

Only Mukesh

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How India and Australia have elevated their ties

Four Ds—democracy, defence, diaspora, and dosti—have led PM Modi and PM Morrison to deepen the partnership

(News Agencies) The Comprehensive Strategic Partnership agreed by India and Australia at Thursday's Virtual Leaders' Summit has been in the making for a decade. Increased cooperation between our countries and the trust and confidence between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Scott Morrison made it possible to take our partnership to the next level. We have built a durable, future-looking relationship. India and Australia are natural partners, well positioned to build a more secure and prosperous future for our peoples, the Indo-Pacific and the wider world.

The Comprehensive Strategic Partnership reflects a historic high point in our relationship. The elements include defence and maritime security, cyber-security and technology, science and research and critical supply chains. The outcomes from the Virtual Leaders' Summit reflect our shared goals for a more open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific and a world of stronger institutions equipped to support the interests of all states, economic growth and human development. This is all the more important as we face the challenge of coronavirus disease (Covid-19). It is remarkable that our leaders have set such an ambitious agenda during these challenging times.

It reflects the irreversible forces bringing India and Australia together, what I call the 4 'D's. First, democracy—reflecting our shared democratic values. The world, and the region, is better served by democracies working together to build a more inclusive, open and pro-development international system. Second, defence—a shared commitment to



a more peaceful and secure all states, international law Indo-Pacific underpinned by and a region which eschews the rights to sovereignty for "might is right".

Protests are erupting over police brutality



(News Agencies) As protests over police brutality erupt across the United States, some officers are responding to demonstrations with violence. In recent days, we've seen footage of police firing tear gas and rubber bullets, and several videos showing officers pushing protesters to the ground. Accusations of heavy-handed police responses have come under withering criticism, with some officers suspended or facing criminal charges. In some cases, police leaders say violence in the streets leaves them with no other choice. But

protesters and police critics argue that some officers are escalating tensions with their actions.

"They're making the argument for the demonstrators, that American policing remains unreformed and out of control," says Alex Vitale, a professor of sociology at Brooklyn College who's called for police funding to be cut.

It's a fast-moving situation, with different scenes unfolding in different cities, and even -- at times -- on different blocks. Some officers have garnered praise for showing solidarity

with protesters by kneeling beside them, or for defusing tensions by talking face-to-face with demonstrators. That's what people in the community want. They really want to be joined with their police department. They want to feel a sense of trust," says Cedric Alexander, a CNN law enforcement analyst and former president of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.

But Vitale says some police departments have been sending a much more aggressive message.

Trump declares victory as US unemployment drops to 13.3%

(News Agencies) President Donald Trump took a victory lap on news of a 13.3% US unemployment rate Friday, beginning what he had billed as Rose Garden news conference -- though he didn't take questions -- with tangent-filled remarks on the economy and taking credit for lower unemployment numbers. Trump called the jobs report "an affirmation of all the work we've been doing" over the course of his administration and said earlier predictions were "the greatest miscalculation in the history of business shows." He compared the economy to a "body" that was "strong" but needed an operation, and said it is now "a rocketship."

While the numbers still reflect enormous levels of American unemployment, the jobless rate improved from the dramatic 14.7% in April, which was the worst rate since monthly record keeping began in 1948. The US economy added 2.5 million

jobs in May, after 20.7 million positions vanished in April.

The good news in the jobs report comes as the nation faces social unrest during economic and health crises. In one sign of systemic inequality, black unemployment, at 16.8%, remains significantly higher than white unemployment, at 12.4%. While many Americans have looked inward at injustice in the country, Trump has spent part of his morning retweeting

more than 100 times from more than 25 Republican senators. Those retweets come one day after he vowed to campaign for literally any Republican candidate -- "good or bad" -- "with a pulse" against Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski, who has been critical of him. Also on Thursday, Trump tweeted a letter from his lawyer that referred to the protesters forcibly dispersed near the White House ahead of a photo opportunity as



"terrorists." The White House protests, with a new layer of is fortified ahead of a second fencing the Secret Service says a weekend of expected will be up through June 10.

Over 1,000 coronavirus deaths reported in the past 24 hours

(News Agencies) In a little over a week, Americans have gone from taking their first hesitant steps outside again to marching in tightly packed crowds in cities all over the country. Any uncertainty about venturing out during the coronavirus pandemic has been seemingly put aside by many to protest police brutality after watching video of George Floyd fatally pinned under an officer's knee in Minneapolis. Protesters, often without masks, have shouted Floyd's name. And during arrests, police have loaded them into

vehicles and holding cells, making it difficult to social distance.

Despite the sudden shift, coronavirus is still spreading. Since Sunday, 4,430 deaths in the US have been reported. Of those, 1,036 deaths were between Thursday morning and the same time Friday.

And by early Friday, the virus had killed more than 108,000 people in the United States and infected over 1.8 million, according to Johns Hopkins University. Officials fear those numbers will rise following the protests, and are urging those taking part to get tested. "Based

on the way the disease spreads, there is every reason to expect that we will see new clusters and potentially new outbreaks moving forward," US Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams warned this week. The effects of the protests on infection rates and hospitalizations will emerge in three to four weeks, CNN's chief medical correspondent, Dr. Sanjay Gupta, said. He noted factors, such as protests taking place outdoors, could mean a lower risk for transmission of the virus. New discoveries about the coronavirus

are still emerging. Scientists discovered that it's not mutating in a way they'd feared early on. But that doesn't mean it's any less dangerous, experts said this week.

So far, evidence does not show it's getting worse or more transmittable. But complacency by people and governments could increase its spread, said Maria Van Kerkhove, a disease epidemiologist at the World Health Organization. "Scientists are looking to see, are there changes in the virus? And as it is a coronavirus ... there are normal

changes in this virus that one would expect over time," she said. "None of these changes so far indicate that the virus itself is changing in terms of its ability to transmit or to cause more severe disease."

But the presence of the virus over time may lead some people to lower their guards, she said.

"They may become lax in the measures needed to control the spread of the virus, such as social distancing," she said. "It's very difficult to keep up all of these measures and we must remain strong and vigilant."

Stand-off along LAC is for India, China to resolve: Australia envoy

In an online media briefing ahead of the June 4 virtual summit between Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, Australian high commissioner Barry O'Farrell said his country's foreign policy is set by its national interests, including a desire for stability in the South China Sea.



(News Agencies) his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi, Australian high commissioner Barry O'Farrell said his country's foreign policy is set by its national interests, including a desire for stability in the South China Sea. O'Farrell reiterated Australia's support for India's call for the reform of multilateral bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) so that

they are better placed to deal with future challenges and crises. Asked specifically about the India-China standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and whether such issues would figure in the upcoming summit, the envoy replied: "In relation to the border issue, that's a matter for China and India to resolve and not a matter for

Australia to interfere with." In an apparent reference to the US president's attempts to mediate in the matter, which have already been rebuffed by India, O'Farrell added: "That's reflected by what we've seen over the past week, when others have sought to suggest that they could step in and provide some advice. Clearly it's going to be a matter that India and China will resolve." Australia, he said, has a "substantial interest in stability and adherence to international law" in the South China Sea, where it is "concerned about the militarisation of disputed features" and has urged all parties to take meaningful steps to ease tensions. While Australian vessels

and aircraft will continue to exercise their rights to freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, all claims in that region should be resolved according to international law, and the "most sensible place" to resolve such matters is the UN, he said. The virtual summit, organised after Morrison called off a visit to India in January because of bushfires in Australia and also due to the impact on the Covid-19 crisis, is expected to see the signing of several agreements, including the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) for reciprocal access to military logistics facilities. O'Farrell said the summit is also expected to advance an

ambitious agenda that will include working together to improve regional and multilateral institutions, including on Covid-19 and public health, boosting science and tech cooperation, stronger collaboration on cyber-security and critical technology, maritime issues in the Indo-Pacific, critical mineral supply chains, education, and water resource management. "It's as crucial as ever for like-minded democracies and important partners like Australia and India, at this time, work together to shape the type of region and type of world in which we want to live presently but importantly, post-Covid," he said.

After Amphan, Nisarga sounds a warning bell

The climate crisis is here. Cities will have to prepare better for disasters



(News Agencies) The developing severe tropical cyclonic storm in the Arabian Sea — Cyclone Nisarga — is expected to make landfall in Raigad district, south of Mumbai, by Wednesday afternoon, India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. The IMD has sounded a red alert for June 3 and 4 in Mumbai and Thane, Palghar, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts. Like Amphan, which battered West Bengal and Odisha last month, Nisarga is expected to submerge low-lying areas, uproot trees, destroy uncemented houses and critical infrastructure, and worse, kill people and animals. The aftermath of the storm will be challenging too. Nisarga comes at a time when Maharashtra is already in the grip of the coronavirus pandemic, and there is severe strain on the health care system and personnel. Both Amphan and Nisarga are trailers of what the future is going to look like for India's eastern and western coastlines, thanks to the climate crisis. The climate crisis is making these cyclones stronger and more destructive by increasing the sea surface temperature and rainfall during the storm; raising sea levels, which increases the distance that a storm surge can reach; and allowing storms to gain strength quickly.

Enforcement Directorate files chargesheet against P Chidambaram, son Karti in INX Media case

Enforcement Directorate's INX Media case was one of the cases in which Chidambaram was arrested last year. He was released on bail after spending 106 days in jail.

(News Agencies) The Enforcement Directorate has filed charges against former finance minister P Chidambaram and son Karti in the INX Media case, people familiar with the development said. The charge-sheet was filed in special judge Ajay Kumar's court on Tuesday. The ED, a federal agency that investigates financial crimes and money laundering, has accused the 74-year-old veteran Congress politician and Karti of being beneficial owners of shell firms incorporated in India and abroad that received bribes. There has been no statement from the ED detailing provisions of the money laundering law that the two Congress leaders that have been invoked in the charge-sheet. But the Enforcement Directorate has alleged in the past that nearly Rs 3 crore had been paid to Karti Chidambaram's companies by INX Media co-founder, Peter Mukerjee. This money was allegedly paid at the behest of the senior Congress politician who was the finance minister when approvals to receive foreign investments were granted to INX Media. P Chidambaram was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in October last year when he was in Tihar jail. The arrest came



around the same time that his bail application in a related case filed by the CBI was coming up for hearing. The Rajya Sabha MP

was eventually released in December 2019 after spending nearly 105 days in Tihar jail. The former Union minister and his

son have repeatedly denied the allegations. Asked about the charge-sheet filed by the Enforcement Directorate, Karti Chidambaram declined to say anything. "I will not comment until something is served to me formally," he said. The ED and CBI cases are linked to grant of Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) clearance to INX Media to receive overseas funds to the tune of Rs 307 crore in 2007, when the Congress politician was finance minister in the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government.

Sizeable number of Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh, India has done what it needs to: Rajnath Singh

(News Agencies) A "sizeable number" of Chinese troops have moved into eastern Ladakh and India too has taken all necessary steps to deal with the situation, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Tuesday, referring to the nearly month-long high-altitude standoff between the two armies. Singh said a meeting between senior Indian and Chinese military leaders has been scheduled for June 6 even as he asserted that India is not going to back off from its

position. Asked about the current situation in sensitive areas in eastern Ladakh, he said Chinese have come up to what they claim is their territory while Indians believed it is theirs. "There has been a disagreement over it. A sizeable number of Chinese people have come there. India has done what it needs to do. (Usko lekar ek matbhed hua hain. Aur acchi khasi sankhya mein Cheen ke log bhi aa gaye hain. Lekin Bharat ko bhi apni taraf se jo kuch bhi karna

chahiye, Bharat ne bhi kiya hain)," Singh told CNN-News 18. Singh's comments were seen as first official confirmation of presence of significant number of Chinese troops in the disputed areas which India maintains are on its side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de-facto border between the two countries. According to reports, significant numbers of Chinese troops have been camping in the Indian side of the LAC in Galwan Valley and Pangong Tso.

In 40-minute phone call, Trump invites PM Modi to G7 meet, discusses China standoff

PM Modi commended President Trump for his creative and far-sighted approach, acknowledging the fact that such an expanded forum would be in keeping with the emerging realities of the post-Covid world.



(News Agencies) After Donald Trump Tuesday spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to declare that he wanted to expand the G7 to include other important countries, grouping's next meeting

to be held in the United States of America. As the 40-minute conversation went on, President Trump and PM Modi also discussed other issues such as the India-China border standoff and the reforms of the World Health Organisation, a statement by the Prime Minister's Office said. The two leaders are learnt to have shared their perceptions about the standoff that was triggered

last month after China's People's Liberation Army activated the Line of Actual Control at Naku La area in north Sikkim and then at three points in Galwan and one point at Pangong Tso in Ladakh sector. The convergence in the views of the two leaders was also reflected in their view on the reforms at the World Health Organisation. Both leaders have been

votaries of reforms in the WHO but have chosen to take a vastly different approach. US President Donald Trump has threatened to exit the global health body to push the WHO to carry out the reforms. PM Modi, in contrast, has decided to push hard on reforms while staying as part of the WHO. PM Modi also expressed concern regarding the ongoing civil disturbances

in the US, conveyed his best wishes for an early resolution of the situation, a PMO statement said. "The phone conversation underscores that even in such an unsettled world and the changing dynamics in the post-Covid-19 pandemic, the relationship between India and the United States remains strong," a top government functionary told Hindustan Times.

Blowout in Assam gas well may take a few weeks before it's under control

Gas and condensate is flowing uncontrollably from an Oil India Limited (OIL) natural gas well in Assam's Tinsukia district since a blowout a week ago, and officials believe it could take a few more weeks to bring the situation under control.



(Insider Bureau) Gas and condensate is flowing uncontrollably from an Oil India Limited (OIL) natural gas well in Assam's Tinsukia district since a blowout a week ago, and officials believe it could take a few more weeks to bring the situation under control. The blowout, or uncontrolled release of natural gas or oil from a well when pressure control systems fail, has already led to the evacuation of 650 families as a safety measure. Groundwork is being done to bring the blowout at Baghjan well under control, but it could take a few more weeks to get logistics and experts in place to stop the uncontrolled flow of gas and condensate, the low-density mixture of hydrocarbon liquids generally found with natural gas. In 2005, it took nearly 90 days and the help of foreign experts to control a blaze at an abandoned oil well of OIL at Dikom in Dibrugarh district of Assam.

being mobilised and fit-for-purpose equipment is being fabricated at OIL workshop," OIL said in a statement on Tuesday. Help from several foreign firms is being sought to contain the blowout. OIL said on Tuesday experts from Singapore-based Alert Disaster Control could reach the site in the next few days. A retired senior OIL executive, who declined to be named, said: "The process to control a blowout requires lot of heavy equipment, which will have to be brought from other parts of the country, as well as services of global experts in dealing with such situations. In 2005, it took more than a month to bring things under control.

The blowout at Baghjan occurred at 10.30 am on May 27, while work was underway to produce gas from a new oil and gas reservoir at a depth of 3,729 metres. "The operation to contain the blowout requires a large amount of water and lot of heavy machinery. Therefore, it will take several days to put everything in place before the actual effort to control the well can start," OIL spokesperson Tridiv Hazarika said. A water reservoir is being dug near the well to place two 2,500-gallon pumps and a pipeline is being laid from a nearby river to ensure continuous supply of water. OIL and Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) personnel are pumping water to the well to minimise the chances of a fire. "It has been assessed that approach to the vicinity of the well would not be safe due to gas gushing at high pressure. Hence, necessary equipment is

France says will deliver Rafale fighter jets to IAF on time despite Covid-19

The IAF is likely to get the delivery of the first batch of four Rafale jets from France by July-end. The four fighters were supposed to fly to their home base in India in May 2020, but the plan was delayed due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

(Insider Bureau) France has said that it will deliver Rafale fighter jets to the Indian Air Force on time despite the challenges posed by the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic. This was communicated to defence minister Rajnath Singh by his French counterpart Florence Parly during a phone call on Tuesday. "France reaffirmed its commitment to ensure timely delivery of Rafale aircraft despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic," the defence ministry said in a statement after the two ministers spoke. The IAF is likely to get the delivery of the first batch of four Rafale jets from France by July-end. The four fighters were supposed to fly to their home base in India in May 2020,



but the plan was delayed due to the Covid-19 outbreak. Confinement measures announced by France to battle the outbreak had temporarily halted production at aircraft manufacturer Dassault Aviation's Merignac facility. India ordered 36 Rafale jets from France in a deal worth Rs 59,000 crore in September 2016 as an emergency purchase to arrest the worrying slide in the air force's combat

capabilities. According to the delivery schedule, the first 18 jets (including the four in the first batch) are supposed to be delivered to the IAF by February 2021, with the rest expected by April-May 2022. France handed over to India its first Rafale fighter during a ceremony attended by Singh and Parly in Merignac on October 8, 2019, which coincided with the IAF's 87th founding day and the Hindu festival of Dussehra.

Drive from Delhi to Katra in just 6.5 hours by 2023 on the express corridor: Dr Jitendra Singh

(Insider Bureau) Union minister Dr Jitendra Singh on Tuesday said that the Katra-Delhi express road corridor will be ready for operation by 2023, thereby reducing the road-travel time between Katra and Delhi to around six and half hours and six hours between Jammu and Delhi. After a meeting with Union minister for road transport and highways Nitin Gadkari, Dr Jitendra Singh said the 575 kms long express road corridor will cost over Rs. 35,000 crore and will connect Katra to Delhi via Amritsar. It will also touch Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Ludhiana in

Punjab alongwith Kathua and Jammu in J&K. Dr Jitendra Singh, who is a Lok Sabha MP from Udhampur in Jammu division, has been pursuing this project since 2015 and about three and half years ago told the people in Katra that the proposal for the corridor has been accepted by Gadkari but it would take time to materialise because of procedural issues like survey, land acquisition, forest clearance etc. According to Dr Jitendra Singh, the survey has been completed and the process of acquisition of land is

nearly complete in Haryana and will now be taken up in Punjab followed by the Jammu and Kashmir segment of the corridor. The formal approval of the proposal has been obtained from Punjab. Jammu and Kashmir had approved it earlier. Singh said after the completion of the corridor, people would prefer to travel between Jammu and Delhi by road instead of train or by air. The corridor has been planned to connect the two holy cities of Katra and Amritsar along with some other important religious shrines between the two destinations.

198 migrant workers killed in road accidents during lockdown: Report

There were at least 1,461 accidents over the course of the nationwide lockdown - from March 25 to May 31 - in which at least 750 people were killed, including 198 migrant workers. There were 1,390 who got injured, according to the data.

(Insider Bureau) One hundred and ninety eight migrant workers lost their lives in road accidents during the lockdown period, according to data compiled by the SaveLIFE Foundation, a road safety NGO. There were at least 1,461 accidents over the course of the nationwide lockdown - from March 25 to May 31 - in which at least 750 people were killed, including 198 migrant workers. There were 1,390 who got injured, according to the data. Migrant workers, killed during their efforts to go back home, comprise 26.4% of the overall deaths during the lockdown whereas essential workers comprise 5.3% of the total deaths. The overall deaths involving



other other road users of the reported deaths, stands at 68.3 percent. The report contributes fatigue among bus and truck drivers, hired to transport migrants, combined with over speeding and poor engineering of roads as the top reason for deaths. Out

of the reported deaths, Uttar Pradesh accounted for over 30% (245) of the total deaths followed by Telangana (56), Madhya Pradesh (56), Bihar (43), Punjab (38) and Maharashtra (36). The top five states that reported road crash deaths

of migrant workers are Uttar Pradesh (94), Madhya Pradesh (38), Bihar (16), Telangana (11) and Maharashtra (9). To be clear, the report says that the data has been compiled using media-tracking and multi-source verification.

Further analysis reveals that around 27% of the victims were migrant workers whereas 5% were essential workers like police, doctors, and others. About 68% of the overall deaths involved pedestrians, two-wheelers and three-wheelers – categorised as Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs). "Since the lockdown began, nearly 200 migrant workers have lost their lives while walking, cycling back home, traveling in HMVs and LMV commercial vehicles, and in mass fatality crashes involving state-organised buses. One of the recurring reasons for mass casualties in most of the incidents was speeding and driver fatigue due to continuous driving on tenuous routes," the report

said. Out of the four phases of lockdown, phase four was the deadliest overall in terms of road deaths with 322 deaths (43%) and phase three was the deadliest in particular for migrant workers. Phase three reported 60% of all migrant deaths in road crashes during lockdown followed by phase four with 19% of total migrant deaths reported in the media. "With Covid-19 still very much around, we simply can't afford to burden our already overburdened healthcare system with road crash related trauma. The data collated by us suggests that there has been a surge in road crashes with lifting of the restrictions across the states in Phase 3 and Phase 4.

Moody's rated Modi's handling of economy a step above 'junk': Rahul Gandhi
Gandhi said that Moody's has termed "a step above junk" the handling of the economy by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



(News Agencies) Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday expressed concern over the downgrading of India's sovereign credit rating by Moody's Investors Service for the first time in more than two decades. Gandhi said that Moody's has termed "a step above junk" the handling of the economy by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Moody's has rated Modi's handling of India's economy a step above JUNK. Lack of support to the poor and the MSME sector means the worst is yet to come," he tweeted.

Downgrading India's rating by a notch to 'Baa3' from 'Baa2' assigned in November 2018, Moody's on Monday estimated India's GDP would shrink by 4% -- the first full fiscal contraction in more than four decades. Addressing a virtual news conference, Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jakhar questioned the Central government's intention of helping farmers, saying Modi's aim of doubling their income by 2022 will remain a "pipe dream" if they don't get the promised minimum support price (MSP) for their produce.

Rajasthan explores feasibility of creating manufacturing hubs along highways

As a pilot, the state has started some projects, such as the upcoming oil refinery in Barmer, and a petroleum chemicals and petrochemicals investment region (PCPIR) being developed along the Jodhpur-Barmer highway.

(News Agencies) The Rajasthan government is exploring the possibility of establishing manufacturing hubs along highways in the state to bring in investment and create jobs, a senior official of the industry department has said.

Under the proposal, the state is looking at designating areas along highways as manufacturing hubs. These projects would be on the lines of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor and Bharatmala, which focus on developing economic corridors, the official said on condition of anonymity.

The state government has asked the task force of the industry department to study the possibility of declaring land on both the sides of state and national highways as manufacturing zones and easing the process of conversion of land, the official said.

Referring to the benefits of such hubs, the official said: "Along the highways, there are generally no residential areas. The transportation cost of raw materials will be



low, and warehouses will be close as they usually are located along highways." As a pilot, the state has started some projects, such as the upcoming oil refinery in Barmer, and a petroleum chemicals and petrochemicals investment region (PCPIR) being developed along the Jodhpur-Barmer highway. A detailed project report has also been prepared.

The official said two locations had been identified by the Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation

(RIICO) for PCPIR—Borawas Kalawa (where land has been acquired to develop an industrial area) and Ram Nagar Thob (where land has been identified).

"Two major express highways – Delhi-Vadodara and Jamnagar Amritsar – cross Rajasthan. Now, industrial development is mostly near highways and railways. The state is looking for land banks close to highways as it is all about connectivity," the official said.

Besides PCPIR, the state has developed and sold clusters for sports goods and

toys at Khushkeda in Bhiwadi, which will benefit domestic business. Similarly, gas grids are being established in Rajasthan so that raw materials going from the state to Gujarat for making ceramic goods, in the absence of a gas grid, will be utilised here. The state has identified two locations for gas grids and six firms have shown interest. CII Rajasthan chairman Vishal Baid said the National Highways Authority of India accomplished the figure for the highest ever highway construction of 3,979 km in fiscal 2020.

Migrant workers: The emergence of invisible India

Prepare a migrant database, give them welfare and voting rights wherever they are, enhance social security



We are living in challenging times brought on by the coronavirus diseases (Covid-19). When India imposed its lockdown, everyone extended full support to the move in the belief that we need to stand as one in the fight against the virus.

Now that India is opening up, it is clear that the strategy to combat the virus did not consider all Indians as one. A country of over 1.3 billion people was locked down, at four hours' notice, ignoring the needs of the poorest and migrant workers. The government's response came with an inherent class bias built into it. If you were an Indian abroad, the national carrier was pressed into service to fly you back, even from countries such as China, where the virus had already spread. I support this as an action any responsible country must take for its citizens stranded abroad. Yet, migrant workers, stranded away from their homes and families, found themselves out of jobs with no money or food security. I am from Pandrauna in Kushinagar district in eastern Uttar Pradesh. Thousands of men leave this district every year to find work in the cities often leaving their families behind. Within days of the lockdown, Congress workers reported that many migrants from my district were stranded in different states. I set up a helpline with my team. As soon as we made the numbers public, we were deluged with calls. They all had one demand in common: Basic rations to get by. All their money had been exhausted with the overnight shutdown of factories. One of the saddest calls was from a group of young boys stuck in central UP. Left with no wages, they had pooled together and sold three mobile phones to buy food. Selling a mobile phone, the only connection with their families, has become an act of ultimate desperation to survive in these times.

The Congress Working

Committee and president as well as Rahul Gandhi warned the government that this was becoming a humanitarian crisis of unimaginable proportions. This was dismissed as carping by the Opposition. The irony is, we have treated migrant workers as outsiders, though they have been crucial to nation-building. Their needs were invisible to those who made grand announcements, until they came out to walk on the very streets and highways they had built, on the way back to their homes. During election campaigns, I have often gone to areas where there

is a dominance of people from UP. They have all told me the same thing — they are considered outsiders who are good enough to build metros and skyscrapers, but not considered deserving even of habitable accommodations. They are outside the safety net of most state government schemes because they don't have domicile documents.

There are three constructive action points we need to consider urgently. One, we need a database of people working and living outside their states. For too long, the fact that they are working in the informal sector as contract labour has made them almost non-existent. This database would make it easier to accurately assess how many need to be given food or shelter or transported during a crisis such as this.

Two, the government has now taken up the proposal put forward by the former United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government of one-nation, one-ration card. This must be taken a step further.

Workers with an identity document from another state should be allowed to access all government schemes and facilities of the central government or of the state where they are currently living. Also, workers from other states must be allowed to vote where they are living. This will give them political value and access to the local elected representative. Both Aadhaar and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme are UPA government schemes. They must now be strengthened. Three, instituting labour reforms does not mean making it easier to exploit workers. We must now formulate a universal social security scheme for workers using an authentic database. In reply to a recent public interest litigation in Gujarat, the state said only 7,512 of an estimated 2.25 million migrant workers were registered. The government has no accurate estimates of the numbers of migrant workers or their locations which explains the inadequate response to their

plight today.

The only silver lining in a dark cloud is that India's urban residents seem to have finally woken up to the circumstances in which many of their fellow citizens are living. They have begun to realise how much these voiceless, faceless people contribute to their lives.

The most humbling conversation I have had during these last two months was with the father of a 19-year-old boy, Arjun Chauhan, who came from my district. He was killed in a road accident in Auraiya, UP, on his way home in the back of a crowded truck. His father told me his son had left his village for the first time in his young life, just a few months ago, to earn a decent living for himself and his family. Will his death be seen as a fall-out of the pandemic, the apathy of the State, or just another statistic to be forgotten? Most importantly, will it be a wake up call to India's policy makers?

RPN Singh is a former Union minister and Congress leader

Recovery must take into account the climate crisis

Create mass awareness, nudge governments, incentivise businesses, and strengthen international institutions

By Shankar Venkateswaran

As the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) continues to engulf the world, the other big agenda of our time — the climate crisis — has begun to re-emerge from the shadows.

The big question, of course, is whether the pandemic will accelerate our quest for a zero-carbon-emission world or will it set us back. The lessons of the virus will not automatically rub-off on the climate crisis agenda unless a set of deliberate, strategic actions are taken. Covid-19 has certainly opened everyone's eyes to possibilities that can positively impact the climate agenda. Clean, breathable air and the reality of a work-from-home culture are the obvious ones. For manufacturers, shorter supply chains with its lower

Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions will become a business continuity imperative. The similarities between Covid-19 and the climate crisis — both in terms of their disruptive impacts on human lives and the economy and their response that emphasises science and the need to build resilience — can also benefit the climate agenda. There are other reasons for optimism. A Standard & Poor's global report says that during the pandemic, companies such as Microsoft, Royal Dutch

Shell, Morgan Stanley, Bank of Montreal and Citibank have made climate-related pledges. A BBC report quoted Frans Timmermans, the chief of the European Commission's (EU's) Green Deal (which

polluting industries, emissions rebounded to 5.9% in 2010. The impact of the indefinite postponement of COP-26, where countries were expected to announce enhancement of their Paris commitments, is still awaited.

Big emitters such as China, the US and Brazil have indicated a relaxation on environmental compliances and enforcement. Even as the EU reiterates its commitment to the Green Deal, a few member-countries have publicly sought moratoriums. The negative growth economies of the developed countries will mean less finance available to developing countries to meet their Nationally Determined Contributions, a condition that countries such as India have placed in order to fulfil its own commitments. And

historically low oil prices, combined with reported announcements from major oil producers to increase production, will work against the interests of a low-carbon recovery. There is, therefore, reason to believe that a post-Covid low-carbon recovery is neither inevitable nor automatic. Therefore, a set of five actions can and must be taken to enable this to happen. One, nudge governments on to a low-carbon recovery path.

commits the EU to net-zero emissions by 2050), as saying that every euro spent on economic recovery measures after the Covid-19 crisis will be linked to the green transitions.

However, history and economics provide a counter-narrative. For instance, after the 2008 financial crisis, global carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel combustion and cement production fell 1.4% in 2009, but with economic stimulus resources disproportionately allocated to



(Contd on page 28)

Covid-19: Where a new India is born

Invest in health care, address inequity, stop communal politics, and let compassion prevail

Since a prolonged lockdown due to the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) offers an opportunity for the creative juices to flow, I may take a bit of poetic licence this week to adapt a poem of Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore for a "new" India in the coronavirus times.

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high. Where a pandemic isn't an alibi for untrammelled State power, but instead redefines the State-citizenship engagement by putting citizens first. Where rules are enforced not by fear or diktat, but by information and knowledge, where prime ministers and chief ministers work together as a collective and not as adversaries, where autocratic tendencies are replaced by democratic consensus, where domain expertise is valued more than routine cheerleaders.

