believed that the situation is triggered by outdoor pollution, indoor pollution is also a leading cause.

Dr Azmat Karim, Consultant, Pulmonary Critical Care and Sleep Medicine, Fortis Escorts, Okhla Road, New Delhi, told IndiaToday.in that indoor pollution is, sometimes, more harmful to the lungs than outdoor pollution.

"Indoor pollution is more dangerous, sometimes, than outdoor pollution because it is settled dust. Settled dust goes directly in the air and you will persistently inhale the particles in the house, whereas in outdoor pollution the air particles are more scattered and sparser and you might not keep inhaling it continuously," said Dr Azmat Karim. He added that when the air quality changes (lowers) and there is turbulence in the climate, more dust is inhaled and it can make breathing worse.

"For someone who has asthma, these dust particles can cause exacerbation like bronchial asthma and type 1 respiratory failure. As a result, a person might even have to go to the ICU (intensive care unit)," said Dr Karim.

WHAT DOES INDOOR POLLUTION INCLUDE?

Indoor pollutants include products of combustion, including particulate matter (PM) and oxides of nitrogen, as well as airborne allergens and endotoxin.

Can belly fat be the reason for your hair loss? Find out



Speaking to IndiaToday.in, Dr Navya Handa, Consultant Dermatologist and Cosmetologist, Primus Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi, said that having excess belly fat can be a sign of an unhealthy lifestyle, which can contribute to hair loss. "One of the main culprits behind hair loss is an imbalance in hormones. Excess belly fat can lead to higher levels of the hormone dihydrotestosterone (DHT), which can shrink hair follicles and cause hair to fall out," said Dr Navya Handa. As per the expert, an unhealthy diet and lifestyle can lead to nutrient deficiencies, such as iron and biotin, which are essential for

healthy hair growth. These deficiencies can cause hair to become weak, brittle, and prone to falling out. Furthermore, stress is a common cause of hair loss, and having excess belly fat can be a sign of chronic stress.

"High levels of stress can disrupt the hair growth cycle and lead to hair loss. Therefore, while belly fat may not be directly responsible for hair loss, it can be a sign of an unhealthy lifestyle that can contribute to hair loss. Maintaining a healthy weight, eating a balanced diet, and managing stress levels can help promote healthy hair growth," said Dr Handa.

Angelina Jolie on life after divorce with Brad Pitt: Having children saved me



Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt who got married in 2014, separated in 2016 after their relationship had hit the rock. Now, in a new interview, the actress reflected her thoughts on motherhood and divorce.

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt's divorce in 2016 was one of the most talked about things back then. The two stars had met on the sets of the 2005 movie Mr and Mrs Smith. After dating for many years, they got married in 2014. However, their marriage soon hit a rock and they parted ways in 2016. ANGELINA JOLIE TALKS ABOUT DIVORCE

Angelina Jolie, who is a prominent name in Hollywood, recently discussed her life after embracing motherhood and separation from her ex-husband Brad Pitt. The former couple share six children, namely Maddox, Pax, Zahara, Shiloh and twins Vivienne and Knox.

The actress who graced the cover of Vogue magazine, opened up about her life in an interview where the 48-year-old 'Maleficent' actress reflected on becoming a parent for the first time in her twenties.

"I was 26 when I became a mother. My entire life changed. Having children saved me - and taught me to be in this world differently," she said. "I think, recently, I would've gone under in a much darker way had I not wanted to live for them."

The actress highlighted that she is still in transition as a person. "I'm still understanding who I am at 48. I guess I'm in transition as a person. I don't feel like I've been myself for a decade, in a way, which I don't want to get



into," shared Jolie. Highlighting how her family has withstood difficult times, Jolie said, "We had a lot of healing to do. We're still finding our footing."

ANGELINA JOLIE'S WORK FRONT

Angelina Jolie is one of Hollywood's highest-paid actresses. She was last seen in 'Eternals' as Thena. She will be lending her voice for the upcoming 2024 film, 'Kung Fu Panda 4' for Master Tigress.



'Animal' teaser: Ranbir Kapoor's baddie avatar in gritty drama promises bloody ride

Ranbir Kapoor's 'Animal' by Sandeep Reddy Vanga, features Ranbir Kapoor's birthday. The two-minute, 26-second clip is a power-packed one filled with high-octane stunts, amazing dialogues, and spectacular acting by Ranbir Kapoor. His transformation from a homely boy

to a rebellious one is sure to leave fans intrigued. Ranbir is doing a mass role for the first time and the raw scenes just depict the kind of hard work Ranbir has done for the film.

Anil Kapoor's role as Ranbir's father is different and unique from what the actor has played in the past. The entire teaser is a complete entertainment package and after Arjun Reddy, fans can expect another hit from director Sandeep. Bobby Deol as the villain would be quite interesting to watch as he also underwent transformation for his role.

ABOUT 'ANIMAL'

Previously, 'Animal' was slated to release in theatres in September. In order to prevent it from coinciding with 'Jawan' release, the movie was postponed. It will now release on December 1. Ranbir Kapoor will be seen in a full-fledged mass role in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's film. It also stars Anil Kapoor, Rashmika Mandana, Bobby Deol, and Triptii Dimri in key roles.

Raveena says she was replaced by Karisma in 'Saajan Chale...': Others have done...



Actor Raveena Tandon has been working in the film industry for decades. Over the years, she has dabbled in South films as well as web series. In a recent interview, Raveena spoke about her survival in such a harsh and competitive industry and said that people did 'blatant politics' against

her.

RAVEENA ON GROUPISM IN INDUSTRY

Speaking to YouTube channel Lehren Retro, Raveena said that she lost out on roles that was later given to actors such as Tabu and Karisma Kapoor. She said, "I have always believed in healthy competition because that brings out the best in you. But I am not a cutthroat person, nobody can say Raveena got me removed from a project or Raveena refused to work with a newcomer. I have never done that kind of politics and groupism but others have blatantly done politics against me. I was supposed to do Saajan Chale Sasural with David Dhawan and Govinda and they told me this later. I had even signed Vijaypath, I lost the film."

