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US Special Forces secretly deployed to Taiwan for at least a year

(SAI Bureau)-A contingent of U.S. Special Operations and Marine forces have been secretly operating out of Taiwan as aggressive Chinese actions continue to escalate, a report said Thursday. U.S. forces have been working to train the Taiwanese military in an attempt to shore up the Indo-Pacific nation's defenses, first reported the Wall Street Journal. Officials told the

publication that over the last year roughly two dozen members of U.S. Special Operation units and supporting troops have conducted ground training while the Marines have worked to train small boat units. The news comes just days after a record number of Chinese military planes entered Taiwan's air defense zone. China's air force flew roughly 150 fighter (Contd on page 34)



The debt drama that masked a brutal power struggle: Schumer vs. McConnell



(SAI Bureau)- On the surface, the Senate battled this week over avoiding a cataclysmic debt default. Underneath it all, the clash was really about who controls a historically divided chamber. A collapse in the U.S. credit rating was never really on the table, according to interviews with senators in both parties. Instead, rank-and-file members stepped back to let Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell make hard-charging moves in their ongoing one-upmanship. (Contd on page 36)

India's TV news channels picked a clear side between farmers and BJP on Lakhimpur Kheri incident.

Times Now sympathy went to BJP Minister's son. Zee News turned to 'Khalistan plan'

(SAI Bureau)- Television news which the dead were allegedly either doesn't follow the news, it chases the 'mowed down' or 'lynched', last politics. This suits the political parties Sunday.

and them, admirably-they get the confrontation they want between the ruling party and the Opposition, and the politicians seize the moment, make it their own when it rightly belongs elsewhere. The moment, in this case, belonged to the nine lives lost in Lakhimpur, Uttar Pradesh, when a BJP convoy ran into farm protesters; it belonged to their bereaved families; and it ought to have belonged to discovering what happened and who was responsible for the 'terrifying' (India Today) incidents in



Instead, it was politics, slants and videotape - to rewrite the name of a celebrated film. News channels diverted our attention: we watched the ludicrous spectacle, Wednesday, of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi arguing with the UP Police at Lucknow airport over 'cars' and 'permission pe pange' (CNN-News18), Rahul Gandhi on the flight to Lucknow, Rahul Gandhi driving to Delhi airport, Rahul Gandhi at a press conference...

(Contd on page 35)

"Congress In Dying Stages. Had They Allowed Me...": Navjot Sidhu's Latest Googly



(Contd on page 33)

CIA launches new China-focused unit



(Contd on page 33)



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Houston Post Office Named After Sikh Cop Who Was Shot Dead

A dedication ceremony was held where Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher, who brought the renaming legislation to the US House of Representatives, said it was fitting to rename the post office at 315 Addicks Howell Road after someone who committed his life to serving the community.

(Insider Bureau)-A post office in west Houston has been renamed after Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal, in a fitting tribute to the trailblazing Indian-American Sikh police officer who died after being shot multiple times from behind while on duty in the US state of Texas in 2019.

Dhaliwal, the beloved 42-year-old Harris County Sheriff's Deputy and a father of three, was gunned down during a traffic stop on September 27. Dhaliwal made national headlines in 2015 when he became the first police officer in Texas to serve while keeping his Sikh articles of faith, including a turban and beard.

"Our fallen brother Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal was honoured by renaming a postal office in west Harris County in his memory. We are grateful to the Texas delegation, Harris County Commissioners Court, United States Postal Office, & the Sikh community for honoring him," Harris County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) said in a tweet on Wednesday.

Houston's Sikh community and local elected officials and members of law enforcement gathered on Tuesday at a ceremony at 315 Addicks-Howell Road to dedicate the "Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal Post Office."

"I am honoured to play a role in commemorating Deputy Dhaliwal's remarkable life of selfless service," said Congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher, who brought the renaming legislation to the US House of Representatives.

"He represented the very best of our community: he worked for equality, connection, and community through his life of service to others. I was glad to work with a bipartisan delegation, our community partners, and those in the Sikh community, to pass legislation to rename this building the Deputy Sandeep Singh Dhaliwal Post Office," Fletcher said.

No Quarantine For Fully Vaccinated Indians Travelling To UK From Monday



(Insider Bureau)-Indians who are fully vaccinated with Covishield or any other UK-approved vaccine will not be quarantined when they arrive in Britain from October 11, the High Commissioner to India said on Thursday, ending a row over what was perceived as unfair imposition of COVID-19 quarantine rules.

"No quarantine for India travellers to United Kingdom fully vaccinated with Covishield or another UK-approved vaccine from 11 October. Thanks to Indian government for close cooperation over last month," British High Commissioner to India Alex Ellis tweeted on Thursday.

On October 1, in response to the UK quarantine rules for Indians and citizens of several nations, including those vaccinated with UK-approved Covishield, India had imposed mandatory 10-day quarantine for British citizens irrespective of vaccination status.

Described as discriminatory and even "colonialist", the UK government had faced intense backlash over its refusal to recognise visitors as vaccinated unless they received their shots in a handful of select countries.

40-Member Group Of Mostly Indians Wins \$2.72 Million Lottery In UAE: Report

(Insider Bureau)- A 40-member group, including 38 Indians working at a Qatar-based hypermarket chain, have won 10 million dirhams (USD 2.72 million) in a lucky draw in the UAE,



according to a media report on Monday.

The winning ticket was bought on Indian expatriate Naheel Nizamudeen's name in the Big Ticket Lottery, Abu Dhabi, the Khaleej Times reported.

Mr Nizamudeen, who hails from Kerala, could not be reached since Sunday evening and the lottery

organisers had to contact his parents in India to deliver the news of the mega prize.

In the lottery application, Mr Naheel had given his Indian number which was not active. However, he had also given the alternate number of his parents, which was how the organisers contacted him.

The prize will be shared by another 39 winners, of whom 37 are Indians (all hailing from Kerala) and the other two are from Bangladesh. All of them are employees of Qatar-based hypermarket chain Al Suwayed Group.

The news of the winning is yet to sink in. "We usually get a lot of spam calls. I still can't believe that we have won," Mr Naheel told the newspaper.

"We are all from middle-class families and have financial issues. So, the future of 40 families have been secured with this jackpot," said Shinoy Othayoth Kizhakk, one of the winners and Mr Nizamudeen's roommate.

Indian-Singaporean Jailed For Assaulting Volunteer Who Asked Him To Wear Mask

(Insider Bureau)-An Indian-origin Singaporean has been sentenced to seven weeks in jail for assaulting a volunteer at a local food centre here after being asked to wear his mask properly as part of the safety measures to check the spread of the coronavirus.

K. Chandra Segaran, 58, who had earlier been released from prison for another assault offence in December 2020, hurled racial insults and punched Brandon Ong, an "SG Clean Ambassador" on duty to ensure people wear masks over their mouths properly in public places, The Straits Times reported on Monday.

Chandra, a driver, was

sentenced to seven weeks in jail on Friday after he pleaded guilty to one count each of assault, harassment and an offence under the COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act.

Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP) Joseph Gwee said that on April 18, Ong and an auxiliary police officer spotted Chandra walking around the Maxwell Food Centre with his mask below his chin.

He was not consuming any food or drinks at the time. Ong asked Chandra to wear his mask properly but he ignored the volunteer.

When Ong repeated his request, Chandra punched the volunteer on the left side of his face and verbally abused him.

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"Join Friends In India To Celebrate 152nd Birthday Of Mahatma Gandhi": US Official

(Insider Bureau)-Mahatma Gandhi's message of non-violence, respect and tolerance matters today, maybe more than it ever has, a top US official has said as glowing tributes to the global peace icon



were paid across America on the occasion of his 152nd birth anniversary.

"We join our friends in India and around the world to celebrate the 152nd birthday of Mahatma Gandhi," US Secretary of State Tony Blinken tweeted on Saturday.

He recalled the remarks of President Joe Biden a week ago during his joint media appearance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Oval Office of the White House.

As the President said, "We're all reminded that his message of non-violence, respect, (and) tolerance matters today, maybe more than it ever has," Blinken tweeted.

India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu paid respect to Bapu at the Gandhi memorial in the American Capital.

"The life and legacy of #Gandhiji continue to influence and inspire generations in India, the US and the world," he tweeted.

Early this week, in the run-up to Gandhi Jayanti students from the prestigious Howard University, paid respects at the Gandhi Statue and had an interaction at the Embassy.

"Happy Birthday to the man who taught us that 'in a gentle way, you can shake the world'," said Howard University's Bunche International Center, which has organised a lecture on Gandhi and Dr King next week featuring Sandhu as the keynote speaker.

"On what would have been Gandhi's 152nd birthday, may we honour him by finding ways, big and small, to live out his lessons of pluralism and peace," said Indian American Congressman Ro Khanna.

While Mahatma Gandhi never travelled to the United States, it is perhaps the only country that has the largest number of statues and busts of India's father of the nation. The teachings and philosophy of the apostle of peace have deeply influenced America's civil rights movement, in particular, that led by Martin Luther King Jr.

Free Trade Agreement Is The Next Frontier In India-US Ties: Top Advocacy Group

(Insider Bureau)-A Free Trade Agreement is the next frontier in the India-US relationship, the head of a top India-centric business advocacy group has said, stressing that it is not tenable for the two largest economies of the world to not have a trade architecture in place between them, though its path is riddled with "all kinds of obstacles". Nisha Desai Biswal, president of US-India Business Council and a former US diplomat, was speaking at a dinner hosted by Indiaspora. "The time has come for us to get serious about where the next frontier is in US India ties. And neither for the United States, nor for India, is it tenable for two of the largest economies in the world to be outside of the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) and to not have a trade architecture in place between the two of them," Nisha Desai Biswal, president of US India Business Council said. "We are starting

to see real signals of interest from India to be able to explore that. So, I think the time has come to get serious. It's not easy. It's a path riddled with all kinds of obstacles," she said. "I've heard it described to me that trade negotiations are a knife fight in a dark alley. It's time for us to put down the knives, turn on the light, get down to business," she said in a lighter vein as she urged the powerful group of Indian Americans to engage the two governments on the issue.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, while addressing the 4th Annual Leadership Summit of the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) on Wednesday, said that India and the US should engage in a much bigger way and New Delhi is ready and willing to expand the economic partnership with America. He also called for setting an ambitious bilateral trade target of USD 1 trillion in the next 10 years.