Where a national lockdown is planned through greater consultation and not implemented at four hours notice. Where when a few members of Parliament wear masks and call for the House to be adjourned, the presiding officer doesn't ask them to remove the masks. Where toppling an Opposition state government doesn't get precedence over a health emergency.

Where the health care infrastructure is built over decades and doesn't become a jugaad (makeshift) solution to combat an immediate crisis. Where investments in public health take precedence over investing in personal advertisement. Where government hospitals are rebuilt, instead of restoring Parliament buildings. Where quality health centres are given preference over gargantuan statues and boulevards. Where pitched battles are not fought over places of worship, but over whether a disputed land should be given for a school or a hospital.

Where doctors aren't just acclaimed as "coronavirus warriors" in a pandemic, but are respected at all times. Where respect isn't about lighting diyas, with taali-thaali, processions and air shows, but is really about giving our health workers better working conditions and quality personal protective equipment. Where junior doctors don't have to agitate for higher stipends and seek police protection when they are attacked for doing their job.

Where those who suffer economic and physical dislocation aren't treated as invisibilised migrant labour but given their due as equal citizens with equal rights. Where those who built our homes and cities are not one of them but truly one of us, deserving of social and financial security. Where those non-governmental organisations which raise their voice in solidarity with the poor and homeless are not dismissed by the country's top law officer as "prophets of doom" but are appreciated for being society's conscience-keepers. Where journalists who report on the travails of displaced labour aren't labelled as "cultures", but hailed for showing truth to power.

Where providing basic transport services for labourers to go back to their villages

doesn't become a Centre-versus-state tug-of-war or pit state-versus-state, but instead allows for a melting of inter-state borders. Where a Uttar Pradesh-bound train doesn't end up in Odisha, and a railway track isn't bloodied with the crushed bodies of fatigued fellow-citizens. Where a teenaged girl cycling 1,200 kilometres to take her injured father home isn't celebrated as a potential Olympic medal winner, but seen as a grim reminder of the desperate poverty that breeds grit and endurance. Where social distancing is not an elite privilege, but an option available to all citizens. Where 50 people do not have to share a single toilet and a dozen people sleep in a single room even as single families can live in multi-storeyed skyscraper splendour. Where the stark inequities are reduced by a welfarist State that places a premium on providing low-cost housing for all with basic sanitation facilities. Where the slum of Dharavi is not seen as Asia's largest, but as a reflection of the degradation of urban life that forces millions to live in squalour.

Where members of a specific community aren't ostracised and spurious links drawn between religion and a virus only to further narrow political agendas. Where vegetable vendors aren't boycotted because of their religious identity. Where the media doesn't seek to sensationalise the news in the race for Television Rating Points with provocative hashtags that only spread disaffection and enmity among communities.

Where a pandemic breaks through all caste and class barriers. Where a co-operative society or resident welfare associations do not become private fiefdoms. Where domestic help aren't stigmatised as coronavirus carriers or denied their wages and barred from the forbidding gates of a housing complex. Where the realisation dawns that this was not a virus spawned in the slums but imported by the flying class of the country. Where we remember that the affluent can Netflix and Zoom their way through a lockdown, but the poor still need to work for a daily income.

Where companies who donate generously to the PM Cares Fund don't forget to care for those around them. Where all government relief funds are subject to higher standards of public scrutiny. Where job cuts are the exception, not the rule, and compassion overrides commerce. Where governments provide mega-stimulus packages that ensure above all else direct cash support to the most vulnerable. Where we see reform opportunity in a crisis but don't allow the reformist zeal to descend into cronyism once again. Where reforms are designed to protect the interests of labour and not just of well-networked industry. Where we look to build a "self-reliant" India but not as an attractive slogan but as a living reality. Where our law-makers abandon the foreign accessories — the branded watches, designer glasses, luxury cars — that are such an intrinsic part of their lifestyle.

Rajdeep Sardesai is a senior journalist and author.

Of Course Destruction of Property Is Violence

Breaking things and burning buildings is enjoying a vogue it hasn't had since the late 1960s or early 1970s.

Arson and looting are a perennial feature of urban unrest, but they have been pretty universally condemned for decades now—until the last week or so. Forced to choose between criticizing the George Floyd protests when they get out of hand and defending the indefensible, activists and writers on the left have been tempted into the latter. In so doing, they damage their own credibility and the moral and intellectual climate of the country.

The inventive, but completely absurd contention is that the destruction of property doesn't qualify as violence, and, at the end of the day, isn't such a bad thing, maybe even a salutary thing.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning architect of the New York Times' 1619 Project, Nikole Hannah-Jones, made this distinction in an interview: "Violence is when an agent of the state kneels on a man's neck until all of the life is leached out of his body. Destroying property, which can be replaced, is not violence. To use the same language to describe those two things is not moral."

In a piece titled "An American Uprising," the editor of the New Yorker, David Remnick, favorably quoted a co-founder of Black Lives Matter Global Network, who explained, "We don't have time to finger-wag at protesters about property. That can be rebuilt. Target will reopen."

An article in Current Affairs argued that applying the word "violence" to the destruction of property risks "making

the term conceptually incoherent and—much more important—conflating acts that do very serious physical harm to people with acts that have not physically harmed anyone."

As graffiti on a building in Minneapolis put it, "Merchandise can be replaced. Black lives can not." Now, it's obviously true that what happened to George Floyd is sickening, and that harming a person is much worse than damaging property. But that doesn't mean that both aren't acts of violence, and both aren't wrong.

The idea that, say, burning down a building isn't violence fails to pass the Merriam-Webster test. The dictionary defines violence as "the use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy." And the blasé attitude about the destruction of property doesn't pass the common-sense test.

Property is not an abstraction. It gives people shelter, and a sense of protection and stability. People pour themselves into their property, using their earnings to pay for it, improving it, becoming identified with it. If the property is a business, it often represents years of blood, sweat, tears and dreams.

For someone to come and destroy it in a spasm of rage or gleeful looting, is felt as a profound violation, and understandably so.

In Minneapolis, rioters ransacked the bar of an African American former firefighter named Korboi Balla. Balla had invested his life savings in the place, which he had planned to open any day. "I don't know what we're going to do," he said. **(Contd on page 31)**



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Modi's plan for economic revival is a game-changer

The focus has been on the supply-side. Expect measures, within bounds of fiscal prudence, to boost demand

By Syed Zafar Islam

The first anniversary of the National Democratic Alliance government, popularly referred to as Modi-2, may have been somewhat subdued due to the lockdown as a result of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19). But the achievements of the last 12 months were succinctly encapsulated in Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi's recent letter to the nation. At the outset, he referred to the Rs 20 lakh crore economic package that he dedicated to the nation on May 12 and stressed his desire to make India self-reliant.

There comes a time in a nation's life when momentous decisions are taken in the interest of not just the current generation, but generations to follow.

The year 1991 was a defining moment for independent India, when the then PM, PV Narasimha Rao, opened the country's zealously-guarded doors to the wider world. It was a decision taken out of compulsion. India was impoverished, out of money and vulnerable. Fear and suspicion were deeply embedded in India's psyche. We were suspicious of strong foreign forces recolonising us through giant multinational companies.

A slew of bold decisions and policy announcements in Modi's address to the nation on May 12 will go down in the nation's history as more momentous than those taken in 1991.

Modi's steely political will to make India self-reliant is as courageous as it is visionary. Some of the far-reaching announcements included the push for structural reforms in key areas such as agriculture, defence, coal and public sector enterprises. Linking the benefits to states with their performances was among the highlights of the package. While their positive impact will take time to kick in, there is no doubt that these structural reforms will boost growth.

Some in the country expected an instant fiscal stimulus beyond what the country could afford at the moment, or perhaps a reduction in the Goods and Services Tax and income tax rates. They also wanted to see the government's effort directed exclusively to dealing with the

emergency-like situation that we find ourselves in. They gave examples of the United States (US) and United Kingdom's stimulus packages. Modi's ideas are all-encompassing. The measures he took ensured that the supply side became robust. Immediately after the lockdown, the government announced a big relief package of Rs 1.7 lakh crore for the bottom 20% of the population. This was followed by a series of measures to provide relief to the poor and farmers. They included cash transfers of over Rs 52,000 crore through Jan Dhan accounts and allocation of an additional Rs 40,000 crore under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to create jobs for those living on the margins of society. The micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector, the backbone of our economy which contributes significantly to the Gross

Domestic Product (GDP), is the worst hit by the pandemic. The Modi government has taken targeted measures to boost the MSMEs, including with the support of a sovereign guaranteed loan of Rs 3 lakh crore through equity and subordinated loans. The government deserves appreciation for the path-breaking step of changing the definition of MSMEs. What is also commendable is that despite a huge economic package, the government has not tried to punch above its weight. The Reserve Bank of India has also been proactive in supporting the government's initiatives and has taken many unconventional measures such as the Targeted Long-term Repo Operation to create the right amount of liquidity available in the system for banks, non-banking financial companies and industry. With the economy in motion again, we have the supply side in place. I am certain

some more stimulus measures, within the bounds of fiscal prudence, will be taken to boost demand, which will help the economy accelerate. We have to remind ourselves that the pandemic is still wreaking havoc on the world. But a day will surely come when all this is behind us. That, many believe, will signal the beginning of a new world order built on the collapsed edifice of the international order that emerged in the aftermath of World War 2. Where will India be? This is the most important question on the minds of policymakers. Focusing on the pandemic alone would have been a populist but short-sighted move. Modi has wisely recognised the gravity of the current situation and made bold decisions which will help us maintain our position as a leading global player. The PM's clarion call for self-reliance is a game

changer. Imagine the force, energy, skills and strength a self-reliant nation of 1.3 billion people will bring to bear on the global polity. If the goal of self-reliance is achieved, we will be in a position to perhaps even compete with China in the near future. Modi's call to self-reliance is in our national interest. In a post-pandemic world, many countries will look to strengthen production and supply chains and promote homegrown products. Self-reliance will come only with a mindset change and some amount of sacrifice and patience. A self-reliant India, he argued, would be in a much better position to contribute to the world. But self-reliance does not mean an entire reset of the economy or a throwback to the swadeshi model. It is our own "India First" policy. When we become truly self-reliant, we will be one of the world's leading economic powerhouses.

Leading India to full independence

In the past year, PM Modi has brought back credibility to politics and unveiled radical reforms

By Rajnath Singh

Great changes are witnessed in history on rare occasions. 2014 was such a time for India when it saw momentous changes in its political history. At that time, people wanted to get rid of an incapable and corrupt government. This is what drove them to vote the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), led by Narendra Modi, to power.

People generally don't repose enough trust in an incumbent government to vote it back to power a second time. Modi is one of the few leaders in Indian history to have been voted in successively, and with an even greater mandate, to office. While the 2014 mandate was for change, the 2019 one was a clear indication of the people's acceptance and trust in the changes that were brought by his government. However, when people put such faith in any political leader, the challenge he faces in fulfilling their aspirations and expectations is huge. This requires a substantial degree of political credibility. But in 2019, when the BJP government came to power again, Prime Minister (PM) Modi took several decisions in a courageous and determined manner to fulfil the promises made, something which has remained the ideological foundation of the party.

In doing so over the last one year, Modi has enhanced his credibility and that of the BJP. In fact, the last year can be

considered a milestone from the credibility perspective for politics. Whatever one's political ideology, on this count, the political fraternity should acknowledge Modi's contribution. The abrogation of Article 370, the abolition of triple talaq, amendments in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and paving the way for the construction of a temple at the Ram Janmabhoomi site in Ayodhya makes the year memorable on many counts — social, political and constitutional. Muslims women have long been victims of the practice of talaq-e-biddat, which makes it easy for a husband to divorce his wife by uttering a few words. They do not have to fear this now. In fact, the abolition of this practice has given Muslim women their self-respect back. After the Supreme Court judgment on Ram Janmabhoomi, the degree of peace and amity that was seen across the country, counts, in my view, as a seminal achievement of the Modi government in the last one year. Our political ideology is based on Ram's ideals of Ram Rajya, which enjoins upon everyone to live in peace while practising their own religions.

While Modi tried to reverse the crisis of credibility in politics, the Opposition parties did the opposite when on the issue of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act or CAA, they issued hostile statements. The states ruled by them passed resolutions and sullied the

issue. India is a secular nation, and being a global power, it is our constitutional duty to help those people who suffer from religious persecutions in our neighbourhood. Amending CAA to give citizenship to the persecuted religious minorities, is, I feel, an unprecedented step in the history of secularism. But vested political interests tried to create baseless misconceptions among the Muslim community.

The first year of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)-2 government saw more assistance for farmers, better working conditions for labourers, small shop owners and other micro, medium and small enterprises, and assured pension for the elderly. As defence minister, the first thing that I wanted was to create the office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), which had been pending and could facilitate better coordination among the forces. On August 15, 2019, the PM, in his address to the nation from the Red Fort, announced the creation of the post of CDS. In NDA-1, the government resolved the one-rank one-pension issue. In order to make India self-reliant in security terms, the thrust was on domestic production of defence equipment, the indigenous manufacture of guns and rifles with private sector participation,

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Our leaders have dithered and lied about the riots as the nation goes up in flames

By Tucker Carlson,
Courtesy Fox News

The nation went up in flames this weekend. No one in charge stood up to save America. Our leaders dithered. They cowered. They openly sided with the destroyers. In many cases, they egged them on.

Later, they will deny doing any of this. They are denying it now. But you know the truth because you saw it happen. This is how nations collapse. When no one in authority keeps the order, and when someone in our professional class encourage violence, American citizens are forced to defend themselves. They have no choice. No one else is going to defend them -- they know that now. It's possible that more people will be hurt in coming days -- that would be a tragedy. But in an environment like this, more violence could very well lead to a cascade of new tragedies, to something far bigger and more destructive than anything we have seen so far. So, this isn't over. It might simply be the beginning. We pray it isn't.

It's hard to think clearly about anything that's going on right now. The chaos, the destruction, the relentless lying from above -- it's all too much. Americans are bewildered, and they are afraid. But most of all, they are filled with rage, angrier than they have ever been.

The worst people in our society have taken control. They did nothing to build this country. Now, they are tearing it down. They are rushing us toward mass suicide.

So, how do we respond? We must protect ourselves and our families. Once again, we have no choice, but to do that. But we cannot allow ourselves to become like they are.

We are not animals, we are Americans. In the face of such indecency, we must resolve to be decent. We believe this country has a future. We intend for our

children to live and thrive here. That is what we are defending.

All our leaders do is set us against each other. They stage a never-ending national cockfight for their profit and amusement.

But we're not going to play along. We will love our neighbors relentlessly in spite of all of it, not because they look like us or share our political views. But we love them because they are human beings, and they are Americans. Those are the bonds that tie us together -- the bonds our leaders seek to destroy. We can't let them.

We should start by being unsparingly honest about what is happening right now. Truth is our defense, and it's our country's last hope.

We plan to use this hour to create a record of this moment right now, to show you what's really going on in your country. We feel an obligation to do that before the facts are spun into propaganda by the liars or the images are pulled off the internet forever, as many of them inevitably will be.

We're going to begin with where my family lives and has lived for 35 years, in the northwest quadrant of Washington, D.C. This is called Mac Market. It's on MacArthur Boulevard, which is named after General MacArthur during the war. It's our neighborhood store; it's walking distance from my house.

People meet there every morning for coffee. Kids come after school for candy. It's as close to a community gathering spot as we have.

The market is run by the Kim family. The Kims are immigrants from Korea. They are revered in our neighborhood for their decency and their hard work. When they lost their son several years ago, the neighbors grieved for them.

The Kims are not political. They've never hurt anyone. They

only make things better. But last night, the mob came for their store. At 1 a.m. Monday morning, Mr. Kim was kneeling alone on the sidewalk trying to salvage what he has spent his life building.

Scenes like this played out in hundreds of neighborhoods across this country, maybe yours.

Here are a few. In Columbia, S.C., a man called the police when things began to fall apart. Rioters saw him call. They surrounded that man, and they beat him. Onlookers laughed as he was pummeled.

In Rochester, N.Y., a group of eight men smashed the windows of a jewelry store. The couple who lived above the shop emerged to confront them. Both of them were viciously beaten with a ladder and a two-by-four.

In Dallas, a man armed with what appeared to be a sword did his best to defend a business from looters. The mob bashed him in the head with a rock and a skateboard. It's hard to watch.

In San Jose, riders with crowbar stormed the highway and attacked vehicles, trying to pull drivers from their cars. In Birmingham, Ala., a local reporter called Stephen Quinn was beaten, and then he was robbed on live television as he tried to cover the looting.

In Portland, Ore., a man was beaten apparently for daring to carry an American flag in public. He never released the flag, by the way.

How many of these people died? How many were murdered by the rioters? We don't know yet. At the least, some are likely disabled for life. They were beaten that badly.

And then there was the mass stealing. It seemed to be everywhere over the weekend.

In Buckhead, an upscale part of Atlanta, rioters stole a Tesla from a dealership and drove it through an indoor mall just to



underscore how completely out of control things were. In Portland, Oregon, mobs looted Louis Vuitton, Apple and Chase Bank among many others. They often set fires as they left. In Chicago, protesters fought systemic racism by running through a Nike store stealing shoes.

And in Washington, D.C., a federal city surrounded by military bases and protected at all times by the single highest concentration of law enforcement in the world, criminals operated with apparent impunity in the streets. They looted Georgetown. They smashed the windows in federal buildings. They desecrated virtually every war memorial in the city a week after Memorial Day.

And then, as you likely know, Sunday night they set fire to St. John's Episcopal Church, a 200-year-old building that has welcomed every American president since James Madison. It is right across the street from the White House. For people stuck inside anywhere during this insanity -- the sick, the elderly, the powerless -- the experience was terrifying. Listen to this woman from Minneapolis.

Reporter: How was last night? Unidentified woman: Scary. They went straight to Office Max, the Dollar Store and every store over here that I go to. I have nowhere to go now. I have no way to get there because the buses aren't running. So, that's what's happening in America right now. We didn't play all of the tape we have. There's a lot of it. Some of the tape is too shocking, and honestly, it's too incendiary. We understand that television is an emotional medium, and we don't want to make things worse. We're not going to, but you get the point.

The point is, this is a national emergency. It's a profound national emergency. But you would never know that from listening to our elected leaders. Almost all of them pretend this is not really happening or if it is happening, it is just part of America's long tradition of vigorous political discourse.

Politicians on both sides tell us that this is all about the death of a man in police custody in Minneapolis last week. The people burning down our country are "protesters". They're engaged

in a legitimate "protest."

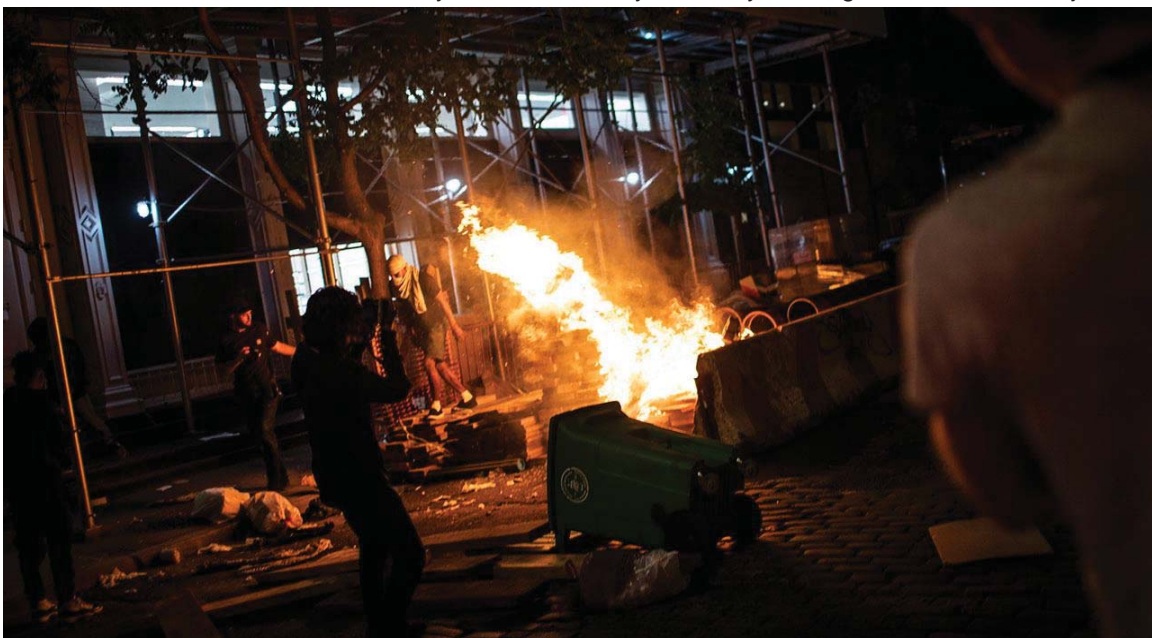
Okay, what exactly are those protesters' demands? What are they asking for? If Congress agreed to enact their program, what would the program be?

Not a single person even hints the answer because there is not an answer. No one has bothered to pull the guys beating up old ladies on the street or looting Gucci, but you've got to wonder how many of them have ever even heard of George Floyd. And if they have heard of him, what difference would it make? Violence and looting are not forms of political expression.

If you were killed tomorrow, how many buildings would you want burned to the ground in your memory? How many old women smashed in the face on the street in your name? None, we hope, because you're not a vicious psychopath, like the people you've just watched.

In fact, what we're watching is not a political protest. It's the opposite of a political protest. It is an attack on the idea of politics. The rioters you have seen are trying to topple our political system. That system is how we resolve our differences without using violence. But these people want a new system, one that is governed by force. Do what we say or we will hurt you. You know this. You can see it for yourself on television; you have. But our leaders continue to lie. They tell us that's not true. This isn't happening. It's just a protest. Some Democrats have openly embraced what is happening. Really they don't have much of a choice. These are their voters cleaning out the Rolex store. These riots effectively are the largest Joe Biden for President rally on record. In gratitude for that, more than a dozen Joe Biden for President campaign staffers donated money to the rioters in Minneapolis, and then they bragged about it on Twitter. No Democratic leader can directly criticize what is happening right now. And in fact, some have joined in. Over the weekend, the Democratic Party of Fairfax, Virginia, which is an important Democratic organization, released the following statement on Twitter: "Riots are an integral part of this country's march towards progress."

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Trump threatens to unleash the military in the US. When will the generals speak out?

Not since one of President Donald Trump's heroes, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, led a mounted charge in 1932 to disperse an encampment of homeless veterans just outside the White House has the country seen such an application of violence against unarmed protesters outside "the People's House." On Monday evening police, with National Guard troops in reserve, attacked peaceful protesters gathered outside the White House with rubber bullets and tear gas. It's the kind of scene we associate with dictatorships, not western democracies.

Even worse was the purpose of this travesty — which was to allow President Trump a photo op outside St. John's, the "church of the presidents" just outside the White House grounds.

There Trump held up a bible on the cameras, which will surely be an iconic image of his presidency as the coronavirus ravages the United States and riots and protests rage in its cities.

Just as bad as the attacks on the peaceful protesters outside the White House were Trump's threats Monday to send the federal military to quell unrest in American cities, which is simply not their job. What makes it particularly odd is that Trump frequently complains that US troops in Afghanistan are acting as a "police force." Like so much of what Trump says that isn't true, but even the President realizes on occasion that the federal US

military doesn't perform a law enforcement function for good reason; it's not what it is trained to do. Also, the Pentagon simply can't go to war with its own citizens.

Indeed it is barred from doing so by the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, although under some very rare circumstances, federal troops have been deployed in the US. The last time they were called up for such duty was almost three decades ago during the 1992 Los Angeles riots which followed the acquittal of police officers who brutally beat Rodney King. More than 50 people were killed in the riots. The federal troops were called in at the invitation of California's governor and they were not unilaterally deployed as President Trump has threatened to do.

Trump's discussion of the sometimes violent protests that have occurred across the United States over the past week with US governors on a phone call Monday that became public in a leaked audio confirms that he and his "war cabinet" have a militarized view of the unrest in American cities.

Trump said that he had put US Joint Chiefs Chairman Army Gen. Mark Milley "in charge," which is a strange formulation since the United States' top military officer is not supposed to be responsible for domestic law enforcement. That's the role of the police and in some cases, the National Guard under the control of each states' governor.

On Monday's call with the

governors, US Defense Secretary Mark Esper blathered about dominating "the battle space" as if the protests and riots in American cities were taking place in Baghdad in 2003.

Gen. Tony Thomas, who ran US Special Operations Command and also US Joint Special Operations Command — the unit that killed Osama bin Laden — tweeted to his relatively small group of some 1,300 followers on Monday night: "The 'battle space' of America??? Not what America needs to hear...ever, unless we are invaded by an adversary or experience a constitutional failure...ie a Civil War..."

Good for Thomas, but his tweet has received scant attention as yet. We need more senior retired generals to say that violence against peaceful protesters is unacceptable and that using the US military aside from the national guard to police protests is fundamentally an un-American idea.

A retired top military officer who also just stepped up the plate is former US Joint Chiefs Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen, who wrote in *The Atlantic* Tuesday evening: "It sickened me yesterday to see security personnel—including members of the National Guard—forcibly and violently clear a path through Lafayette Square to accommodate the president's visit outside St. John's Church. I have to date been reticent to speak out on issues surrounding President Trump's leadership, but we are at an

inflection point, and the events of the past few weeks have made it impossible to remain silent."

Adm. Bill McRaven, the architect of the bin Laden raid, and Gen. Stanley McChrystal, who turned Joint Special Operations Command into one of the most lethal fighting forces in US history, have been willing to call out the President for his dishonesty and divisiveness.

But isn't it time to hear now also from former US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, a retired four-star general who commanded CENTCOM that oversees America's wars in the greater Middle East and who led the US Marines into Baghdad in 2003?

Or from former national security adviser Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster who fought heroically both in the first Gulf War and the Iraq War and whose PhD dissertation that became a book about the Vietnam War is one of the key texts about the proper role of relations between a US president and his generals?

It's past time for Mattis to abandon his position that he won't speak out against President Trump. In his 2019 autobiography "Call Sign Chaos," Mattis observed, "I'm old fashioned: I don't write about sitting Presidents." This conception of the proper role of retired senior US generals that they shouldn't make statements about contemporaneous political matters may work in times of normalcy but this is not

one of those times.

During his 2019 book tour Mattis told Jeffrey Goldberg of *The Atlantic* that his duty of silence about Trump wasn't "eternal."

Now would be an important time for Mattis to break his silence. Mattis can use his considerable stature for the common good to push back on Trump's dangerous ideas about deploying the US federal military in American cities and also to condemn the President's role in attacking peaceful protestors outside the White House.

Retired four-star Marine Gen. John Kelly also has the experience and gravitas to make similar points. Kelly led SOUTHCOM which oversees all of US military operations south of the US-Mexico border and later became Trump's chief of staff.

And McMaster could also use his considerable stature to speak out about the politicization of the US military by the Trump administration.

McMaster's book described the failures of American generals to stand up to President Lyndon Johnson and to provide him truthful military advice about the conduct of the Vietnam War, which Johnson saw largely through the lens of his domestic political fortunes. We have reached a similar point in the United States where the Pentagon is being used for Trump's political purposes and it's time to push back.



The long, dark history of Donald Trump's pledge to be a 'law and order' president

On Monday night, President Donald Trump addressed the nation with words presumably meant to reassure: "I am your President of law and order."

Whether Trump realized it or not -- and my guess is he did -- by invoking the idea of being a "law and order" president, he was tapping into a long history of presidents leaning on the idea of strict adherence to the rule of law to squelch civil disobedience often by minority communities in the country.

The use of the phrase "law and order" came into common presidential parlance during the late 1960s as President Richard Nixon sought to soothe a (white) populace unnerved by the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr. as well as the protests and riots that broke out in reaction to King's slaying. (There had been more than 150 race riots in the country in 1967 alone.) "Because, my friends, let this message come through clear from what I say tonight. Time is running out for the merchants of crime and corruption in American society.

"The wave of crime is not going to be the wave of the future in the United States of America.

"We shall re-establish freedom from fear in America so that America can take the lead in re-establishing freedom from fear in the world.

"And to those who say that law and order is the code word for racism, there and here is a reply:

"Our goal is justice for every American. If we are to have respect for law in America, we must have laws that deserve respect.

"Just as we cannot have progress without order, we cannot have order without

progress, and so, as we commit to order tonight, let us commit to progress."

Nixon repeatedly insisted throughout the fall campaign that "law and order" was something all Americans wanted -- and that it had little to do with playing on the racial animus and fears of white Americans directed at black Americans. In response to a question from a black panelist at a debate that year, Nixon sought to find a middle ground away from the clear weaponizing of race espoused by George Wallace, who was running a third-party bid for president.

"I have often said that you cannot have order unless you have justice, because if you stifle dissent, if you just stifle progress, you're going to have an explosion and you're going to have disorder," Nixon said. "On the other hand, you can't have progress without order, because when you have disorder, and revolution, you destroy all of the progress you have."

But once elected, Nixon returned to just the sort of purposefully racialized language that he had insisted he wasn't using. "Law and order" evolved into the "silent majority" -- Nixon's signifier for the older, whiter Americans who might not be as outspoken as the younger, more diverse elements of American society but who comprised a majority that elected him and could reelect him.

(Worth noting: Nixon's initial invocation of the "silent majority" in a speech in 1969 had nothing to do with race. He was seeking to justify his renewed commitment to winning the Vietnam War and contrasting anti-war activists with the "silent

majority" of Americans who supported his stance.)

The political efficacy of Nixon's call to "law and order" was not lost on those Republican politicians who followed him in the presidency.

Ronald Reagan, who, on the day of King's funeral in 1968, called it a "great tragedy that began when we began compromising with law and order, and people started choosing which laws they'd break," took up Nixon's "law and order" mantle when he ran for and won the White House in 1980. (Reagan lost the nomination to Nixon in 1968.)