Saajan Chale Sasural released in 1996 and was one of the biggest hits of the year. The film featured Karisma Kapoor and Govinda in lead roles.

RAVEENA ON HER BOND WITH KARISMA

It had earlier been reported that Karisma and Raveena were not exactly on great terms, even while filming Andaz Apna Apna. In a more recent interview with ETimes, Raveena said, speaking about the same, "See, you can't get along with everyone, right? And today, I am glad to say that Karisma and me were children (then)."

On the work front, Raveena was last seen in One Friday Night.



Jennifer Lawrence's new look surprises fans: What did she get done?

Hollywood star Jennifer Lawrence recently turned heads at a fashion event of Dior. Her 'new look' left fans wondering if she had had some surgery done.

Hollywood star Jennifer Lawrence recently turned heads at a fashion event of Dior. Wearing formals -- white shirt and black trousers -- the actress looked her usual pretty self. However, some fans noticed that the actress looked different.

FANS REACT TO J-LAW'S NEW LOOK

While a section of the internet opined that the actress had gotten fillers, other thought that it was just bad make-up. One person commented, "What did she get done?" Yet another user wrote, "I think it's fillers. Picture was taken too soon after fillers." It's called LIP LINER," said another. "It's temp filler we can relax," read one comment. "I think it's just aging + bad makeup (sic)," wrote another. The event was attended by a host of celebrities, including actors such as Charlize Theron, Robert Pattinson, Jenna Ortega, Joseph Quinn among more. **HER WORK FRONT** On the work front, Jennifer Lawrence was last seen in No Hard Feelings, co-starring Andrew Barth Feldman. It currently holds a 71 per cent rating on Rotten Tomatoes. The critical consensus reads, "This raunchy comedy often plays it disappointingly safe, but Jennifer Lawrence's comedic and dramatic chops ensure that the end result prompts No Hard Feelings." She has also co-produced the movie. Before this, she was seen in A24 film Causeway.





SRK's 'Dunki' vs Prabhas' 'Salaar': Trade experts call it a bad move

Prabhas' film 'Salaar' is all set to release on Christmas, clashing with Shah Rukh Khan's 'Dunki'. IndiaToday.in exclusively spoke to trade experts to understand how will this clash affect both the films.

Prabhas' highly anticipated film, 'Salaar', has been rescheduled due to technical issues. The film, initially set to hit cinemas on September 28, is now planned to be released on Christmas. This puts it in direct competition with

Shah Rukh Khan's 'Dunki'. 'Salaar' is expected to arrive on December 22, 2023, the same day as 'Dunki'. IndiaToday.in spoke to trade analysts Taran Adarsh and Ramesh Bala to understand how this big clash will affect the two films. CLASH OF TITANS - NOT A HEALTHY TREND!

Speaking about 'Dunki' and 'Salaar' clash, Taran Adarsh said, "Not good. It's not a healthy trend for the industry at least. I think the business is bound to

be divided. That still comes much later. The screens' and shows' division will lead to a lot of bitterness before the release itself. The industry will be divided. It's two big events clashing on the same day. They should have spaced out. 'Dunki' was already announced at the time of the launch itself. 'Salaar' shifted its date. Of course, we live in a democracy set up and you have every right to announce anything on any date. However, from the business point of view, a gap would have

been much better. Eventually, of course, the content speaks for itself and no one has watched it yet for both the films. But initially, there will be a lot of division of business."

Ramesh Bala also feels the opening of both the films will be affected. He added, "There are around 10,000 screens in India and they will be divided now between 'Dunki', 'Salaar' and some other small films. It will affect the opening, which is very important for a film. It could crash. The lifetime revenue depends on that. In a way, they will be affected by the clash. Generally, people should watch both films, but many prefer one movie over the other. Not everyone watches two films in theatres back-to-back, especially families, because of the cost. There will be a negative impact."

OPENING COLLECTION OF BOTH 'DUNKI' AND 'SALAAR' TO BE AFFECTED

Ramesh Bala said, "Both are big movies but the genres are different. 'Salaar' is an action movie on the lines of 'KGF' but 'Dunki' will be more of a feel-good, family entertainer drama. Like 'Jawan' or 'Pathaan', 'Dunki' might not make a huge impact in the South. In a way, they might complement each other in certain regions. However, theatrically speaking, it would have been better if the clash had been avoided. But it is happening and Christmas is a long holiday with New Year too. If the movies are good, they will eventually have a good lifetime business. However, the opening will be affected."

Taran Adarsh feels that while Prabhas' film will do well in the South, SRK's fan following in the North will make 'Dunki' a hit here. He said, "Prabhas will dominate in the south market, but in the north, Shah Rukh Khan is huge. That too, he is coming with Rajkumar Hirani. Both of them are superstars."

However, Ramesh Bala said that 'Salaar' has the potential to do well in the North because of its genre. He said, "Salaar will definitely do well in the South. It is just like 'KGF' which did well in the North, so it has an advantage there too. Action movies are easily liked by the audience in rural areas and cities. However, 'Dunki' might do well just in the North, but not much in the South. It's not 'Pathaan' or 'Jawan' which did so well in the South. I would put 'Salaar' on the upper hand right now just because of the genre."

HOW MUCH MONEY IS RIDING ON BOTH THE FILMS?

In terms of lifetime box office business of 'Salaar' and 'Dunki', Ramesh Bala said, "Nowadays, Rs 1000 crore has become the new benchmark with 'Pathaan', 'Jawan', 'RRR', 'KGF', etc. 'Salaar' definitely has the potential to do Rs 1000 crore. 'Dunki' may have a Rs 500 crore potential. Since they are clashing, the numbers will be affected by 10-20 per cent. Combined, at least Rs 1500 - Rs 1800 crore is riding on these movies."