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Lakhimpur Kheri



8 deaths, 7 political implications

The violence at Lakhimpur Kheri has several political implications. Many see the Lakhimpur Kheri incident as a major poll plank in the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly election.

The Lakhimpur Kheri violence leading to the death of eight people, including

four farmers, has stirred the political pot of Uttar Pradesh with barely five months to go for the assembly polls.

The violence at Lakhimpur Kheri has several political implications. Many see the Lakhimpur Kheri incident as a major poll plank in the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly election.

'BRAHMIN' AJAY MISRA

Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Misra Teni, the Kheri MP, is in the spotlight over the Lakhimpur Kheri violence. The farmers named his son, Ashish, as the prime accused in the deaths of four farmers. They demanded that Ashish be booked on murder charges.

When Ajay Misra was inducted into the Union Council of Ministers in July this year, he was seen more as a representation of the Brahmins in Uttar Pradesh. The induction of Jitin Prasada into the BJP was also seen in the same contest as the party's attempt to reach out to the Brahmin community.

This came in the backdrop of theories that the Brahmins of Uttar Pradesh were moving away from

the BJP. It was said the party was doling out favours to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Dalits at the cost of the Brahmin community.

At the same time, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati, who is trying to cobble up a Dalit-Brahmin social formula for the UP Assembly election, also refrained from targeting Ajay Misra aggressively. She demanded a judicial probe and expressed solidarity with farmers. The Samajwadi Party, too, had been cautious with Akhilesh Yadav staging a sit-in protest outside his residence in Lucknow.

On the other hand, the Congress went all out in targeting Ajay Misra with Rahul Gandhi calling his son, without taking his name, a "criminal" in a press conference on Wednesday.

The BJP counts on the support of about 10-12 per cent Brahmin voters in Uttar Pradesh. Over a range of issues including the encounter of Kanpur don Vikas Dubey, the Yogi Adityanath government is seen as anti-Brahmin by some groups. The political observers say that the Brahmins could still be with the BJP but they seem to have an 'issue' with the government headed by Yogi Adityanath.

YOGI-MAURYA TUSSELE

There have been reports of

differences between Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and his deputy Keshav Prasad Maurya. Not long ago, there was speculation about Keshav Prasad Maurya emerging as the alternative chief ministerial aspirant after the 2022 UP polls. Maurya was to be the chief guest at the event that the farmers had gathered to protest against. Maurya could not reach the venue as the protesters blocked the connecting road. The vehicle that rammed the crowd of protesters was reportedly sent to escort Maurya to the venue.

FARM STIR SPREADS

Farmers' protests had remained in western Uttar Pradesh since late 2020. The border areas with Delhi and Haryana remained the active protest region for farmers. This had also given a kind of insulation to the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh making the farmers' protest a 'political subject' for the central government.

The Lakhimpur Kheri incident ensured its deeper penetration into central Uttar Pradesh. The Opposition, particularly the Congress, is now looking to take it to eastern Uttar Pradesh over the next few months leading to the assembly polls.

Farmers and farm labourers dominate the largely rural

landscape of Uttar Pradesh. Further penetration of the farm stir may emerge as a bigger factor in UP polls.

BACK-TO-BACK CHALLENGES FOR YOGI GOVT

The Lakhimpur Kheri violence happened close on the heels of a sensational incident in Gorakhpur, where a Kanpur-based businessman, Manish Gupta, died during a police raid at a hotel. Gupta had reportedly joined the BJP only four months ago.

His death saw a swift response from CM Yogi. A compensation amount was announced and a government job was promised to the family. The firefighting exercise denied the Opposition the chance to make the incident on CM Yogi's home turf an issue for the upcoming polls.

When the Lakhimpur Kheri violence took place, CM Yogi was in Gorakhpur. He cut short his visit to hold a high-level meeting in Lucknow. A team of police officers was sent to hold talks with protesting farmers.

Political leaders were denied permission to visit Lakhimpur Kheri. Farmer leader Rakesh Tikait was allowed to visit the affected families.

Tikait and the government reached an agreement for compensation and a probe. CM Yogi may have insulated his

government from farmers' anger. The unresolved issue is that of the continuation of Ajay Misra in the Modi government and action against his son for alleged involvement in the incident.

MORE FAITH IN OFFICERS THAN POLITICIANS

Ever since taking over as the UP chief minister, Yogi Adityanath has appeared to depend more on the police and administrative officers than politicians to deal with situations with political implications. His "thok do" comment was seen as giving a free hand to police officers resulting in a number of headline-making encounters.

During the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests, the Yogi government appeared to lean more on the police than reach out to different political groups for managing protests. In Sonbhadra, where 10 tribal people were killed over a land dispute, the government restricted permission to political leaders to visit the affected families.

In the Hathras case of the gang rape and murder of a Dalit woman, the police administration handled the matter. The Gorakhpur and Lakhimpur Kheri incidents fit the same theory that CM Yogi has more faith in the police than politicians.

Tamil Nadu: Officials hunt for elusive man-eater tiger in Masinagudi

(News Agencies)- Forest officials are on the trail to capture T23, a 13-year-old tiger, which is reported to have killed four persons, cows, and a goat so far. The officials are on the hunt for the tenth day at Masinagudi in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR). On September 25, wildlife officials began the combing operation, accompanied by two Kumkis and several hunting dogs, to capture the elusive tiger. The officials are strictly following the guidelines of the National Tiger Conservation Authority. Meanwhile, though villagers want T23 to be killed, calling it a "man-eater" after the death of a 52-year-old man in September, a PIL was filed in Madras High Court, challenging Principal Chief Conservator of Forests' 'hunt order'. The petitioner stated that the hunting order was issued, calling T23 dangerous to human life. However, the PIL pointed out that confusion

Forest officials are on the trail of an elusive "man-eater" tiger for past 10 days at Masinagudi in Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR).



persists in categorising human killings due to "chance encounters" and "habituated animals" that pose danger to human lives.

The petitioner also claimed that there was no evidence in the

case of T23 to confirm it as a human-stalking habituated animal.

Chief Justice Sanjeeb Banneerjee while hearing the PIL asked the forest officials to not go for immediate kill.

"Don't go for the immediate kill. MDT23 might not be a man-eater. We have only limited number of tigers in the Country", said Sanjeeb Banneerjee.

Forest officials also informed

the court that they are making all attempts to capture the animal alive.

State Environment Secretary Supriya Sahu stated that no decision under pressure would be taken as the main goal is only conservation.

"Our approach as always has been based on the fact that the tiger is saved. We are relying on local experts as they know the terrain. The tiger is old and injured, so our concern is we are able to safely tranquilize the tiger and rehabilitate it properly. Tiger is the keystone animal. If there are no tigers, there are not going to be human beings. It governs an ecosystem, hence our approach is conservation", said Supriya Sahu.

While efforts are on to capture the tiger, weather and terrain is causing a delay for officials. Moreover, presences of four other tigers in the same area also pose a problem for officials who have to be careful to not disturb their habitat.



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Lakhimpur Kheri



India Today accessed a copy of the FIR of the Lakhimpur Kheri incident that named Union minister Ajay Misra's son Ashish Misra and 15-20 others as accused and charged them with murder.

Union minister's son Ashish Misra named in FIR, booked for murder

The Uttar Pradesh Police has lodged a first information report (FIR) in the Lakhimpur Kheri incident which claimed the lives of eight people, including four farmers. The FIR states that Union minister Ajay Misra's son Ashish Misra alias Monu was sitting in the car that mowed down protesting farmers. India Today accessed a copy of the FIR which also claims that Ashish Misra had opened fire at the protesting farmers. The FIR, lodged on a complaint of Jagjit Singh, a native of Bahraich district, claims that the incident was "premeditated" for which the "conspiracy was hatched" by the Union minister and his son. The complaint also alleged that "provocative" statements of the Union minister had led to the farmers' protest. "The farmers had gathered to lodge their protest after a video

went viral in which the Union minister made comments during a public meeting and threatened to chase out the farmers from the state, prior to the (October 3) incident," the FIR stated. On Sunday, the farmers had gathered at the sports ground of the Maharaja Agrasen Inter-College to peacefully protest against the Centre's three farm laws. They had planned to show black flags to the Union minister Ajay Misra and Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, who were there to attend an event. "Around 3 pm, Ashish Misra along with 15-20 armed men in three speeding four-wheelers reached the protest spot in Banbirpur. Monu Misra opened gunfire while he was seated on the left side of his Mahindra Thar, which mowed down the crowd and sped ahead," stated the FIR. "Because of the firing, farmer

Gurvinder Singh, son of Sukhwinder, resident of Matronia in Nanpara, died. The numbers of the speeding vehicles which cruelly crushed the farmers standing on both sides of the roads are UP 31 AS 1000 and UP 32 KM 0036, while the third vehicle (whose number is not confirmed) was a Mahindra Scorpio," it added. The report further stated, "Ashish Misra's speeding vehicle overturned on the side of the road, leading to injuries to several other people. Ashish Misra escaped from the car, opened fire and hid in a sugarcane field." The FIR mentioned Ashish Misra and others as accused and charged them with murder, criminal conspiracy, rash driving, rioting, among others. However, Union minister Ajay Misra is not named in the FIR. Meanwhile, Ajay Misra has refuted the allegations of his

son's involvement in the incident that claimed the lives of four farmers. The deceased farmers have been identified as Gurvinder Singh (22), Daljit Singh (35), Nakshatra Singh and Lovepreet Singh. The FIR claimed, "The minister's son committed the act in a display of hooliganism. The central government also did not take any action against the Union minister in the wake of the viral video and today (October 3), his son carried out the gruesome act." The complainant demanded the arrest of the Union minister and his son. The FIR has been lodged under Indian Penal Code sections 147, 148, 149 (all three related to rioting), 279 (rash driving), 338 (causes grievous hurt to any person by doing any act so rashly or negligently as to endanger human life), 304A (causing death by negligence), 302 (murder), 120B (party to a criminal conspiracy).