In office, Reagan's law and order focus was at the heart of his much-touted "war on drugs" -- a deeply controversial program that led to an eight-fold increase in incarceration between 1980 and 1997, a massive surge that most directly impacted the black community.

In George H.W. Bush's 1988 campaign, the call to law and order again took center stage. That race pivoted on an ad run by Bush supporters that painted Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis as soft on crime -- using a black man named Willie Horton who was let out on a weekend pass program approved by Dukakis and stabbed a man and raped his girlfriend.

The ad was effective, although widely renounced in retrospect for playing on racist stereotypes. Horton, sporting a beard and an Afro, was shown on screen throughout the ad. The message was crystal clear.

As Michael Nelson, who edited a book of essays on H.W. Bush's presidency, told The New York Times' Peter Baker in 2018: "In some ways, the Willie Horton ad is the 1.0 version

of Trump's relentless tweets and comments about African-Americans."

Trump took what Nixon, Reagan and H.W. Bush had done on "law and order" and, as he does with everything, took it to its logical extreme.

"We must maintain law and order at the highest level or we will cease to have a country, 100 percent," Trump said in a 2016 speech just days after a gunman had killed five police officers in Dallas. "We will cease to have a country. I am the law and order candidate."

In his inaugural address, Trump painted a grim picture of an America under assault

-- and himself as the one person who was ready to clean up the streets. Here's the key bit:

"But for too many of our citizens, a different reality exists: Mothers and children trapped in poverty in our inner cities; rusted-out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our nation; an education system, flush with cash, but which leaves our young and beautiful students deprived of knowledge; and the crime and gangs and drugs that have stolen too many lives and robbed our country of so

much unrealized potential.

"This American carnage stops right here and stops right now." Trump's campaign -- and his presidency -- has trafficked heavily in fear: Of people who don't look like you, of foreign countries, of losing what you have to someone who doesn't deserve it. The subtext has become text. Need more proof of that direct line between Nixon and Trump on using race to divide us? The President provided it himself on Tuesday morning. "SILENT MAJORITY!" he tweeted. Yeah, that about covers it.

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Modi 2.0: Dark clouds have engulfed the nation

The government has undermined secular democracy; social justice; federalism; and economic self-reliance



By Sitaram Yechury

Surreal is, perhaps, the only way to describe marking of the first anniversary of the Modi 2.0 government. As the government data detailing the pre-coronavirus disease destruction of the economy and the consequent ruination of crores of lives during the last year was being released, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi was writing to all of us describing the year as “a golden chapter in the history of Indian democracy”. This ruination has been aggravated by the coronavirus pandemic and the unplanned and abrupt unilateral lockdown announced by the PM. This lockdown has neither strengthened the efforts to combat the pandemic nor has it provided any relief to beleaguered citizens. The situation continues to worsen.

India appears to have entered a post-truth society. The Oxford Dictionary defines post-truth as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief”. The propaganda and spin machine of the government projects a surreal world divorced from the truth.

The first year of this government has been traumatic. Apart from all other issues such as the economic downturn, increase in people’s miseries, assaults on democratic rights and civil liberties, this year has been traumatic for the single-minded focus with which this government began to systematically undermine India’s secular, democratic, republican order.

Among the attacks — the delivery of a verdict and

not justice in the Ram temple site dispute in Ayodhya, the triple talaq criminalisation of only Muslim men, not other’ for deserting their wives — are two that spring to mind immediately.

Modi 2.0 began with an immediate assault on the Constitution with the abrogation of Article 370. In one stroke, the state of Jammu and Kashmir became a part of history and was bifurcated into Union territories. The promises made during the freedom movement and the Constitution have been betrayed. The manner in which this was done was an affront to the constitutional scheme of things. By dissolving the elected assembly and not holding the elections along with the 2019 general elections, this government deliberately bypassed the constitutional stipulation that the border of any state in India cannot be altered without the concurrence of the assembly. As the assembly was non-existent, the governor appointed by the Centre was presumed to be the substitute, whose consent was naturally obtained. The entire exercise was done surreptitiously.

Then came the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), a brazen violation of the Constitution in stipulating religion as a criterion for citizenship. The Constitution underlines the equality of every citizen, irrespective of caste, creed, gender or any other attribute. The corollary to CAA was the National Population Register on whose basis the National Register of Citizens would be prepared. This exercise was rightly seen by many as the intensification of communal polarisation that feeds into the larger

construct of targeting the Muslim minority. These two, along with many other assaults, are part of the effort to transform a secular, democratic, republican India into an intolerant theocratic, exclusivist fascistic state, which is the project of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the ideological mentor of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Citizenship is the fundamental requirement for every other right provided by the Constitution. Once people are stripped of their citizenship, they stand automatically stripped of all their rights and liberties in India.

These assaults on the Constitution were accompanied by the weakening of the

constitutional institutions. Both these issues were challenged in the Supreme Court (SC) and continues to remain there without being heard, considered or adjudicated on. The SC has chosen to consider matters such as anticipatory bail to journalists charged with aiding campaigns of hate as being more important than the defence of the Constitution. From the deepest recesses of my memory come surging images of courts during South Africa’s apartheid regime where criminals were acquitted, and the victims prosecuted. Retired SC Justice Gopala Gowda recently commented that the draconian experience of the infamous ADM Jabalpur case in which anyone considered a political threat

to authorities could be taken into custody without trial, during the Emergency, is now passé.

The four foundational pillars of the Constitution — secular democracy; social justice; federalism; and economic self-reliance — are taking a severe beating. Sharpening communal polarisation and the undermining of secularism are accompanied by attacks on any expression of dissent. Draconian laws such as the Sedition Act, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the National Security Act are used. The stigma of social oppression has worsened.

There is increasing centralisation of all authority by the central government bypassing elected state governments,

negating federalism. A unitary State is required not only to centralise authority to facilitate the realisation of the RSS project but also to create a surveillance-based “security State”.

The grandiose announcement of ~20 lakh crore financial package in the name of self-reliance is nothing but a blueprint for India’s self-subservience. It provides profit maximisation for foreign and domestic corporates. The net result will be the further widening of economic inequalities which have already reached alarming levels.

Such are the dark clouds that have engulfed the Indian Republic during the last year. The silver lining must be enlarged by all of us together to overshadow and consume these dark clouds.

The dismantling of the idea of India

Instead of focusing on the economy, the Modi government has pushed its divisive agenda

By Kapil Sibal

March 24, 2020, was a watershed moment with Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi announcing a national lockdown in view of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic. This black swan event in the first year of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government’s second term in office has changed our lives. Prior to that date, the government was pushing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)’s core agenda with characteristic authoritarianism. But the pandemic has humbled all of us, including those with invincible mindsets.

Two decisions of Modi-1 cast their shadow on the Modi-2 dispensation. First, the ill-thought-out, knee-jerk decision of the PM on November 8, 2016, to demonetise high-value currency notes. The rich were able to exchange their unaccounted cash but it deprived the poor of their hard-earned money. That was a monetary lockdown that

destabilised the economy. The second was the establishment and implementation of a multi-layered Goods and Service Tax (GST) regime, which is mired in confusion even today. Its negative economic fallout impacted the free flow of

communications and financial services. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) warned (in May 2020) about the slackening of private consumption. Economic growth is a continuum subject to occasional hiccups that no one can control.

But during Modi-2, these hiccups were man-made. An economy already in decline needed an impetus to revive it. Instead of concentrating on governance issues — including health care, education and the concerns of the poor — Modi-2 tore the nation apart by polarising it with a communal agenda.

In August 2019, Article 370 was recast and President’s rule imposed, with the state of Jammu and Kashmir being converted into two Union territories. This paradigm shift was claimed by Modi as a signal achievement. However, the situation on the ground is far from normal.

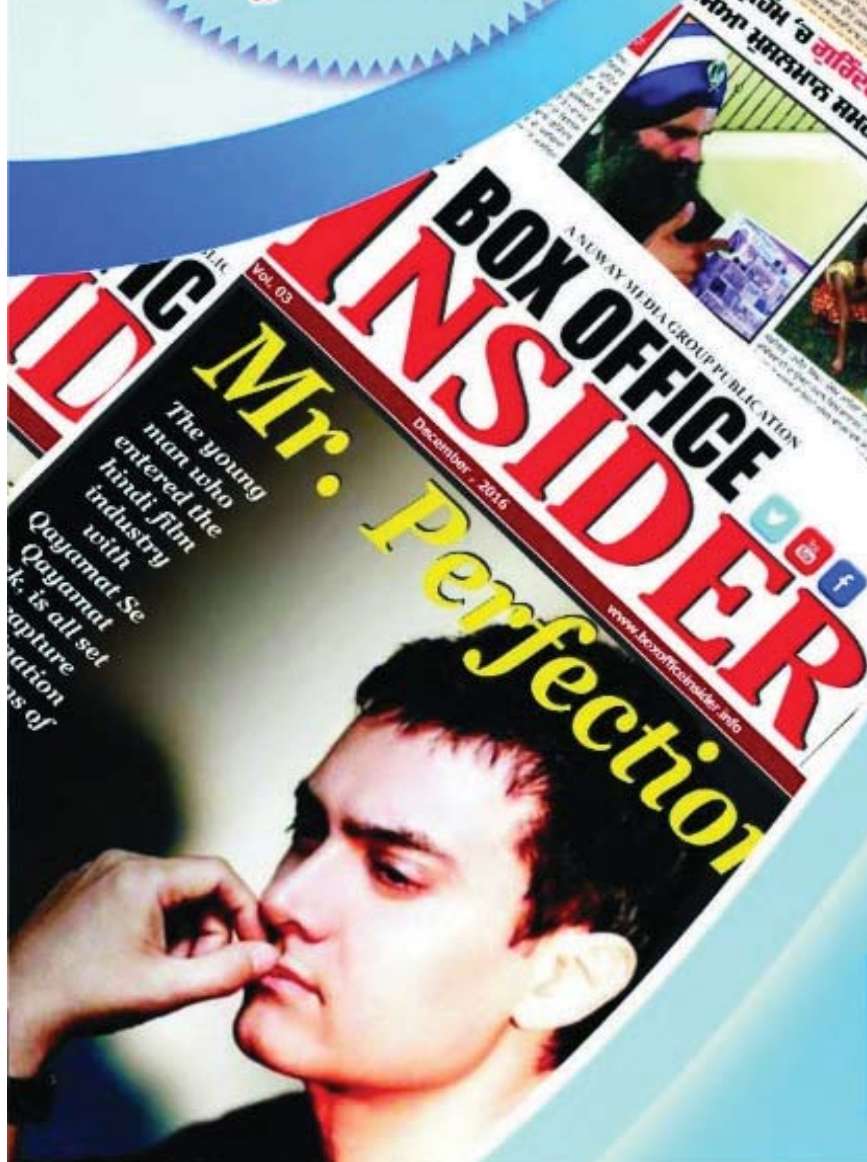
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How five states in India are leading economy to recovery from lockdown



Five Indian states contributing nearly 27% of the country's gross domestic product are leading a recovery in the economy as it slowly emerges from the world's biggest lockdown, a study by Elara Securities Inc. shows.

(News Agencies) Five Indian states contributing nearly 27% of the country's gross domestic product are leading a recovery in the economy as it slowly emerges from the world's biggest lockdown, a study by Elara Securities Inc. shows. Kerala, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Haryana and Karnataka have seen a pickup in activity, based on an analysis of indicators such as power consumption, traffic movement, arrival of farm products

at wholesale markets and Google mobility data, Garima Kapoor, an economist at Elara Securities in Mumbai, wrote in a note. Some of the most industrialized states such as Maharashtra and Gujarat were trailing because of tough measures still in place to contain the Covid-19 pandemic, she said. India will begin a phased lifting of the nationwide lockdown from June 8, allowing shopping malls, restaurants and places of worship to reopen in areas where virus infections are under control. "The best stimulus India can have is resumption of normal economic

activity," Kapoor said. "The country is witnessing an improvement in activity but it remains sporadic." Punjab and Haryana were among states that saw an improvement in electricity requirement, reflecting demand from farm operations, the study showed. National capital Delhi also showed an increase in power demand as well as mobility trends. Kapoor examined Google search trends to see if consumers are shifting consumption patterns as they adapt to a "new way of life." The analysis showed there was pent-up demand for salon services, air

conditioners, air travel, bikes, vacuum cleaners and washing machines. Searches associated with panic-buying when the lockdown was first announced -- such as pharmacy and grocery stores and liquid soaps -- have eased. Consumers haven't given up looking for items such as earphones, hair oil, laptops, mobile phones, jewelry, mops, toys and microwave ovens. "We anticipate demand to persist in the upcoming months, as some are virus-related shifts in patterns," Kapoor said.

Copyright extends to theme, plot and storyline of literary works: Bombay High Court



(News Agencies) Bombay High Court has held that in the case of literary artworks, copyright extends not only to the expression of the core idea but also to its theme, plot and the storyline. The order pronounced on Friday came on a plea filed by Urdu writer Shamoil Ahmad Khan who claimed that Falguni Shah and two others had infringed his copyright in one of his short stories, Singardan (Dressing Table), and produced a web series under the same title. It is being aired on an online platform, Ullu, and is also available on YouTube, Khan said. Khan claimed that producers of the web series had not only copied the title but also the entire plot, narrative and characters of his story. Producers of the web series opposed his plea for an injunction claiming that save and except the central idea of Singardaan, there was no other similarity between Khan's work and the web series. They claimed that the central idea—a man taking away a dressing table from a brothel to his home during riots and its use leading to changes in the behaviour of the womenfolk at home—by itself was not entitled to any copyright protection. They submitted that the depiction of the central idea in the web

series, including the pathos, texture, treatment, purport and presentation, was materially different from Khan's story and therefore there was no question of infringement. The argument, however, failed to impress upon justice SC Gupte. The judge said it's true that copyright does not extend to ideas, or schemes, or systems, or methods and it is confined to their expression, and if the expression is not copied the copyright is not infringed. Justice Gupte clarified that in a literary artwork a germ of an idea is developed into a theme and then into a plot and then the final story with the help of characters and settings. It is the combination of all these elements which give a substance to the work, he said. "If one goes on stripping the final work of these various elements, one may finally come to the bare idea or abstraction which no longer enjoys copyright protection." Justice Gupte said when someone strips the story of Singardaan of its embellishments, the motivations and the tribulations of its characters and their actual actions, they get the plot and the storyline. "The above narration is the life and blood of the plaintiff's (Khan's) story," said the judge. He added it cannot be said that the writer

has copyright only in the details of expression and that those are embellishments - the details which have no essential bearing on the theme, plot and storyline of Khan's work. "If someone steals this theme, plot and storyline, is he not thereby plagiarising the expression of the plaintiff's work? Can the above theme, plot and storyline be simply dismissed as non-protectable ideas of the plaintiff's work and not its expression? I think not. We have not yet reached that

level of extraction where the work can be stripped to its non-protectable idea," he said. The judge concluded that though the producers of the web series developed Khan's theme, plot and storyline in a different manner, prima facie it was a case of copyright infringement, and restrained them from making any further adaptation of Singardaan. The court also directed them to maintain accounts of the revenue earned from the web series, right from its inception till disposal of Khan's suit.

Kerala snake-bite murder

Three more arrested, hidden gold ornaments dug out

(News Agencies) The Kerala police team probing the snake-bite murder of Uthra S (25) in south Kerala's Kollam district on Tuesday arrested three family members of the main accused and recovered the victim's gold ornaments buried in two packets on the premises of their house. Earlier two persons, including her husband P Sooraj and a local snake handler, were arrested for letting a cobra loose in Uthra's room on May 6 night that led to her death a day later. The fatal second bite occurred when she was undergoing treatment for the first bite by a viper at her husband's home two months ago. Later, police did a post-mortem on the carcass of the black cobra that had bit the deceased to collect scientific evidences.

After her death, Uthra's parents alleged that it was a well-planned murder and her in-laws and sister (in-law) were aware of the crime. During questioning, Sooraj reportedly told the police that his parents also knew about the plot and they hid her ornaments. The police then recovered 37 sovereigns of gold on Monday which was buried in two packets. Uthra's parents alleged that a

major portion of the gold gifted as dowry was missing. Crime branch deputy superintendent A Ashokan said all three, Sooraj's parents and sister, will be booked for domestic violence, anti-dowry provisions, abetment to crime and destroying evidences. Earlier, the state women's commission had also directed the police to book them.

The case surfaced after Uthra's parents filed a complaint a week after her death. They alleged that Sooraj and his family members often harassed her for dowry. The couple had got married two years ago and has a one-year-old son. Her father said that he had gifted over 100 sovereigns of gold, a new car and Rs 10 lakh cash to appease her ever-demanding in-laws. Later, probe revealed that Sooraj had bought a cobra from a snake handler for Rs 10,000. On May 6, he reportedly took the snake to Uthra's paternal house in Anchal, where she was undergoing treatment for the first snake bite. The police said after Uthra fell asleep, Sooraj allegedly took out the snake from the bottle and threw it on her. Later, he also said Uthra was sedated by lacing sleeping pills in her food.

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India is sensitive to China but won't allow change in any border sector

PM Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping should keep channels of communication open. The two countries can't be adversaries forever

(News Agencies) At the 2019 informal summit between India and China at Mamallapuram, on the periphery of Chennai, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping decided to celebrate the 70th anniversary of bilateral relations in 2020 by deepening exchanges at all levels — between the legislatures, political parties, cultural and youth organisations, even the militaries of the two countries. The two leaders also decided to organise 70 activities, including a conference on a ship that would trace the historical connect between the two civilisations. No one expected that rosy diplomatic picture would turn as grim as it has now,

with the spread of the coronavirus that was first reported from Wuhan — ironically, the site of the 2018 informal summit between India and China — and with war clouds gathering over eastern Ladakh. This has happened within seven months of the Mamallapuram meet, which saw the reiteration of a desire for peace and tranquillity in the border areas and a commitment to work on additional Confidence Building Measures (CBMs). Yet, today, the Indian Army is facing two aggressive Combined Arms Brigades of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) at Galwan Valley and Pangong Tso patrolling points along the 3,488-kilometre-long Line



of Actual Control (LAC). In May, PLA first activated LAC at Naku La area in north Sikkim and then at three points in Galwan and one point at Pangong Tso. While the Chinese defence ministry spokesperson has said that the situation in Ladakh is "stable and controllable," this appears to be a gross understatement as the two armies are literally at each other's throats. This fragile situation does not augur well for bilateral relations. It has already turned the normally-dormant LAC active, forcing India to deploy troops on the northern border and prepare for the worst-case scenario. Much as India's detractors would like to remind it about the 1962 border skirmish with China, the fact is that even PLA would have to move troops from the hinterland to protect its own territory if the red flag goes up. As of now China has 76

and 77 group armies days of stand-off, and the (around 45,000 men) along next question facing with an option of six to Chinese generals would be eight divisions of troops whether their troops can from Tibet and Xinjiang force a decisive victory. The military district holding the PLA generals, who have Western Theatre studied the Kargil war more Command facing India. seriously that anyone, With India rapidly building know that the Indian Army force levels in eastern can and will fight against all Ladakh, it will be only a odds. Even though China is matter a time before PLA now sabre-rattling at the calls for reinforcements border, it also knows that from the hinterland if India has a very strong status quo ante is not leader in PM Narendra restored. Given that Modi, who has not named India's lines of China for spreading the communication and air Covid-19 virus, maintained a bases are closer to LAC, studied silence over the the scenario may not treatment of minorities in favour PLA. For instance, Xinjiang, not commented on its Russian copy fighters the draconian laws in Hong Kong, and stayed silent while will suffer severe load others have pushed for an penalty if they take off from observer status for Taiwan at the rarefied Tibetan plateau. The PLA has already lost the World Health Organization. the element of surprise after

Pakistan 'blasphemy' death row couple's plea for freedom

Shagufta Kausar and her husband Shafqat Emmanuel have spent the last six years in jail waiting for an appeal against their death sentence for "blasphemy" to conclude.



(News Agencies) Now, the family of the poor Christian couple from the central Pakistani town of Gojra slowed in recent weeks as a result of the coronavirus outbreak. The married couple were convicted in 2014 of sending blasphemous text messages insulting the Prophet Muhammad to a local imam from a phone number registered to Shagufta Kausar's name. Blasphemy is punishable by death in Pakistan, and though no-one has ever been executed for it, dozens have been killed by mobs after being accused of the crime. Shagufta's brother Joseph, who requested his surname not be published, told the BBC the couple were innocent, and he doubted they were extremists. Court

written the abusive so hard that his leg was messages. Shagufta broken."The couple have worked as a caretaker in a four children, who Joseph Christian school, whilst her said had been left husband Shafqat is traumatised."All the time partially paralysed. they are crying... they are Joseph said on a visit to missing them, they wish to jail, Shafqat told him he had see their parents been tortured into making again."Human rights groups say blasphemy a false confession: "He told me the policeman hit [him] allegations are frequently used to settle personal scores or target religious minorities. The couple's lawyer told the BBC that in their trial they suggested a Christian neighbour they had argued with might have purchased a SIM card in Shagufta Kausar's name and sent the messages in order to frame religious groups. them. Blasphemy convictions are often eventually overturned on appeal in Pakistan. Last year, Asia Bibi left the country after more than a decade in prison, having been acquitted by the Supreme Court. The verdict led to violent protests by hardline

Vietnam: How this country of 95 million kept its coronavirus death toll at zero

When the world looked to Asia for successful examples in handling the novel coronavirus outbreak, much attention and plaudits were paid to South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

(News Agencies) But there's one overlooked success story -- Vietnam. The country of 97 million people has not reported a single coronavirus-related death and on Saturday had just 328 confirmed cases, despite its long border with China and the millions of Chinese visitors it receives each year. This is all the more remarkable considering Vietnam is a low-middle income country with a much less-advanced healthcare system than others in the region. It only has 8 doctors for every 10,000 people, a third of the ratio in South Korea, according to the World Bank. After a three-week nationwide lockdown, Vietnam lifted social distancing rules in late April. It hasn't reported any local infections for more than 40 days. Businesses and schools have reopened, and life is gradually returning to normal. To skeptics, Vietnam's official numbers may seem too good to be true. But Guy Thwaites, an infectious disease doctor who works in one of the main hospitals designated by the Vietnamese government to treat Covid-19 patients, said the numbers matched the reality on the ground. "I go to the wards every day, I know

the cases, I know there has been no death," said Thwaites, who also heads the Oxford University Clinical Research Unit in Ho Chi Minh City. "If you had unreported or uncontrolled community transmission, then we'll be seeing cases in our hospital, people coming in with chest infections perhaps not diagnosed -- that has never happened," he said. So how has Vietnam seemingly bucked the global trend and largely escaped the scourge of the coronavirus? The answer, according to public health experts, lies in a combination of factors, from the government's swift,

Decoding the India-Nepal dispute

New Delhi and Kathmandu must engage each with each other on the border issue

(News Agencies) Things are not looking good in the Himalayas. And it's not just because of India's longstanding border dispute with China and recent skirmishes along the Line of Actual Control. On Tuesday, Nepal's Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli convened an all-party meeting seeking a consensus on amending the constitution to include the strategic northwestern tri-junction with India and China – Kalapani, Limpiadhura and Lipulekh – within Nepal's territory. It could turn out to be a significant political move, though the amendment has not yet been endorsed by Parliament at the time of writing. Oli obviously wants to negotiate with New Delhi from a position of strength. Nepal maintains that the 1816 Treaty of Sugauli, ratified by both sides, designates the (Maha)kali as the boundary river. It considers the treaty as the only authentic document on boundary delineation and all other documents as "subsidiaries". A lot has changed in Nepal since India's defence minister Rajnath Singh opened the track linking India and China through the disputed territory on May 8. Battling for political survival amid a serious intra-party feud, the issue with New Delhi has given Oli a new lease of life. For the second time since 2015, New Delhi's foreign-policy decisions have buttressed Oli's nationalist credentials. Here's a bit of election history. In 2017, Oli's party, the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) rode to



power on a strong nationalist wave, following India's undeclared border blockade to express its displeasure over the new constitution that it believed wasn't inclusive enough. After a formal merger between his party and Prachanda's Maoist party, Oli now heads Nepal's strongest government in 30 years. If Indian pressure increases, there is a strong possibility that Oli's nationalist position will trump all intra- and inter-

party differences, eroding all nuances. Nepal could yet again be pushed towards China. As of now, Nepal's strategic community and political leaders are at least wondering why China in 2015 agreed with India to allow the construction of a link road through the disputed Lipulekh. Is China telling us the full story? Does it consider its ties with Nepal independent of its ties with India, an Asia-Pacific power? In 1963, when Nepal and China unilaterally, with the signed a border agreement, the two sides decided to remain "open" to Nepal's both the status quo and international conventions (where Kalapani lies) and for the northeastern tri-junction to be discussed at some point with India. The Indo-China border war had just ended, and there was too much acrimony for all three sides to sit down for talks, recalls Bhek Bahadur Thapa, who was a Nepal government secretary then. When Thapa became Nepal's ambassador to India in 1997-2003, then prime minister IK Gujral and his counterpart in Nepal formed a joint team at the foreign secretary level to settle outstanding border issues. When India published a new map in November last year

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6,500 Pak terrorists among foreign fighters in Afghanistan; LeT, JeM play key role: UN report

The report, from the UN Security Council's analytical support and sanctions monitoring team and issued late last month, indicated the Pakistani terrorists formed a significant part of the foreign fighters that pose a serious threat to Afghanistan's security because of their activities and permanent presence in the country.



(News Agencies) There are some 6,500 Pakistani nationals among foreign terrorists operating in Afghanistan and the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) play a key role in bringing foreign fighters into the war-torn country, according to a UN report. The report, from the UN Security Council's analytical support and sanctions monitoring team and issued late last month, indicated Pakistani terrorists formed a significant part of foreign fighters that pose a serious threat to Afghanistan's security because of their activities and permanent presence in the country. The report said the Afghan Taliban's role as a credible counter-terrorism partner for the world

community in the aftermath of the February agreement with the US will need careful monitoring because of the "number of foreign terrorist fighters in search of a purpose and livelihood in Afghanistan, including up to 6,500 Pakistanis". Reacting to the report, external affairs ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava expressed "serious concern" to the continued presence in Afghanistan of the senior leadership of al-Qaeda and a large number of foreign terrorists, including 6,500 Pakistan nationals. The report, he said, "vindicates India's long-standing position that Pakistan remains the epicentre of international terrorism". There have been reports since last year of the JeM

and LeT, both blamed for high-profile attacks in India, sending hundreds of fighters to Afghanistan following increased pressure on Pakistan from the world community to crack down on terror groups. The UN report said Afghan officials highlighted Taliban Pakistan (TTP), JeM and LeT among the foreign groups posing a security threat. All three groups have a presence in the eastern Afghan provinces of Kunar, Nangarhar and Nuristan, "where they operate under the umbrella of the Afghan Taliban", the report said.

Afghan interlocutors said assassinations against government officials and others. Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Jaish-i-Mohammed were stated to have approximately 800 and 200 armed fighters, respectively, co-located with Taliban forces in Mohmand Darah, Dur Baba and Sherzad Districts of Nangarhar Province.

Bangladesh arrests alleged human traffic chief after Libya killings

(News Agencies) A Bangladeshi racket involved in the recent incident," police spokesman Sujoy Kumar Roy told AFP. Police alleged Uddin's gang targeted Bangladeshi villagers. "Kamal Uddin has smuggled over 400 Bangladeshis in the last 10-12 years," they added in a statement.

Bangladesh has urged Libya's UN-backed government to probe the killings, punish the perpetrators and compensate the victims. The incident highlighted the trafficking of youth from the impoverished South Asian nation to Libya, where they usually embark on a sea crossing to Europe. Tens of thousands of young Bangladeshi men have attempted the perilous Mediterranean crossing in recent years, and the number of traffickers catering to them has

mushroomed. "At least 700 Bangladeshis have been detained by the Libyan coastguard during this pandemic, which gives a hint at the actual number of Bangladeshis attempting these perilous journeys," the head of a local migration think tank, Tasneem Siddiqui, told AFP. When AFP visited the rural town of Beanibazar in 2016, a local councillor said thousands of young men paid up to \$12,000 to traffickers for safe passage to Italy. But many were later found to have been sold as slaves in Libya, he said. The fall and killing of veteran dictator Moamer Kadhafi in a 2011 uprising sparked years of chaos that traffickers have exploited to turn Libya into a major route for illicit migration towards Europe.



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Pakistan's mango exports take huge hit amidst coronavirus restrictions

Pakistan's traditional mango exports have taken a hit from the economic havoc wreaked by the coronavirus pandemic, as exporters fear a huge decline in export of the fruit this year.



(News Agencies) Suspension of international flights, closure of borders, rising freight fares, and on top of all, contracting demands altogether are likely to decline the country's mango exports by 35 to 40 per cent this year. Last year, Pakistan exported 130,000 metric tonnes of mangoes to the Middle East, Europe, the United States, Japan, Australia and other countries. This year, however, according to

Waheed Ahmed, a leading fruit exporter and president of Pakistan Fruits Exporters Association, the country is not expected to export more than 80,000 metric tonnes of mangoes. "Pakistan had earned over \$90 million through mango exports alone but it will not be more than \$50 million this year due to the present coronavirus conditions," Ahmed told Anadolu Agency. "Timing is a key factor vis-a-vis mango exports as it's a perishable

commodity. It cannot wait long," he said, adding: "Suspension of international flights has badly hit the mango exports to Europe and the US." "Many exporters are sending mangoes to Europe and the US via cargo flights but their charges have increased four times," Ahmed said. Closure of borders with neighboring Iran and Afghanistan have also added to the decline in

mango exports. The two countries together import 30,000 to 35,000 metric tons of mangoes annually. "Mango exports to the Middle East are continuing via sea route but the demands are not that high as tens of thousands of Pakistanis and other South Asians have returned to their countries [from Gulf states], while a large number of people have lost their jobs," he said.