Priyanka Chopra on writers' strike coming to an end: Result of a unified stance

Priyanka Chopra took to social media to applaud the tentative deal reached by the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and the labour group representing the studios, which could possibly end the SAG-AFTRA strike.

PRIYANKA CHOPRA HAILS EFFORTS TO END THE WRITERS STRIKE

The WGA announced coming to a tentative deal with the streamers and the studios. The significant breakthrough could bring the 146-day writers strike to a halt, providing a much needed relief to the film industry. Several films and shows were put on hold due to the SAG-AFTRA strike.

Now, after the announcement, several celebrities, including Priyanka Chopra, celebrated and applauded the efforts of those who played a significant role in making this deal. The 'Citadel' actress took to Instagram on Monday, September 25, to share her joy. Expressing her excitement, she wrote, "Bravo!!! This is the result of a committed, unified stance. Hope that this positive momentum can drive closure on the SAG AFTRA discussions too. After several long

consecutive days of negotiations, the #WGA and the #AMPTP have reached a tentative deal on a new contract in a major development that could precipitate the end of a historic, 146-day #WritersStrike (sic)."

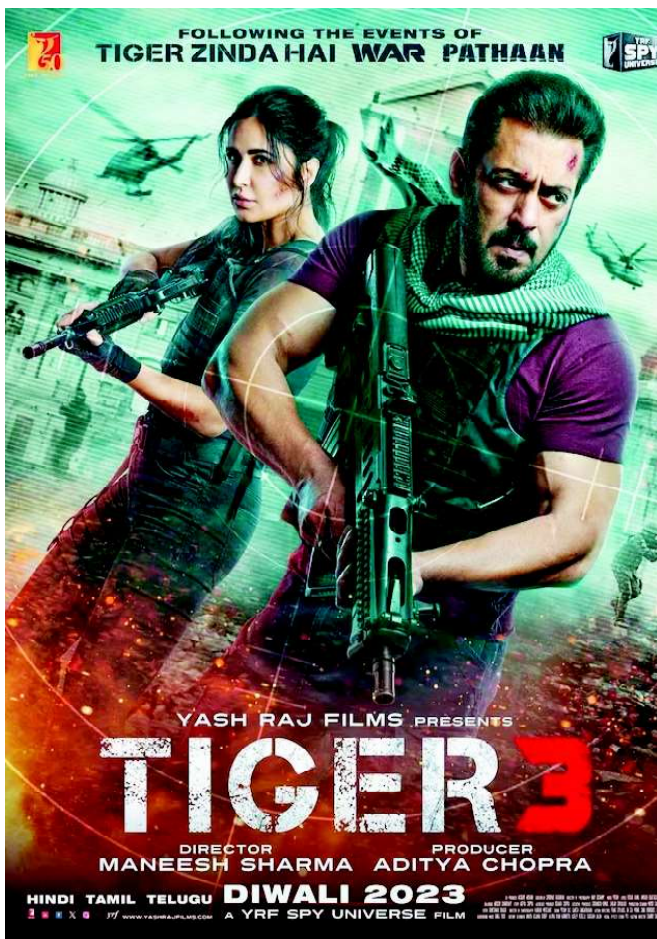
WGA REACHES A TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the WGA shared the announcement via email on Sunday, September 24. They mentioned that they have locked in a three-year agreement with Hollywood's major studios. The WGA, which represents 11,500 film and television writers, described the deal as "exceptional" with "meaningful gains and protections for writers."

However, the deal must be approved by the WGA members for it to become official. Exact details of the agreement are expected to be revealed in the coming days.

Meanwhile, Priyanka Chopra's 'Heads Of State,' which was previously paused due to the strike, is now reportedly set to resume. She will also be sharing the screen with 'Guardians of the Galaxy' star Chris Pratt in 'Cowboy Ninja Viking.'





Salman Khan Declares 'Jab Tak Tiger Mara Nahi...' In Tiger 3 Teaser, Fans Say 'Rs 1000 Cr Loading'

Salman Khan has left fans gasping for breath after he dropped the first footage from his highly anticipated movie Tiger 3. The first footage featured Tiger Ka Message in which Avinash Singh Rathore aka Tiger demands his character certificate from India after he is dubbed 'traitor' and 'enemy no. 1'.

"I am Avinash Singh Rathore but I am Tiger for all of you," he begins the message as he reveals that he has been declared a traitor after serving the country for 20 years and he wants the people of the country to decide how they want to introduce him to his son. "Mere bete ko main nahi, India bole ga ke uska baap kya tha - gaddar ya desh bhakt. Zinda raha toh aapki kidmat mein fir haazir, nahi toh, Jai Hind," he adds. He later declares, "Jab tak Tiger mara nahi tab tak Tiger haara nahi (Tiger is not defeated until he dies)." The

particular dialogue has sent the internet into a frenzy, with fans going gaga over Salman's return as Tiger. Film critic and trade expert Manobala Vijayabalan wrote, "ORGANIC Rs 1000 crore film #Tiger3 loading." A fan said, "Till Now #EkThaTiger Teaser was the Best

Teaser from Indian Cinema, From now Onwards It's #TigerKaMessage from #Tiger3, Maneesh Sharma ne Kabir aur Ali ko peeche chor diya!" Tiger 3 marks the third film in Yash Raj Films' OG spy franchise. The film is directed by Maneesh Sharma and it is reported that Aditya

Chopra has penned the story. While fans are eager to see Tiger and Zoya reunite on the big screen, many are also looking forward to seeing Pathaan's cameo in the film. It has been widely reported that Shah Rukh Khan's Pathaan, who made his debut in the spy universe earlier this year, will be appearing in Tiger 3 in the same way that Salman's Tiger appeared in Pathaan. Details about his cameo is still under the wraps.