Bombay high court to hear Sachin Vaze's plea seeking house custody next week, NIA to file affidavit



The Bombay high court will be hearing dismissed Mumbai police officer Sachin Vaze's plea next week where he is seeking house custody instead of being kept in jail for post operative care. The high court directed the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to file an affidavit in response to the plea. Advocate Sandesh Patil appearing for the National Investigating Agency (NIA) sought time to file a reply to Sachin Vaze's plea. Sachin Vaze was arrested by the NIA in the Antilia bomb scare and businessman Mansukh Hiran murder case in March this year and was later sent to judicial custody. Last month, Vaze was permitted by a sessions court to be admitted to a private hospital where he underwent bypass surgery. Sachin Vaze, 52, later sought permission from the special NIA court to be placed under house arrest so that he could recuperate. Sachin Vaze's plea stated that he had undergone complex cardiac surgery with five grafts and that he was more vulnerable to infections such as tuberculosis if he was sent back to Talaja jail. The plea said that house custody would enable him to recover in a safe, sterile and stress-free environment, albeit in custody. It added that if house arrest permission is granted, Vaze would be put in a separate room in his residence where complete seclusion would be maintained. He also sought permission to visit his hospital in Mumbai and meet his lawyer as per the jail manual while in house custody. His lawyers cited Elgar Parishad accused Varavara Rao's case, where the court had observed that 'continued custody of the person under trial at the Talaja Central Prison is wholly incompatible with his health condition, because the hospital at the Talaja Central Prison is not adequately equipped to take care of the under trial, given his advanced age and various health conditions'.

UP govt permits political parties to visit Lakhimpur Kheri, only 5 people allowed at a time



(News Agencies)-The Uttar Pradesh government has now granted permission to all political parties to visit Lakhimpur Kheri, where eight people died as violence erupted during a farmers' protest three days back.

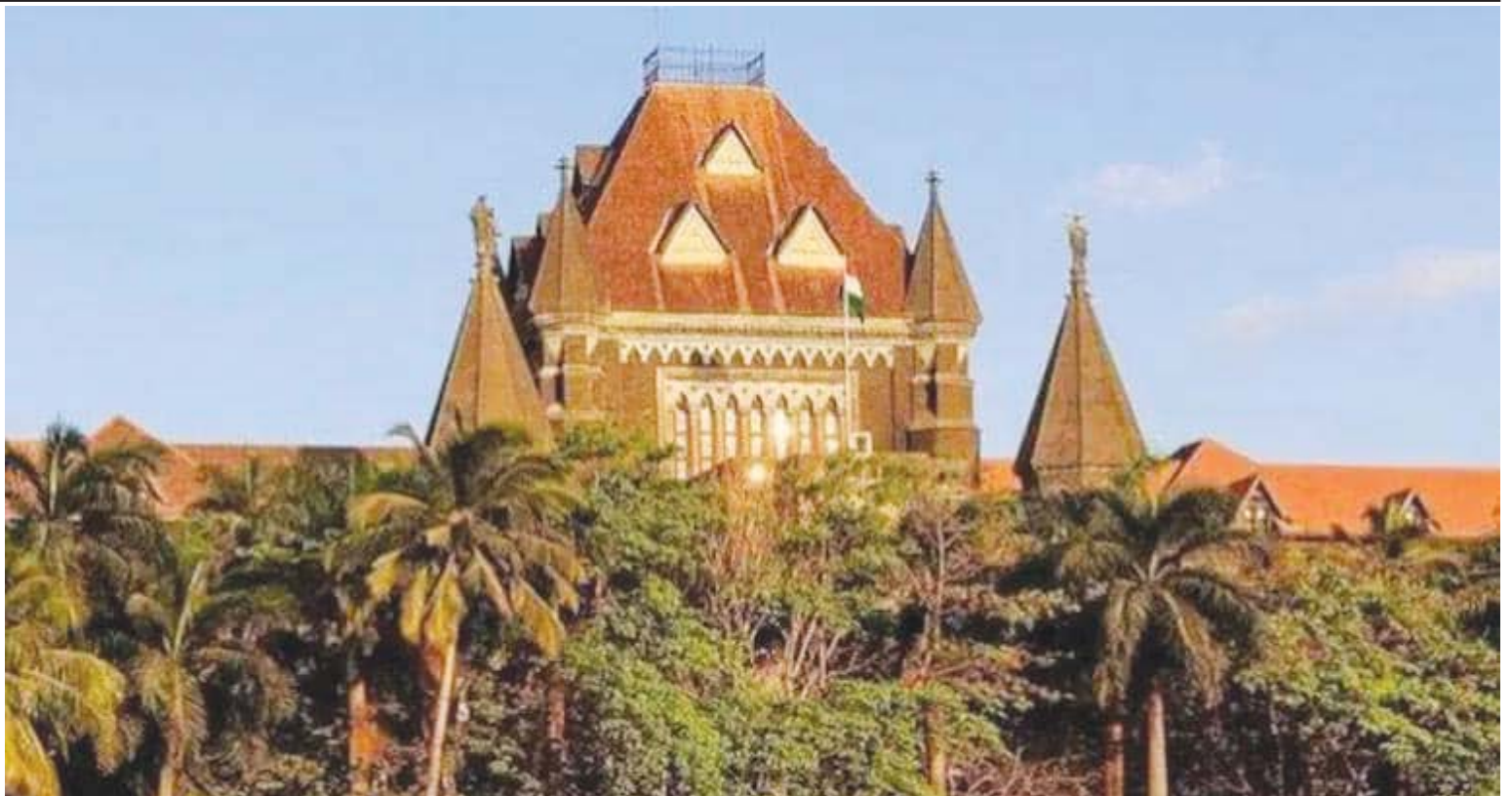
However, only five people will be allowed at a time, a top official said here.

Earlier in the day, the state government had denied permission to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his visit to the violence-hit district, and an official spokesperson had said that no one would be allowed to go there to vitiate the atmosphere.

"Permission has been given to political parties to visit Lakhimpur. Only five people will be allowed," Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Home, Awanish Kumar Awasthi told PTI in Lucknow.

Before this, ACS, Information, Navneet Sehgal had said that permission had been given to five leaders of the Congress, including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, to visit Lakhimpur.

Priyanka Gandhi is in detention at the PAC compound in Sitapur since Monday morning. She was on her way to meet the families of farmers killed in Sunday's violence in Lakhimpur Kheri when she was stopped.



Bombay HC reprimands govt pleader for not being prepared in Tariq Parveen bail plea hearing

Bombay High Court was almost ready to grant bail to alleged underworld don Dawood Ibrahim's aide Tariq Parveen on Wednesday, since it was upset that the government pleader, who was representing the state, was not prepared.

(News Agencies)-Bombay High Court was almost ready to grant bail to alleged underworld don Dawood Ibrahim's aide Tariq Parveen on Wednesday, since it was upset that the government pleader who was representing the state, was not prepared.

After hearing senior advocate Shirish Gupte, along with advocates Sudeep Pasbola and Karl Rustomkhan, who were

submitting their arguments for Tariq, Justice Nitin W Sambre saw the government pleader was just not prepared.

He said, "We asked you in the beginning and you said you were prepared and still you have nothing to reply." The government pleader said that during the last hearing, Additional Public Prosecutor (APP) Swapnil Pednekar had appeared and he had just been handed over the case papers. At this Justice Sambre said: "You go on changing APP in every matter. The moment we grant adjournment, the APP vanishes."

Giving a last chance to the government, the court adjourned the bail hearing to October 22.

The case pertains to a complaint by a businessman in 2013, when he had received an international threat call for extortion, where some good

will amount, in short protection money was sought. In this case, Tariq was arrested on Feb 9, 2020 allegedly after gangster Ejaz Lakdawala named him in his statement. In this case, three people had been arrested apart from Tariq, Lakdawala and former police informer Salim Penwala alias Salim Maharaj.

During the hearing of this court before the bench of Justice Bharti Dangre, Mumbai crime branch had filed an affidavit however it was silent on certain issue. On September 14, Justice Dangre had stated: "Though the affidavit has been filed, it is silent on the commonality of the present applicant (Tariq) with the gang leader (Lakdawala) and he (APP Pednekar) would like to ascertain the said position, at his request, stand over to 28th Sept 2021."

Arguing for Tariq, Gupte said Tariq does not have any other

case, which would show his connection with Ejaz Lakdawala, who is supposed to be the gang leader. Gupte explained that case against Tariq is that a meeting allegedly took place where Tariq told the complainant to make some payment for extortion and out of the Rs 3 lakh paid, Tariq allegedly received Rs 2 lakhs. "There are a few cases shown against me (Tariq) but in none of the cases, I am associated with Lakdawala. I am acquitted in most of the cases against me," said Gupte. Justice Sambre asked, "How many cases are there?" Gupta replied, "10 offences".

After this, Justice Sambre asked: "How many are for extortion? MCOCA (Maharashtra control of Organised Crime Act) was invoked?" Gupta replied that there are two cases of extortion. One in which Tariq is acquitted while the other is pending and that there are no MCOCA cases. However, government pleader said that there are four cases against Tariq and one in which MCOCA provisions had been invoked. The court looked through MCOCA provisions which stated that the accused must act on behalf of the syndicate in any of the offences.

"So, is the requirement not fulfilled?" Asked Justice Sambre. Gupta replied: "But I am not here for quashing of MCOCA. I am here for bail." Soon after, the APP got up to speak but seemed that he was not prepared.

Govt hospital in Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi prints X-rays on paper, cites fund crunch

(News Agencies)-People in the Kovilpatti area of Tamil Nadu's Thoothukudi district have claimed that a government hospital was printing X-ray results of patients on A4 sized sheets instead of films. Patients from the neighbouring areas, mostly daily wage labourers, showed their X-ray results on A4 sized sheets, claiming that this was being done for the past several weeks.

However, the hospital authorities cited the shortage of funds for



printing X-ray reports on paper. Marimuthu, a patient who has

chronic pain in his right hand, got an X-ray done at the hospital.

"The X-rays are being taken on paper and it is so difficult to show it to the doctors. I couldn't get a second opinion because of this," Marimuthu said. Marimuthu said this is the only hospital in the region that is easily accessible to the people.

Otherwise, they need to go to the Thoothukudi government hospital, he added.

"Fifteen days ago, I had requested the district collector to take action on the issue of X-ray results being printed on paper. No action has been taken to date," said another patient.

The X-rays on films cost just Rs 50 in the government hospital and on paper, the cost is zero.