Cost of production rises

Mahmood Nawaz Shah, a grower from Sindh, the second largest mango producing province after Punjab, echoed Ahmed's views. "The overall mango exports will be lesser this year due to Covid-19-related restrictions, mainly closure of international flights, and a huge increase in freight rates," Shah told Anadolu Agency. Cost of production, he went on to say, has also increased due to implementation of Covid-19 safety guidelines. Pakistan partially lifted a

prolonged ban on international flights last week, which Shah thought, would give relief to mango exporters. "This will certainly have a positive impact because at least access will be available," he observed. "But, I don't see a huge difference because airlines are not going to decrease freight rates," he added. Ahmed too sees little impact on mango exports from resumption of flights. "I don't see a major impact on [mango] exports because there is no decrease in freight rates."

Less production

Extolled as king of fruits, India and Pakistan recognise mango as their national fruit. Both often unleash the fruit's clout in diplomacy and political outreach. Mangoes have also been used by writers and poets in the region over centuries to represent unspoken thoughts and feelings. Until 2018, Pakistan produced 1.9

million metric tonnes of mangoes annually, thus ranking sixth in the world, followed by India, China, Thailand, Indonesia and Mexico. There are two dozen mango varieties in the country, notably, Anwar Ratol, Dasherri, Langra, Saroli, Sindhri, Totapari, and others. But the taste of Pakistan is Chaunsa, which accounts for 60pc of the country's total mango exports. The most famous Pakistani mango is the Anwar Ratol, which has its roots in a village two hours from New Delhi, in the Baghpat district of western Uttar Pradesh in India. Many years before partition in 1947, a mango grower from Ratol in Uttar Pradesh had migrated to Punjab and named a sprig he had transplanted there after his father, Anwar. Almost every year, Pakistan sends a box of mangoes to the Indian prime minister, and other top functionaries in the Indian capital, New Delhi.

China's New High-Security Compound In Pakistan May Indicate Naval Plans

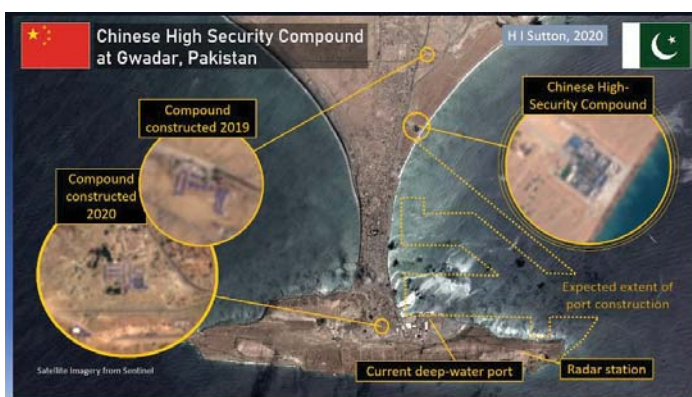
(News Agencies) Analysts have been watching for the first signs of a long-expected Chinese naval base at Gwadar in Pakistan. The base, to complement an elaborate one in Djibouti, would strengthen China's foothold in the Indian Ocean. Recent satellite images appear to show that several new complexes have been built in the last few years. One of them, identified as being used by a Chinese company involved in port development, has unusually high security. Located at the western end of Pakistan's coast, Gwadar is expected to be a major port in China's Belt and Road Initiative. This will allow Chinese goods to shortcut through Pakistan,

instead of sailing all the way around South Asia. China was first reported to be planning a naval base there in January 2018. While the plan has never

engineering projects. While some degree of security is normal in the region, the level of security seen here is extensive. It has anti-vehicle berms, security fences and a high wall. Sentry posts and elevated guard towers cover the perimeter between the fence and the inner wall. This suggests armed guards

the Chinese Consulate in Karachi on November 23 2018, and on a hotel in Gwadar on May 11 2019. The latter attack targeted the Zaver Pearl-Continental 5-star Hotel, which is another centerpiece of Chinese investment in the town.

The high security compound is not alone. There are also two smaller sites built in the last year with rows of blue-roofed buildings. It has been suggested that these might be barracks for a Chinese Marine Corps garrison. China was reported to be deploying marines there back in March 2017. But the sites lack the level of security that would be expected. Whatever their exact purpose, their location and timing suggests that they are connected to the port expansion. The sites can be seen in these tweets by Twitter user



Can Bangladesh deal with mountains of COVID-19 medical waste?



(News Agencies) Experts say more resources and public awareness are urgently needed in Bangladesh to ensure discarded medical waste does not make the coronavirus pandemic worse. Bangladesh was already struggling with poor medical waste management before the coronavirus pandemic. Now, it is at risk of being hit hard by a "sudden onslaught" of single-use medical plastic. Around 250 tonnes of medical waste was generated by hospitals last month, and sanitation workers often lack the protective gear to keep them safe from COVID-19.

been confirmed officially, it would be a natural path. The high-security compound has been identified as being used by the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC Ltd). This is a majority state-owned company that is heavily involved in many Chinese civil

with rifles. China has good reason to focus on security. The region, near the border with Iran and Afghanistan, is facing a long-standing insurgency. The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) seeks an independent state for the Baloch people. They carried out an attack on

Leader of Afghan Taliban Said to Be Gravely Ill With the Coronavirus

“Nearly all the Taliban leadership in Doha has the bug,” a senior Afghan official said.



(News Agencies) The supreme leader of the Afghan Taliban has contracted COVID-19 and has possibly died while receiving treatment, according to Taliban officials. Confirmation that Mullah Haibatullah Akhunzada had died of the illness. No official confirmation appeared to be forthcoming Monday. A senior official in the Afghan government said other Taliban leaders, including many in the movement's office in Doha, Qatar, who negotiated a bilateral deal with the United

recovering,” Ahmed told Foreign Policy in an interview. However, three other Taliban figures in the Pakistani city of Quetta, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said they believed Akhunzada had died of the illness. No official confirmation appeared to be forthcoming Monday. A senior official in the Afghan government said other Taliban leaders, including many in the movement's office in Doha, Qatar, who negotiated a bilateral deal with the United

States that was signed in February, were also ill with COVID-19. Speaking on the condition that he not be identified, the official said: “Nearly all the Taliban leadership in Doha has the bug.” “This is significant because if talks [between the Afghan government and the Taliban] are likely not to start within the next few weeks if they're sick, how long will they keep up the cease-fire?” the official added. The Taliban officials who would not be named said Akhunzada, the supreme leader, had

not been seen for the past three months and had not made any voice recordings, including an Eid al-Fitr message released as a statement ahead of the holiday last month. Ahmed, the senior Taliban official, said Akhunzada had been hospitalized but he would not confirm where. Asked if the Taliban's leader had received treatment in Pakistan, he responded: “Why do you people think that Pakistan is the only country [where he would be hospitalized]? There are other countries that are stronger than Pakistan, that support us, and the world knows that. I will not name the country, but it is a powerful country that is one of our allies.” Afghan government and Western official sources have suspected that Akhunzada contracted the virus some time ago. Antonio Giustozzi, a Taliban expert with the Royal United Services

Institute in London, said his Taliban sources confirmed Akhunzada had contracted the coronavirus. “Haibatullah is seriously sick and in hospital in Pakistan,” Giustozzi said. Some Taliban sources in Quetta have said Akhunzada went to Russia for treatment. The Taliban offered a three-day cease-fire to coincide with the Eid holiday. Afghan media quoted an unnamed Kabul government source saying the cease-fire would continue unofficially as neither side had yet announced its end. However, as COVID-19 sweeps through the Taliban leadership, infecting negotiators and commanders, the peace process has been hit by the uncertainty of how the pandemic will impact the uppermost echelons of the group. Foreign Policy reported on May 29 that many of the Taliban's

senior leaders in Quetta had caught COVID-19, including Akhunzada's deputy, Sirajuddin Haqqani, the leader of the jihadi Haqqani network, which has been behind many brutal attacks on Afghan and international forces and civilians in Afghanistan and has close ties to al Qaeda. With the top two leaders out of action, the Taliban movement is now being run by the son of its founder, Mullah Mohammed Omar, whose death was revealed in mid-2015, more than two years after he had died. Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob has taken over administrative, operational, and military command of the movement, according to Taliban officials, including Ahmed, and Western intelligence sources. COVID-19 appears to have helped Yaqoob on the way to realizing his long-held ambition of taking his late father's mantle as Taliban leader.

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What Poland's 'ghost election' can teach us about pandemic-era democracy

(News Agencies) A deeply divided country is preparing for a presidential election in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, facing starkly polarized debates about how to protect voters and still ensure them access to the ballot box. No, it's not the United States. These dynamics are playing out in Poland, which was scheduled to hold its presidential election earlier this month. Concerns over the virus and a drawn-out partisan back-and-forth led to a messy, last-minute postponement — and to lingering uncertainty about when and how a new election will take place. The resulting "bizarre ghost election," as one news organization called it — an election day on which no one voted and no polling places were open — was the culmination of weeks of political battles between the ruling right-wing Law and Justice Party (PiS) and Poland's opposition parties. Though the election date had been set before the virus hit Poland, PiS leaders insisted the vote should go ahead as planned, worried its candidate would struggle in a later election as Poles began

feeling the economic effects of the pandemic. They introduced legislation in early April that would have implemented an unprecedented all-mail vote on May 10. But opposition leaders and international observers strongly opposed this plan, saying the reforms were being pushed through too hastily — and that such an election, especially under a government that has been criticized for its approach to democracy and the rule of law, amounted to a power grab by PiS and its incumbent president, Andrzej Duda. As a result, PiS leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski announced just four days beforehand that the vote wouldn't actually happen; election officials later deemed it invalid and called for fresh elections on some to-be-determined date this summer.

Holding elections during a pandemic is not an easy task, as countries like Poland have learned: Under constantly changing circumstances, officials need to balance protecting public health with ensuring citizens' democratic right to vote. At least 62 countries across the world, from the United Kingdom to Italy to Ethiopia to Bolivia, have opted to postpone elections due to the spread of the virus. Others, including France, the southern German state of Bavaria, and several US states, have gone ahead with in-person elections despite concerns that such votes were potentially putting

citizens at risk.

But although there is no set playbook for safe and fair elections during the coronavirus crisis, Poland's experience offers some crucial lessons for other countries navigating these questions, including the US: Doing this right means planning as early as possible — and somehow finding a way to set aside political partisanship in order to come up with a plan for voting that everyone believes is fair.

In Poland, political polarization is at the heart of why the situation devolved into such uncertainty — and why debates about a new election are likely to be nearly as thorny as the ones leading up to May 10. Even if it had been organizationally possible for Poland to make the last-minute switch to a mail-only vote, the ability to effectively prepare for an election doesn't mean much if

you can't find a political consensus on how to do it. When neither side trusts the other to act in the best interest of citizens, it affects the way people view their democracy. And this "seriously impacts trust in the institution of elections," said Zselyke Csaky, research director for Europe and Eurasia at the democracy watchdog organization Freedom House. "That's a very serious concern, because that's one of the most important elements of a functioning democracy." As in the US, control in the Polish parliament is split: The ruling party's coalition narrowly controls the lower house, the Sejm, while the opposition narrowly controls the upper house, the Senate. When the Sejm passed its legislation mandating an all-mail ballot in early April, the opposition used its constitutional ability to delay the legislation, ultimately taking the full 30 days allowed. This meant that the legislation was held up until May 6, just four days before the election was supposed to take place, leading to a last-minute scramble.



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Top Republican senators defend Trump's church photo-op after peaceful protesters cleared out

(News Agencies) TTop Republican senators are defending the use of police force to clear out peaceful protesters near the White House that allowed President Donald Trump to pose with a Bible in front of a church amid the continued unrest in the United States. The stunning move prompted a visceral reaction among Democrats, who likened Trump's actions to a dictator as they prepared legislation to condemn the use of force -- including tear gas and rubber bullets -- against Americans exercising their constitutional rights to protest.

But Republicans -- for the most part -- aligned squarely with the President, saying it was his right to take such action given at times the violent protests that have occurred in the United States and the need for him to demonstrate that the country would not stand for the actions of looters and "anarchists." It was the latest indication of the deeply polarized environment on Capitol Hill amid one of the most tumultuous years in American history, with the two parties at sharp odds over the President's stewardship of the multiple crises facing the country and violent protests in cities following the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police. Sen. John Cornyn, a member of the GOP leadership team, said the protesters had to be cleared out "for security purposes" since Trump was "walking over to the church" and they were asked to clear "but refused to do so." "So obviously, it was a necessary security

measure," Cornyn told CNN. Cornyn rejected the notion that they were acting peacefully since they can't "ignore what law enforcement officers are telling them to do for the security of the president or anybody else." Asked if the President should have gone to the church for a photo-op that led to tear gas and other measures to be used on the protesters, Cornyn criticized the media and others who are "never going to find any good or any positive development in anything. So you can characterize it



the way you want, but obviously the President is free to go where he wants and to hold up a Bible if he wants," calling it a "civil message." Sen. Chuck Grassley, the most senior Republican in the Senate, told CNN that peaceful protesters have the right to demonstrate but he didn't know the extent to which the "police might expect violence from some of the people -- maybe 5% of the people -- and that could be a potential problem, the answer would be, it's OK" to clear them out with force.

4 Races To Watch On The First Big Primary Day Of The Pandemic

(News Agencies) Tuesday marks the first major multistate election day since the earliest days of the coronavirus pandemic in the United States, with the nominations for critical House and Senate races up for grabs and a number of nationally known politicians at risk of losing their seats. Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Montana, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and South Dakota are all holding primaries on Tuesday. Races across the eight states will point to additional signs about the direction of both the Democratic and Republican parties. Will Republicans tolerate Trump-like rhetoric on race from a candidate other than Donald Trump? Does Democrats' preference for Joe Biden-like moderation translate down-ballot? How does the shift to vote-by-mail impact pandemic-era turnout?

The highest-profile contest is likely in rural northwest Iowa, where GOP Rep. Steve King, who has a long history of racist remarks, is trying to fend off a challenge from a fellow Republican. Meanwhile, the Democratic nomination to challenge GOP Sen. Joni Ernst is up for grabs, with Washington Democrats spending heavily to get their favored candidate over the finish line.

In New Mexico, former CIA agent Valerie Plame ? a Bush-era liberal darling ? is struggling to win the Democratic nomination in a district centered around

Santa Fe. In the state's southern half, Democrats are interfering in an already brutal Republican primary, hoping to pick an opponent for one of the GOP's most vulnerable House members. And in Montana, a third-party primary where it's unlikely more than a few thousand votes will be cast could play a crucial role in determining control of the U.S. Senate. None of Tuesday's contests are likely to reveal much about how American politics will shift following the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody and the resulting protests. Mail-in ballots mean many people voted before Floyd's death, and most of the races are taking place far from major urban centers.

Can Rep. Steve King Survive?

Mainstream Republicans have had it with GOP Rep. Steve King, whose embrace of white nationalist rhetoric has made him one of the House's best-known and least-powerful members. King, who nearly lost his deeply conservative district in rural Northwest Iowa to Democrat J.D. Scholten in 2018, is now facing a well-financed challenger, Iowa state Senate President Randy Feenstra, who has the backing of nearly every establishment Republican whose endorsement matters. As HuffPost's Christopher Mathias wrote this week, the effort to oust King has largely avoided focusing on his racist rhetoric, instead arguing King would hurt other Republicans

politically and is unable to effectively advocate for his district because he no longer serves on committees. (King has claimed he may be able to reclaim his committee spots in the next Congress.) There's been limited public polling of the race, but what is available shows a tight contest, with the possibilities that minor candidates could deny Feenstra the votes to seize the nomination from King.

Democrats would prefer that Scholten face King, a weaker candidate, in the November general election.

The Tiny Primary With A Big Sky Impact

Third-party nominations almost never matter in American politics, but the race in Montana might be a rare exception. Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock's late entrance into the race against GOP Sen. Steve Daines instantly moved this reelection contest from afterthought to the political center stage. Bullock, who has a high approval rating and has won statewide twice, is seen as the only Democrat in the state who could defeat Daines. Operatives in both parties believe the race could make or break control of the Senate.

This primary is expected to be close, and third-party voters could be crucial. Montana Democratic Sen. Jon Tester won in both 2006 and 2012 with less than half of the vote because Libertarian candidates drew small but significant percentages. Republicans

are hoping to damage Bullock's chances in a similar fashion ? the Montana GOP spent at least \$100,000 to help the Green Party qualify for the ballot, hoping to draw away a crucial sliver of liberal-leaning voters.

Here's the twist: Two people are running for the Green Party's nomination. One, retired college professor Dennis Daneke, has promised to drop out of the race if nominated in order to clear the way for Bullock. Go Green Montana, a PAC linked to a GOP consulting firm, meanwhile, has spent tens of thousands of dollars promoting rival candidate Wendie Fredrickson and calling Daneke a "puppet of big Democrats."

In 2018, a mere 1,500 people voted in the Green Party primary for Senate. A similar number of people could end up having an enormous sway over which party ends up controlling the Senate in 2021.

Elsewhere in Montana, there are competitive primaries in both parties for the gubernatorial nomination ? Democrats have held the state's governorship for the past 16 years, even as Republicans have dominated on the presidential level and seized control of the state legislature. On the GOP side, Rep. Greg Gianforte ? who made national news for assaulting a reporter in 2017 ? has deployed his personal fortune and is now favored against Attorney General Tim Fox. The Democratic primary, meanwhile, pits Lt. Gov Mike

Cooney against businessperson Whitney Williams. Cooney has the backing of Tester and Bullock, while EMILY's List has spent aggressively for Williams.

Iowa's Democratic Senate Primary

Theresa Greenfield, the candidate endorsed by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, is expected to win. But she needs to earn more than 35% of the vote in a four-way race to avoid having to secure the nomination at a convention later this summer.

Iowa, where GOP Sen. Joni Ernst is running for reelection, is expected to be a major Senate battleground ? both parties have reserved millions of dollars of television time in the state for the fall. Republicans hope a weaker-than-expected performance by Greenfield could prevent the party from focusing its fire on Ernst early. The DSCC's early endorsement of Greenfield, a political neophyte and small-business owner who made an aborted run for Congress in 2018, irritated some local Democrats. Two men have succeeded in running relatively serious campaigns for the nomination: retired Navy Vice Adm. Mike Franken and businessperson Eddie Mauro. While national Democratic groups allied with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer have spent more than \$10 million boosting Greenfield, Franken managed to generate buzz by earning the endorsement

of the Des Moines Register, and Mauro has run ads attacking her. EMILY's List ? rare among Democratic groups for its willingness to go negative during primaries ? has aired ads attacking both men.

Democrats Meddle in New Mexico

One of the toughest House seats for Democrats to hold in 2020 will be New Mexico's 2nd District, which covers the rural southern half of the state, where the economy is based around oil and gas production. Democratic Rep. Xochitl Torres Small, a 35-year-old Latina lawyer, defeated Republican Yvette Herrell by fewer than 4,000 votes in 2018, one of the best years for Democrats in recent political memory. This time around, Herrell is battling businessperson Claire Chase for the GOP nomination, and Democrats have decided Herrell would be the weaker candidate because of her voting record in New Mexico's legislature. Two Democratic outside groups ? one affiliated with EMILY's List, the other a little-known super PAC ? have paid for advertising highlighting Facebook posts Chase made insulting Trump as an "asshole unworthy of the office." At the same time, Republicans allied with Chase have fired back with ads alleging Herrell plotted to deny Trump the GOP nomination. Democrats are hoping the contentious primary, which was already nasty before their meddling, will increase Torres Small's chances of holding the seat.

Biden sharpens contrast with Trump: 'I won't traffic in fear and division'



(News Agencies) Joe Biden issued a blistering condemnation of President Donald Trump on Tuesday and pledged to offer a break from the "selfishness and fear" that he said have marked Trump's tenure in office and response to protests against racism and police brutality. In a speech in Philadelphia, the presumptive Democratic 2020 presidential nominee addressed systemic racism and empathized with those who are protesting across the nation in the wake of the police killing of George Floyd in Minnesota in ways Trump has not. His remarks offered a striking contrast to Trump that came about 16 hours after peaceful protesters in a park outside the White House were hit with tear gas so that Trump could cross the park and visit St. John's Church for a photo opportunity — a move that the Episcopal bishop that oversees the church later condemned.

"I won't traffic in fear and division. I won't fan the flames of hate. I'll seek to heal the racial wounds that have long plagued our country, not use them for political gain. I'll do my job and I'll take responsibility — I won't blame others," Biden said. It was Biden's first trip outside Delaware in months after the coronavirus pandemic put a halt to in-person campaign activities. It came amid protests in major cities across the nation — accompanied by looting and property damage in some cities, as well as police violence targeting protesters.

6 Atlanta Officers Charged After Brutally Pulling Students From Car

(News Agencies) ATLANTA—Six Atlanta police officers have been charged after a dramatic video showed authorities pulling two young people from a car during protests over the death of George Floyd, a prosecutor said Tuesday. Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard announced the charges during a news conference. "I feel a little safer now that these monsters are off the street and no longer able to terrorize anyone else," said Messiah Young, who was dragged from the vehicle along with his girlfriend, Taniyah Pilgrim. The Saturday night incident first gained attention from video online and on local news. Throughout, the couple can be heard screaming and asking



officers what is happening. Five of the officers are charged with aggravated assault, in addition to other charges. Two of the officers, Investigator Ivory Streeter and Investigator Mark Gardner, were fired earlier this week. Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said Pilgrim was released without charges. She said Young, was released, too, and she's ordering the charges

against him dropped. She didn't specify what charges he faced. A police report says Young was charged with attempting to elude police and driving with a suspended license. Dramatic body camera video that police released Sunday night shows police taking another young man into custody in a downtown street alongside a line of stopped cars. The man

is pleading with police to let him go, saying he didn't do anything. Young, sitting in the driver's seat of a car stopped in the street holds up his phone, appearing to shoot video as an officer approaches and pulls the driver's side door open. Young pulls the door shut and says repeatedly, "I'm not dying today." He urges the officers to release the other man and let him get in the car as the dark sedan advances a bit. The car gets stuck in traffic and officers run up to both sides of the car shouting orders. An officer uses a stun gun on Pilgrim as she's trying to get out of the car and then officers pull her from the vehicle. Another officer yells at Young to put the car in park and open the window.

Surgeon General warns of coronavirus outbreaks from Floyd protests

US Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams said to expect new outbreaks of the coronavirus resulting from the nationwide protests over the death of George Floyd that have seen thousands of people gather in close proximity.

(News Agencies) While a majority of protesters nationwide have worn masks and face coverings as they demand justice for Floyd, an African-American man who died last week while in police custody, the large crowds have made it difficult to social distance. The coronavirus pandemic has also disproportionately affected communities of color, an issue Adams has highlighted. "I remain concerned about the public health consequences both of individual and institutional racism [and] people out protesting in a way that is harmful to themselves and to

their communities," Adams told Politico in an interview



published Monday. "Based on the way the disease spreads, there is every reason to expect that we will see new clusters and potentially new outbreaks moving forward," he added. Adams is the latest government

leader to express concern over whether the protests could spread coronavirus, as he and other health groups are caught in a balancing act of trying to advise Americans during a pandemic and raise awareness of how racism puts the black community's health at risk. "You understand the anger, you hope that we can find ways that really can help people channel their anger into meaningful steps forward," Adams, who's African-American, told Politico. "There is going to be a lot to do after this, even to try and get the

communities of color back to where they need to be for people to be able to recover from Covid, and for people to be able to recover from the shutdown and to be able to prosper." On Saturday, Adams said there's "no easy prescription to heal our Nation, or to take away the pain people are feeling" — a pain that he too is experiencing as a black man. "We won't fix or remove all the obstacles and stressors that are affecting people's health and wellbeing — especially ones like racism — over night. That doesn't mean we mustn't try at all," he posted on Twitter.



How coronavirus hypocrisy is tarnishing Boris Johnson's government

(News Agencies) When British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was fighting for his life last month, his chief adviser Dominic Cummings was dealing with his own Covid-related battle. Now the circumstances of Cummings' case, and in particular how and where he chose to deal with it, pose a challenge to the health of the British government and may even threaten the UK's capacity to swiftly fight off the virus. Johnson

has proved staunch in his defense of his close ally since the latter was accused of breaking the UK's strict lockdown by driving 260 miles with his wife, who he admits was displaying some symptoms of coronavirus, and young son to be near his extended family. He suggested the adviser followed "the instincts of every father..." in seeking help with child care in the event the couple became too ill to care for their son. In

quarantine-fatigued Britain, however, where many have agonized over the command to stay away from frightened, sick and dying relatives, the Prime Minister's words have not gone down well. Highly unusually, several of his own Conservative MPs are now calling for Cummings to be sacked, and even the government-friendly Daily Mail asked: "What Planet Are They On?" of his decision to stand by his man. In a sign of

the strength of feeling, more than a dozen Church of England bishops have condemned both Johnson and his adviser. One, Nick Baines, the Bishop of Leeds, asked on Twitter: "[D]o we accept being lied to, patronised and treated by a PM as mugs?" — implying he took a dim view of the Prime Minister's claim that Mr. Cummings had not broken the letter or spirit of the quarantine laws through his actions.

Nigerian woman brutally raped, murdered inside church while studying: reports

(News Agencies) A 22-year-old Nigerian woman was brutally raped and killed after she went inside a church looking for a space to study. The crime has sparked outrage and horror across the African nation, as hundreds demand justice. Vera Uwaila Omozuwa, a microbiology student at the University of Benin, went inside an empty Redeemed Christian Church of God, or RCCG, church in Benin City, southern Nigeria, to get some studying done Wednesday. Hours later, a church security guard found her unconscious in a pool of blood, her family told local newspapers. She died in a hospital on Saturday afternoon. Her family said she also had been raped. A Nigerian police spokesperson said the force would "bring the perpetrators of the callous act to book in the shortest possible time." In a statement on Twitter, RCCG said: "As a church we are deeply touched and condemn in absolute terms this evil visited on an innocent girl as we have equally condemn any act of violence and abuse against women." In a separate statement, the church's global leader, Pastor Enoch Adeboye said: "All I can do at this time is to pray for the family of Omozuwa and do everything possible working with relevant authorities to bring the perpetrators to book. I and members of my Family condemn this act strongly and urge everyone to stay calm as we are already looking into the matter and cooperating with the police to establish the facts of the shocking incident. #justiceforuwa"

Secret Service tightens security around White House

(News Agencies) The U.S. Secret Service is tightening security around the White House Tuesday morning, after protests turned violent in the nation's capital and across the country in recent days. A USSS source told Fox News that the agency has installed anti-rioting fences around the White House and implemented road closures. "They're expanding the perimeter," a source told Fox News. By Tuesday morning, a nearly eight-foot-high chain-link fence was installed along the perimeter of Lafayette Square, preventing people from being able to even come close to the park itself. The installment came after waist-high barricades that were in place Monday proved to be ineffective. A traffic advisory early Tuesday also said certain roads around the White House and the park would be "closed to vehicular

traffic until further notice," and urged the public to "use alternate routes." Secret Service agents and FBI agents were seen in uniform Tuesday morning guarding the area. Riots escalated in Washington, D.C., and across the country Sunday night in response to Minneapolis man George Floyd's death in police custody last week. U.S. Marshals and Drug Enforcement Administration

(DEA) agents were deployed into the streets of D.C. to help beef up security alongside local police, Secret Service and Homeland Security agents at the direction of the Justice Department. Additionally, the entire Washington, D.C. National Guard was being called in to help with the response to protests outside the White House and elsewhere in the nation's capital, according to two Defense Department officials.

With NYC under attack, de Blasio's handling of NYPD fuels long-running tensions with police

(News Agencies) As New York City was besieged once again by rioters on Monday night, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's combative handling of the NYPD is fueling long-running tensions with New York's Finest -- who have been increasingly vocal about what they see as a hardline on cops and a soft line on criminal elements. "YOU DID THIS!" former NYPD Commissioner Bernard Kerik tweeted, linking to video of a cop being

hit by a car. "You have allowed the thugs to take over our city with your 'soft approach.'" On Monday night alone there were 700 arrests, with half a dozen police vehicles vandalized, according to the NYPD. That's as stores and parks were taken over by marauding protesters looting and causing significant damage. De Blasio was widely criticized for having placed a late curfew time of 11 p.m., by which time a

significant amount of looting had already occurred. "The Mayor in NYC has lost control of the mob and of the city," former Mayor Rudy Giuliani tweeted. "The Mayor is preventing the NYPD to take the actions necessary to stop brutal attacks on police and citizens." De Blasio has suffered from poor relations with the cops for years. Cops turned their backs on him at an NYPD funeral in 2014 after the execution of two police

officers -- which cops blamed in part on de Blasio's anti-police rhetoric. Now, with riots tearing through parts of New York, de Blasio has offered some praise to the police fighting it out on the ground, but has taken a number of shots at them even as they seek to defend the city. On Monday he infuriated police by saying that a cop who drew his gun amid protesters should have his gun and badge taken from him "today."