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You'll never believe why RFK Jr. thinks he's qualified to be commander in chief

By Peter Bergen

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has made a career out of challenging the status quo. For some of that work, like his time spent cleaning up the Hudson River as an environmental lawyer, he has received widespread praise. But in recent years, he has taken increasingly unorthodox positions, promoting conspiracy theories without any reliable evidence. He has suggested, for instance, that antidepressants may be to blame for school shootings, that vaccines cause autism, that HIV may not cause AIDS and that Wi-Fi causes "leaky brain" and cancer. Kennedy also accepts little of the scientific consensus about the efficacy of Covid-19 vaccinations, and he caused widespread consternation when at a Washington, DC, rally in January 2022, he appeared to liken pandemic safety protocols to measures that Nazis put in place when they were in power in Germany. Much condemnation followed that statement - including even from his wife, actor Cheryl Hines - and Kennedy apologized. Months later, he said that he was simply misunderstood. He said he was making a broader point that surveillance technology today is so advanced that any government can surveil its citizens to an unprecedented degree, telling CNN host Michael Smerconish in April that "... in the future totalitarian systems would be able to surveil us and intrude and control our lives in ways that had never happened in the past." Of course, the level of surveillance that exists in our world is surely worrying to anyone concerned about privacy.

Now, Kennedy is running against President Joe Biden in the Democratic primaries. A CNN poll released this month had sobering news for Biden; two-thirds of likely Democratic voters say the party should nominate someone other than Biden, and about half of them said that Biden's age was their biggest concern. For a candidate such as Kennedy - who at 69 is a full decade younger than Biden and whose campaign has released footage of him doing push-ups on social media - that provides something of an opportunity. Yet in a CNN New Hampshire poll last week, Biden got the support of 78% of likely Democratic primary voters in that early primary state, compared with 9% for Kennedy.

I sat down with Kennedy for a lengthy interview in Manhattan at the end of last month for the Audible podcast "In the Room With Peter Bergen."

When he enters a room, Kennedy is a commanding presence, tall and tanned with piercing blue eyes, his bodyguards discreetly in the background.

During our interview, he made several assertions that made it clear he isn't



qualified to be commander in chief. Among them: He disputes that Covid-19 vaccines saved many lives, he has doubts about the official explanation of the cause of the 9/11 attacks, he promises that he could settle the war in Ukraine by simply negotiating with Russian President Vladimir Putin and he thinks the media works for the pharmaceutical industry.

To boot, he would be only the second president (the first being Donald Trump) who has neither held prior political office nor had any military experience.

RFK Jr. and the media

During the interview, he made sweeping statements about the need for strong skepticism: "People should not trust the government now. It's untrustworthy." He also asserted that "the media habitually lies. ... I don't think you can survive in the mainstream media unless you're willing to become a propagandist."

For me, that triggered a question about CNN anchor Anderson Cooper, whom Kennedy had falsely and bizarrely accused of being on the payroll of the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer.

In his response to me, Kennedy broadened this charge, saying that "technically, the entire news industry is working for the pharmaceutical companies."

I've worked in the news business in some shape or form for almost four decades, and this was definitely news to me. I told Kennedy that I had never seen any evidence for this claim to which he asked, "Are you telling me that you could have this conversation with me on CNN?"

I asked him, "They haven't booked you?"

He replied, "No, of course not."

I pointed out that he had, in fact, done an interview on CNN with Smerconish in April. He conceded that was true, adding, "That's the exception."

Kennedy's portrayal of the mainstream media as propagandists in the pocket of pharmaceutical companies is nonsensical. It's part of his overall impulse to paint a picture of some kind of large-scale

conspiracy to silence him when in fact, he has been the subject of significant coverage in a host of media outlets.

9/11

Kennedy questions who was behind 9/11, even though few events have been more exhaustively examined. The FBI conducted its largest criminal investigation in history, chasing down more than 500,000 leads and interviewing over 167,000 witnesses. The bipartisan 9/11 commission also produced an authoritative report after two years of hearings. Its conclusions that al Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden, carried out the 9/11 attacks were based on overwhelming evidence.

Yet Kennedy told me, "I don't know what happened on 9/11. I mean, I understand what the official explanation is; I understand that there is dissent. I have not looked into it." He added some "strange things that happened," such as that one of the buildings in the World Trade Center complex, Building 7, collapsed even though a plane didn't directly hit it. The government's official report of how Building 7 collapsed was that it was hit with debris from the massive north tower of the World Trade Center after one of the hijacked passenger jets had crashed into it, creating a giant fireball. The debris from the north tower landed on Building 7, causing fires, which led to Building 7's collapse. There's nothing "strange" about it.

War in Ukraine

Kennedy is positioning himself as an alternative to Biden, in part, because he says he is worried that the president is moving the US closer to nuclear war with the Russians.

Kennedy said the Biden administration shares much of the blame for the current situation in Ukraine, pointing to "the neocons within the State Department and the White House. ... They want a conflict with Russia."

Kennedy added, "Putin did not want to take over the country. He wants us back at the negotiating table. But we won't help because we don't want peace."

In fact, as is widely known, Putin brought the war on himself by unprovoked aggression, miscalculating that he would win a quick victory. Instead, the Ukrainians have resisted for a year and a half with help from the United States and other NATO countries.

Kennedy said he is worried that "we've got Putin's back to the wall. He's already said that if it's existential, he's going to use a nuclear weapon. Once he uses it, we're going to use all of ours, and that's it."

He added that he had a plan to end the war in Ukraine and any chance of a nuclear exchange with Putin, asserting, "If I'm commander in chief, he's not going to do that because he's going to know he's dealing with somebody who's going to settle this war."

As for his assertion that Putin really wants to negotiate, it seems like wishful thinking, given the Russian leader's long record of aggression. For instance: ordering the Russian invasion of Chechnya in 1999; invading Georgia in 2008; invading parts of eastern Ukraine in 2014; and sending considerable Russian air power to Syria in 2015 to prop up the dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad, not to mention the indiscriminate attacks on Ukrainian civilian targets over the past year and half.