In the raid, a total of eight accused, including two women, were apprehended and their roles are being investigated in relation to the recovery, said Mumbai NCB.

The twists and turns of the NCB cruise drug racket bust

On October 2, the Narcotic Control Bureau (NCB) said that "on the basis of specific information, the officials of NCB Mumbai conducted a raid on Cordelia Cruise, which was going to Goa from Mumbai.

During the operation, all suspects as per the information were searched, various drugs like MDMA/ ecstasy, cocaine, MD (Mephedrone) and charas were recovered."

In the raid, a total of 8 accused, including 2 women, were apprehended and their roles are being investigated in relation to the recovery, said Mumbai NCB. Some of the accused, among the 8, were actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan Khan and his friend, actor Arbaaz Merchantt.

How did the cruise set sail In court, however, Aryan and Arbaaz's lawyer said the two had not even boarded the cruise and had been detained by NCB sleuths even before they could board. While a few others, like accused Munmun Dhamecha, who were shown as arrested from the ship along with five others, were reboarded.

The investigating officer, V V Singh, had told the Magistrate court while seeking, remand of Khan, Merchantt and Dhanecha, there were about 1,200-1,300 people who had been invited to the party that was to take place on the cruise when it set sail. He further added that after the Saturday raid, NCB officials had told the organizers not to set sail. "The organisers were told to cooperate, we checked in the night and in spite of our asking, they left for sea early in the morning and were not contactable."

NCB officials had to then carry

out fresh searches again when the cruise returned to Bombay dock from the high sea on October 4. People who know the case are wondering if any drug was thrown off the ship in high seas so that those who were in possession of drug, could run away from the clutches of the law.

After the fiasco, other arms of the government are believed to have started investigating the ship, which is said to have been operating without a license to hold a party. Even Mumbai Police have started investigating the case from this angle as during the pandemic when crowd regulation was in vogue. According to the agencies, there were at least 1,200 people on board the cruise.

No commercial quantity found at the party NCB has for many people and raided the ship, but from the passengers on board and the organisers, there was only a small quantity of drugs that was found. Actor Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan and another person, Avin Sahu, were not found to be in possession of drugs. Even then, these two were sent to NCB custody to face custodial interrogation. The statements recorded by NCB have been retracted by most of the accused, including Khan.

Possession of a small quantity of drug, which is of different measure for different kinds of contraband, is considered for personal consumption, and is not as harshly seen in law as the case of an accused, who is caught with a large quantity of drug. Large consignments are

meant for trade under law and that is strictly banned in the country.

It is NCB's case that on the ship, after the raid was conducted, the accused persons were individually found in possession of only a small quantity of drugs. For example, Arbaaz Merchant was found in possession of 5mg

of ganja, while it is the same with Munmun according to NCB.

On October 2, the NCB claimed to have seized 13 grams of cocaine (intermediate quantity), 5 grams of MD (mephedrone) (intermediate quantity), 21 grams of charas (small quantity), 22 pills of MDMA (ecstasy) (intermediate quantity) and Rs

1,33,000 at International Cruise Terminal.

However, it is only now, after the eight accused, who were arrested earlier and during sustained interrogation, named the suppliers from whom they were purchasing the drugs that new names cropped up and fresh arrests were made.



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Rahul Gandhi allowed to leave Lucknow airport after being briefly stopped

Rahul Gandhi and his two-member Congress delegation were allowed to leave Lucknow airport after security personnel briefly barred their way.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his two-member delegation were allowed to leave Lucknow airport after security personnel briefly barred their way. Rahul Gandhi will first visit Sitapur where his sister Priyanka Gandhi

Vadra has been kept under detention. He is accompanied by Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel and Punjab CM Charanjit Singh Channi. After that, they will head to Lakhimpur Kheri.

Gandhi was stopped from leaving the airport, hours after the Uttar Pradesh government ostensibly gave him permission to visit violence-hit Lakhimpur Kheri.

In a video shared by ANI, Gandhi can be seen pointing to a cordon of security personnel who he claimed are barring his way out of the airport.

"Look, they are not letting me leave the airport. First they say that I have been given permission, so let me leave now. What sort of 'permission' is this?" Rahul Gandhi can be heard saying in the video, as a wall of security personnel block his

way. The Gandhi scion also posted on his official Twitter handle: "This is the BJP government's 'permission'. What are they so afraid of?" Rahul Gandhi is leading a delegation of Congress leaders to meet with the families of two farmers who lost their lives in the deadly clashes in Lakhimpur Kheri last Sunday. Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC are in force in the district. Earlier in the day, Rahul Gandhi addressed a press conference affirming his intention to visit Lakhimpur Kheri after the Uttar Pradesh government denied him permission to do so, stating that it could vitiate the law and order situation there. The Congress leader specified that he would be accompanied by two senior party leaders, which would not be in violation of Section 144.

Later, the state government allowed Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and three other Congress leaders to visit Lakhimpur. "Permission has been given to five leaders of Congress, including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, to visit Lakhimpur," Additional Chief Secretary, Information, Navneet Sehgal told PTI.

Ajay Misra must resign, his son must go to jail for Lakhimpur Kheri killings, says Akhilesh Yadav



(News Agencies)-Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav has demanded the resignation of Union minister Ajay Misra over the Lakhimpur Kheri violence in which 8 people were killed.

Speaking to India Today TV in an interview, Akhilesh Yadav also said that while Ajay Misra should immediately resign from the post, his son, Ashish Misra, should be put behind the bars for "deliberately running over a group of farmers".

"Even in the Hitler rule, such a thing wouldn't have happened in which farmers are deliberately run over by a car," Akhilesh Yadav told India Today TV.

He added, "The MoS (Home) threatened the farmers a day before the Lakhimpur Kheri violence. A day later, his son ran them over, killing them on the spot. Those behind the killings should be arrested immediately."

"The Union minister (Ajay Misra) must resign immediately. There is video evidence showing the minister's son is responsible for the killings in Lakhimpur Kheri," said Akhilesh Yadav.

Asked about Ajay Misra and his son Ashish Misra denying the accusations of running over the farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri, Akhilesh Yadav said, "There is video evidence that shows the guilty persons and which car was used to kill the farmers."

"This government speaks of its work on restoring law and order in UP. Is this maintaining law and order? You are running over farmers and killing them," asked Akhilesh Yadav while slamming the UP government along with PM Narendra Modi over his talks on democracy in India. "PM Modi goes to the US and talks about India's vibrant democracy. Is this the democracy he talks about," asked Akhilesh Yadav.

Earlier, Akhilesh Yadav was among the host of opposition leaders who were detained over their protests against the Lakhimpur Kheri incident. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, his Punjab counterpart Charanjit Singh Channi, the BSP's SC Mishra and the AAP's Sanjay Singh were among those prevented by the state authorities from reaching Lakhimpur.

TRS will retain power after next elections too: Telangana CM KCR

(News Agencies)-Telangana chief minister and TRS supremo K Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) has expressed confidence that his party will retain power in the state after the next elections.

"We may be a member of the next government or have an influence on the future government at the Centre," said KCR. The Telangana CM's remarks come in the wake of his meetings with PM Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Minister Piyush Goyal in Delhi.



Addressing the ongoing politics, but people have faith in Telangana Assembly session, the government that delivers on its promises and does good work. While participating in a

debate over his government's flagship Dalit Bandhu scheme, KCR promised to launch a similar initiative for the Muslim community. This assurance was in response to the AIMIM seeking a similar financial assistance scheme for Muslims in the state. "A similar scheme focusing on poorest of the poor Muslims, BCs and upper castes will be rolled out in the near future," he said. However Muslims do not receive the same kind of government support as

Dalits. @CMOTelangana recently started the revolutionary #DalitBandhu scheme. It's the country's largest cash transfer program. And visionary step by CM KCR sir

Under Dalit Bandhu, the Telangana government will provide Rs 10 lakh financial assistance to all Dalits in the state. KCR also floated the idea to pass a unanimous resolution in the State Legislature demanding a caste census, so that it could be forwarded to the Centre.



You can't kill his spirit: Daughter of pharmacist shot dead in Srinagar challenges his killers to a debate

(News Agencies)-Dr Shraddha Bindroo, daughter of Srinagar's prominent pharmacist Makhan Lal Bindroo who was shot dead by suspected militants on Tuesday, challenged the gunmen who killed her father to face her in a debate.

Three civilians, including Makhan Lal Bindroo, a Kashmiri Pandit, were shot dead by suspected militants on Tuesday in separate incidents in Srinagar and Bandipora districts of Jammu and Kashmir. Makhan Lal Bindroo was killed at his shop Bindroo Medicate in Srinagar.

Shraddha Bindroo said her father may have died but his spirit would always live on. "My father was a fighter, always said 'I'll die with my shoes on'," she said.

"You can kill one person, but you can't kill the spirit of Makhan Lal. Whoever shot dead my father, come in front of me. My father gave me education, while politicians gave you guns and stones. You want to fight with guns and stones? That is cowardice. All politicians are using you, come and fight with education," said a fearless Shraddha Bindroo, without a tear in her eyes.

She further added, "Mister, who shot my father dead while he was working, if you have the guts and courage, come and have a face-to-face debate with us. Then we will see what you are. You won't be able to utter a word. All you can do is throw stones and shoot bullets from behind."

"My father Makhan Lal Bindroo a Kashmiri Pandit will never die. You can just kill the body and he will be alive in the spirit," says Dr Shraddha Bindroo. #srinagar #Kashmir pic.twitter.com/Ai938ty2wP

- Parvaiz Ahmad Qadri (@Parvaiz_Qadri) October 6, 2021

Recollecting her family's journey, Shraddha said, "I am an associate professor. I started from zero; my father started from a bicycle, my brother is a famous diabetologist, my mother sits in the shop - that is what Makhan Lal Bindroo made us. A Kashmiri Pandit, he will never die. Despite being a Hindu, I have read the Quran. The Quran says you may kill the body, the spirit lives on. Bindroo will remain alive in spirit."

In another interview, Shraddha Bindroo can be heard saying, "He was an awesome person who served Kashmir and Kashmiriyat. His body is gone but his spirit is still alive. Person responsible for the crime has opened doors of hell for himself."