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ਮੋਦੀ ਕਾ ਏਲਾਨ-ਏ-ਜੰਗ

ਬੂੰਦ-ਬੂੰਦ ਕੀ ਤਰਸੇਗਾ ਪਾਕ

ਗੁਜਰਾਤ ਆ ਰਾਹ ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ, ਹੀਰੋ ਦੇ ਦਿਨ ਨੀ ਕੀ ਗੋਲੀਬਾਰੀ, ਭਾਰਤ ਨੇ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਕਟਾੜਾ ਜਵਾਬ

ਜ਼ਾਹਿਦ ਖਾਨ ਨੇ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਵਾਬ

ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਆਲੋਚਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੋਦੀ ਦੇ ਏਲਾਨ-ਏ-ਜੰਗ ਨੂੰ 'ਗੋਲੀਬਾਰੀ' ਦਾ ਏਲਾਨ-ਏ-ਜੰਗ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ। ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਆਲੋਚਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੋਦੀ ਦੇ ਏਲਾਨ-ਏ-ਜੰਗ ਨੂੰ 'ਗੋਲੀਬਾਰੀ' ਦਾ ਏਲਾਨ-ਏ-ਜੰਗ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ। ਪਾਕਿਸਤਾਨ ਦੇ ਆਲੋਚਕਾਂ ਨੇ ਮੋਦੀ ਦੇ ਏਲਾਨ-ਏ-ਜੰਗ ਨੂੰ 'ਗੋਲੀਬਾਰੀ' ਦਾ ਏਲਾਨ-ਏ-ਜੰਗ ਦੱਸਿਆ ਹੈ।

ਮਾਨੀਟਰਿੰਗ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਖੋਜ ਨਿਵਾਰ

ਅਮੇਰਿਕਾ ਨੇ ਏਂਟਰੀ ਦੇਣੇ ਦੇ ਕਿੱਧਰਾ ਝੰਕਾਰ

ਅਮੇਰਿਕਾ ਨੇ ਏਂਟਰੀ ਦੇਣੇ ਦੇ ਕਿੱਧਰਾ ਝੰਕਾਰ

ਅਮੇਰਿਕਾ ਨੇ ਏਂਟਰੀ ਦੇਣੇ ਦੇ ਕਿੱਧਰਾ ਝੰਕਾਰ

ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ

Since April 2005 Editor: Sharnjit Singh Thind PUNJABI DUNIYA Weekly

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ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਉਡਾਰੀ ਮਾਰਨ ਲਈ ਖਰਚੇ 27000 ਕਰੋੜ

ਨਵੇਂ ਸਾਲ ਮੌਕੇ ਅਮਰੀਕੀ ਫੌਜ ਨੇ ਬੋਬਾ ਦਾ ਟਵੀਟ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਮੰਗੀ ਮੁਆਫੀ

ਅਮਰੀਕੀ ਫੌਜ ਨੇ ਬੋਬਾ ਦਾ ਟਵੀਟ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਮੰਗੀ ਮੁਆਫੀ

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Two ex-Minneapolis police officers charged in George Floyd's death cast blame on more senior colleague



faces second-degree murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter charges and is scheduled to make his first appearance Monday.

On Thursday, Hennepin County District Judge Paul Scoggin set bail for each of the other three at \$1 million without conditions, or \$750,000 with conditions. But their initial

appearance, normally routine, turned contentious. "What is my client supposed to do but follow what the [senior] officer says?" Lane's attorney, Earl Gray, argued in court. "The strength of this case, your honor, in my opinion is extremely weak." Assistant Attorney General Matthew Frank, who is prosecuting the case with

assistance from the Hennepin County Attorney's Office, argued for high bail amounts, noting that the charges were "very serious" and had drawn such intense public interest that the former officers were a flight risk. Each defense attorney rejected the claim, and asked for between \$50,000 and \$250,000 in bail.

A whistleblower just took home \$50 million—the biggest award the SEC has ever paid

(News Agencies) New York :The US Securities and Exchange Commission has paid out its largest-ever whistleblower award — nearly \$50 million. The whistleblower tipped off the agency to a currency manipulation scheme at a massive bank, resulting in a "successful enforcement action," the SEC said Thursday. The Wall Street Journal, which conducted an investigation about the scheme, reported the whistleblower is a trader from Bank of New York Mellon (BKPRC) who alerted the SEC about the bank's reported pattern of "overcharging big clients on currency trades." The trader assisted with the SEC's investigation for more than a decade. The bank was accused of giving pension funds less-than-desirable exchange rates, helping the bank make massive profits from the difference, the newspaper reported. A source told the Journal the whistleblower's name is Grant Wilson. The SEC noted in its release that confidentiality agreements

restrict it from naming whistleblower's name or identity. "This matter was resolved more than five years ago and we are pleased it is behind us," a BNY Mellon spokesperson told CNN Business. The bank, which ended up paying more than \$700 million in fines for the case in 2015, didn't deny the accusations in its prior comment on the case. "We are pleased to put these legacy FX matters behind us, which is in the best interest of our company and our constituents," BNY Mellon said at the time, according to multiple reports. The SEC said Thursday's payout brings its total award to more than \$500 million to 83 individuals in roughly the decade since the program was created. "Whistleblowers have proven to be a critical tool in the enforcement arsenal to combat fraud and protect investors." Jane Norberg, chief of the SEC's Office of the Whistleblower, said in a statement.

(News Agencies) The booking mugs of the three former Minneapolis officers charged Wednesday with aiding and abetting murder. From left are J Alexander Kueng, Thomas Lane and Tou Thao. Derek Chauvin, who was previously charged, had a count of second. Attorneys for two former rookie Minneapolis police officers on Thursday rejected accusations that their clients aided and abetted the killing of George Floyd, casting blame instead on a senior officer who allegedly ignored his younger counterparts. Early signs of a legal defense strategy began to emerge when former officers J Alexander Kueng, Thomas K. Lane and Tou Thao made their first court appearances in the Memorial Day killing of Floyd, a 46-year-old black man who died in police custody. Each officer is charged with one count of aiding and abetting second-degree murder and aiding and abetting second-degree manslaughter. The charges allege that they did not intervene when their former colleague and 19-year police veteran Derek Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, all while Floyd pleaded with them and told them he couldn't breathe. All four were fired after Floyd's death. Chauvin, 44, of Oakdale, was charged last week and is being held in lieu of \$1 million bail. He

Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW: If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you might have it, follow the steps below to help protect other people in your home and community.

Stay home except to get medical care

- **Stay home:** People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to recover at home. Do not leave, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- **Stay in touch with your doctor.** Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you feel worse or you think it is an emergency.
- **Avoid public transportation:** Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.



Separate yourself from other people in your home, this is known as home isolation

- **Stay away from others:** As much as possible, you should stay in a specific "sick room" and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- **Limit contact with pets & animals:** You should restrict contact with pets and other animals, just like you would around other people.
 - Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people with the virus limit contact with animals until more information is known.
 - When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick with COVID-19. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with them. See COVID-19 and Animals for more information.



Call ahead before visiting your doctor

- **Call ahead:** If you have a medical appointment, call your doctor's office or emergency department, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.



Wear a facemask if you are sick

- **If you are sick:** You should wear a facemask when you are around other people and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- **If you are caring for others:** If the person who is sick is not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live in the home should stay in a different room. When caregivers enter the room of the sick person, they should wear a facemask. Visitors, other than caregivers, are not recommended.



Cover your coughs and sneezes

- **Cover:** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- **Dispose:** Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- **Wash hands:** Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Clean your hands often

- **Wash hands:** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- **Hand sanitizer:** If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- **Soap and water:** Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Avoid touching:** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid sharing personal household items

- **Do not share:** Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.



[cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

CS 114120-A 05/20/2020

STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



[cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

114115-A March 16, 2020 1:02 PM

Hours after George Floyd memorial, protesters call for justice in 10th night of demonstrations

Hundreds marched across the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City in a massive show of mourning for Floyd, who died May 25 while in Minneapolis police custody.

By Corky Siemaszko

Protesters in cities across the U.S. hit the streets for a 10th straight night Thursday just hours after George Floyd's family condemned the "pandemic of racism and discrimination" at a memorial service for the man who died while a police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

When the two-hour service was over and Floyd's coffin was wheeled out of the sanctuary at North Central University in Minneapolis, the thousand or so waiting outside broke into chants of "We can't breathe" and "No justice, no peace. Prosecute the police!"

In New York City, the site of some of the biggest protests against police brutality, thousands gathered peacefully in the afternoon at Cadman Plaza in Brooklyn to remember Floyd. Later, dozens of protesters gathered at Washington Square Park in Manhattan while police watched warily from the periphery. Hundreds more marched across the Brooklyn Bridge in a massive show of mourning for Floyd, 46, who died May 25 while in Minneapolis police custody. Just about everybody appeared to be heeding organizers' warnings to



wear masks although admonitions to social distance fell by the wayside as the marchers crossed the best known bridge in a crowded city where more than 20,000 people have died from the coronavirus.

Outside Manhattan's Bellevue Hospital, doctors and other health care workers who have been lauded for weeks for their efforts to combat the coronavirus pandemic, returned the favor by gathering outside and taking a knee in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. "This protest means so much to me, how we all came together as one in the hospital for this cause," mortuary technician Robert

Almanzar said. Dozens of protesters were later arrested in Manhattan and The Bronx when the 8 p.m. curfew kicked in and they refused to leave the street. In Washington, workers continued to wall off more of the White House complex to keep demonstrators at bay, and by Thursday they had extended new fencing down 17th Street from Pennsylvania Avenue to Constitution Avenue. The reinforced fence-building went into overdrive after demonstrators breached a temporary barrier last Friday, prompting the Secret Service to rush President Donald Trump to a bunker inside the White House for his safety.

When asked by NBC News why the additional fencing was necessary, White House Deputy Press Secretary Judd Deere replied, "The White House does not comment on security protocols and decisions." Metropolitan Police Chief Peter Newsham said the department was preparing for big numbers of "peaceful demonstrators coming to exercise their First Amendment rights" on Saturday. "We have a lot of public open source information to suggest that the event on this upcoming Saturday may be one of the largest that we've had in the

city," he said. Still, in a sign that tensions might be easing, NBC News first reported Thursday that some of the more than 1,600 active-duty soldiers who were called to the nation's capital in case Trump invoked the Insurrection Act to deal with demonstrators may soon go back to their bases. Large protests were also being planned for Saturday in Los Angeles, where in recent days the police have come under criticism for cracking down hard on demonstrators after several troubling videos have worked their way onto the internet.

In Chicago, another city where relations between the local police and African-Americans have long been fraught, Mayor Lori Lightfoot denounced vigilantism after groups of white men with baseball bats who were seen Wednesday night patrolling the streets of Bridgeport, a once Irish-enclave that was the home of the Daley political family. "I absolutely support neighbors being vigilant as to what's going on on the streets and in their blocks," Lightfoot said. "But taking up arms, that leads to chaos and we're not supporting vigilantism in the city of Chicago under any circumstances."

'Not stopping': Defiant New York City protesters march through curfew

The citywide curfew, which is in place through Sunday and was moved earlier from the previous night, was instated to prevent the widespread damage and destruction that has filled the city's streets over the last two nights after largely peaceful dayside protests.



(News Agencies) An 8 p.m. curfew didn't stop thousands of defiant demonstrators from marching through the streets of New York City throughout the night Tuesday, though some of the rampant destruction seen over the past few nights was quelled.

The citywide curfew, which is in place through Sunday and was moved earlier from the

previous night, was instated to prevent the widespread damage and destruction that has filled the city's streets over the last two nights after largely peaceful dayside protests. Mayor Bill de Blasio doubled down on a citywide curfew, but rejected urging from President Donald Trump and an offer from Gov. Andrew Cuomo to bring in the National Guard. "Everyone,

time to go home so we can keep people safe," he said on WINS-AM radio shortly after the curfew took effect. But demonstrators continued winding through the streets, mostly in Manhattan and Brooklyn, as part of ongoing nationwide protests following the May 25 death of George Floyd and other recent racially charged killings. "I'm surprised," said Risha Munoz, on Manhattan's Upper West Side, where at points they were greeted with cheers and horns by onlookers in building windows. "I didn't think they were gonna let us go on, but we just kept on moving and we're not stopping." "Something has to break, and it's not going to be us," said Evan Kutcher, one of hundreds of demonstrators who stood outside the Barclays Center chanting Floyd's name Tuesday evening. Police began making arrests

around 9 p.m. and shut down parts of the West Side Highway in lower Manhattan, blocking it off to huge crowds of protesters. The police department announced it would not allow vehicle traffic south of 96th Street in Manhattan after curfew, though residents, essential workers, buses and truck deliveries were exempt. "We're going to have a tough few days. We're going to beat it back," de Blasio, a Democrat, said. Jane Rossi said she witnessed officers rip a man out of his car and arrest him in Chelsea around 10:45 p.m. The car was behind a group of several hundred protesters that had roamed Manhattan peacefully since leaving Trump Tower at 8 p.m. Tensions had risen moments earlier when some in the group began trying to damage a bike rental

station and banged on the windows of a JCPenny's. The vast majority of the crowd moved to stop the them. Officers surrounded the car and arrested the driver moments later. "They were just driving behind the protesters making sure that we were safe," Rossi said. "They were part of the protest." Just after midnight Wednesday, most of the city's streets were cleared aside from police patrolling, especially in hot-spot areas for demonstrations in areas of Brooklyn and Manhattan. There was a heavy police presence in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Crown Heights, where authorities say police fatally shot a man after responding to reports of shots fired. NYPD Chief of Department Terence Monahan said the officer-involved shooting was not connected to the protests.

If you're planning to take part in protests, know your rights.

Every American has the right to demonstrate peacefully. It's right there in the First Amendment. But it's not as simple as showing up with a sign. There are some measures officials can use to limit protests, and it's easy to accidentally tiptoe into legally murky territory if you don't know the specifics.

So before you go, read up.

Timothy Zick is a professor of Government and Citizenship at the College of William & Mary Law School. He specializes in constitutional law and the First Amendment, and he's written several books about both, including 2009's "Speech Out of Doors: Preserving First Amendment Liberties in Public Spaces." Emerson Sykes is a staff attorney with the ACLU's Speech, Technology and Privacy Project, who studies free speech protections under the First Amendment. Previously, he worked at the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law to protect free speech in Africa. The First Amendment gives Americans the right to assemble peacefully and air our grievances. Historically, we've relied on protests to hold power to account -- think the March on Washington in 1963 for civil rights or the March for Our Lives demonstration in 2018 for gun control. The government can't stop you from peacefully protesting, but they can impose some restrictions on the time, place and manner of the protest -- for example, barring protesters from walking onto a public highway or instituting a curfew that affects when protests end, Sykes said.

They can't block a protest simply because of its content, though. If protests are planned in advance, organizers may obtain a permit so law enforcement can block off public spaces for them to demonstrate, Sykes said. There are protections, though, for "spontaneous protests" that spawn in response to current events, like the protests that spawned after George Floyd's death, he said.

1. What are my rights as a protester?

The First Amendment does not continue to protect protests that escalate to violence or the destruction of private or public property, he said. That's when law enforcement has the

obligation to respond and deescalate threats of violence, he said.

2. Where can and can't I protest?

A slew of public spaces are OK for protests -- sidewalks, city parks, streets and other public forums are usually lawful, Sykes said. Some states require you file a permit to block off streets, and the right to assembly doesn't give you the automatic right to march on a public highway, Zick said. People can be arrested or cited for blocking passage, he said. On private property, you don't have the right to assemble.

Zick called it the "no man's land" in terms of the First Amendment, and police can move you off the property and keep you from demonstrating there. They may even have that right to move you even if you're on public property. Special rules apply to government buildings because protests may disrupt business going on inside, Sykes said. If the protest was permitted, you should be allowed to stay where you are -- but leaving the permitted protest site may unintentionally lead you into prohibited places, he said.

3. Can police or local leaders tell us to disperse?

It depends, Sykes said: If a mayor pleads with people to go home, you have no legal obligation to comply. But police and local government can order you to leave, say, if they've imposed a curfew, as long as they give you ample notice to leave safely, Sykes said. If you stay on the street past a curfew -- or if you protest on private property -- you may be cited or arrested.

4. What can I record?

You have the right to take photos and videos of what's happening at a protest in a public place, and you can record police, too. Different states have different rules about audio recording and sharing that without the consent of the people whose voices you recorded, but the visual portion of videos and photos are always protected by the First Amendment, Sykes said. If you're interfering with legitimate police operations, they can ask you to move. It's best to videotape them from a safe distance. Police can't ask you to give them your phone or forcibly confiscate it without a search warrant, which they would've

needed to obtain from a judge, he said. If they demand your phone, though, comply to avoid escalating the confrontation. Afterward, you can file a police misconduct complaint or contact the ACLU, he said.

5. Someone took a picture of my face at a public protest. Is that allowed?

At a public protest in the United States, you consent to a photo just by being there. Anyone who photographs you protesting in a public place may have a right to use your image, and you may see images of yourself in the media or online, Zick said.

6. What should I pack to stay safe at a protest?

Pack light, Sykes said. He suggests you bring water and a snack at minimum. If you bring a bag, prepare for it to be searched. In a pandemic, wearing a mask can keep you from breathing in droplets containing coronavirus. Coming within close contact of other protesters could expose you to their spit or sneezes, which may carry the coronavirus. And if you fear you'll be arrested and will need legal help, memorize or write on your arm the number to a local or national law organization that could assist you in getting out of jail and handling your case afterward, Sykes said.

7. What can -- and can't -- police do during a protest?

It's the responsibility of police to protect your right to peaceful assembly. They're also empowered to uphold law and order, which gives them broad authority to deescalate threats of violence how they see fit. How they deescalate that violence depends on local laws and the circumstances under which they use them, which can be difficult to prove in court if you believe they used force unlawfully, Zick said. Like Sykes said, police do not have the right to search your phone or personal devices without a warrant, which only a judge can grant them. They also don't have permission to delete content from your phone, so if they tell you to delete a video you took or delete it themselves, they're in the wrong, he said.

8. What can I do if a police officer stops me? Stay calm. Don't resist. Ask them if you're free to go after speaking with them, Sykes said. If they say yes, calmly walk away and rejoin

the protest if it's safe to. If they say no, and they detain you, don't resist and keep calm, Sykes said. Ask them what crime you're suspected of committing.

9. What can I do if I get arrested?

Some people get arrested intentionally as a form of civil disobedience. But whether or not you planned to get handcuffed, you shouldn't resist arrest, Sykes said. It's the best chance you have to stay safe. During your arrest, you can remain silent, as is your right, Sykes said. In some states, police are permitted to know your name if they ask, but they don't have the right to know where you're from or your citizenship status, he said. You can also ask for a lawyer -- remember that number you held onto for legal support. If you're booked into jail, call a lawyer immediately, Sykes said. Police can't listen in on your call if you're phoning a lawyer, but they can listen in if you're calling a friend or family member, so be aware, he said.

10. What can I do if I feel law enforcement or other officials violated my rights?

You can sue for civil rights violations. You're allowed to do that under Section 1983 of federal law, which covers violations by state actors and police who violate First Amendment rights to assemble, speak and petition. Some protesters file large class-

action suits that are occasionally successful, and sometimes authorities can pay damages when they decide litigation isn't worth it, Zick said. But qualified immunity can shield officers from civil liability if they didn't violate a clearly established law, he said. Qualified immunity is a legal doctrine that protects police officers accused of interfering with constitutional rights from being liable unless they violated a clearly established and defined law. The lines are blurred at protests of what police are allowed to do and what constitutes overreaching, so "clearly established" constitutional rights are difficult to determine, Zick said. In this way, many police officers are protected by qualified immunity, Sykes said. "Those cases are difficult to win and expensive in terms of personal time and resources," Zick said. "Naturally, I think a lot of the protesters whose rights may well have been violated may not pursue cases."

11. Can my workplace fire me if they find out I attended a protest? That depends on the contract you made with your employer when you were hired, but yes, it's possible, Sykes said. You have stronger constitutional protections for what you do outside of work, but depending on what you agreed on when you were hired, a company may be able to terminate your employment, he said.

Leading India to full independence

the corporatisation of the Ordnance Factory Board, ensuring the delivery of the state-of-the-art Rafale fighter plane from France and the induction of the indigenously-built fighter jet Tejas into the Indian Air Force. I have flown in both these jet fighters and am proud of India's defence achievements over the last year. Today, as the world faces the greatest threat in recent history to mankind, the coronavirus pandemic, the PM has displayed both vigilance and competence in fighting this by imposing a strict lockdown at the right time. Today, migrant workers and farmers are going through very difficult challenges. But the government has acted with utmost sensitivity and that is commendable. From ensuring the direct transfer of money into the accounts of poor people and providing them free food grains, to taking inputs from not only politicians but all sections of society, the PM has set the bar for efficient administration very high. Modi displayed his capability for turning challenges into opportunities by implementing, over the last year, several decisions such as allowing farmers to sell their crops anywhere; introducing a one-nation one-ration card system for labourers; changing the definition of small and medium enterprises; and developing India as a major repair maintenance and overhauling hub for aircraft. The effects of all this will be seen in the decades to come. This is the centenary year of the death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak. He raised the slogan of complete independence for India. Given the kind of work that Modi has undertaken in the service of the nation, it can be said with confidence that the Swarajya dream of Tilak at the beginning of the 20th century will most likely be achieved by the third decade of the 21st century.

Our leaders have dithered and lied about the riots as the nation goes up in flames

Progress. Burning buildings, teargas, dead bodies, the screaming injured, criminal anarchy -- to the Democratic Party of Fairfax, that is called progress. Celebrity after celebrity has weighed in to agree on social media. From his fortified compound, basketball star LeBron James has used his accounts to encourage more rioting. Bernie Sanders surrogate Shaun King has done the same. So has Black Lives Matter leader, DeRay Mckesson. Colin Kaepernick openly calls for violence. Here's a quote: "The cries for peace will rain down and when they do, they will land on deaf ears," he says approvingly. Imagine shouting fire in a crowded theater, a theater with 325 million people in it called our country. That's what they've been doing and have been doing for days.

When the violence began, what we needed more than anything was clarity in the middle of this. It's hard to see when the tear gas starts. Someone in America needed to tell the truth to the country. Instead, almost all of our so-called conservative leaders joined the left's chorus, as if on cue. On Friday, as American cities were being destroyed by mobs, the vice president United States refused to say anything specific about the riots we were watching on television. Instead, Mike Pence scolded America for its racism. Carly Fiorina, once a leading Republican presidential candidate tweeted that -- and we're quoting, "It's white America that now must see the truth, speak the truth and act on the truth." Meanwhile, Kay Coles James, who is the president of the Heritage Foundation -- that's the largest conservative think tank in the country. You may have sent them money, hopefully for the last time. Kay Coles James wrote a long scream denouncing America as an irredeemably racist nation: "How many times will protests have to occur?"

Got that? "Have to occur." Like the rest of us caused this by our sinfulness. The message from our leaders on the right, as on the left, was unambiguous: Don't complain. You deserve what's happening to you. No one jumped in more forcefully or seemed angrier in America than former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley. "Tonight I turned on the news and I am heartbroken," Haley wrote. "It's important to understand that the death of George Ford was personal and painful for many. In order to heal, it needs to be personal and painful for everyone." ut wait a second, you may be wondering, how am I "personally responsible" for the behavior of a Minneapolis police officer? I've never even been to Minneapolis, you may think to yourself. And why is some politician telling me I'm required to be upset about it? Those are all good questions. Nikki Haley did not answer those questions explaining. It is not her strong suit -- that would require thinking.

What Nikki Haley does best is moral blackmail. During the 2016 campaign, she compared Donald Trump to the racist mass murderer, Dylann Roof. How is Donald Trump similar to a serial killer? Nikki Haley never explained that. She wasn't trying to educate anyone. Her only goal was political advantage. Nikki Haley is exceptionally good at getting what she wants. She is happy to denounce you as a racist in order to get it. She just did. In this case, Nikki Haley's wish came true. The riots were indeed "personal and painful" for everyone. And then the pain kept increasing. Two days after she wrote that, dozens of American cities had been thoroughly trashed, some destroyed. A country already on the brink of recession suddenly faced economic collapse. An already fearful population locked down for months because of the coronavirus had been thoroughly and completely terrorized. Mission accomplished. Let's hope Nikki Haley is pleased. We've now atoned. How did the Trump administration respond to the horrors going on around us? Well, Sunday morning, the country's national security adviser, Robert O'Brien, did a live interview from the White House lawn. Here's how it began:

Robert O'Brien, U.S. National Security Adviser: First thing I want to say, on behalf of the president --he said this to the family -- but our hearts and prayers are going out to the Floyd family. We mourn with them and we grieve with them and what happened there was horrific and I can't even imagine what that poor family is going through as his videos are played over and over again. That should have never happened in America and it's a tragic thing. The president said that from the start, and we're with the family and as the President said, we're with the peaceful protesters. "We're with the peaceful protesters," O'Brien announced. Really? Can you be more specific about that? Who are you talking about exactly? Is it the people spitting foam as they scream, "F the police"? Is it the one standing next to the arsonist doing nothing as they set fire to buildings? Is it the kids laughing as they film the looting and the beatings on their iPhones? Maybe it's the famous people in L.A. who are raising money online to support the rioters? They're all just peaceful protesters. Yes, we support that. It's who we are.

What about the president? Where is he during all of this? Well, on Friday night, after the show, Leland Vitter and a cameraman headed to Lafayette Square in Washington to cover what was happening outside the White House. Here's what happened next. Reporter: A Fox News reporter is getting chased out by these -- by the George Floyd protesters here in front of -- at Lafayette Park.

Look, there's water being thrown on the reporter here. This is just -- they took his mic. The just threw the mic at the reporter here. As you see

guys, things are spiraling here quick at the protest. That was in Lafayette Square in the center of our capital city. The tape raised a troubling question: If you can't keep a Fox News correspondent from getting attacked directly across the street from your house, how can you protect my family? How are you going to protect the country? How hard are you trying? On Twitter the next morning, the president reassured America that he and his family were just fine. The federally funded bodyguards had kept them safe. He did not mention protecting the rest of the nation, much of which was then on fire. He seemed aware only of himself. For people who like Donald Trump, who voted for Donald Trump, who support his policies, who have defended him for years and years against the most absurd kinds of slander, this was a distressing moment. The first requirement of leadership is that you watch over the people in your care. That's what soldiers want from their officers. It's what families need from their fathers. It's what voters demand from their presidents. People will put up with almost anything if you do that. You can regularly say embarrassing things on television. You can hire Omarosa to work at the White House. All of that will be forgiven if you protect your people.

But if you do not protect them -- or worse than that, if you seem like you can't be bothered to protect them -- then you're done. It's over. People will not forgive weakness. That's the one thing, by the way, that is not a partisan point. It is human nature. Nero is the only Roman emperor whose name most people still remember. Why? Because he abandoned his nation in a time of crisis. And 2,000 years later, we still don't forgive him. Donald Trump's response to these riots, which is ongoing, is the singular test of his presidency. About an hour ago, the president announced that he's going to marshal all available forces -- military and civilian -- to stop these riots. President Donald Trump: If a city or state refuses to take the actions that are necessary to defend the life and property of their residents, then I will deploy the United States military and quickly solve the problem for them. Good for him.

Immediately after that address, the president walked over to St. John's, which, we just told you, was burning fewer than 24 hours ago, and that provided a powerful symbolic gesture. It was a declaration that this country -- our national symbols, our oldest institutions -- will not be desecrated and defeated by nihilistic destruction. We fervently hope this all works. What Americans want most right now is an end to this chaos. They want their cities to be saved. They want this to stop immediately. If the commander-in-chief cannot stop it, he will lose in November. The left will blame him for the atrocities they encouraged, and some voters will agree. Donald

Trump is the president. Presidents save countries. That's their job. That's why we hire them. It's that simple. Some key advisers around the president don't seem to understand this or the gravity of the moment. No matter what happens, they'll tell you, our voters aren't going anywhere. "The trailer parks are rock solid. What choice do they have? They've got to vote for us." Jared Kushner, for one, has made that point out loud. No one has more contempt for Donald Trump's voters than Jared Kushner does, and no one expresses it more frequently. In 2016, Donald Trump ran as a law and order candidate because he meant it, and his views remain fundamentally unchanged today. But the president's famously sharp instincts, the ones that won him the presidency almost four years ago, have been since subverted at every level by Jared Kushner. This is true on immigration, on foreign policy, and especially on law enforcement. As crime in this country continues to rise, Jared Kushner has led a highly aggressive effort to let more criminals out of prison and back on to the streets. This is reckless. At this moment in time, it is insane. It continues to happen.

The president seems to sense this. At times he seems aware he is being led in the wrong direction. He often derides Kushner as a liberal and that's correct, Kushner is. But Kushner has convinced the president that throwing open the prisons is the key to winning African-American votes in the fall and that those votes are essential to his reelection.

Several times over the past few days, the president has signaled that he would very much like to crack down on rioters -- that is his instinct. If you've watched him, you'll believe it. But every time he has been talked out of it by Jared Kushner and by aides that Kushner has hired and controls. Kushner's assumption, apparently, is that African-American voters like looting. That is wrong. Normal Americans of all colors hate looting, obviously. Why wouldn't they hate looting? They are decent people. So one of the lessons of all that we have seen and we've seen so much over the past five days is America is going to change because of this -- that is certain. What can we learn from it? What should we demand going forward? The first thing to know is that we can no longer accept race-baiting from our leaders. Never. That has become so common now that we barely notice it. But it is dividing and destroying this country. We should make them stop. On Sunday, for example, Mayor Jenny Durkan of Seattle tweeted this: "I want to acknowledge that much of the violence and destruction both here in Seattle and across the country has been instigated and perpetrated by white men." Is that factually true? Who knows? Who cares? The skin color of criminals is totally irrelevant to how we prosecute them for the crimes they commit. It must be irrelevant. Otherwise, we're committing the bigotry we claim to abhor.

Yet everywhere on television and social media, prominent people are now talking exactly like this. Not just

a few crackpots -- thousands of people, well-known people. They are amplifying race hatred at exactly the moment that we need at least at the moment when it's the most dangerous. This is Art Acevedo. Acevedo with the police chief of Houston. Houston is the fourth biggest city in this country.

Acevedo's job, his sworn duty, is to enforce the law fairly and evenly regardless of the ethnicity of the suspect. Watch this and tell us if you think he is capable of doing that. Do you think he's even interested?

Art Acevedo, chief of the Houston Police department: My people for -- as an immigrant, we are raised like this. But you know what? We built this country ... We have got news for them. We ain't going nowhere. We ain't going nowhere. I think the ship has sailed.

So if you've got hate in your heart for people of color, get over it, because this city is a minority-majority city.

"My people." If a police chief of any color -- any color -- said that, we would attack him instantly, and we would mean it. It is wrong.

When you run a law enforcement agency, you don't get to consider "my people" much less claim your people deserve some kind of special consideration because they "built this country." No. Your obligation is not to consider your people, but all people and consider them equally. Period.

Art Acevedo is not even trying to do that. Imagine being arrested by this creep. Think you'd get a fair shake? There's almost nothing that hurts America more than this. If you are worried about the rise of extremism here -- and honestly, you should be worried -- this kind of insanity is absolutely certain to cause it. And let's be clear, when we say extremism, we're not talking about unconventional views that get you bounced off Twitter or scolded by the corporate HR department. We mean actual extremism where people espouse violence against other people, where large groups come to believe their racial identity is the most important thing about them.