Covid-19

It was Kennedy's criticisms of the US government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic that fueled his rise as the leader of an unlikely coalition. His supporters come from across the political spectrum, and their common denominator appears to be a deep mistrust of corporate and government institutions.

During the height of the pandemic in 2021, Kennedy published "The Real Anthony Fauci: Bill Gates, Big Pharma, and the Global War on Democracy and Public Health," a book that has sold more than 1 million copies, according to The New York Times.

The audio version of the book is currently on the Times' audio nonfiction bestseller list two years after it was first published.

I asked Kennedy if he was surprised by how well the book had done, and he replied, "I was surprised in light of the fact that it was so heavily censored."

I asked, "If it sold a million copies, how was it censored?" Kennedy said: "There was no review in any mainstream paper. It was silenced."

As to his solution to preventing any future pandemics, Kennedy said: "I would begin (by) eliminating the most likely causes of epidemics, which is No. 1, 'gain of function' studies all over the world." "Gain of function" research takes viruses and manipulates them. By tinkering with them, the result may be a pathogen that's even more dangerous to humans.

Regime-Change Attempts in Bangladesh? PM Sheikh Hasina Thinks So

By Sagorika Sinha

In April, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina accused the United States of pursuing a regime change in her nation. "They are trying to eliminate democracy and introduce a government that will not have a democratic existence," she said. This came on the back of the US castigating India's neighbour for human rights abuses. Despite the country having done well economically under Sheikh Hasina, reports of discontent against the ruling Awami League were shared in American political circles. However, PM Hasina's allegations seem to have found purchase as India has cautioned the US about interference in Bangladeshi elections.

Secretary of State Anthony Blinken announced visa restrictions on Bangladeshi officials in June, and was met with assurances and arguments from Sheikh Hasina's government. While a country reserves the right to offer entry to foreign visitors, government officials involved in trade and policy are often issued tangible reasoning for being denied access instead of unilateral accusations of participating in "democratic backsliding". At the same time, members of the Bangladeshi government wrote to Blinken with video evidence of Bangladesh's opposition vowing to obstruct elections, and requesting that the new American visa policy towards Bangladeshi officials apply equally to establishment and opposition. It may be seen as hypocritical that no official representative of the US is concerned about actual obstructions to free and fair elections in a democracy, as long as they stem from an opposition.



With trade and exports as a matter of constant discussion between governments, Dhaka has been forced to issue statements to mollify the US government, while also accusing them of fomenting unrest with the intent to change the government at the Centre. The US had previously imposed sanctions on officers of Bangladesh's Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and the Bangladesh Police in 2021. The same year, the US did not invite the Asian democracy to their Summit for Democracy. Earlier this year, however, senior state official Donald Lu was in Dhaka and suggested that the sanctions had made a difference, and that the RAB had been reigned in by US action.

Interestingly, the American castigation of the Islamic nation does not consider religious fundamentalism to be an issue. Despite the continued destruction of temples that exemplify the country's recent past as well as the significant but rapidly dwindling Hindu population, the American State Department chooses to instead cite the Rohingya refugee situation, in addition to internal political tussles. It is worth noting that Priya Saha, a minority Hindu woman who had the chance to bring up the persecution of minorities before former US President Donald Trump in 2019, was about to be charged with sedition in her

home country. PM Sheikh Hasina disapproved of the move by her government to file charges against her, at the last minute. While the Bangladesh-America relationship has seen



its fair share of challenges, attempts to improve ties with the Bangladeshi democracy were underway before the Biden administration took over, and engagement was less than adversarial. The change in the US administration in 2020 has brought forth renewed complications. Accusations of a regime change by a sitting Prime Minister are hardly trivial.

The US now cites accusations by the Bangladeshi Opposition, the Bangladeshi Nationalist Party (BNP) led by Khaleda Zia, as further proof of political persecution. Citing opposition talking points in a democratic nation by an international entity lends

credence to suspicions of foreign interference by any other issues. The non-nation. Considering American involvement in "Color Revolutions" around the world, it is not unlikely that democratic nations fear there may be similar attempts on their soil. Selfies in the background of the recently concluded G20 meeting in New Delhi featuring PM Hasina and her daughter Saima Wazed with American President Joe Biden have found mention in several reports; however, they come without any solid conclusions about attempts to reset ties between both democracies.

With the Biden administration

Rohingya to Myanmar, among other issues. The non-fundamentalist Hasina government has worked towards a more stable Indian subcontinent and is strategically important to countering Chinese inroads in the region. However, the US currently seems to believe that antagonizing the Hasina government is a chance worth taking, even in the face of continued Chinese belligerence in the region.

Puppet governments benefit only western corporates in the long term, as may be seen from history. Citizens are left bereft of means to address concerns, and whole nations remain fraught in poverty or war, often both. Democracy is a serious attempt at ensuring that the will of a people is exercised, and can only be based on free and fair elections. If a nation as powerful as the United States of America chooses to wield their immense diplomatic, media and trade power to undermine elections in a sovereign democracy halfway across the world, they will only bolster claims of democracy functioning as a reason to subdue. All democracies are imperfect democracies, and while the US is a valuable example of a sufficiently functional democracy, it cannot claim leadership of the free world by favouring undemocratic alliances in other democracies. The people of Bangladesh have the right to continue to choose their own leaders through democratic means. The world will keep watch and weigh Sheikh Hasina's assurances of free and fair elections as they approach in 2024, but in the meantime, American heckling will be seen as an explicit threat of regime change.



The India-Canada diplomatic flare-up has once again brought attention to an old problem: the long-standing nexus between Indo-Canadian gangsters and Sikh separatists.