#WATCH He was an awesome person who served Kashmir&Kashmiriyat. His body is gone but his spirit is still alive. Person responsible for the crime has opened doors of hell for himself:Shraddha Bindroo, daughter of pharmacist ML Bindroo who was killed by terrorists in Srinagar y'day pic.twitter.com/FEjNcDpVr2

- ANI (@ANI) October 6, 2021

Sixty-eight-year-old Makhan Lal Bindroo was shot at by the assailants from point-blank range while he was at his pharmacy, dispensing medicines.

An official said Makhan Lal Bindroo received four bullets and was declared brought dead at SMHS hospital. A famous chemist in the area, Bindroo had been operating his pharmacy in Srinagar for many decades and was also well known for his philanthropic works.

A Kashmiri Pandit, Makhan Lal Bindroo, was one of the few from the community who did not migrate out at the onset of militancy in 1990. He stayed back along with his wife to continue operating his business which grew to become a trusted name in the city for quality medicines.

Within an hour, militants struck at Hawal area of the city, killing a non-local street vendor, an official said.

Virender, who used to sell bhelpuri, was also shot at point blank and died on the spot, he said, adding further details were being ascertained.

Within minutes of the second killing, militants shot dead Mohammad Shafi Lone at Naidkhai in Bandipora district, the officials said.

They said Lone was president of the local taxi stand.

Bindroo's killing was widely condemned.

Incidents like Lakhimpur Kheri must not be tolerated: Punjab CM Charanjit Singh Channi meets Amit Shah



(News Agencies)-In his first meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah as chief minister of Punjab, Charanjit Singh Channi sought action against those responsible for the violence that claimed eight lives in UP's Lakhimpur Kheri.

Punjab CM Channi also discussed with Amit Shah regarding the Uttar Pradesh government's decision to disallow Congress leaders from reaching Lakhimpur Kheri.

Several political leaders, including many from Punjab, were not allowed to enter the state. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi was detained in Sitapur and continues to be under house arrest. According to reports, Rahul Gandhi will now be travelling to Lakhimpur Kheri.

Charanjit Singh Channi also asked Amit Shah to repeal the farm laws, a demand he had raised during a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi last week.

The Punjab CM also raised the issue of security concerns. Charanjit Singh Channi asked the home minister to ensure that BSF seals the border of Punjab and to ensure not to allow weapons from Pakistan.

Released from detention, Priyanka Gandhi leaves for Lakhimpur Kheri with Rahul



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi reached Uttar Pradesh's Sitapur on Wednesday where his sister and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was in detention. Both the leaders then left for Lakhimpur Kheri to meet the families of farmers who were killed during Sunday's clashes. Along with the Gandhis, Congress leaders Randeep Surjewala and Deepinder Hooda are going to Lakhimpur Kheri. Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi and Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel are also part of the convoy. Another Congress leader, Sachin Pilot, who was going to Lakhimpur Kheri, was stopped by the UP Police in Moradabad. Rahul Gandhi reached Sitapur in the evening but the police blocked his convoy from following him. This caused a major traffic jam on the Sitapur highway. Congress workers started raising slogans and arguing with the police.

Priyanka Gandhi released from detention - After being placed under detention for over 48 hours, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was released on Wednesday. Sitapur Sub-Divisional Magistrate (Sadar) Pyarelal Maurya told PTI that Priyanka Gandhi had been released from detention.

Pandora Papers: Stop the enablers that help billionaires dodge taxes

By Chuck Collins

The recent publication of the Pandora Papers adds to the recent bounty of investigative journalism chronicling how the super-wealthy play shell games with their tax obligations.

The Pandora Papers disclosures reveal the elaborate mechanisms that the wealthy deploy to shift funds between global jurisdictions, masking their true wealth and minimizing their tax obligations. It unmasks the U.S. as a tax haven — including the state of South Dakota with its proliferation of dynasty trusts.

Recently, ProPublica chronicled the proliferation of grantor retained annuity trusts (GRATS) in enabling billionaires avoid estate tax and pass on democracy-distorting levels of wealth to their heirs. This and other tax dodges are the reason that the 400 wealthiest households paid an effective tax rate of 8.2 percent when the average taxpayer pays 14 percent, according to a White House analysis.

While we should hold the billionaire tax dodgers to account, not enough scrutiny is focused on the enablers, what social scientists describe as “the wealth defense industry.” These are the tax attorneys, accountants, wealth managers and family-office staffers that are paid millions to help billionaires sequester trillions.

These paid experts create dynasty trusts, anonymous shell companies, and construct complex alphabet soup of tax-dodging mechanisms such as GRATs. They take advantage of weak IRS oversight, offshore tax havens and competing state jurisdictions to help their super-rich clients move their treasure to the shadows.

The wealth defenders will crow “everything we do is legal” but segments of the wealth defense industry are implicated in writing the rules governing trusts in many U.S. states and designing the exotic transactions that dance along the intent of the law. While the left hand is using various wealth-hiding techniques and loopholes, the right hand is fending off oversight, lobbying for special treatment, and creating new loophole innovations. For example, South Dakota has pioneered the “dynasty trust,” according to revelations from the Pandora Papers, a favorite among global billionaires. The state legislature, at the behest of the state’s tiny trust industry, update their laws on a regular basis to maintain their competitive advantage against other states, such as Nevada and Delaware, in a race to the bottom of weak trust regulation.

In another example of writing the rules, wealth advisors in New Hampshire lobbied for the creation of a new ownership structure — the civil law foundation (not to be confused with charitable foundations). Their goal was to attract billionaire wealth from around the world that

might be anxious about the unfamiliar “trust” ownership form. These enablers actively rig the rules to benefit their clients. The good news is with political leadership, we can shut down this corrupt hidden wealth system. At the end of 2020, with bipartisan leadership, Congress passed the Corporate Transparency Act to require limited liability companies to disclose their real owners to the law enforcement arm of the Treasury department.

It would be great if the wealth defense industry policed their own ranks, but we can’t wait for voluntary action. The next steps include outlawing particular trusts and loopholes, promoting further ownership transparency, passing global trade treaties that prohibit offshore practices (and consign rebel states to economic pariah status), as well as investing in robust enforcement.

A group of lawmakers has proposed the “Enablers Act,” an amendment to the Bank Secrecy Act, to establish due diligence laws for the attorneys, art dealers and other “middlemen” responsible for these systems.

To ensure the super-wealthy pay their fair share, we urgently need robust IRS oversight. The IRS has lost roughly 18,000 full-time positions since 2010, primarily the result of Republican budget cuts. As a result, the IRS lost the expertise required to “follow the money” and unravel the complex tax dodges that have proliferated in recent years. As a result, the gap between the amount owed and the amount collected has widened. IRS Commissioner Charles Rettig told Congress in April that the gap may be as large as \$1 trillion a year.

To pay for his Build Back Better program, President Biden has proposed restoring higher corporate and individual tax rates and taxing millionaire income on capital gains at the same rate as wages. But lawmakers also need to back Biden’s plan to spend \$80 billion over the next ten years to help enforce existing tax laws, a move that could raise an estimated \$700 billion over the next decade. Blocking the path of this necessary change won’t just be the super-wealthy, but this self-interested class of wealth advisers who thrive on complexity and trusts that live forever (and provide them with perpetual fees). Lawmakers should strive for tax transparency and simplicity and consider a radical solution: Outlaw all trusts except a few special-needs custodial arrangements for a publicly disclosed single beneficiary — and require an annual tax return for the trust. Without these enablers, what sociologist Brooke Harrington calls the “agents of inequality,” the super-rich would still avoid taxes — but the scale of the heist would be considerably smaller.

NCB Drug Bust: Bollywood and drug association shaken India

By Susmita Ghosh

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) of India completed a major operation in their war against drugs. In their recent drug bust on a cruise, detained are several high-profile names including Aryan Khan, the son of Bollywood superstar, Shah Rukh Khan, Arbaaz Merchant and Munmun Dhamecha.

The NCB officials took exemplary measures, when they infiltrated a party on the Goa-bound Cordelia Cruises’ Empress Ship, off the coast of Mumbai. The officials seized drugs hidden on board and detained several who were in possession of narcotic substances. The administration and the judiciary were prompt in their action to expedite the process. Besides, three, there are five other individuals who are under the radar and interrogated.

Initially, the Mumbai Court has granted the custody of Aryan Khan and other two accused to NCB, till October 4. The seized drug list contained 13 grams of cocaine, 20 grams of Charas, 22 MDMA pills, 5 grams of Mephedrone among others. All three of the major accused have been booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, eventually, the custody of Aryan Khan was extended for three more days.

The names of the accused were not disclosed primarily. After a prolonged probing and investigation, Aryan Khan was disclosed as one of the main accused in this matter.

Recently, in India, the ongoing war

against Drugs is moving at a high frequency. A judicial probe is likely to happen in the 3000 kg Heroin-seizure case in the Mundra Port. Follow-up operations resulted in narcotic substances recovery like Cocaine and heroin from Noida and Delhi.

India is located in between two of the world’s high production areas of Opium, the most challenging one being an uncontrolled Afghanistan under the Taliban rule. Besides, medical drug abuse as an addictive has long been a problem for India for quite some time. The impact of this drug bust and the related issues across India has highlighted the topic of nepotism in the film industry. The relationship between drugs and Bollywood celebs is not a new development. Several stars and starlets were detained at different times and the trend still continues. In the development of this case, Shreyas Nair, an alleged long-time drug peddler to Aryan Khan, was also arrested.

A legion of B-town celebs came forth to support the superstar and his family calling this matter as ‘witch-hunt’ only. However, the common people are protesting against them who are trying to dilute the matter with their public support. According to the Indian constitution, it’s considered as a major criminal act. The NCB officials did not turn down a connection with international drug trafficking organizations related to this event.

The drug bust has traumatised the core

(Contd on page 35)



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Modi-Shah's Silence On Farmers Who Were Run Over



This must be the first case in the world of an official convoy of a Minister of State in the central government - and that too, in the Ministry of Home Affairs which is mandated to uphold law and order - mowing down a group of protesting farmers, killing four of them and injuring a dozen more. The last time a case of a similar nature got world attention was when three men in a van smashed into pedestrians, killing at least eight people in a terrorist attack on London Bridge in 2017. What happened in Lakhimpur Kheri yesterday was no less an act of terror than what happened in London. In fact, it was worse, as it was a terrorist act by state players. Ajay Mishra, the minister concerned, is directly responsible for what occurred. Call it by its name - a cold-blooded terror attack.