Now, at this moment, no matter what they're telling you, no matter what they claim for political advantage, there's not a huge amount of that in this country, thank God. Most people still think of themselves as Americans and want to. But if the left keeps talking like this, there definitely will be and very soon. And you don't want to live here when that happens. We should demand they stop immediately.

Enforcing the law is not white supremacy. Insisting that everyone in the country follow the same rules is not racism. In fact, it's the answer to racism. It is equality -- equality under the law. It is the one thing we must defend, and if we don't, it's over. Things fall apart. Weakness invites aggression. That is true in nature and it's every bit as true in human society. Our leaders are weak. Predators know it. That's why this is happening. If you let people spray paint obscenities in City Hall, pretty soon they are overturning cop cars. If you put up with that, they'll come right to the front door of the police precinct, and they will burn it down.

The dismantling of the idea of India

The communication blackout, detention of political leaders and the imposition of curfew resulted in Kashmir witnessing one of its worst economic crises. Despite the government's iron grip over the Valley, we have been regularly losing members of India's security forces. The criminalisation of triple talaq on July 30, 2019 had nothing to do with the pain the BJP felt for Muslim women, especially when it did not shed a tear for the two million Hindu women who are abandoned by or separated from their husbands. The passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, under challenge in the Supreme Court, witnessed protests across campuses in the

country. In the violence that erupted in Delhi on February 24-25, 53 people lost their lives and hundreds were injured. Instances of police brutality and, on occasion, collaboration with perpetrators of violence, was there for all to see. But the government looked the other way. The possibility of a National Register of Citizens and the announcement of a National Population Register further stoked communal fires. The passing of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 2019, though intended to fight terror, has been used against those who have raised their voice against the government, which includes Right to Information activists,

research scholars, thinkers, photojournalists and others. The aim was to silence dissent.

Suddenly, on March 24, things changed. But again, Modi made a mistake. He announced a lockdown with just four hours for its implementation. The consequences are there for all to see. An already sliding economy has been hit hard by the lockdown. The fact that all economic activities have been frozen for months will have dire consequences that will push India back for years. The last quarter of 2019-20, with only seven days of the lockdown, brought economic growth down to 3.1%. Economists have

predicted that the growth this year will be in negative territory. This has also been endorsed by RBI. That is not all. A 25% reduction in earnings will increase the number of those below the poverty line from 21.9% to 46.3%. In the midst of all this, mass migration of hapless victims of the lockdown has resulted in a humanitarian crisis not seen in this country for a long time. Apart from deaths in trains, because of accidents or hunger and thirst, the sheer scale of the misery is captured by the image of a young child lifting his dead mother's shroud in an effort to wake her up. The government's initial denial that

no migrant was on the road is consistent with its constant denial of the consequences of ill-thought decisions. Modi-1 symbolised muscle power and a determined PM taking knee-jerk decisions. Modi-2 has dismantled an India that was carefully built by successive governments until 2014. It is time the government realises that its divisive agendas will only jeopardise the future of generations to come. This government must abandon its "let the fire burn and the cauldron bubble" policy and shift gears to address the burning issues of poverty and the marginalisation of those at the bottom of the pyramid.

A lost decade looms for America's economy Recovery must take into account the climate crisis

The report from the highly respected government number crunchers further challenges hopes for a speedy economic recovery from the pandemic, which had been a common talking point in the early days of the crisis. More than GDP: If recent history is a guide, it could take even longer for the labor market and household wealth to recover.

The 2008 global financial crisis took a much smaller bite out of GDP than what experts expect to see as a result of the pandemic. But 10 years after the Great Recession began, labor force participation rates for prime-age workers remained depressed in the United States, and household wealth had only started to recover. Neil Shearing, the group chief economist at Capital Economics, said that most major economies

are in a similar position — at least in the medium term — despite the recent pick up in high frequency data such as road traffic and electricity consumption.

"While the slump in output caused by the virus seems to have bottomed out, the recovery is likely to be slow going and uneven. Most economies are still likely to be below their pre-virus paths of GDP by the end of our central forecast horizon in 2022," he wrote in a research note on Monday.

Shearing cited three big reasons why a recovery in high frequency data doesn't tell the whole story. Reason 1: The recovery follows an extreme economic chock. "The fact that activity is recovering needs to be seen in this context of the huge loss of output incurred during lockdowns. Output in most major economies is still running at

somewhere between 15% and 25% of pre-virus levels," he said.

Reason 2: High frequency data doesn't tell us much about what's going on with demand — one of the biggest factors in any rebound. "The fact that more journeys are taking place is encouraging, but the extent to which this will translate into a recovery in consumer spending is unclear," he said. Reason 3: Governments and central banks still need to figure out how to transition from crisis mode to recovery, and to reopen their economies in ways that don't do more damage. "Policy needs to shift from combatting a crisis to supporting the recovery," said Shearing. "Making this transition will not be easy. One of the biggest risks in the near-term is that governments move too quickly to embrace a new round of austerity."

Climate champions - NGOs, think tanks, academia, activists around the world - should produce evidence to demonstrate to governments the long-term economic and resilience gains from economic stimulus programmes that prioritise investments in low-carbon pathways. This could include assistance to businesses conditioned on drastic cuts in emissions and financial industry bailouts that require banks to invest less in fossil fuel and more in climate crisis mitigation and resilience efforts. Two, make the climate crisis a people's campaign. The environmental gains from Covid-19, the renewed faith in science as well as the comparable risks to human life that the climate crisis and Covid-19 represent are good hooks to make it so. This requires converting the incredible scientific evidence that exists on the climate crisis into simple, understandable and actionable messages that individuals and communities, particularly young people, can use to make changes in their own behaviour while influencing businesses and governments in their roles as customers, employees and responsible citizens.

Three, strengthen the "business case" for climate efforts. Some of the rub-offs of Covid-19 on climate such as shorter supply chains and reduced business travel are self-evident to companies and will happen. Investors and lenders, who have understood

risk better now must see the benefits of pushing for resilience in the companies they fund. Insurers must factor in these risks. All this will incentivise companies to go down a low carbon path. Four, build a national consensus on long-term low-carbon strategy. The response to Covid-19 has demonstrated both the need and the possibility for a political consensus, which is critical in a democracy. Climate crisis actors such as think tanks and advocacy groups should work to ensure this momentum is maintained. The development of long-term low greenhouse gas emissions development strategies for India will be a useful instrument to build such a consensus. Five, strengthen international cooperation and institutions. To address the spatial aspects of a global challenge such as the climate crisis, there is a need for a global institution to anchor the process, a role that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has played for a long time. However, the somewhat tarnished reputation of the World Health Organization during Covid-19, and the rather scattered and private sector-driven search for a vaccine, suggests that strengthening international cooperation and UNFCCC and United Nations Environment Programme as institutions is a project that all climate change champions must commit themselves to.

Jessica Lal's murderer Manu Sharma walks out of Tihar jail

Any convict — barring one found guilty of heinous crimes such as rape and murder, murder and robbery, murder in cases of terrorism and murder while out on parole — who has completed 14 years in prison without remission is eligible for early release. Siddharth Vashishta, 43, better known by his alias Manu Sharma, shot dead model Jessica Lal, who was tending an unlicensed bar at a private party on April 30, 1999, after she refused to serve him a drink well past midnight. He is the son of Haryana politician Venod Sharma. In November 2019, Sahni approached the Delhi high court seeking Sharma's release. In his plea, he said that despite spending 23 years in jail (with remission added), and a record of good conduct in

prison, the SRB denied his client's release on four separate occasions in an "unfair and unlawful manner." Remission is when a prisoner displays good conduct in prison, and his/her sentence is reduced. While Sharma has served around 16 years of actual sentencing, he has completed 23 years with remission. The Delhi high court had then asked the board to consider Sharma's case for release in its next meeting, which took place on May 11. The board consists of the state home minister, who is its chairman, and the prison's director-general, state home secretary, state law secretary, a district judge, the government's chief probationary

officer and a joint commissioner-rank officer of the Delhi Police. Last month Lal's sister Sabrina had said that she had forgiven Sharma and that he had served his time for the crime. Sabrina had also said that it was time for her to move on. "My fight was always for justice. We got justice. If he is released. I have no problem." Sharma's acquittal by a city court in February 2006 triggered protests across the country, after which the Delhi high court took up the case. The high court reversed the order, saying the lower court ignored or misread material evidence. Sharma was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in December 2006. The Supreme Court upheld the order in 2010.

How Upheaval On The Streets of D.C. Conjured the Unimaginable About America

Bill Clinton accused George H.W. Bush of “coddling tyrants” for his allegedly weak response to the crackdown. Ever since, Tiananmen has offered American officials the opportunity to brandish, when convenient, a kind of moral superiority about the dangers of China’s one-party tyranny.

In what can charitably be described as awkward timing, on Tuesday, a day after peaceful White House protesters were attacked with tear gas by police, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo criticized China for disallowing a Tiananmen remembrance vigil in Hong Kong and met privately with survivors of the massacre in Washington.

Nobody casually familiar with American history would be naive enough to think that the U.S. government hasn’t tried to stuff bits of history down the memory hole, George Orwell’s term for the chutes used to incinerate inconvenient facts in 1984. But the fight to control the narrative and shape the meaning of major events is usually more subtle. Like Pompeo, we all like to believe that Tiananmen-level suppression of the truth is out of the question in America.

The past week has presented some challenges to that assumption. I spent the last few days outside the White House covering the demonstrators (both peaceful protesters and violent ones), inside the White House listening to the new press secretary respond to the growing unrest, and online watching President Donald Trump maneuver to take electoral advantage of yet another crisis. Something seems different from previous incidents of police violence about the fight to

control the story of the George Floyd protests.

At least in Washington, these are big, confusing, spontaneous demonstrations drawing in an eclectic group of people who usually get labeled generically as protesters. They have been squaring off against a wide array of police forces from both the federal and local governments in Washington (Secret Service, Park Police, D.C.’s Metropolitan Police Department) who have in turn acted within shifting rules of engagement. The core grievance that has sparked these events is morally unambiguous: American cops murdering black men. But on the ground things are messy. The crowd outside the White House on Sunday night was divided. Park Police in riot gear and body-length plastic shields were arrayed in a long line bisecting Lafayette Square, a tree-lined park of winding paths and wooden benches that many Americans know from scenes of secret meetings in political thrillers. Facing the cops were hundreds of protesters squeezed against black metal barricades that, as the day had worn on, were pushed from the north edge of the park to its interior. At most White House protests the police are irrelevant. If you’re protesting Obama’s health care bill or Trump’s inaction on climate change, you probably have little reason to interact with the cops doing crowd control. But when the issue is police brutality, the cops themselves suddenly become the targets of the protest.

Among the demonstrators, there was no clear unified position about tactics in Lafayette Square. The main division seemed to be over

the use of violence (meaning throwing stuff at the cops) and property damage. Many people stuck to chants about the killing in Minneapolis: “Say His Name! George Floyd!” “I Can’t Breathe.” Others targeted the president and the cops in front of them: “Fuck Trump,” “Fuck the Police.” But a sizable faction threw water bottles, rocks stashed in a pile behind a tree, and — reportedly — bricks pulled from the sidewalk. (I saw where bricks had been pulled out but never witnessed one being thrown.) The water bottles were the most common projectile and they would often land against a policeman’s plastic shield with a distinctive thud.

Other times, because of the tall trees that needed to be cleared, a bottle would ricochet off a limb and back into the crowd. “Sorry, friendly fire!” one young man yelled when he accidentally hit a civilian in the head. Shouting matches erupted between the protesters hurling things and the majority of people there who were insistent on nonviolence. “Fuck you, you’re not even black!” one young black woman yelled at a man scolding her about throwing things.

But the shaming by the anti-violence majority was strong enough that I noticed the few people attacking the police became increasingly furtive when they launched anything. Given the wide latitude that American cops have to respond with force to the slightest provocation — and the frequency with which they exercise it — it was surprising to see them get pelted and not react. I pushed up close against the barricade and watched them

as they occasionally dodged projectiles and were taunted as pigs and racists and, if they were black, Uncle Toms.

But eventually they did react, and Monday night was then taken over by the violent faction of protesters. At least three fires were set — one in a historic building at the edge of the park, one in the middle of H Street, and one in the basement of St.

Of Course Destruction of Property Is Violence

“It hurts, man. It’s not fair, it’s not right. We’ve been working so hard for this place. It’s not just for me, it’s for my family.” But hey, it was just property. Those who minimize looting often explain that businesses have insurance, so what’s the big deal? But Balla wasn’t insured, and neither are many small businesses.

How about big chain stores like Target? They have more resources. But there’s still a cost. They may decide it’s too risky to open back up in a neighborhood where a store has been looted. And these businesses employ black people and have black customers. It is blinkered and ahistorical to assume that urban areas easily bounce back from the large-scale destruction of property. Cities like Newark, Detroit, Philadelphia, Chicago and Washington arguably never recovered or took decades to fully recover from the riots of the 1960s. Finally, there isn’t such an easy distinction between harming property and people. Some stores are empty. But some shop-owners will try to

John’s Church. And at around 11 p.m., the city-imposed curfew, in a few dramatic thrusts police used tear gas and fired rubber bullets and quickly cleared Lafayette Square. Tiny plumes of the gas lingered and traveled long after it was unleashed and when you walked around you could suddenly inhale a stray whiff.

defend their livelihoods, or hire security guards to do it. We’ve seen business owners beaten and a security guard at a St. Louis pawn shop shot and killed by people who, presumably, started out “only” wanting to destroy and steal property.

It’s easy to be cavalier about someone else’s property. The former ESPN NBA reporter Chris Martin Palmer illustrated the point nicely, if inadvertently, in a series of tweets. At first, he exulted in an image of a building burning in Minneapolis, “Burn that s— down. Burn it all down.” (It turned out to be an affordable housing project set to open next year, but it did make for an impressively fiery photo.) Then, when rioters got close to where he lived, trying to scale the gates of a nearby gated community and destroying his local Starbucks, Palmer lashed out at them as “animals.” Palmer subsequently explained that he doesn’t endorse the destruction of property and supports peaceful protest. That’s the right position, although one that is now, incredibly enough, controversial.

While America Struggles for its Soul, Biden Struggles for Relevance

The obstacles for the former vice president are more daunting than the logistics of being housebound in a pandemic. The crisis calls into question the earnest, cheerful, incremental brand of progressivism that animated Biden’s career for a half-century. The picture of American cities aflame across the continent, in response to what African Americans credibly regard as widespread police brutality and racism, is a soul-depleting return to an earlier age. As it happens, it is an age the 77-year-old Biden knows well. He told an audience last year he decided to organize his life around politics during the violent traumas of 1968—the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, and the racial and anti-war riots that ensued across the country that

spring and summer. Biden’s own words make the year a useful prism for viewing both his present circumstances—even a few weeks ago they would have seemed beyond belief—and the broader premises on which a lifetime in politics have rested. Biden was 25 years old for most of 1968, working as a clerk at a Delaware law firm. Forty years would pass, all but four of them in the U.S. Senate, until Biden was tapped as running mate by Barack Obama on his way to becoming the nation’s first African American president. There was an event that affirmed the essence of Biden’s steady, temperate liberalism—striking evidence that the system is on the level, that history moves toward light, that people of goodwill can overcome America’s original sin of racism.

Could Biden, or even Obama, possibly have imagined 12 years ago how perishable those gains would seem today? How profoundly many African Americans, and others, believe many institutions are simply not on the level and are not getting gradually better? And how, in such a climate, the voice of a divisive but omnipresent performer like Trump could make Biden seem almost inaudible in the storm? As it happens, 1968 also offers another vivid example of a progressive but conventional politician out of step with the urgencies of the moment. Although Biden, like many Democrats of his generation, often invoked the Kennedys as a political figure, he more closely resembles another tragic leader of that time: Vice President Hubert

H. Humphrey.

Humphrey that year was defending President Lyndon B. Johnson’s unpopular war in Vietnam, a problem Biden thankfully does not have. But like Biden (who later served with Humphrey in the Senate before his 1978 death), the vice president was a garrulous man whose personal decency and progressive instincts were genuine and widely respected, even by Republicans. And like Biden—at least as 2020 has unfolded so far—Humphrey had trouble finding the right emotional pitch during a year of national anguish. When he announced his candidacy in late April 1968—a few weeks after King’s murder and not quite six weeks before Kennedy’s—he spoke of wanting to infuse his party with a “politics of joy.” It

was a line that flowed naturally from his own ebullient personality—and seemed shockingly disconnected to the country’s reality. Kennedy mocked him in reply: “It is easy to say this is the politics of happiness—but if you see children starving in the Delta of Mississippi and despair on the Indian reservations, then you know that everybody in America is not satisfied.” Humphrey, who had been a leader on civil rights since the 1940s, would have regarded the problems of 2020 as at least a partial failure of his own legacy. Minneapolis—that genial, sensible, sturdy city which Humphrey once served as mayor—was the same place where Officer Derek Chauvin put his knee on George Floyd’s neck and wouldn’t take it off.

Only Mukesh

How Dhirubhai Ambani's son is on his way to owning India's digital market

It used to be said, with some truth, that what was good for General Motors was good for the US of A. In India, the equivalent comment (rather less truthfully) used to be that what was good for Birla Brothers was good for the country. That is history. GM now sells more cars in China than in its home market, and the Birlas have fallen apart, their pride of place taken by Mukesh Ambani. Mukesh's deals over the last month have made headlines around the world — five stake sales in Jio Platforms, a Reliance Industries subsidiary, have netted Rs 78,500 crore (more than \$10 billion), the latest deal valuing the digital behemoth at a staggering \$65 billion. Meanwhile the mother company, Reliance, is in the middle of a rights issue, which seems small by comparison but is the biggest in India's history: Rs

53,000 crore. Other stake sales are at various stages of closure: In the telecom tower business for Rs 25,000 crore, plus Rs 7,000 crore from BP for a 49 per cent stake in petroleum marketing. Even if a planned 20 per cent stake sale in the oil and petrochemical businesses to Saudi Aramco for \$15 billion falls through, this will be the biggest cash-in ever by an Indian businessman. Mukesh seems set to cross his target of raising \$20 billion and achieving zero net-debt status, and do it with the ease of a Usain Bolt. He may even end up being cash-surplus, despite having invested a staggering \$40 billion or thereabouts in the telecom and associated digital businesses of the future. Overall, Reliance is valued on the market at close to Rs 10 lakh crore (\$127 billion). Many had

believed that the outsize investment in an already competitive business like telecom could never yield a proper return. But Mukesh's anticipation of the future, his execution capabilities, and now his string of deals have shown up the sceptics (including this writer). And the game has just begun, with Mark Zuckerberg as an e-commerce partner to take on Walmart-Flipkart and China's Alibaba. Mukesh has thus wheeled around his gigantic enterprise, and re-imagined it, in a manner that has few parallels in business history. What was begun by the founder and Mukesh's father, Dhirubhai Ambani, as a synthetics textile company in the 1970s, had already gone through one transformation when Dhirubhai pulled Mukesh out of Stanford and asked him to help take the



business upstream by building giant petrochemical complexes at Patalganga and Hazira. There followed a technologically brilliant move even further upstream, with the building of the world's largest, most complex refinery that could use even the worst-quality crude — and yield industry-beating refining margins. Still, despite scale efficiencies, the business had always depended on favourable government policies. The son once recalled his father's allegory about the householder who had to feed the pundit, the cow, the pet dog, and the crow that had hopped closer before he could eat himself. This is truer of

commoditised products like PVC or polyester fibre, where government decisions on taxes, tariffs, licences and such can make or mar a business. In Dhirubhai's case, it was usually (but not always) the former. Hence the old joke that had the Arab wanting to buy the Air India stewardess. On being told she belonged to Air India, he offered to buy the airline. And if that belonged to the government, he would like to buy the government. That, he was told, had already been sold to Dhirubhai. The government matters less in brand and technology businesses, where consumer preferences and the building

of a franchise are autonomous of policy, though policy helps (to block rivals, for example). Hence Mukesh's fresh re-focusing of his company. His initial entry into retailing was botched but re-strategised, and the initial foray into telecom was a marketing flop; in any case it had to be given away to younger brother, Anil. Finally today there is the all-encompassing Jio, whose 385 million customers are manifestly worth a fortune. Reliance, which once made saris, has thus been re-invented yet again. Dhirubhai may or may not have owned the government; it would seem his son wants to own the market.

With Ambani by his side, Zuckerberg has finally made his Mark in India's telecom space

Apart from paring its debt, the Facebook deal will help RIL enter India's e-commerce space by tapping into WhatsApp's 400 million strong userbase.

When Covid-19 has brought to a halt almost all deal activity across the world, the \$5.7 billion equity deal between Reliance's Jio Platforms and tech giant Facebook has sent shockwaves through India's e-commerce and telecom industry. The deal, which gives Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook a 9.99 per cent stake in Mukesh Ambani-led Jio Platforms, was announced Wednesday and is likely to face the scrutiny of fair trade regulator Competition Commission of India and telecom watchdog Trai. The largest FDI in India's tech space by the Menlo Park, California-based social media behemoth makes Reliance chairman Mukesh Ambani the richest man in Asia, surpassing Alibaba co-founder Jack Ma. The teaming up of Reliance Retail, Reliance Jio and WhatsApp has left competitors like the Alibaba-backed Big Basket, Amazon's Pantry and Walmart-owned Flipkart shaking in their boots. Just a day after the deal was announced, Amazon ramped up its pilot programme Local Shops on Amazon, anticipating that it won't be the only one trying to woo small businesses across India into its digital systems. It's clear that this deal isn't just big, it's serious and has the potential to have industry-wide implications, both in

e-commerce and telecom. At the national level, it seems to peddle Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Digital India Mission. The agreement has also raised eyebrows on privacy concerns as a consequence of two "data elephants" coming together.

What's in it for Ambani?

Well, the tie-up seems to be a clear win-win for both sides. Jio's parent company Reliance Industries gets some breathing space amid its ballooning debt and a flailing petroleum business (courtesy declining crude oil prices). The deal gives Jio a whopping pre-enterprise value of 1 4.62 trillion, also making it the fifth-largest firm in India. Daddy Reliance is on that list too, mind you. But making big splashes has always been Jio's way. After entering the telecom sector in 2016, it went from being a new kid on the block to bulldozer in just three years. Offering cheap data plans to its 370 million subscribers, the company has been accused of predatory pricing and "monopolistic tendencies" by rival Bharti Airtel and upturning the entire telecom industry. It's also courted controversy for using PM Modi's face in an ad in 2016.

What's in it for Zuckerberg

Mark Zuckerberg finally gets a slice of India's internet pie that he's been eyeing for more than five years now, and that

too, without wasting much time on obtaining regulatory approvals. Also, the timing couldn't be more impeccable. As Facebook India CEO Ajit Mohan put it, announcing the deal amid the coronavirus crisis "is a reflection of our commitment to invest in the country." The deal will give Facebook a board seat in Jio Platforms and "an observer seat without voting powers" in addition to using WhatsApp for e-commerce opportunities with small businesses in India. Let's not forget that Zuckerberg has been pining to provide internet access to India's one billion strong consumer market for some time now. In 2014, the American entrepreneur visited a Rajasthan village to launch the 'Free Basics' plan to "provide free internet access to a digitally starved nation", but its business proposal was shot down by Trai in 2016. Trai had said that the model proposed by Facebook violated principles of net neutrality. Zuckerberg gave it another shot in 2017, with the launch of Express WiFi in non-urban areas but that now seems to have gone cold turkey. This time around, he has partnered with one of the most influential and successful businessmen in the country who may have just given him the golden ticket he's been waiting for.





Mukesh Ambani Won the World's Most Expensive Sibling Rivalry

Being the brother of Asia's richest man is harder than you think.

Even by the sky-high standards of Indian nuptials, the wedding of Akash Ambani and Shloka Mehta in March of last year was ambitious. The festivities began in the Swiss Alps, with inner-circle guests flown by private jet to St. Moritz, where the diversions included a winter carnival and a performance by Coldplay's Chris Martin. Then it was back to Mumbai for three days of events, culminating in a grand reception that took over a brand-new convention center. It had been transformed for the occasion into a fantasia of undulating columns, fountains, and screens composed from vivid sheets of live flowers. In one spot, an ingeniously designed peacock sculpture fanned out its floral plumage for the amusement of passersby. The centerpiece was a giant statue of the Hindu god Krishna, made entirely of plants.

The cost was easily in the tens of millions of dollars, but for Akash's father, Mukesh, it was pocket change. Mukesh is the chairman of Reliance Industries Ltd., which owns oil refineries, chemical plants, supermarkets, and India's largest mobile network. With a personal net worth of about \$53 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Mukesh is the richest person in Asia and, apart from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, probably India's most powerful citizen. The economic centrality of Reliance, which accounts for almost 10% of India's total exports, is difficult to overstate. In American terms, it's as though Dow Chemical, AT&T, Exxon Mobil, and Amazon were a single conglomerate. Even the coronavirus pandemic has barely slowed it down. While the collapse in oil prices battered Reliance stock, it's recouped almost all the losses, thanks in part to a \$5.7 billion deal to sell a stake in its digital arm to Facebook Inc.

As the wedding began, Mukesh's brother, Anil Ambani, who's also a prominent businessman, lingered near the entrance to greet guests. He performed his familial duties with aplomb, making sure everyone was suitably refreshed and properly oriented through the plant life and advising Akash on how to make a grand entrance. The outward harmony, though, papered over a tense situation. At the time of the wedding, Anil was 10 days away from a court-imposed deadline to repay \$80 million in debt, with failure

potentially punishable by imprisonment—the most extreme example of a legal crackdown on large-scale borrowing by Indian businesspeople. For weeks he and Mukesh had been locked in negotiations over a bailout, mediated in part by their mother, who urged them to find a solution that would protect Anil and keep the Ambani name from being associated with financial ruin. But Mukesh wasn't going to help his brother avoid debtor's prison for nothing, and Anil had yet to offer collateral he was willing to accept. The last-minute talks were the low point of a domestic breakdown that's captivated the Indian business world. The Ambani brothers began their careers as intimate collaborators, with Anil once describing their approach as “two bodies, one mind.” But after the death of their father, Dhirubhai, who founded Reliance almost five decades ago, they grew increasingly estranged, first splitting his empire and then becoming direct competitors. Their sibling rivalry since then has become an object lesson in the promise and perils of India's economy under Modi. Since the Hindu nationalist leader came to office in 2014, tycoons who can help deliver on his agenda of Indian self-sufficiency—above all, Mukesh—have seen their fortunes and influence swell, while others—Anil included—have found their margin for error drastically reduced. Neither Mukesh, Anil, nor their companies replied to repeated requests for comment on this story and its contents. Bloomberg News is currently defending against litigation brought by Anil in connection with previous reporting.

The negotiations between the brothers continued nearly to the deadline. Although the Ambani clan publicly characterized them as amicable, two people familiar with the talks, who asked to remain anonymous discussing a family matter, used a different descriptor. Mukesh, both said, made Anil “beg.”

The Ambanis' story has the ring of an entrepreneurial fairy tale. A former gas station attendant from a remote town in the western state of Gujarat, Dhirubhai spotted a gap in the consumer market in the early 1970s: supplying nylon, polyester, and other synthetic materials, which were still novelties in India. He founded Reliance in 1973 as a trading house, then gradually turned it into

a vertically integrated operation, first by manufacturing the fibers, then producing the chemical precursors they needed, then refining the oil used to make those, too. By the late 1980s the company was the dominant, and in some cases exclusive, domestic manufacturer of a range of key petrochemicals.

In the business world, Dhirubhai—his real name was Dhirajlal, but he was almost always called by the nickname, which incorporates the Hindi word for “brother”—was known as more than a skilled factory operator. Until the 1990s the biggest headache for India's companies was the so-called License Raj, an ever-shifting system of import quotas, permit requirements, and price controls that governed most of the economy. Dhirubhai seemed always to be one step ahead of its strictures. According to Reliance veterans, he maintained an office building on the outskirts of Delhi, stuffed with retired bureaucrats assigned to keep tabs on their former colleagues. Among other tasks, they tracked the ages of senior officials' children so they could be offered Reliance-funded scholarships to study abroad when they reached university age. During Diwali, the former employees said, Reliance would send mailroom assistants at important ministries boxes of candy, each with a small piece of gold or silver hidden inside—a common practice, but also a reminder to keep the company informed of what their superiors were working on.

Dhirubhai took a similarly deliberate approach to raising Mukesh and Anil, who were born in 1957 and 1959, respectively. On weekends, Anil has said, their father would lead them on “incentive-oriented outings”—for instance, a 10-kilometer hike through the rain, with a box of mangoes as a reward. Mukesh recounted that, to punish the boys for acting out while guests were visiting, Dhirubhai once confined them for “two days in the garage on water and roti.” There was never any doubt that both would join the family business, and by their mid-20s they'd assumed prominent roles: Mukesh as a hands-on manager of facilities, including Reliance's first domestic polyester plant, and Anil as an executive dealing with government officials, investors, and the press.

Their roles suited their personalities. Mukesh wore little that was fancier than an untucked short-sleeve shirt, married a woman chosen for him by his parents at 27, and spent most evenings watching old movies at home. Anil, who slicked back his hair and dressed in sharp suits, was part

of Mumbai's fast crowd, friendly with socialites and Bollywood stars, whom he sometimes took on getaways in a corporate jet. He married at 31, late in India, and his parents made no secret of their disapproval of his choice of spouse, the actress Tina Munim. While Mukesh was rarely seen in public, on many evenings reporters could find Anil outside Reliance's headquarters, sitting on the hood of a Cadillac and munching on street food while talking up the company's prospects to anyone who'd listen.

There was plenty to brag about. By 2001, Reliance was India's most important corporation by virtually every measure, with big plans for expansion in financial services, electricity generation, and telecommunications, plus an oil refining operation on its way to being so large that the national trade deficit rises substantially when it closes for maintenance. Any tensions between the Ambani sons were kept hidden while their father was alive. But in 2002, Dhirubhai died suddenly from a stroke. He was only 69 and hadn't left a formal succession plan. With no indication of how he wished his heirs to divide power, they sorted themselves by age, Mukesh becoming Reliance's chairman and Anil vice chairman.