Guns, gangs & extremism

how nexus of organised crime and Sikh separatism took root in Canada

(News Agency) -When the Lawrence Bishnoi gang claimed responsibility for killing Sukha Deneka, a pro-Khalistan gangster, in Canada this week, social media erupted with memes. One featured Bishnoi's associate Goldy Brar with the caption, "Zara hum bhi to dekhein humse bada zimmedar kaun paida ho gaya (let's see who is more responsible than us)," - a reference to Indian gangsters taking credit for numerous murders in India and Canada. Undeterred by the downturn in India-Canada ties, social media fan pages and accounts glorifying gangsters and Sikh extremists continue to thrive. Some dedicated to Goldy Brar, Bishnoi, and other gangsters brim with reels glamorising gun violence. Others focus on the pro-Khalistan sentiment, with excerpts from past speeches of radical Sikh preacher Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and captions such as "Khalistan zindabad". Shortly after the assassination of Harpreet Singh Nijjar, the chief of the Khalistan Tiger Force, in Vancouver on 18 June this year, an unframed poster was discovered outside the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurudwara in the vicinity, referring to him as a "martyr". This week, Nijjar's murder became the latest flashpoint between India and Canada when Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused Indian agents of having a hand in the killing. India, meanwhile, accused the Canadian government of being a "safe haven for terrorists, extremists, and organised crime". The Punjab Police launched raids against associates of Brar, who has ties to Canada, and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) announced cash

rewards for Babbar Khalsa operatives. This flare-up has once again brought attention to an old problem: the long-standing nexus between Indo-Canadian gangsters and Sikh separatists. Many Canada-based gangsters, some of whom openly endorse separatist ideology, initially entered the world of crime through extortion and assault. Most started out in India, but as cases against them piled up, they fled overseas. Some of these gangsters aligned themselves with Sikh extremists. In addition, some of their associates remained in India and continued to run their gangs from inside Indian jails.

Goldy Brar, Arsh Dalla & Bishnoi-Bambiha rivalry

Perhaps the most notorious among gangsters who went to Canada and operated their gangs in India from there, is Satinderjeet Singh alias Goldy Brar. He moved to Canada sometime in 2017 to evade action by Indian law enforcement. Authorities suspect that he continued to run his gang from Canada with help from gangster Lawrence Bishnoi - currently lodged at Gujarat's Sabarmati prison. Operating from Canada, Brar recruits new gang members, runs extortion rackets, and sanctions hit jobs, allegedly including against Sidhu Moose Wala last May. A fugitive, his current location remains unknown. Another name that surfaces in connection with the nexus of Indo-Canadian gangsters is that of Arshdeep Singh Gill or Arsh Dalla. A member of the separatist outfit Khalistan Tiger Force, Dalla is named in

more than 20 criminal cases in India, including the beheading of a man in Delhi in January this year. He moved to Canada sometime in 2018 and is believed to have been involved in weapons smuggling, drug trafficking and assassinations.

His name made headlines again after it was reported Thursday that gangster Sukha Duneke - said to be an associate of Dalla - had been shot dead in Winnipeg, Canada, allegedly in a "gang war". The Lawrence Bishnoi gang claimed responsibility for the killing.

Duneke, believed to be allied with the rival Davinder Bambiha gang, reportedly fled to Canada in 2017 on a forged passport. Bishnoi, as ThePrint reported earlier, had allegedly conspired to get Moose Wala killed on the suspicion that he had ties to the Bambiha gang.

Apart from Gill, Brar, and others, Prince Chauhan, an associate of jailed gangster Virender Pratap alias Kala Rana also runs his gang from Canada.

Ramandeep Singh alias Raman Judge, the brother of jailed gangster Gagandeep Singh of the Jaipal Bhullar gang is also suspected to be operating from Canadian soil. An alleged operative and recruiter of the Khalistan Tiger Force, he stands accused of terrorist activities in Punjab, the murder of a dera follower, and the attack on a priest in Phillaur in 2021.

Gangster-turned-terrorist Lakhbir Singh Sandhu alias Landa, whose name featured in the NIA's latest list of suspected Babbar Khalsa operatives, fled to Canada in 2017. He is said to be closely working with Harvinder Singh alias Rinda, a Lahore-

based terrorist associated with Babbar Khalsa International.

It is believed that Satnam Singh alias Satta, a former kabaddi player wanted in several cases including the Mohali RPG attack case, too moved to Canada from Portugal sometime over the last few months. Satta is suspected to be a close aide of Landa.

Nexus of organised crime & Sikh extremism

The nexus between Indian fugitives and Sikh extremists operating out of Canada can be traced back to the 1970s. The subsequent rise of gun and gang culture among sections of the diaspora there coincided with the influx of Sikhs in the wake of Operation Blue Star.

Over the years, Canada became a preferred destination for gangsters who wanted to run their gangs while staying out of the net of Indian investigative agencies. Many also inserted their hooks into the Punjabi music industry and began extorting singers for "protection". There were also reports of them calling the shots over casting of actors in music videos.

For instance, Bhupinder 'Bindy' Singh Johal, who migrated to Canada in 1975 with his mother, ended up joining the 'Punjabi gang' of Ron and Jimmy Dosanjh - leaders of the separatist International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF), a designated terrorist outfit.

Pakistan-based Lakhbir Singh Rode, the nephew of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, now heads the banned outfit. His son Bhagat Singh Brar, along with Parvkar Singh Dulai - both residents of Surrey - were put on the no-fly list by the Canadian government in 2018.

This nexus of organised crime and Sikh extremism operating on Canadian soil also surfaced in the aftermath of the 1985 bombing of the Air India Flight 182 that killed 329 people on board. Tara Singh Hayer, a prominent journalist and key witness in the case, was shot dead in Surrey, Canada, in 1998. The probe into his assassination remains unresolved.

Young men from Punjab, said a source in the Indian security establishment, are "smitten by drug money, fancy cars and everything else" they are shown by gang members. "Funds needed to run these gangs and procure weapons often come from pro-Khalistan leaders and those sharing similar sentiments," the source added.