A week or so earlier, the minister had openly threatened peacefully protesting farmers. In a public speech, he called farmers "cowards" and dared them to protest with black flags in his presence so that he could teach them a lesson. He threatened that none of them "would remain" in his area. Is this the sort of language that should be used by a union minister? Yesterday, he was part of an official programme involving the Chief Minister of UP when farmers gathered in protest against his provocative speech. The official meeting was cancelled. The farmers were in fact dispersing when speeding cars in the official convoy, in which the minister's son was present according to farmers, knocked down some of them. There was retaliation and four others were killed.

In the face of a snowballing protest agitation by farmers not just in Lakhimpur but across India, the Adityanath Government has been forced to file an FIR against the minister's son. However, no arrests have been made and no case has been filed against the minister. The demand of the farmers that the minister should be sacked is legitimate and deserves support.

Equally objectionable is the lockdown imposed in the area and the arrests of Opposition leaders travelling to Lakhimpur Kheri to express their sympathy for and condolences to the families of those killed. This is a direct assault on democracy. The truth is that the BJP's style of governance is based not on the Constitution of India but on the politics of division and dictatorship. The BJP has tried

to divide farmers in the name of religion, language and region. When it failed to do so, it used intimidation and threats and false cases. When even that failed to cow down farmers, it has apparently licensed its ministers to use the power of their government positions to raise armies of anti-socials and criminals to directly attack farmers. Mishra's statement provoking and abusing farmers has been followed by one from the Chief Minister of Haryana. On the very day that farmers were being mowed down and killed, Khattar was inciting his partymen in Haryana to arm themselves with lathis to "reply" to farmers. "Don't be afraid of going to jail" he said, "you will become leaders that way." Earlier a farmer had been killed and several injured after an officer of the Haryana

government was filmed saying that his men should "break heads" of protesting farmers. And yesterday, Chief Minister Khattar was brazenly instructing his party men to unleash violence against farmers. A case should be filed against him for inciting violence.

In any other country, in the wake of such chilling brutality as in Lakhimpur, the head of the national government would at least have issued a statement of regret or even condolence. Even Donald Trump, known for his racist bigotry, expressed his condolences to the family of George Floyd, albeit four days after the brutal killing. But 'Howdy Modi' has maintained a deafening silence as though it does not concern him or his government. The silence of the Home Minister Amit Shah is equally shocking.

The Neglected Agency at the Center of Biden's China Strategy

On Monday, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai called out China's "lack of adherence to global trading norms" and vowed that the United States would respond by developing trade policies that protect U.S. markets against unfair economic practices and benefit American workers. The speech is one of the clearest examples thus far of the Biden administration's intent to compete with China by countering its anti-competitive economic methods, which have flouted free-market rules, distorted the global market and involved wholesale theft of American technology and know-

how. Tai made it clear that economic tools like tariffs and export controls are central to the administration's approach. Yet the government agency most critical to these efforts still lacks the resources and authorities it needs to accomplish its mission. We're talking about the Department of Commerce. As America's national security becomes intertwined with its economic strength and technological leadership, Commerce has an increasingly

central role in protecting U.S. technology advantages, addressing supply chain vulnerabilities and ensuring long-



term economic competitiveness. The Commerce Department's role and responsibilities have grown in size and complexity, while its capabilities and

resources have not. This shift reflects the nature of the competition with China (and one of the reasons the analogy to a "new Cold War" is flawed): Economic security and technology have outsize importance compared to traditional military strength. That's still crucial, of course, but much of the day-to-day contest happens in the arena of commerce. Just as other departments, like Treasury and Homeland Security, have been revamped and restructured as their relevance to national security

grew, the Biden administration needs to reform the Commerce Department's resources, structure and authorities if its China strategy is to succeed. In 2018, the Trump administration declared that economic security is national security. This proclamation articulated a shift that had been in motion for years: The once arcane enforcement of trade and security laws was now the tip of the spear in addressing the China challenge. The Biden administration, like its predecessor, characterizes China as more than a military threat.



Move petty criminal trials to virtual courts too. Ease judicial load

The impetus on adoption of technology in the judiciary may have been a result of the Covid crisis, but the opportunity should be embraced.

It would be undoubtedly trite to underscore the importance of implementing digital tools to the existing court infrastructure in the switch from traditional physical hearings to the more accessible virtual hearings. The significance of this shift cannot be undermined, especially in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting burdening on the judicial system, already malaised with massive backlogs. Consequently, there is delay in the dispensation of justice, thereby vitiating the cause of justice itself for millions of undertrials, many of whom have languished far longer than the maximum prescribed punishment, particularly those accused of petty offences. Most of these undertrials, who are accused of petty offences, are under-resourced individuals belonging to poor, downtrodden, and marginalised communities.

The impetus on the adoption of technology in the judicial infrastructure may have been a result of the current crisis, however, this opportunity and its consequent benefits should be embraced because the traditional method of judicial functioning has failed to accommodate India's enormous litigation demands.

The digital re-imagination of petty criminal trials Criminal trials have largely remained under the radar of judicial overhaul and, therefore, have remained untouched by the technological revolution. The primary reason for this resistance to change can be attributed to the very nature of criminal proceedings, especially the sessions trial. They require heavy evidentiary hearings and voluminous documents that need to be examined for authenticity and validity by the judge and the parties owing to the severity of

the crime. The witnesses are also required to depose and subject themselves to examination-in-chief and cross-examination. These aspects make lawyers and judges averse to conducting virtual hearings. However, it would be pertinent to question whether any modality can be carved out to facilitate at least the petty criminal trials. The answer becomes clear when we narrow down the scope of our query to specific types of criminal trials. These could include trials not necessarily bogged down by the challenges of a high degree of application of evidentiary laws and procedures (magisterial trials), offences attracting lesser punishment, and bailable and non-cognisable offences. The undertrials are unable to secure a speedy and timely trial because

of a plethora of reasons ranging from inadequacy of police force to transport them to court, inability of the government pleader or the defence counsel to appear/argue the matter, thereby inevitably causing an adjournment, and the unavailability of the judge as well on certain dates. However, these issues could be addressed by the effective utilisation of the digital aids installed as part of the prison infrastructure to allow the undertrial to attend and appear for the hearing at the assigned date and time through virtual appearance facilitated via digital platforms such as Cisco Webex or the Vidyo Software of NIC (National Informatics Centre) - all adequate tools that can be applied in all courts across India.

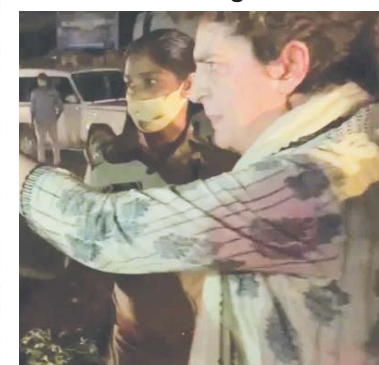
Even the People's Bank of China Can't Kill Bitcoin FOMO

The cryptocurrency crowd has wasted no time in dancing on the grave of China's "FUD" (internet speak for fear, uncertainty and doubt). Last week's move by the People's Bank of China to ban crypto transactions and mining dented the prices of Bitcoin, Ethereum and other digital currencies, but they've largely rebounded. The bulls reckon the latest attempt by Beijing to crack down on crypto - the seventh, by research firm Fundstrat's calculations - will fail to throttle an asset that bypasses borders and banking systems. They also hope that what seems "bad" for crypto will prove to be "good." Advocates are using China's ban as ammunition to promote an opportunity for America: It can lead the way for a more permissive approach to crypto. This looks like the kind of warped logic that paints Bitcoin mining as a "green" form of energy use, even as it breathes new life into aging fossil-fuel power plants. What's bad for crypto sometimes really is just bad.

The jury may be out on whether this ban will be more successful than previous ones, but painting it as a way for the U.S. to steal a march on China is a stretch. The Biden administration has made clear it sees cryptocurrencies as fuel for ransomware, a vehicle for fraud and a potential threat to financial stability and post-Covid reconstruction. The crypto industry has attempted to plead for more lenient treatment as a poke in China's eye in the past - see Facebook Inc.'s Mark Zuckerberg's defense of the Libra project - to no avail. More regulation of this sector is undoubtedly on the way, and those on the frontlines know it. The question of whether the U.S. could follow suit with a ban of its own, as Ray Dalio has imagined, is a trickier one. The laser-eyed crowd may have a point in that it's getting rather late in the day for the U.S. to try the Chinese approach, not least with Wall Street eyeing a bigger share of the crypto pie. But that doesn't mean regulation is out of sight.



Yogi Does For Priyanka What PK Couldn't - by Vir Sanghvi



It is a strange world where the man who causes a turnaround in Priyanka Gandhi's political fortunes is the guy who appears to despise her.

Priyanka has much to thank Yogi Adityanath for. The UP Chief Minister has managed what legions of Congress cronies could not: he has given Priyanka's image a huge boost and helped turn her into a liberal heroine.

Consider the background. Priyanka joined politics (at least in terms of accepting a party position) two years ago and was given charge of UP. The general election result that followed was a disaster for the Congress but people were willing to give her the benefit of the doubt. But even after that election was over, the Congress did not seem to be making any kind of electoral comeback in UP. Most commentators reckoned that it would do badly in the forthcoming assembly election as well.

Meanwhile, Priyanka busied herself with managing Navjot Singh Sidhu's dissidence campaign in Punjab and in destabilizing one of the Congress's few Chief Ministers. When the party got rid of Captain Amarinder Singh, there were those who said that Sidhu's victory was also Priyanka's victory: she may not have been able to defeat the BJP, but she had, at least, defeated someone - a Congress Chief Minister she was opposed to. That view went out of the window when a sulking Sidhu suddenly resigned as Congress party chief in Punjab and had to be persuaded to withdraw his resignation by being offered face-savers. Suddenly, it began to look as if Priyanka's political instincts were all wrong and that her interference in Congress matters was doing the party more harm than good.

In Congress, the command has no control - Punjab or Delhi, Sidhu or Amarinder

A week is a long time in politics. This quote, widely attributed to former British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, has lately held true for the Congress - more than ever before. From Ji Huzoori to G23, from tomato attacks to the identical sher-o-shayari of the exits, the party was washing all its good and bad linen in public this week.