Their relationship soon grew strained, according to people close to them at the time. Each believed the other was making decisions without enough consultation: Mukesh was annoyed when Anil announced a power-generation project without discussing it, and Anil was infuriated when Mukesh restructured the entities that managed the family's Reliance shares without his input. Underlying it all was a dispute about the basic nature of the relationship. Mukesh saw himself as the undisputed boss, whereas Anil considered himself an equal partner.

The brothers' discord burst out into the open two years after Dhirubhai's death, when Reliance's board passed a motion indicating that Anil would henceforth be “under the overall authority of the chairman.” He viewed it as a humiliation, according to a person knowledgeable about his thinking. A sort of Ambani civil war ensued. Anil refused to sign off on Reliance's financial statements, citing what he said were inadequate disclosures, and directors at a subsidiary he ran resigned to show their loyalty. At one point, India's finance minister pleaded with the brothers to repair their relationship. After a year the family matriarch, Kokilaben Ambani, decided she'd had

enough. In June 2005 she declared in a statement that she'd “amicably resolved the issues of my two sons” with an arrangement that would “resolutely uphold the values of their father and work towards protecting and enhancing value.”

Her solution was a split. Mukesh would take the profitable but slow-growing refinery and petrochemicals businesses, while Anil would get the operations that seemed to have more long-term potential: financial services, power generation, and telecommunications. It was a remarkable move, divvying up a substantial portion of India's economy as though it were a set of heirloom china. It also seemed, at least for a while, like a reasonably equitable deal. In 2007, according to estimates by Forbes India, Anil's net worth tripled, to \$45 billion, making him the country's third-richest citizen. His brother was a mere \$4 billion ahead. With plenty of cash to play with, Anil adopted billionaire hobbies such as film production, becoming one of the main backers of Steven Spielberg's DreamWorks Pictures. Sometimes he invited members of Mumbai's elite to screenings of upcoming releases at his home. Mukesh wasn't seen among the guests.

The truce between the brothers included an unusual proviso: a fraternal noncompete clause that forbade each from entering the other's industries for a period of 10 years. Eventually, though, Anil's businesses began to struggle. Power projects failed as state authorities mandated lower electricity rates; he had to rebuild a national mobile network from scratch when it became clear its technology would soon be obsolete. Mukesh, whose company was raking in more than \$40 billion a year, saw an opportunity. As part of a 2010 deal to supply natural gas that Anil needed to make failing power plants viable, people close to the younger Ambani said, Mukesh insisted that the noncompete deal be annulled.

The business he was eyeing was telecommunications. At the time only about half of India's population had a mobile phone, which meant there was a massive pool of potential customers. In 2016, Reliance unveiled Jio, a mobile operator that promised much cheaper rates than competitors. “Mobile internet will be the single most defining technology of this century for human development,” Mukesh said in an interview promoting the launch. “We feel fortunate to be the ones to bring the mobile broadband revolution to 1.2 billion Indians.”

(Contd on page 35)

Amid COVID-19, Investors Bet On Mukesh Ambani's Jio And Its Giant-Killer Playbook

The 10-week coronavirus-triggered lockdown has also led to a surge in demand for data, boosting Jio's phone and broadband offerings.

Mumbai: From its Silicon Valley-like campus near Mumbai, billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Jio telecom carrier is emerging as a winner from changes in the way consumers in the country plug into a digital economy made more urgent by the coronavirus pandemic. For shoppers who prefer to order online, it is launching a grocery ordering service with Facebook Inc's popular WhatsApp messaging. For Bollywood fans who would prefer to avoid a crowded theater, it is readying same-day-release on the Jio platform. Those plans had been in the making for months, but the pandemic has given them a shot in the arm. The government's 10-week lockdown has also led to a surge in demand for data, boosting Jio's phone and broadband offerings. And, over the past six weeks, the digital business of Mr Ambani's Reliance Industries, known as Jio Platforms, raised a striking \$10 billion from global investors. The investments, including \$5.7 billion from Facebook and money from private equity firms Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic and KKR & Co Inc, value Jio Platforms, where Reliance Industries last year announced

it was consolidating its digital offerings, at roughly \$65 billion (51.6 billion pounds). They also put Jio on track toward a goal Mr Ambani described last year: an eventual listing that would mark a milestone for his effort to unite the digital offerings of his sprawling conglomerate, from set-top boxes to e-commerce and home automation.

Reliance Industries declined to make Mr Ambani, Asia's richest man, available for interview or respond to a detailed list of questions. But interviews with a dozen people familiar with the company's development efforts show how Reliance Industries has pushed aggressive pricing for a one-stop digital commerce platform that incorporates features modeled on the American tech heavyweights it sees as rivals. When Jio set out to launch a set-top box, it tasked a team with analysing – and in some cases replicating – some 100 features of an Apple TV set-top box last year, according to a person close to the project and internal Jio documents seen by news agency Reuters. "Presentation and listing of menu items should be similar to Apple TV," one of the documents says, assigning

the task a "Priority 1" rating. One document compares the products' features, like average weight. Another includes instructions like "Matching the background theme of Launcher (home screen) to that of Apple TV." Jio's set-top box comes included in its broadband plans, with the cheapest annual deal costing around \$110, whereas Apple TV 4K is selling for around \$210 to \$230 on Indian e-commerce sites. Apple Inc did not respond to requests for comment. Jio also analysed Amazon's Alexa voice assistant with the aim of coming up with its own offering, according to one person with knowledge of Jio's strategy. "They wanted to say: 'Hey Jio, can you switch on the lights?'," said the person. Reuters could not determine the status of the project. Amazon declined comment. In other areas, Mr Ambani has shown a willingness to bet big on emerging technology. In India, Jio was an early adopter of voice-over-LTE, which is more efficient than traditional networks. The company expects that to give it an edge in rolling out 5G services. "Few companies have the potential to transform a country's digital ecosystem in

the way that Jio Platforms is doing in India," said KKR co-founder Henry Kravis in announcing his investment. In partnership with Facebook's WhatsApp, Reliance Industries has launched a new service that allows consumers to order from their local grocery stores at a time when many Indian consumers, like shoppers elsewhere, are trying to minimize trips to stores. The service was rolled out in April in three areas of Greater Mumbai. "Reliance wants to be a global technology powerhouse," said Rahul Malhotra, an analyst with Bernstein. "With the Facebook partnership, they will build the WeChat of India," he added, referring to Tencent Holdings' messaging, payments and social media app that is ubiquitous in China.

Total Reliance

Mr Ambani dominates a dizzying array of sectors: Jio is the country's leading telecoms carrier, Reliance Retail is its top brick-and-mortar retailer, Reliance Industries' Network18 Media & Investments is one of its biggest news networks, and Jamnagar is its largest oil complex. His empire also produces films at Jio Studios and

runs the country's top soccer tournament, the Indian Super League, by providing consumers access to everything from groceries and clothes to banking and home automation via an integrated system running through Jio, Mr Ambani hopes Reliance Industries can become what he calls an "everything company". To help back its retail push, Reliance Industries in March asked an Indian logistics provider for some 5 million square feet of warehousing space, according to a person briefed on the plans. That comes after a 2019 request for service, reviewed by Reuters, that said the company was seeking 1.1 million square feet of warehousing space that would be "expandable in future".

Reliance Industries has not made public details of its warehousing space. By comparison, Amazon said in 2017 it had warehouses covering about 3 million square feet in India and has expanded since then. Amazon did not provide Reuters with an updated figure. In addition to an eventual listing for Jio, Mr Ambani has said he would look to list Reliance Industries' retail operations as well.

Mukesh Ambani Won the World's Most Expensive Sibling Rivalry

(Contd from page 36)

The circumstances of Jio's creation reminded some Ambani watchers of Dhirubhai's early success navigating the Indian regulatory state. Jio's wireless spectrum had been originally purchased not by Reliance but by a little-known company called Infotel Broadband Services Ltd., which Reliance acquired just hours afterward. A little under three years later, the national communications regulator changed the rules to allow that spectrum to be used for voice calls as well as data. Had that been the case at the time of the auction, public auditors estimated, the sale price of roughly \$2.7 billion would have been about \$533 million higher. An earlier draft of the auditors' report, leaked to Indian media outlets, put the difference at \$3.6 billion. (Reliance has said the acquisition of Jio's spectrum complied with all relevant rules.)

Mukesh's mounting success has inspired both awe and a certain amount of fear

With Jio, Mukesh aspired not just to enter but to dominate India's ultra competitive wireless market, which at times has had as many as a dozen operators. He believed he could do so by turning those hundreds of millions of largely poor people without mobile

service, let alone a smartphone, into online consumers. With vast cash reserves, Reliance could lose money on cut-rate packages for years if necessary while it built a large, loyal customer base that could eventually turn profitable. At first, Jio's service was practically free, offered as an extended beta test to what competitors claimed were as many as 3 million customers. When it went national, its data rates were far cheaper than anyone else's—sometimes just 7.5 rupees (about 10¢) per gigabyte, with no charges for voice calls. Rivals accused Jio of predatory behavior—a suggestion it rejected—and a price war followed, hitting Anil's already shaky cellular business, Reliance Communications, particularly hard. According to a person familiar with Mukesh's strategy, he saw the likelihood that Jio would crush his brother's company as neither incentive nor deterrent. Rather, the person said, he saw Anil as simply another competitor, deserving of no special consideration as he moved into an industry he viewed as the future.

Whatever Mukesh's motives, Jio sealed Anil's fate. In 2019, Reliance Communications filed for bankruptcy.

For three days in early 2019,

Room 6 in New Delhi's stately Supreme Court building was packed. The crowd was there to gawk at something remarkable: Anil, no longer a billionaire, had been summoned to answer a criminal contempt charge. It stemmed from an ill-advised decision to personally guarantee an \$80 million debt Reliance Communications owed a creditor, Swedish gearmaker Ericsson AB. Despite promising the court he would pay, Anil hadn't.

The indignities began on the first day. Anil arrived early but for some reason didn't have a seat, and he spent hours standing against a back wall. With the court enforcing a policy against using air conditioning in winter, and the bodies in the room driving the temperature to sweltering heights, he grew wan and disheveled, first removing the jacket of his excellently tailored suit and then his tie.

The two judges listened impassively as Anil's lawyers argued that his promise Ericsson would be paid was contingent on an asset sale that had never been concluded. After they finished, he left without saying a word to the reporters shouting questions.

Anil returned a month later for the ruling, this time occupying a seat. The two judges entered, and Justice Rohinton Fali Nariman

read the verdict: guilty. For a moment it seemed that guards might take Anil directly to jail from the courtroom. But then Nariman reached the final point of the decision. "We are of the view," he said, "that the contempt of this court needs to be purged by payment." Anil, he continued, would be given a month to nullify the case by handing over the cash. The ruling shocked Anil, according to a person with knowledge of his reaction. He was so accustomed to getting his way, the person said, that he'd never expected the court to rule against him.

After round-the-clock negotiations that continued until days before Anil was to be taken into custody, he and Mukesh reached a deal. In a press release announcing the breakthrough, Anil was quoted thanking his brother for "staying true to our strong family values." In exchange for Mukesh's cash, people with knowledge of the agreement said, he surrendered a pair of 99-year leases on office buildings in Mumbai. Although the statement included several quotations from Anil, it had been drafted by Mukesh's side, according to one of the people. The person said it wasn't shown to Anil before it was published.

Anil probably shouldn't have been so surprised by his loss in court. Since Modi was elected on a platform of economic reform,

India's government and courts have taken a much harder line with billionaires in financial trouble. The cheap loans from state-linked banks and fortuitously timed government contracts that many used to receive have disappeared, and in 2016 Modi's party passed a bankruptcy law that made it harder to shield assets from angry creditors. The courts and law enforcement have also become much more severe with delinquent borrowers, even pursuing criminal charges when a default is suspected to have been intentional. Vijay Mallya, a fallen beer baron who once styled himself as India's "King of Good Times," is fighting extradition from the U.K. over such a case; two other industrialists, brothers Shashi and Ravi Ruia, recently lost control of a bankrupt steel mill after the Supreme Court ruled against them. The Modi era has been far kinder to Mukesh, whose success flatters the vision of an investment-friendly, modernizing India the prime minister has sought to promote. Mukesh began developing a relationship with Modi in the 1990s, when the latter was an obscure party functionary. According to Ambani family aides, Mukesh rarely has to request a meeting with Modi; instead, he's invited for regular consultations at the prime minister's residence.

By Ari Altstedter and P R Sanjai

How Asia's richest man is trying to build the next global tech giant



company into a sprawling conglomerate that includes retail shops, a mobile and broadband carrier, digital platforms and more.

But to take his plans to the next level, Ambani needed buy-in from Silicon Valley — hence, his \$5.7 billion partnership with Facebook and its global messaging service WhatsApp. When the deal was announced last month, the scale of his ambition was clear.

"This winning recipe will be extended to serve other key stakeholders of Indian society," Ambani said. "Our kisans [small agricultural workers]. Our small and medium enterprises. Our students and teachers. Our healthcare providers." The deal, which is still awaiting regulatory approval, signaled that Ambani and Facebook are trying to create "some sort of platform where you can do everything from mobile banking, to messaging, to your social media, to everything basically built into just one platform," according to Fernyhough. In other words, a version of Tencent's wildly popular WeChat service in China.



Mukesh Ambani wants to build the next global technology company. And if he plays his cards right, his mobile carrier and technology juggernaut Jio Platforms could soon hold rank alongside the likes of Google (GOOGL), Amazon (AMZN), Alibaba (BABA) and Tencent (TCEHY). Jio Platforms already has an ecosystem of apps — which feature everything from online grocery shopping to video streaming — that it serves to the 388 million people subscribed through the Reliance Jio mobile network in India.

Now, Asia's richest man is getting even more ambitious. In the span of a few weeks, he's amassed a \$9 billion war chest from Facebook (FB) and

a clutch of A-list American investors to fuel the next phase of his domination of India's internet, the fastest growing in the world.

Ambani "definitely [wants Jio Platforms] to be more than just a telecom company. They want to be the next Google or Tencent of India," said Wylie Fernyhough, an analyst with PitchBook.

The "ultimate goal," according to Counterpoint Research analyst Tarun Pathak, is to become everything to every Indian and build an indispensable platform for the country's hundreds of millions of internet customers.

Under Ambani's leadership, Reliance Industries has grown from an oil and energy

Unlike Tencent, though, Jio Platforms also has a massive mobile network that it can rely on to build a base of customers.

"We have seen the e-commerce, content, cloud, tech companies replacing traditional telcos," said Pathak.

He pointed to Rakuten (RKUNF) Japan, an e-commerce company that is now working to build a 5G network, and to US mobile carriers, who are becoming "content houses" as the number of cord cutting Americans grows. (CNN is owned by AT&T (T).)

"Eventually you can't just sell data, right, it will be much more

on top of it," he said.

Facebook has pushed back on the idea that it is helping Ambani build a "super app" by noting that the two companies will continue to operate separately in India with their own services. Instead, the two companies are providing "enabling blocks for small businesses to come online, that then allows many other companies to ride on that," Ajit Mohan, vice president and managing director of Facebook for India, told CNN Business.

But even that level of collaboration gives Ambani a great deal of clout in India, allowing him to find new customers by offering online services and digital tools that Indians are clamoring for.

JioMart has started off on a rotten note. But that won't upset its applecart



When a Mumbai resident opened her JioMart delivery bag on June 2, she found caterpillars crawling on okra and rotten brinjals. This, after her order had been delayed by several days, and only groceries worth Rs1,000 showed up from a total bill of over Rs3,000.

"Vegetables are not that great even from a BigBasket at this time (given the Covid-19

lockdown) but they're nowhere near this bad. Jio's milk tetra packs were puffed and dirty like someone picked them up from the mud and put them directly in the bag. I had to clean everything twice over," the shopper, who wished to stay anonymous, told Quartz.

She has no idea what will happen to the rest of her order, but she is clear about one thing: "I'm not ordering from JioMart

ever again."

This experience is in stark contrast to what one would expect from a service launched by India's richest man in partnership with the world's largest social media company. And this is far from the only complaint about JioMart, which was launched on April 26 by Mukesh Ambani-owned Jio and Facebook-owned WhatsApp.

Twitter is littered with disgruntled customers whose laundry list of problems ranged from order histories vanishing to subpar or wrong products being delivered to a poor user interface.

Jio has clearly started off on the wrong foot in India's highly-competitive \$1 billion grocery market, but analysts said it's too early to write the company off.

Invincible Jio?

"Given the reach of Jio, some poor reviews at the beginning will not materially impact its long-term potential due to the

strength of the Reliance group, their deep pockets, and willingness to stay put in this business," Yugal Joshi, vice-president of Texas-based consultancy Everest Group, said.

Just days before its official launch, on April 22, Facebook invested \$5.7 billion dollars in JioMart, picking up a 9.99% stake in the company. Besides the money and its tech prowess, the social media giant brings to the table a ready userbase of India's 400 million WhatsApp users for JioMart to tap into. By May 31, Reliance launched JioMart in over 200 cities. In addition, the over \$10 billion cash that JioMart holds strengthens its position for the longer term, said Sukriti Seth, a consultant at the Noida-based TechSci Research. "Ambani is uniquely positioned to fight the duopoly of Amazon and Walmart's Flipkart," she said. In addition to Facebook, JioMart has raised money from private

equity firms KKR, Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, and General Atlantic in the past three months.

This cash reserve could help JioMart take advantage of India's price-sensitive customers by luring them with discounts and freebies, a strategy that is prevalent in India's e-commerce industry and one that Ambani's Reliance Group has banked for decades. Most recently, the group won in the telecom sector by offering data at dirt cheap prices.

"Jio has (the) power to sweep out certain competition based on aggressive pricing and targeted attacker strategy," Joshi said. This is already becoming apparent. On average, Jio Mart offered a 15% discount on the maximum retail price—marginally lower than D-Mart's 16% and better than Amazon or Big Basket's nearly 9%, a May 31 report by Jefferies said.

By Ananya Bhattacharya,
Courtesy Quartz India



By NN Vohra

United States (US) President Donald Trump recently suspended financial support to the World Health Organization (WHO) and has threatened to quit the world body. This news took me back nearly 40 years when, while serving in the Union ministry of health and family welfare, I was involved in dealing with a similar threat from the US. It was May 1982. I was in Geneva to represent India in the annual session of the World Health Assembly (WHA) which, at that time, had over 160 member countries and met for two weeks to deal with varied health and medical issues. The large agenda was split and discussed in two commissions, named "A" and "B".

The 1982 WHA unanimously elected me to chair the functioning of commission "B". Our then ambassador in Geneva, AP Venkateswaran, reported this event as a "diplomatic victory" for India, especially as it came without lobbying. As in the functioning of any United Nations organisation, WHO member-countries also never lost an opportunity to raise health issues which provided an opening for airing their views on current political controversies. Before the WHA proceedings began, I carefully read every agenda item entrusted to my commission. Neither I, nor the more experienced secretariat personnel, realised that a certain matter would generate an upheaval that would threaten the existence of WHO. This related to a draft resolution, moved by a group of Afro-Arab countries, which sought to focus attention on the poor health conditions of the Palestinians living in the Israeli-occupied territories. I was not overly concerned by this as there were similar items which sought the provision of health assistance to refugees in Cyprus and Lebanon and to the flood-affected in Yemen. Former WHO director-general, Halfdan Mahler, was on the dais with me when the aforesaid agenda item came up and I allowed the leader of the

Palestine delegation to introduce it. Inter-alia, the agenda note referred to an expert committee report on the subject and to the reports presented by the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the Israeli health ministry and the specialised UN agency for providing relief to the Palestinian refugees. While calling for the establishment of WHO-supervised health centres in the occupied territories, reference was also drawn to an earlier UN General Assembly resolution on this matter. Before I could announce the name of the next delegate to speak on the subject, the leader of the US delegation, Dr John Bryant (also

a member of the executive committee), wanted to make an urgent statement. Normally, comments from the floor were allowed only after the sponsoring country representatives complete their statements.

Bryant raised serious objection to a portion of the operative paragraph of the draft resolution which, if accepted, would have the effect of cutting-off the membership rights and services of Israel. He announced that if this matter was discussed any further, he was under instruction to state that his country "here and now suspends its budgetary support" (which was about half of WHO's annual budget) and withdraws from WHO. As soon as Bryant completed his statement, delegates from Israel and several other countries stood up and pronounced full support for the US' stand. Delegates from Palestine and many Arab and African countries stood up and voiced support for the Palestinian cause. The ensuing

pandemonium was unprecedented. I kept striking the gavel and calling for order till there was a lull in which I announced a break to consider how WHA could proceed further. After a brief exchange with Mahler, I stepped into the assembly hall and for the next hour-and-a-half held discussions with the leaders of the warring groups. I found that there was no ready meeting point and also realised that if the situation was allowed to go unchecked, there would be grave consequences for WHO, besides the failure of my chairmanship. It was already past the lunch hour. Getting back on the dais, I informed WHA that my parleys would continue and the commission would reassemble next morning at the scheduled time. For the next 12 hours, I held intensive discussions with protagonists on both sides and also met several eminent health ministers (attending WHA). I also met the iconic Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat arrived late in the

evening. After several rounds of negotiations with the Arab, African, Israeli, American and other delegations concerned, I managed to soften their earlier positions. Also, in the course of these discussions, I had virtually redone the original draft resolution. In the early hours of the next morning, I called a senior secretariat staff to arrange for copies of the revised draft resolution to be distributed before WHA commenced its work.

An uneasy calm prevailed in the hall when I called the meeting to order. I spoke briefly about my efforts since the previous day and about the agreed changes made in the original draft. I read out the revised resolution and asked if there were any observations from any quarter. There was silence. I announced that the resolution was passed and struck the gavel to move on to the next agenda item. There was a perceptible sigh of relief. WHO had been saved.

When US threatened to leave WHO

Four decades ago, WHO faced a deep crisis over a resolution on Palestine. There are lessons

How past US presidents engaged with activists and mass protests

As Americans engage in demonstrations around the country calling for an end to police brutality, President Donald Trump has opted to return to his call for "law and order." And though he's said he's sympathetic to peaceful protesters, he's threatened military force and urged states to empower police to arrest more demonstrators. He's singled out agitators as members of the "radical left." And he's also tweeted that the self-described anti-fascists, Antifa, will be classified as a terrorist organization. (Though the US government has no apparent legal authority to do so.) On Monday evening, he declared in a speech that he was the "law and order" President as security forces could be heard battling with peaceful protesters on the streets near the White House. Moments after the protesters had been moved, Trump walked down the same streets to pose with a Bible at a church damaged by earlier demonstrations.

Past US presidents have had varying approaches to mass protests and activism. Some were reluctant to bring up their causes, but were eventually pushed by politics. Others ignored calls from the masses or charged them with unruly behavior. Others brought them into the White House for discussions. Here's a look back at how recent American presidents engaged with protest movements: President John F. Kennedy delivered an Oval Office address on June 11, 1963, proposing anti-discrimination and anti-segregation legislation. That address, according to the Miller Center at the University of Virginia, happened "only after the effective and public

grassroots movement brought international attention to the violence and undemocratic reality of segregation and forced him to take a stand."

In 1963, Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech and march on Washington was credited with bolstering support for Kennedy's proposed civil rights legislation. The day of the march, Kennedy met with civil rights leaders in the Oval Office. President Lyndon B. Johnson made civil rights a main tenet of his Great Society agenda after Kennedy's death, which propelled the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 through Congress. In the wake of riots across the country over King's assassination, Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968 into law. The legislation also made certain actions relating to inciting a riot a felony under federal law. Johnson, facing pressure from anti-war advocates and the potential emergence of an anti-war Democratic presidential challenger, surprised Americans when he announced he would not be running for reelection in March 1968.

Johnson said in an Oval Office address that during the Vietnam War, he felt he should not be devoting time to "any personal partisan causes or ... any duties other than the awesome duties of this office."

The announcement came after the launch of the Tet Offensive, which was proving successful for North Vietnamese communist troops.

It sparked a new wave of anti-war protests, including when thousands of anti-war protesters clashed with police and the National Guard outside the Democratic

convention in 1968. Richard Nixon, accepting the Republican presidential nomination, pledged to lead America with "law and order" following the anti-war protests as well as the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy. The war in Vietnam waged on and in 1969, the US draft lottery sowed further division among Americans about the war. In his second address to the nation on the Vietnam War, Nixon called for "the great silent majority" of Americans to voice their support for his war policies.

Anti-war demonstrations turned deadly at Kent State University in 1970, when four students were killed by the Ohio National Guard. After the incident at Kent State, Nixon went to the Lincoln Memorial near dawn to meet and talk to anti-war demonstrators. Nixon wouldn't halt direct US involvement in the Vietnam War until 1973. Ronald Reagan garnered early support for his presidential run from the Moral Majority, a conservative Christian group whose leader, Jerry Falwell, referred to AIDS as "God's punishment for homosexuals." And in 1985, the White House would hire Pat Buchanan as a communications director. Two years earlier, he'd written in an op-ed that homosexuals "declared war upon nature, and now nature is exacting an awful retribution" in the form of the AIDS epidemic. Reagan delivered his first major address on AIDS at the American Foundation for AIDS Research in 1987, discussing AIDS in public for the first time since the start of his presidency in 1981. More than 24,000 people had already died from complications of HIV.

As the LAC heats up, reading China's playbook

It is aiming to change facts on the ground, incrementally alter the balance of power, and assert its dominance

The stand-off between Indian and Chinese forces at Galwan Valley in eastern Ladakh continues with both sides reinforcing their respective positions. While tensions may be reduced through continuing dialogue in mechanisms put in place over the past several years, the key issue is whether Chinese troops agree to vacate the area they have occupied by violating the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

China would be content if, after altering the facts on the ground, the stand-off is defused, say by a limited disengagement of a few metres between the troops, leaving most of the encroached territory in Chinese hands. China may agree to vacate the occupied area but expect concessions in return. These could include a halt to border infrastructure development on the Indian side of LAC, even the dismantling of built up structures. In the Doklam stand-off in 2017, the forces of the two sides disengaged. China halted additional road-building activity but continues to consolidate its position in the occupied area. The bottom line — facts on the ground remain altered to China's advantage although India's action forestalled further ingress. Therefore, unless India is able to find an effective counter-strategy to this pattern of Chinese behaviour, incidents of the kind we have seen at many points on LAC are not only likely to continue but to intensify.

There is another feature to the Chinese playbook. This is evident at the India-China border and in other theatres such as the South China Sea, the Taiwan Straits and the Yellow Sea. Each Chinese action, taken in isolation, may not be regarded as threatening enough to require a strong and countervailing military riposte. Over a period of time, however, a string of such "isolated" incidents add up cumulatively to a significant change in the balance of power on the ground. China's dominance of the South China Sea, its occupation and militarisation of several offshore islands, have reached a point where only a major military offensive, perhaps even war, may be necessary to reverse Beijing's advantage. As is apparent, such risky actions are unlikely. At the most, one may expect the now alerted major powers, to prevent any further gains by China. So this is another important part of the playbook — incremental advances short of the threshold of a likely military response from adversaries, but resulting over time in a more



favourable balance of power. We have seen this at the India-China border over the years. There has been constant nibbling activity which the Indian side confronts, but it is unable or unwilling to go on a military offensive to reverse Chinese gains. We have to understand these salami-slicing tactics and develop an effective counter-strategy. This may require the ability to use the ambiguity of LAC to make asymmetric gains in zones where we have a tactical advantage. Only then will there be some bargaining chips available with us to restore the status quo. There is a third element in the Chinese playbook that needs attention. China calibrates its posture towards any country

based on a careful assessment of the balance of economic and military capabilities. This may sometimes go wrong because Chinese leaders are relatively insular and self-centred in their outlook. There is a cultural predilection towards tactical agility, even deception, in interState relations and little patience with notions of statesmanship. After the 1962 war, China's default position on the border was the so-called package proposal, essentially formalising the prevailing status quo. In 1985-86, after the Wandung incident in the eastern sector, the package proposal was reinterpreted to mean that a settlement required India to make "meaningful

concessions" in the east, the area of largest dispute, for which China would make appropriate-though-undefined-concessions in the western sector. Subsequently, it was conveyed that in any settlement, Tawang would have to be "returned" to China. What we now see is a further moving of the goalposts, with China's behaviour suggesting that the ambiguity over the precise alignment of LAC gives it the opportunity to trigger incidents at points of choice in order to make both local, tactical gains but to also convey a larger message that it has a stronger hand when dealing with India. Some analysts suggest that India should not provoke China by moving closer to the United States

(US), the implication being that distancing from the US and other countries which China regards as adversaries, would somehow lessen the pressure on India. This is strange logic. It suggests that decisions on India's foreign policy are being made in Washington but should that be replaced by their being made in accordance with Chinese preferences instead? India's foreign policy should be made in New Delhi in India's best interests. It has been New Delhi's experience that strong relations between India and the US, indeed with other major powers, give India greater room for manoeuvre and ability to manage the China challenge. The more isolated India is, the greater its vulnerability to Chinese pressures. At this juncture, no military alliance with the US is on the cards. But building and strengthening a strong and credible countervailing coalition of major powers, which share India's concerns about the China's predatory predilections, is prudent policy even as India must marshal its energies to reduce the asymmetry of power with China which is at the heart of our current predicament.

Documenting the story of India's migrant distress

Ever since the lockdown began, stories of migrant workers have haunted the country. These stories of suffering and hardship have become the face of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) in India's megacities. There is an eerie similarity to many of them, highlighting an unequal society that has caused a humanitarian crisis to erupt during an unprecedented health crisis.