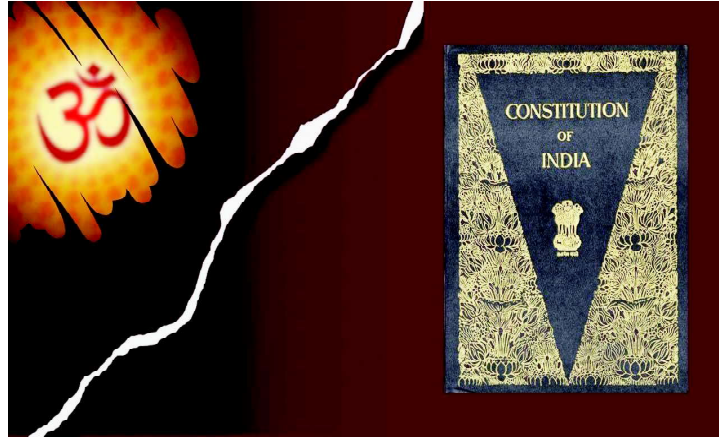
Sanatan Dharma, Bharat And The Indian Constitution

By Rajiv Tuli

The Constitution of any nation embodies its collective values, aspirations, and provides a roadmap for achieving these goals. It also delineates the authority vested in the government and how it should be exercised to realise these values. In the case of India, its Constitution draws heavily from the rich tapestry of civilisational values cultivated over millennia, particularly those rooted in the Sanatan Dharma.

Sanatan Dharma represents the eternal, timeless and unchanging traditions that have evolved in the landmass of Bharat-Khanda (the Indian subcontinent). These traditions are so assimilated in this culture that, the culture that blossomed, flourished and evolved on this geographical entity came to be known as Sanatan Dharam. It is not a religion like Abrahimcal religion but a way of life. The basis of this Dharma is Hinduism, though other streams like Buddhism and Jainism also added their valuable contributions. The fundamental values enshrined in the Indian Constitution include liberty, equality, fraternity, peaceful coexistence, democracy, and respect for nature and all living beings. These values have deep ties to Hindu culture, one of the world's oldest and most enduring civilisations. This article explores how Hinduism's core principles have significantly contributed to the foundational structure of the Indian Constitution.

The very name of Bharat is traced to the Sanatan Dharma. The Indian Constitution



begins with the declaration in Article 1(1), "India, that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States." The choice of the name "Bharat" goes back to India's pre-Muslim and pre-British history, drawing from the legends of ancient Hindu traditions. The term 'Bharat' is intertwined with the country's ancient identity, with references dating back to the Mahabharata era. This was a time when Bharata, a legendary emperor, united the Indian subcontinent into a single political entity known as "Bharatvarsha." Thus, the very name 'Bharat' reflects India's deep-rooted connection to Hindu heritage.

Unity in Diversity:

The phrase "Union of States" signifies the cultural and historical fact that India's foundation has always been a diverse, pluralistic, and tolerant society where numerous sub-cultures coexisted and

thrived. Many of these sub-cultures either originated from Hinduism or were significantly influenced by it. Despite the presence of diverse micro-cultures, there has always been an underlying political, geographical, and cultural unity in India, guided by the cultural tenets of Hinduism. This unity has periodically manifested as centralised power while allowing ample space for regional sub-cultures to flourish, evolve, and endure.

The Indian Constitution, in Part IV A, Article 51-A, outlines Fundamental Duties expected from its citizens, including fostering a spirit of common brotherhood, striving for excellence, and preserving the natural environment. These principles align closely with Hinduism's ethos of tolerance, harmony, and a shared sense of brotherhood transcending religious, linguistic, and regional

diversities.

The core value of fraternity enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution is directly borrowed from the Hindu Upanishadic ideal of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,' which means "the whole world is one family." This inclusion in the Constitution subtly acknowledges that the essence of Indian culture is fundamentally Hindu but inherently inclusive, respecting and tolerating all other faiths.

Hinduism has a strong tradition of coexistence with nature. Article 51-A(g) of the Constitution emphasizes the duty of every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, lakes, rivers, wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures. This reflects the Sanatani way of life, which not only respects human beings but also extends this respect to animals and the environment.

Cow Protection:

Hinduism's reverence for the cow is deeply ingrained in the Indian Sanatani society. Article 48 of the Constitution directs the state to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines, emphasizing the preservation and improvement of cow breeds and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves. This also aligns with Mahatma Gandhi's ideals and enforces the importance of protecting cows through legislation. It is worth noting that Gandhi was always proud of being a Sanatani Hindu.

New AI poll reveals elites are way out of step with the rest of us

By Will Rinehart

Artificial intelligence (AI) is shaping up to be yet another public policy issue where elites are out of step with the public.

In Silicon Valley, Congress and the Biden administration, leaders are buzzing about AI. For those in the Valley, killer robots with lasers for eyes dominate the conversation. The Beltway, in contrast, is spending a lot of political capital to deal with bias in algorithms. And yet, the general public isn't primarily worried about either machines gaining control or about algorithms being biased. What concerns them about AI are the national security implications and the potential for job losses.

Last month, our organization asked 1,000 U.S. voters to rank their top benefits and concerns related to AI. The top concerns include killer computers, transparency, bias, job loss and national security. The results of our poll, which was conducted with YouGov, show there is a gap between the concerns of the public and the concerns of those in



power. Over one-third of people rank job loss as their No. 1 worry when it comes to AI. This matches findings from a poll the CGO conducted earlier this summer that found four out of five Americans worried that AI will displace jobs "generally." (Notably, only two out of five Americans were worried AI would displace their own job.) Following that, about a quarter rank national security as the most important aspect of AI. At the

bottom of the rankings are bias and killer computers at around 10% each.

In other words, people aren't as worried about the esoteric harms of killer robots and bias and are more worried about concrete harms like job loss and losing the AI race to China.