A CM's dramatic resignation; an unexpected appointment replacing him within 24 hours; the entry of two young Leftists; a state unit president quitting his post barely two months after his appointment; a 'dissenting' veteran leader calling for introspection by the top leadership for the nth time that led to 'infuriated' party workers throwing tomatoes at his home - the Congress has witnessed all this and more in the last few days.

After maintaining silence for a few days, Congress in-charge for Punjab, Harish Rawat, Friday hit back at former CM Captain Amarinder Singh over the latter's allegation that he had been humiliated by the party high command. Not only did Rawat contest that, he also raised questions about Captain's frequent meetings with Home Minister Amit Shah in the last few months, the latest one being on Wednesday. "His meetings with Amit Shah and other BJP leaders are raising questions on his secular credentials," Rawat said.

Captain responded Friday, saying it was the "pathetic condition" of the party in the state that led him to take that step, and nothing else. This is a sign of things to come - how the Congress' house will continue to lack order as elections in various states approach. Because of the ongoing drama, politics, and surprises that the party has thrown at the public, the Congress is ThePrint's Newsmaker

of the week.

Sidhu's 'duty'

A little over two months after being made Punjab Congress chief, Navjot Singh Sidhu bowled another googly - on Tuesday, he announced his resignation on Twitter, sharing the letter he wrote to Sonia Gandhi, which was replete with twisted alliterations incomprehensible to most.

It later became clear that Sidhu was referring to a series of appointments and cabinet inclusions made by Charanjit Singh Channi - from the new Director General of Police and the Advocate General, to the entry of certain "tainted" ministers in the government.

In a video statement, Sidhu made it clear that taking a stand for the people of Punjab is his "duty and his religion." He said he will refuse to settle for any compromise. Later in the week, CM Channi invited Sidhu for a meeting, after which it was decided that a three-member committee will be set up to look into the issues, and Sidhu was likely to continue as the party chief in Punjab.

But Sidhu's capricious and ostensibly temperamental attitude gave many an opportunity to call him "unstable." Unsurprisingly, that charge was led by Captain Amarinder Singh, disgruntled and upset with what he termed repeated "humiliation" when he was asked to leave the CM's chair two weeks ago. Ji huzoori and the lack thereof But that isn't all that Sibal said. The leader also reiterated the demands of the 'G-23' - on how there needs to be introspection to know why a string of leaders have quit the party, particularly those considered close to the top brass. He demanded a Congress Working Committee meeting to discuss these matters. "One thing is clear, we are not Ji Huzoor (Yes, your lordship) 23.

We will say what we have to, and keep reiterating it," Sibal said.

Despite Sibal's insistence that "strengthening Congress is important for democracy" and that he will "never leave the party", the response his press conference received from the party was far from welcoming.

Within hours of Sibal's statement, his house was surrounded by Congress party workers who raised slogans of "Get well soon" and "Rahul Gandhi Zindabad!" It did not end there. Scenes of vandalism played out, with Sibal's car reportedly attacked with tomatoes.

The "hooliganism" was condemned by top leaders of the Congress: Anand Sharma, P. Chidambaram, Manish Tewari, and Shashi Tharoor. The protests that seemingly appeared to be a pushback against the call for introspection by Sibal, only served to amplify the party veteran's statement, and also reflected the organisation in a poor light.

Entry of a self-styled 'saviour'

The continuing Punjab crisis, followed by Sibal's press conference and the subsequent attack on him eclipsed another major event that took place in the Congress this week-Kanhaiya Kumar and Jignesh Mevani's entry into the party. On Tuesday, just as Sidhu was putting in his papers, former CPI leader Kumar and independent MLA from Gujarat, Mevani, were joining the Congress. While Mevani has always been supported by the party in his seat, Kumar's entry came as a shocker to many. A 'dyed in the wool' Leftist, who rose to prominence on the back of a student movement in a Left-leaning central university, Kumar showed every sign of being the next big revolutionary leader for the ever-crumbling Indian Left.



PK Was Set To Join The Congress. So Why Didn't It Happen?

In the middle of July this year, images went viral of political strategist Prashant Kishor entering Rahul Gandhi's residence in central Delhi.

It was the first indication that Kishor, considered the architect of a number electoral victories, mainly of regional parties, was in talks with India's main opposition party, making for dizzying headlines.

At the time, sources familiar with the developments told NDTV that the July meeting was not the first between Mr Kishor and the Gandhis, and that both sides were working on a arrangement where "PK", as he is known, would not serve as a political consultant, but, in fact, formally join the Congress. All this was playing out weeks after PK, in an exclusive interview to NDTV, said that he was retiring as an electoral strategist. So, the fact that he was considering joining politics did not seem unviable; in fact, it seemed like a natural progression from that announcement made on NDTV.

The arrangement that the Congress and PK were trying to decide on, NDTV was told, was to work on 'something bigger' than

just the upcoming state elections, an ambitious plan to use PK's skills to revive the faltering fortunes of the Congress in the run-up the 2024 general election.

And then suddenly, without explanation, things went cold.

One explanation for why lies in the revelation of a former Chief Minister of Goa, Luizinho Faleiro, who crossed over earlier this week from the Congress to the Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (TMC) just months before the coastal state votes for its next government. Speaking to NDTV, Mr Faleiro said that it was PK and his group, I-PAC (Indian Political Action Committee), which had approached him to switch to Mamata Banerjee's party. "Of course, he had approached me. Just a few days back," he said.

At a press conference in Panaji, Mr Faleiro was even more explicit. "Believe it or not, I never met them (Mamata Banerjee and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee). They are great leaders. But I did not meet them. I met I-PAC, I met Mr Prashant Kishor of I-PAC. Just before I took the decision, we had the interaction." If Mr Faleiro is to be believed, PK was and is helping expand the political footprint of the

TMC in areas where the Congress has been enervated, even while he was in talks with the Congress over reviving its fortunes. This possible conflict of interest, some in the Congress say, may have contributed to a certain cooling off in pursuing matters with PK. (Further evidence of the continuing deep ties between PK and the TMC surfaced when it emerged last week that Prashant Kishor, a native of Bihar, was registered as a voter in Bhabhanipur in West Bengal, the constituency being contested by Mamta Banerjee for election to the state legislature). PK's camp, however, points out that he had registered as a voter in Bhabhanipur earlier this year before the state election as a preemptive move after reports suggested that the BJP was considering a move to oust him and his outfit during the poll period from West Bengal on grounds that they were outsiders. PK's outfit is also meant to be working to spearhead the TMC's push in the North East; recently, Congress' Assam MP Sushmita

Deb became another high-profile leader to join the TMC.

There is a trust deficit, a Congress source told NDTV.

Sources close to PK maintain that this is not quite the case, and that I-PAC's continuing work with its other clients was discussed at length in his talks with the Congress leadership. The reason for the pause in talks, as per these sources, is almost solely to do with a disagreement over the timing of PK's entry into the Congress: while the Congress leadership is keen for him to join at once, and begin work on the coming assembly elections in February in states including Uttar Pradesh, PK is adamant that he will only join after those elections.

The reason, it was argued, is that the February elections are too close at hand, not giving PK enough time to make the Congress battle-ready in those states. Prashant Kishor reportedly told the Congress top brass that he will be fully on board for all the elections after February, up until and including the big Lok Sabha battle in 2024. The other reason for the possible standstill in the PK-Congress talks could be

reservations of some within the Congress over PK's designation and mandate.

A four-member Congress panel (comprising Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in place of Ahmed Patel, AK Anthony, KC Venugopal and Ambika Soni), meant to advise Sonia Gandhi on political matters, is said to have sought the views of a large section of the Congress' top leadership on PK's entry. While most were said to be in favour, some leaders are believed to have suggested that PK's designation and role be confined only to managing elections. This, sources close to PK maintain, runs contrary to his talks with the Congress leadership, in which both sides reportedly were in favour of a more sweeping role for PK, one in which he would have been empowered to intervene in almost all aspects of decision-making within the party. Regardless of the conflicting claims, it appears that for now, what was a potential headline-making partnership between India's beleaguered Grand Old Party and a rising political upstart, has come to a standstill.



For India's Kirana Store Owners, A Game-Changer, Finally

The erstwhile Lever Brothers - now Unilever Plc - arrived in India in 1888 with crates of Sunlight soap. There was no smartphone, and no fintech. Had those two modern marvels existed back then, millions of corner shops that largely provide self-employment to the owners and their families would have been a capitalist success story by now.

The neighborhood kirana store is the backbone of India's \$520 billion-a-year grocery market, accounting for 80% of sales. But the resources the industry needs to scale up and modernize have always been beyond its reach. Blame that on stunted access to working capital, a constraint on growth that's finally starting to ease thanks to the coming together of mobile internet and finance, especially "buy now, pay later," or BNPL. Globally, a craze among younger borrowers for small, interest-free loans they can repay in 30 days or in a few monthly installments, often without credit-card-style hefty late-payment fees, is sending valuations soaring for apps like Sweden's Klarna and Australia's Afterpay. It's also drawing the likes of Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and PayPal Holdings Inc. into the fray. With Generation Z buyers trying to beat back their pandemic blues by purchasing lipstick in three installments, excessive, debt-fueled consumption could store up problems for the future. In India, BNPL has found an additional - and perhaps more productive - application. Self-employed people, whose customers pay mostly in cash, have traditionally found it very hard to prove their creditworthiness to banks. Starting with Unilever in 1888, practically everyone who has tried to sell consumer goods in this large market has relied on distributors to overcome the problem. Apart from supplying goods to small shops and collecting cash from them, these middlemen have historically provided informal liquidity support to the kirana. Since the distributors themselves raise money by mortgaging their warehouses and homes, they ration

financing, favoring store owners they know.

To be excluded from this narrow circle of trust has acted as an impossible hurdle for enterprising mom-and-pop outfits that want to expand. They can't exactly swipe plastic to stock up, not when 85% of credit cards are with salaried individuals.

A part of the gap is being filled by new-age payment firms, which are weaning small stores off cash by encouraging them to use QR codes. Online transactions are growing rapidly. Customers shelled out 1.2 trillion rupees (\$16.5 billion) to merchants over popular digital wallets like Walmart Inc.'s PhonePe, Alphabet Inc.'s Google Pay and homegrown Paytm in August, a threefold jump from a year earlier. Once it has captured this sales data, it's easy for a startup like BharatPe to collect the principal and interest on collateral-free loans to retailers.