Earlier in the lockdown, one of us noticed two children who lived on the construction site next door. They said nothing and asked for nothing, but there was hunger and curiosity in their eyes. They were the children of Ranju, a migrant worker from Bihar, who worked at the construction site. The pandemic had brought work to a standstill for her and 15 other Bihari workers — no wages, little food, and no cooking gas. An economic package has since been laid out. Yet, labour distress continues. Why did the migrant workers make the punishing journey from big cities back to the nondescript towns and villages of largely Bihar, and in Uttar Pradesh (UP)? The following narratives from Poorvanchal (eastern UP and Bihar) prove the need for a nuanced understanding of the precarity and anxieties of the migrant workforce and the need for State policies that take this into account. The two states account for 37% of the country's interstate migrants whose lives and livelihoods are now uncertain, at least for the near future. We spoke to dozens of workers and community leaders to understand their anxieties and experiences and policymakers to understand their responses.

Migrant workers across the country had similar worries. The absence of basic amenities, the inability to feed their children without ration cards of the particular geography they were

locked down in, and the lack of a security net to protect themselves from Covid-19 made them desperate. Worse still, the persistent fear of eviction played on their minds through the day, while mosquitoes bit them through the night. There was no spare money to purchase soaps, sanitisers, or the most essential product of the times — masks. Their economic insecurities persist despite government action in recent weeks.

Take some examples from Sitamarhi and Madhubani, Bihar. Rajesh worked at a construction site; Rajkishore Ram, Fenkan Raut, Manoj Manjhi, and Roshan Ram were labourers in a shoe factory, and Subhash Sah was a fabricator in another factory. None of them received their wages. The situation was worse for seasonal migrants who oscillated between their home and the destination states. Amar Singh, an agricultural worker in Gorakhpur, who doubles up as a painter in Delhi, travelled 900 kilometres on a motorcycle, only for his village to chase him away. Those arriving from the city were reported to the police and the pradhan, the village chief. In Riwilganj, Bihar, the quarantine centre in the Simariya School provided respite to those who had returned. Food was provided thrice a day. A mosquito net, a towel, and bathing items were also given. But it was life beyond the quarantine that worried them — for no one knew where they would find work. Their fears are for the immediate and long-term. Estimates of unemployment from the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy exhibit a dire situation. Bihar has had one of the highest rates of unemployment in March and April. While the average unemployment rate for the country was 23.5% in April, Bihar's unemployment figure was as high as 46.6%.

Uttar Pradesh is relatively better, with 21.5% unemployment rate in April. Many of these workers escaped the serfdom in villages and flocked to cities only to be forced to restart work in villages, in farms and brick kilns, now that the pandemic rages on. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is now the bulwark for rural employment. In April, nearly 856,773 households demanded employment in Bihar. Of this, only 73% of households could get work. Of the 1,113,644 households in UP that demanded work through MGNREGS in April, only 67% were given work. With hundreds of thousands likely to be added to the workforce in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the demand for MGNREGS is expected to see a sharp rise. Generating work and ensuring regular payments will be a challenge. Bihar has a built-in disadvantage due to extensive landlessness — 80% of rural migrants are either landless or have less than one acre of land. Yet, despite precarious work in cities, no secure wages, and little social support, India's poorest workers have acted with restraint, still following, within their constraints, norms of social distancing. Pandemics may have historically offered opportunities for labour to bargain for higher wages and better conditions. In India, the pressures from maliks (bosses), the pervasive informalism of new economy jobs that lead to no recognition for labour, and the urban middle-class's assertions for exclusion of the urban poor are part of a larger problem. Opportunities are difficult in conditions of inequalities and assertions of power. India must do better, starting with inclusive urbanism and policy reforms premised on an ethic of labour care.



The 'law' that explains why you can't get anything done

A British historian famously wrote that work expands to fill available time - but what was he actually saying about inefficiency?

With offices closed in nations around the world, many of us are grappling with how to stay productive and on task as we work from home. To help provide insight on how to manage this, BBC Worklife is updating some of our most popular productivity stories from our archive. This article was first published on 8 November 2019.

"It is a commonplace observation that work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion." British naval historian and author Cyril Northcote Parkinson wrote that opening line for an essay in *The Economist* in 1955, but the concept known as 'Parkinson's Law' still lives on today.

I think about it every time I have a deadline. How long it takes me to write a story will by and large depend on when my deadline is and how much time I have until then. In his somewhat satirical essay Parkinson uses the example of an elderly lady writing a postcard to her niece. Since she has nothing else to do with her time, the otherwise simple task takes up her entire day.

Apparently, I'm not the only one for whom the notion rings true. 'Parkinson's Law' took on a life of its own, forming the basis of several more essays and a book by Parkinson, leading to public lectures around the world.

But what fewer people know is that Parkinson's original intent was not to take aim at old lady letter-writers or journalists like me, but at a different kind of inefficiency – the

bureaucratisation of the British Civil Service. In his original essay he pointed out that although the number of navy ships decreased by two thirds, and personnel by a third, between 1914 and 1928, the number of bureaucrats had still ballooned by almost 6% a year. There were fewer people and less work to manage – but management was still expanding, and Parkinson argued that this was due to factors that were independent of naval operational needs.

Get more subordinates, create more work

One scholar who has taken a serious look at Parkinson's Law is Stefan Thurner, a professor in Science of Complex Systems at the Medical University of Vienna. Thurner says he became interested in the concept when the faculty of medicine at the University of Vienna split into its own independent university in 2004. Within a couple years, he says, the Medical University of Vienna went from being run by 15 people to 100, while the number of scientists stayed about the same. "I wanted to understand what was going on there, and why my bureaucratic burden did not diminish – on the contrary it increased," he says. He happened to read Parkinson's book around the same time and was inspired to turn it into a mathematical model that could be manipulated and tested, along with co-authors Peter Klimek and Rudolf Hanel. "Parkinson argued that if you have 6% growth rate of any

administrative body, then sooner or later any company will die. They will have all their workforce in bureaucracy and none in production." Parkinson pointed to two critical elements that lead to bureaucratisation – what he called the law of multiplication of subordinates, the tendency of managers to hire two or more subordinates to report to them so that neither is in direct competition with the manager themselves; and the fact that bureaucrats create work for other bureaucrats. Thurner says that companies typically start with a flat hierarchy, perhaps two engineers. As the company grows, they hire assistants, who then get promoted and hire their own subordinates. "A pyramid starts to grow. One might add artificial layers that serve no purpose other than introducing hierarchy, that help you to promote people to please them and keep them motivated. When the pyramid gets very large and expensive it might eat up all the company's profits. If the bureaucratic body is not drastically reduced at this stage the company will die." Thurner also looked at inefficiencies in Parkinson's original context: governments. In another study, he and his colleagues examined cabinet sizes of nearly 200 countries. They found that cabinet size was negatively correlated with government effectiveness; political stability; voice and accountability as measured by the World Bank; and life expectancy, knowledge

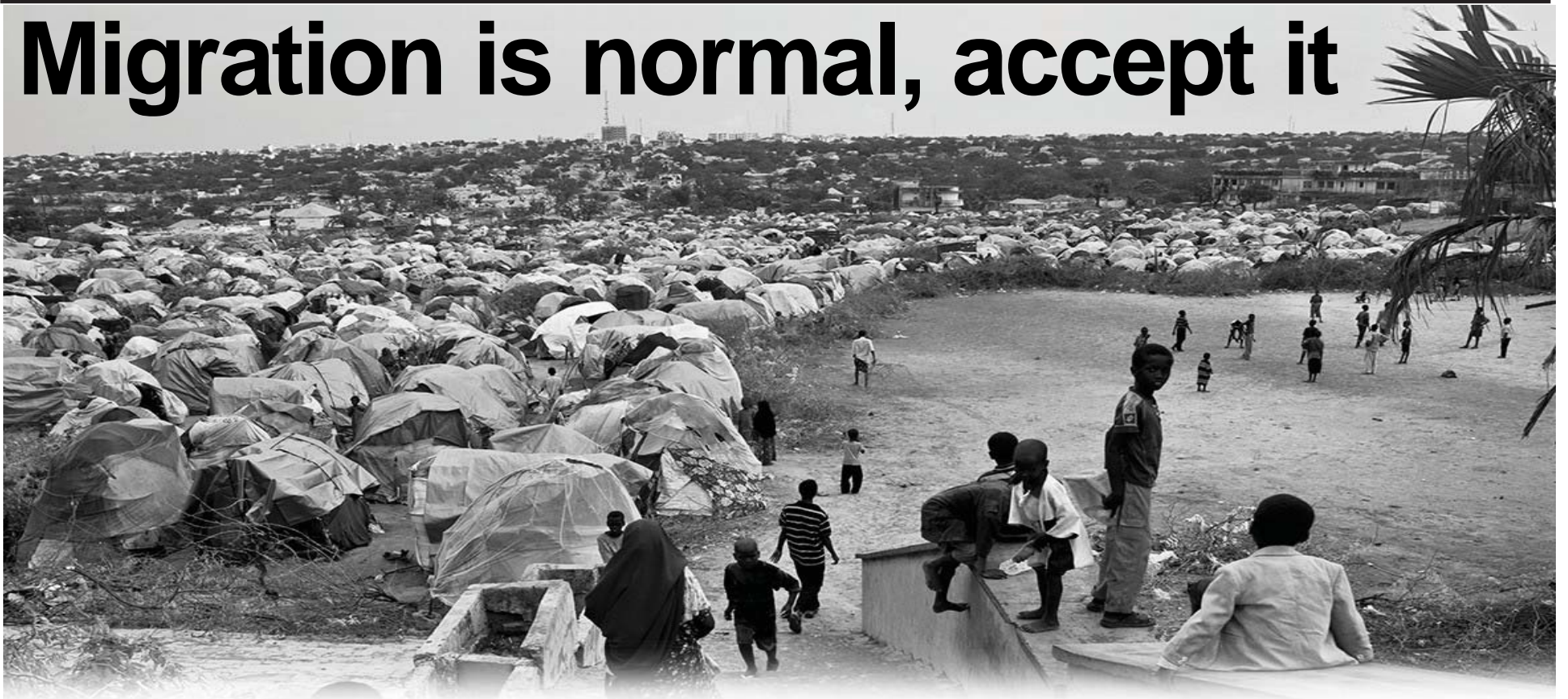
and standard of living as measured by the United Nations. To test how the size of a group affects its ability to make decisions, they created a model based on information flow networks and found that a significant change occurred when groups hit 20. "We found a realistic linking pattern of people and gave artificial committees random initial opinions on subjects," he says. "At 20 you see a strong difference in coalition building. Smaller groups form and they block each other, which explains why it is exceedingly hard to come up with unanimous decisions when cabinets are large."

Can 'menacing' deadlines cure dallying?

So if the wider points Parkinson was making about bureaucracies still stand up today, what of his enduring first line? Today, while some researchers might chuckle at the mention of the 'law' that has come to mean so much more than its original intent, there's also no doubt they know what it is referring to. Is there some truth to the notion that without strict time constraints, we waste time and our work takes longer to complete? In fact, studies in the decades since Parkinson wrote his essay have shown it has some merit. In the 1960s, researchers showed that when subjects were "accidentally" given extra time to complete a task, the task took longer to complete. In another set of studies from

1999, subjects were asked to evaluate four sets of photos. When they were told the fourth set was cancelled, they spent more time "dallying" on the third, rather than just finishing the task more quickly. Researchers also found that the extra time spent on a task – in this case counting the number of letters in a phrase – didn't lead to increased accuracy or ability to recall word pairs on a surprise test afterwards. So does this mean that as a writer, I should be setting my deadlines earlier or limiting the work I do on each story? In general, should we be imposing tougher time constraints to improve our productivity? Humans have a limited capacity for memory, attention and fatigue – or mental bandwidth, according to Eldar Shafir, a professor at Princeton and co-author of *Scarcity*, a book that looks at the psychology of having less than we need and how it drives our behaviours. "Because our attentional capacity is limited, we divide it sporadically any way we can as we run through everyday life," he says. But sometimes, of necessity, we need to knuckle down. In his book, he and co-author Sendhil Mullainathan talk about focusing deeply on a project at the cost of other things. "When you have a deadline it's like a storm ahead of you or having a truck around the corner. It's menacing and it's approaching, so you focus heavily on the task."

Migration is normal, accept it



Pull down the walls and assist those displaced by climate change, argues a book on the movement of people, animals and plants.

When the coronavirus pandemic led to stay-at-home orders around the globe, we all felt, at once, how central to human life movement is. Prevented from leaving our neighbourhoods, we became isolated, nervous, claustrophobic. Were we experiencing some Zugunruhe, the 'migratory restlessness' that seizes birds when it is time to take flight?

This near-universal disruption of how our species operates is another piece of evidence to add to the studies and anecdotes collected by journalist Sonia Shah to support her claim that migration is not aberrant, but is "an unexceptional ongoing reality". The *Next Great Migration* anticipates movements — human and non-human — in response to climate change as just the latest chapter in a story as old as life itself. Such migrations, she posits, are natural, common and largely harmless. Shah convincingly argues that politicians against immigration distort and misuse data to create unnecessary and cruel barriers. She tells gut-wrenching stories of struggling families on the move, and presents evidence that migrants are generally healthier and less apt to commit violent crimes than are the residents of the country they move to. And studies show that immigrants benefit host economies.

Turning to plants and animals, she takes biologists to task for abusing data to make introduced species look worse than they are. She charges that

renowned ecologist Charles Elton "cherry-picked" case studies of the most disruptive introduced species (such as the sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), which originated in the Atlantic Ocean and devastated trout populations in the Great Lakes). She levels that later biologists exaggerated the economic impact of non-natives by including the costs of removing them in calculations. Shah concludes that invasion biologists' predictions of "ecological Armageddon" have failed to transpire.

As a writer on ecology and conservation (for example, my 2011 book *Rambunctious Garden*), my expertise lies with the non-human migrations that Shah covers. I found it odd that she tends to group together many kinds of biological movement that specialists think of as quite different. Annual migrations — such as those of bar-headed geese (*Anser indicus*), which fly over the Himalayas on yearly trips from Mongolia to India and back again — as well as seed dispersal and animals roaming to find new territories and mates, aren't generally seen as comparable to human-mediated translocations across oceans, such as the deliberate introduction of Asian turtles in Hawaii to be bred for food. The former are considered natural, valuable processes; the latter are deemed unnatural, generally undesirable and potentially dangerous. Yet, Shah often ignores the human role.

Perhaps that's part of her point. The way we judge species' movements is a product of our culture, after all, and the borders we draw might be as arbitrary as those between our nation states. People are simply primates with iPhones; why should the species we carry be treated differently from those that move without us? If monkeys could arrive in the New World 30 million years after the Atlantic Ocean formed; if sweet potatoes could raft to Polynesia on their own; if seeds from Hawaii's koa tree could find purchase on the island of Réunion, half a world away, then even transoceanic range shifts are perfectly natural. How else could remote islands have developed any 'native' flora and fauna at all?

Most invasion biologists counter that philosophical discussions of 'naturalness' don't get us very far. Their concern is the effect on the travellers' new homes. The fact that many organisms move about widely of their own accord is not, in itself, evidence that introduced species can't be a problem. Most non-natives don't establish a population, or they have no unwanted effects — as Elton wrote, "There are enormously more invasions that never happen, or fail quite soon or even after a good many years." But a few do take hold. Some — mostly on islands or in lakes — threaten local inhabitants with extinction.

Such extinctions have surely occurred after long-distance

range shifts that people had nothing to do with. The sudden arrival of rodents in South America 41 million years ago, for example, probably had far-reaching effects on the ecosystems there. Indeed, millions of years of planet-wide movements — including, in the past few millennia, journeys of animals and plants as stowaways or as travelling companions of humans — have shaped the ecosystems we are trying to protect.

But the pace of radical range shifts in today's world is immeasurably higher. Before humans got to Hawaii, 30 new species made it there every million years. In the past 2 centuries, the islands have seen about 20 new species show up each year. And there is an ethical argument to be made that, when humans move species, we have a collective responsibility to mitigate the consequences. Cats and foxes that were introduced to Australia after European settlement in 1788 have helped to wipe out 22 native mammal species, such as the desert bandicoot (*Perameles eremiana*) and lesser stick-nest rat (*Leporillus apicalis*). Many introduced species will not cause significant problems. But if we wish to prevent extinctions, then a subset of these introduced species must be managed in some way. Shah does not parse these subtleties with the degree of nuance that specialists might want.

I do agree with her, however, that it is absolutely worth comparing our attitudes towards human and non-human migrants, especially as climate change increases all such movements — our temporary lockdown notwithstanding. As Earth heats, trees climb mountains, butterflies flutter north and birds nest in new places. Humans, too, are relocating in a flow "from south to north along the gradient of our warming planet", Shah writes. She predicts that the biggest and most lasting human movements will be those sparked by persistent droughts. And climate migration won't be a straightforward, predictable human tide. Each story of migration is unique, she says, motivated by an interplay of idiosyncratic social, economic and personal factors. The shifting climate means that we must allow — and assist — people, plants and animals who are forced to relocate to survive. Instead of hardening our borders and fighting to prevent change at all costs, we should help migrants to move in a safe and orderly way. Context will tell us when specific moves — such as animal predators to remote islands — are unwise. But we must face the inevitable: our social, political and ecological world is changing substantially. The altered communities that result won't just be different, they'll often be better adapted to thrive in our warming world. As Shah writes, "We can turn migration from a crisis into its opposite: the solution."

First human trial of potential anti body treatment for Covid-19 begins

(News Agencies) Eli Lilly and Company said Monday it has started the first human trial of an antibody therapy designed to treat Covid-19. The first phase of the trial will test whether the therapy is safe and well-tolerated; those results are expected in late June. The first Covid-19 patients being treated with the therapy are hospitalized at New York University's Grossman School of Medicine in New York, Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles and Emory University in

Atlanta, the company told CNN. If the trial ultimately shows the treatment is effective against Covid-19, it could be available by autumn, according to the Indianapolis-based company.

"Until now, scientists have been trying to repurpose medicines, drugs, that were designed for new diseases to see if they work in Covid-19, but as soon as this epidemic started, we got to work making a new medicine against this disease," said Dr. Dan Skovronsky, Eli

Lilly's senior vice president and chief scientific officer. "Now we're ready and testing it in patients." The treatment was created in collaboration with AbCellera, a biotechnology company based in Canada. When someone recovers from a disease like Covid-19, their body produces millions of proteins called antibodies, which fight off the disease and help them recover. AbCellera acquired a blood sample from one of the first US patients who had recovered



from Covid-19, and the companies sorted through millions of this patient's cells to find hundreds of antibodies. Scientists at AbCellera and the Vaccine Research Center at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases selected those they thought would be

most potent and Lilly scientists engineered the treatment, known as a monoclonal antibody therapy. This approach has worked to treat other illnesses; there are monoclonal antibody therapies that treat HIV, asthma, lupus, Ebola and some forms of cancer.

How to talk to your children about protests and racism



the video of George Floyd, an unarmed and handcuffed black man in Minneapolis, gasping for breath as a white police officer pressed a knee into his neck. Even if they haven't, experts say parents should assume their children are already aware of tragedies like these and their aftermath.

"Children and adolescents are experiencing the collateral consequences of the publicized murders of Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and George Floyd, whether they have a smartphone in their direct possession or not," said California pediatrician Dr. Rhea Boyd, who teaches nationally on the relationship between structural racism, inequity and health.

"Whether from social media accounts, conversations with peers or caregivers, overheard conversations, or the distress they witness in the faces of those they love, children know what is going on," Boyd said. "And without the guidance and validation of their caregivers, they may be navigating their feelings alone." How can a parent help their child traverse these disturbing times? Let the child's age and level of development guide you, experts say, but first, be sure that you are in the right frame of mind. "A parent's first step is to take care of themselves, their mental health, their emotional health. Put their oxygen mask on first before they put the oxygen mask on their child," said Chicago pediatrician

Dr. Nia Heard-Garris, who chairs the minority health, equity and inclusion committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). "Vicarious trauma through screens is real, especially for marginalized communities who may have experienced similar actions first-hand," said Dr. Jenny Radesky, a developmental behavioral pediatrician who teaches at the University of Michigan. The stress of watching traumatic events on television and smartphones "lingers within our bodies and minds," Radesky added. She suggests parents find ways to channel that energy with positive actions, such as deep breathing and re-grounding exercises, before playing with or talking to your kids.

(News Agencies) As cities and social media explode with anger over the killing of yet another black man at the hands of police, worried parents struggle with how to protect their children from seeing the worst of the violence while simultaneously explaining the ravages of racism.

It couldn't have come at a worse time. Sheltering at home for months to avoid the deadly coronavirus, many parents stressed by juggling work and child care from home had eased their restrictions on screen time for their children. Now it's even more likely that kids might find

The protests are raising fears of a spike in coronavirus cases



an increase of almost 20,000 cases nationwide, according to the CNN count compiled with data from John's Hopkins. In Washington DC, the health department on Monday reported a new peak in cases meaning a delay to moving from phase one of the District's reopening program to a less restrictive phase.

In California, cases jumped 11% in days, from 98,980 reported Wednesday to 110,583 cases Sunday, according to the health department's data. In the past week, 18 states had an increase of cases of at least 10%; cases decreased in 21 states, and 11 were holding steady, according to a CNN analysis of the seven-day average of new cases between Memorial Day and Sunday. As of Monday evening, at least 1,809,109 Americans have contracted the virus and 105,099 have died.

Spike in cases expected
With large groups of people out in hoards close together during the protests, Minnesota Governor Walz said he

expects a sharp increase in cases of Covid-19 in his state "I am deeply concerned about a super-spreader type of incident," Walz said. "We're going to see a spike in Covid-19. It's inevitable." Minnesota has been "seeing an uptick in cases to begin with. Even before these protests started, we saw rising hospitalizations in that state," Gottlieb said.

Officials in New York shared the governor's worry about a potential for rise in coronavirus among protesters.

"I would still wish that everyone would realize that when people gather it's inherently dangerous in the context of this pandemic, and I'm going to keep urging people not to use that approach and if they do they focus on social distancing and wearing face coverings," New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said Saturday. The mayor said he recognized the need to demonstrate following the death of Floyd but "It's a very, very complicated reality."

(News Agencies) Government leaders and health officials have expressed their concern that coronavirus could rapidly spread during protests over the death of George Floyd. Floyd died after since-fired Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin knelt on his neck for more than eight minutes. Chauvin was charged with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. People across the country have taken to the streets to vent their frustrations over the seeming lack of

value for the lives of black Americans. It was the same week the nation crossed the 100,000 death count from coronavirus. "There's going to be a lot of issues coming out of what's happened in the last week, but one of them is going to be that chains of transmission will have become lit from these gatherings," Dr. Scott Gottlieb, a former US Food and Drug Administration commissioner, said during CBS' "Face the Nation" Sunday. Cases rising in some areas Sunday alone saw

Vaani Kapoor, called an 'ugly b**ch' by a troll, keeps it classy with her reply

Actor Vaani Kapoor kept it classy with her response to a troll who made a mean comment about her appearance.

(News Agencies) Actor Vaani Kapoor is no stranger to trolling. During a recent Instagram interaction session with her fans, the actor was at the receiving end of a mean comment about her looks, but she had a classy reply ready.

"You ugly b**ch," one person wrote to her during the session, to which Vaani replied, "You're beautiful inside out." She topped it off with a heart emoji. This isn't the first time that Vaani has been trolled. When a person called her 'manly' in the comments section of an

Instagram post, Vaani replied, "I hope you're aware your nothing but an attention seeker .. but there is still time , don't go all hopeless on yourself, you still can get necessary help." The Instagram user then accused her of being an attention-seeker, to which Vaani replied, "Let me save both of us the trouble by blocking you. You can't see me and I don't have to go through your irrelevant comments. K bye." On the same post, when a user wrote, "Suffering from Malnutrition are ya?" in the comments

section, Vaani shot back, "Why don't you find something productive to do in life? Please stop being harsh on yourself, life is so much better... Stop reflecting hate." Vaani made her film debut in Shuddh Desi Romance, which also starred Sushant Singh Rajput and Parineeti Chopra. She then appeared opposite Ranveer Singh in Befikre. In 2019, she appeared in the blockbuster War, with Hrithik Roshan and Tiger Shroff. She will remain with home studio Yash Raj Films for her next project, Shamshera, starring Ranbir Kapoor.



Janhvi Kapoor remembers mom Sridevi on parents' wedding anniversary

Janhvi Kapoor shared a throwback picture of her parents, Sridevi and Boney Kapoor, on their wedding anniversary.



(News Agencies) On February 24, 2018, Sridevi breathed her last, leaving the entire country in deep

shock. Though it has been more than two years since Sridevi left us, her memories remain fresh in

the minds of her fans. Today, Janhvi Kapoor refreshed those memories as she shared a throwback picture of Sridevi and Boney Kapoor, remembering the late actress on her wedding anniversary. Janhvi captioned the post as, "Happy Anniversary," with heart emojis. Earlier, at the India Today Woman Summit 2013, Boney Kapoor had revealed that it was love at first sight for him

when he saw Sridevi. He said, "I fell in love with Sri (Sridevi) when I watched her Tamil film during the late 1970s. After watching her film, I wanted to know more about her. I had especially gone to Chennai to her house to meet her, but she was shooting in Singapore. I returned to Mumbai disheartened." However, Sridevi started warming up to Boney

while shooting Mr India (1987). Boney produced Mr India, starring Sridevi and Anil Kapoor in lead roles. Talking about the same, Boney had said, "I made sure she was comfortable on the set (of Mr India). I personally took care of everything. There were no vanity vans at that time, but I arranged for a separate make-up room for her. Gradually, she felt comfortable with me."

Sara Ali Khan's Workout Partner Is Usual Suspect Brother Ibrahim



(News Agencies) Anyone who has been following Sara Ali Khan on Instagram, would be well-aware of the fact that the actress loves to work out, gym or no gym. The Internet, on Tuesday, chanced upon a video of the Simmba actress working out along with her brother Ibrahim Ali Khan at her home. In the video, the brother-sister duo could be seen doing squats and push-ups, diligently. Sara could be seen wearing a yellow t-shirt and a pair of shorts, while her brother Ibrahim was dressed in a black tee and a matching pair of shorts. The video, which has been curated by several fan clubs on social media, is trending big time. Over the weekend, the Love Aaj Kal actress shared a video, in which she could be seen doing Pilates, cardio exercises, swimming as well as riding bikes and snippets from kickboxing sessions. Sharing the video on her Instagram

profile, Sara wrote, "Namaste Darshako. Lockdown edition. From Sara ka Sara to Sara ka aadha." Ibrahim Ali Khan has some impeccable genes. His parents - Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh are Bollywood actors. His father is now married to Kareena Kapoor. His grandmother (Saif's mother) Sharmila Tagore is a veteran actress. His late grandfather Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi was a legendary cricketer. Ibrahim's sister Sara, who made her Bollywood debut in 2018, has featured in films such as Kedamath (her debut film), Simmba and Love Aaj Kal. Sara Ali Khan's impressive line-up of films includes David Dhawan's Coolie No 1 remake, co-starring Varun Dhawan. She also has signed Aanand L Rai's Atrangi Re, co-starring Akshay Kumar and Dhanush. Sara was last seen in Imtiaz Ali's Love Aaj Kal, featuring Kartik Aaryan.

Meera Chopra files complaint against rape

(News Agencies) Actor Meera Chopra was in for a rude shock



when Jr NTR fans started a hate campaign against her on social media. It all began after her recent chat session on Twitter, when a user asked her to describe Telugu actor Jr NTR in one word and she replied, "I don't know him. I'm not his fan." Having worked in South Indian film industry, she also expressed her admiration for actor Mahesh Babu, which further irked these trolls beyond imagination. "This cyber bullying needs to stop. I can be anybody's fan in the world, it's my choice.

They (Jr NTR fans) threatened me with gang rape, throwing acid on my face, murder and even wished that my parents die of Covid. All this when I hadn't said anything hurtful," says Chopra, adding, "Social media has become such a scary and toxic place. It's amusing to see how people can stoop to this low".

If you're planning to take part in protests, know your rights



Jessica Lal's murderer Manu Sharma walks out of Tihar jail



(News Agencies) Manu Sharma, who was serving a life term after being convicted of the murder of model Jessica Lal in 1999, was released from Tihar jail on Monday evening after lieutenant governor (LG) Anil Baijal accepted the recommendations of the Sentence Review Board (SRB). "The lieutenant governor had accepted the recommendations of the SRB meeting held on May 11," Sharma's lawyer Amit Sahni said. **(Contd on page 30)**

While America Struggles for its Soul, Biden Struggles for Relevance



(News Agencies) There are many voices who see the violence and despair sweeping America this spring as the natural result of everything President Donald Trump stands for - of his divisive language and policies and worldview. It is easy to miss, but embedded in these condemnations is a perverse form of praise: The critics do not doubt the efficacy of Trumpian politics. To the contrary, the condemnations assign the president an undeniable agency. There is a clear link between ideas and consequences. People excoriate Trump, and in so doing ratify his relevance. Relevance is the quality needed most urgently now by Joseph R. Biden Jr. This is a moment that challenges more than his limited stylistic range.

(Contd on page 31)

A lost decade looms for America's economy

(News Agencies) London : It could take the US economy most of the next decade to recover from the coronavirus pandemic, the Congressional Budget Office said on



Monday. The CBO warns in a new analysis that the pandemic will reduce cumulative economic output over the next 10 years by \$7.9 trillion, or 3% of GDP during the decade, compared to its projections from January. Without accounting for inflation, the damage totals \$15.7

trillion, or 5.3% of GDP. The CBO said the revisions reflect expectations of reduced consumer spending caused by business closures and social distancing. In addition, the recent drop in energy prices is expected to "severely" curtail investment in that sector, the CBO warned. Recent legislation, which includes more than \$2 trillion in stimulus, will only partially mitigate the economic fallout

caused by the pandemic, the CBO said. The big caveat: The CBO cautioned that there is an unusually high degree of uncertainty around its forecasts because the course of the pandemic is unknown and it's not clear how the economy will respond.

(Contd on page 30)

How Upheaval On The Streets of D.C. Conjured the Unimaginable About America



(News Agencies) This week is the 31st anniversary of the massacre in Tiananmen Square, in which the Chinese government crushed pro-democracy activists and then spent decades lying about what had happened and suppressing truthful accounts. The event immediately became a political issue in America. During the first presidential election after Tiananmen,

(Contd on page 31)