It is a commonly held notion that the government has done little on AI but the Biden administration has been quite active, especially when it comes to

countering bias. To name just a couple of recent efforts, they have taken "New Steps to Advance Responsible Artificial Intelligence Research, Development, and Deployment," have tackled "Racial and Ethnic Bias in Home Valuations," and have laid out a "Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights." The common theme among all the initiatives in the executive is the goal of reducing algorithmic bias. Of course, the government does have a role to play in policing bad actors in housing, finance and education. But there are already rules on the books that would prevent biased hiring, for instance, and crafting new rules for AI is much easier said than done because there is no agreement on the definition of AI. Poorly crafted rules meant to regulate AI could easily affect all software. Similar definitional issues are at play when analyzing bias and different experts come to different conclusions. What isn't often admitted in these high-level discussions is that the same data can lead to radically different conclusions depending on who analyzes it.



Europe's 'mini-Trump' survived his fall. Now they're hoping for his comeback

By Paul Taylor

When Donald Trump lost the White House in 2020, Europe's strongmen, populists and climate change deniers lost a powerful ally and a protector. Yet most of Europe's mini-Trump's have survived his fall, his denial of defeat and the storming of Congress by his supporters, and are now hoping that a comeback for the Republican frontrunner in next year's US presidential election will put fresh wind in their own sails.

In his four years in office, Trump described the European Union as a "foe" and Nato as "obsolete". He had earlier openly applauded the UK's vote for Brexit and encouraged other countries to follow suit. He pulled the United States out of global agreements to fight climate change, tore up arms control treaties, slapped tariffs on his allies and picked fights with Germany over trade and defence spending. And he rolled out the red carpet for the populist leaders of Poland and Hungary just as they were defying EU censure over moves to snuff out judicial independence, civil rights and media pluralism.

No wonder senior officials in mainstream EU governments are quaking at the prospect that Trump may win in 2024 despite facing several impending trials over his efforts to overturn the results of the election he lost to Joe Biden. With Trump holding a commanding early lead in the race for the Republican nomination, European fears are exacerbated by his refusal to back Ukraine against Russian aggression and his vow to slap tariffs on EU imports.

Continental European practitioners of Trump's attack-dog politics such as the Hungarian prime minister, Viktor

Orbán, and the de facto Polish leader, Jarosław Kaczyński, are still in power and continuing to fight Brussels over the rule of law, migration and LGBTQ+ rights.

Indeed, they may gain a new illiberal ally if Slovakia's former prime minister Robert Fico, who has lifted tactics straight out of the Trump playbook,



achieves a comeback in the general election on 30 September. Fico claims the incumbent liberal government is trying to steal the election because some of his associates, including a former police chief, have been arrested in corruption investigations.

Fico, whose Smer party is a member of the European Socialists and Democrats group, blames the west for Russia's war on Ukraine and says he'll stop all aid to Kyiv if he wins. Slovakian analysts fear he will dismantle the country's judicial independence and purge corruption fighters, as Orbán and Kaczyński have done, and that he will join them in fighting the EU's migration pact, which requires member states to either take a share of asylum seekers or contribute financially to their

reception in other countries.

After Bratislava, the big test for Europe's Trumpists will be in Warsaw, where Kaczyński's conservative nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) party is bidding for an unprecedented third term on 15 October by relentlessly demonising liberal centre-right opposition leader Donald Tusk and

bashing Russia, Germany, Brussels and now even Ukraine, accused of ruining Polish farmers with grain imports.

Hungary's Orbán, who last year hosted the US far-right Conservative Political Action Conference (Cpac) in Budapest and is a buddy of former Fox TV host Tucker Carlson, used his grip on the media, social media and state apparatus to see off a challenge by a united opposition last year. He tarred his challengers as stooges of an EU depicted as trying to thrust gay and transgender propaganda on Hungarian schoolchildren.

PiS is trying to pull a similar trick in Poland by staging a referendum on the same day as the election with four slanted questions including: "Do you

support the admission of thousands of illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa, in accordance with the forced relocation mechanism imposed by the European bureaucracy?"

Former Slovenian prime minister Janez Janša, who jumped the gun and tweeted congratulations on Trump's "victory" in 2020 while votes were still being counted, was beaten by liberal opponents in 2022. But the veteran populist still leads the largest opposition party and may yet rise again from the political graveyard.

Trump's tactics of attacking and bypassing the mainstream media while favouring rightist news outlets that spread "alternative facts" have caught on in Europe. Kaczyński and Orbán have brought public broadcasters under their thumb. The sprouting of Fox News-style hard-right broadcasters in some countries, such as CNews in France, has given politicians of the radical right a platform to propound their narratives without facing the scrutiny of independent journalists. Elsewhere, populists are going direct to their followers on social media.

However, efforts by Steve Bannon, a former Trump strategist, to forge a unified European hard-right front to wield influence in the European parliament and undermine the EU from within have had little success. Bannon's attempt to found an academy for young rightist "gladiators" in an Italian monastery ended in legal eviction. Europe's mini-Trump's remain divided among themselves, notably over whether and how strongly to support Ukraine.

Some pre-war Putin sympathisers, such as Marine Le Pen's French National Rally and Italian deputy premier Matteo Salvini's League, sit in the hard-right Identity and Democracy (ID) group in the EU legislature. Others, who have backed Ukraine, sit in the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) group, including Kaczyński's PiS and Italian prime minister Giorgia Meloni's Brothers of Italy. Yet others, such as Orbán's pro-Russian Fidesz party, are not attached to any political family. This has so far marginalised their influence in European affairs.

The manifest damage of Brexit to the UK's economy has led Europe's radical right to mostly dump manifesto pledges to leave the EU or the euro, and to pledge instead to work for a "Europe of nation states" in which national law would take primacy over EU rules, unravelling the European legal order. Whether a Trump return to the White House would galvanise his European friends and admirers into building a united Eurosceptic movement is far from certain. But it would create a host of political, diplomatic and potentially military headaches for which Europe's governments are ill-prepared.