This is a welcome change, though it isn't enough. The kirana also needs access to interest-free liquidity - just like distributors' credit - but obtained via a formal channel that isn't circumscribed by personal trust. Enter BNPL, a product that's all the rage in consumer finance. That's how Mumbai-based ePayLater also started out five years ago, giving people the flexibility to buy railway tickets on credit.

But ePayLater has pivoted to the retail industry, where rather than enabling excessive consumption, 14-day loans provide the ballast for stocking more inventory. "Everyone is chasing the ultimate consumer," explains co-founder Aurko Bhattacharya. "But here was a business segment that deals so much in cash that it doesn't have a paper trail to get credit from formal sources. It's forced to remain informal."

Not for much longer. After a long period of relative

stagnation, India's retail industry is on the move. Even small shops can now access large, organized wholesalers such as Walmart, Germany's Metro AG and Reliance Market, or place bulk orders online with the likes of Jumbotail, a digital grocery marketplace for business buyers. Finance has been the missing link. "As a retailer, I may get better pricing from large cash-and-carry stores or online business-to-business sellers," says Bhattacharya, "but if I don't have cash or a credit card, I'm forced to go back to my area distributor and order only what he has and what he can give me on credit."

Intermediaries like ePayLater have, therefore, used technology to wedge themselves in the middle of the chain, earning a commission from suppliers for paying them a day after delivery, and using that spread to borrow from banks and extend short-term credit to retailers.

The fintech, which recently raised \$10 million from investors including Zurich-based Responsibility Investments AG, has disbursed 10 billion rupees so far. Bhattacharya expects lending to grow in double digits every month for the next year. Such is the hunger for financing, especially in smaller cities and towns. More importantly, each new dollop of credit where none existed before is fueling aspirations of upward mobility in the next generation, he says. For consumers, "buy now, pay later" is often the gateway to purchases they can't afford, but so far the kirana owners' approach to the product has been business-driven and sensible. The delinquency rate at ePayLater is 0.15%. Clearly, this credit innovation can be more sustainable when it finances livelihoods, and not just lifestyles.

Lakhimpur Kheri Proves BJP's Approach To Dissent

Crush It

For over a year, farmers have been on the warpath all over India, most visibly around the national capital. They are protesting against the three farm laws passed by the parliament of India in a highly questionable way and are demanding their withdrawal. The farmers appear to be in no mood to give up. The government of India is equally determined not to concede their demand. Various rounds of talks between the farmers and the government have failed to produce results and therefore stand abandoned at present. This is the overall picture.

Now, the violence at Lakhimpur Kheri has drawn renewed attention of the people of the country to this festering sore. The farmers' movement has not moved the BJP. In fact, elements within the BJP seem to have hardened their position on the issue. A video clip reveals how the Haryana Chief Minister exhorted the BJP cadres to organise themselves in every village to challenge the farmers and "meet force with force". This is not an isolated incident because it represents the attitude of the entire party and the government of India to crush the agitation by force, if necessary. Talks are out. Dialogue is a sign of weakness for the BJP and its governments

at the centre and in the states. So, Lakhimpur Kheri was just waiting to happen.

Facts in public domain would show that the local MP, who is also a junior minister in the government of India, was imbued with the same spirit of defiance against the farmers as the rest of the party and its governments in UP and at the centre. In a video clip, he is seen openly saying that the agitating farmers do not know him (read do not understand his 'strength'). All this to much applause from an appreciative audience which had gathered to listen to him. And then this tragic

incident takes place in which eight people lose their lives, among whom four were farmers. The allegation is that the farmers were crushed under the wheels of the vehicles which were burnt by the angry farmers subsequently and that the minister's son was directly involved in the incident. The minister's son has denied the charge that he was personally involved. He has claimed that he was not present at the scene of the incident. He has clarified that

the vehicles involved in the incident were on their way to receive the Deputy Chief Minister of UP who had been invited for a function in his village organised by him. Now, an agreement appears to have been reached between the farmers and the UP administration under which a judicial enquiry would be conducted by a retired High Court judge and the farmers,



dead or injured, would be adequately compensated. The minister's son faces murder charges. The judicial enquiry will take its own time; in the meanwhile, there will be so many other issues to attract media attention from tomorrow, which, with a little help from the government and the 'godli' media, will enable the people to forget this tragic happening. Those who have gone are gone; those who are injured will recover; soon, it will be business as usual. In any

case, all political leaders who wanted to visit Lakhimpur Kheri have been prevented from going there. How long can they persevere?

The Lakhimpur Kheri killings however raise many pertinent questions. We all know how the government of UP has been functioning under Yogi. There is a saying in Hindi according to which if a creeper of bitter gourd

climbs a Neem tree, you can easily imagine how much more bitter it would become. The government of India has introduced us to a new 'doctrine of state' under which all dissent has to be crushed, if necessary by force. The UP government has further amended it to mean that all dissent has to be necessarily crushed by force. As long as this doctrine applied to the others, specially Jammu and Kashmir, we remained unconcerned. Today, it has come nearer home and applies to us.

The BJP is securely ensconced in power and behaves pretty much as it likes. There is no issue, no suffering, no pain, which the people are not willing

to undergo, drunk as they are with the heady wine of rabid communalism. As long as the BJP and its governments are seen charging at the windmills of an unseen and imagined enemy, the people will forgive everything and forget all their pain. Marx had described religion as the opiate of the masses. The BJP under its present leadership has proved that it is much more intoxicating than opiate, because opium makes you lazy and leaves you inert, this potion energises you and encourages you to indulge in violence.

Over the last seven years, India has been introduced to many new enemies of the nation. It was the political parties in opposition who were the main enemies to begin with. The Congress party with Nehru as its symbol is still the favourite target of the BJP. The minority communities in this country, mainly the Muslim minority, were also identified as enemies. Then came the JNU students, the "Tukde Tukde Gang", the "Lutyens Elite", the "Khan Market Gang", etc. Today, the farmers of the country have been added to the list. The definition is simple: if you oppose those in power today, you are an enemy of the nation. Period.

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Modi can't behave as if 'sab changa si' and not speak up on Lakhimpur Kheri

Modi's 35-minute speech in Lucknow, about 150 km away from Lakhimpur Kheri site where four farmers were mowed down allegedly by BJP minister Ajay Mishra's son, was bad timing.

In politics and comedy, timing is everything and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has failed the timing trick. Uttar Pradesh appears to be split in two worlds right now. In one, the Opposition parties and farmers are agitating against the 'cold-blooded' killing of four farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri. In the other, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is maintaining a complete silence and is instead busy projecting a utopian world, listing the Yogi Adityanath government's many 'achievements'.

Lakhimpur Kheri has been on the boil after the killing of eight people Sunday, with families of the dead farmers insisting that Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister of State Ajay Mishra, was in the convoy that mowed the protesters down. Opposition leaders, including Congress' Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD)'s Jayant Chaudhary, have forced the government on the back foot, resorting to measures like detaining them and prohibiting politicians, including Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, from entering the state or travelling to Lakhimpur Kheri.

Modi, however, is acting with his trademark oblivion. Inaugurating the 'Azadi@75 - New Urban India: Transforming Urban Landscape'

programme, he gave a 35-minute speech without once mentioning the Lakhimpur tragedy, and instead tomtomming about the 'achievements' of the Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh.

While this is not unusual for Modi, who refuses to buckle under pressure and believes in setting the agenda himself, the extent of brazenness in this case is telling. Given the tragedy that has unfolded in UP, PM Modi is expected to condole or express anguish when visiting the state. But if not that, at the very least, he is expected not to adopt a celebratory and self-congratulatory tone and project a semblance of 'sab changa si' (all is well').

Modi in Lucknow

Whether MoS Mishra's son was involved in 'mowing down' the protesting farmers and whether farmers acted violently is a matter of investigation. And while eyewitness accounts point towards Aashish Mishra's involvement even as the minister's own speech threatening farmers surfaced just before the tragedy, the BJP could still choose to ride the storm out. But regardless of the outcome of the case, the point currently is that, objectively speaking, several people have died in a tragedy that unfolded in broad daylight and the PM, speaking less than 150 kilometres from the spot, cannot ignore it in the unsympathetic manner that he did.

Look at Modi's speech. He talks about how the PM Awas Yojana has been a 'success' in UP, how the setting up of

Real Estate Regulatory Authority has been a great step, how LED street lights have helped save money, and basically how fantastic the BJP government has been.

Nothing wrong with any of this for a party staring at an election in just a few months, except for the ill-timed occasion, which displays not just a lack of sympathy but a degree of arrogance that no public representative should harbour.

Opposition in action

The starkness of the situation cannot be more glaring, with Opposition leaders stopped from visiting the spot, detained and demanding the Adityanath and Modi government be held accountable for the killings.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra sweeping the floor of the guest house where she was detained, Bhupesh Baghel sitting on a dharna at Lucknow airport, Punjab CM Charanjit Singh Channi protesting and Jayant Chaudhary at his vocal best - the Opposition has made sure the tragic incident doesn't wither away from the headlines. But Modi, with his stone-cold silence and a 'glorifying' speech in Lucknow, seems to be bent upon 'hijacking' the agenda and relying on what he knows best - obliviousness, obduracy and obfuscation.

The Modi hallmark

Narendra Modi has always been his own person. He can brazen things out like nobody else and seemingly views acts such as apologising, acknowledging or responding positively to criticism as a sign of weakness.

Stop pretending Afghanistan catastrophe is anything but utter failure



The catastrophe that is only beginning in Afghanistan, is the result of incompetence based in strategic narcissism, or the tendency for American leaders to define the world only in relation to the United States, and to assume that what they decide to do is decisive in securing a positive outcome.

But others, including adversaries and enemies, also enjoy authorship over the future. In Afghanistan, policies and strategies across two decades were based on what U.S. leaders preferred rather than what the situation demanded. Strategic narcissism led to self-delusion, and self-delusion provided a rationale for self-defeat.

A fundamental lesson of Afghanistan is that wars are interactive and that progress in war and diplomacy is never linear. That is why the war in Afghanistan and the broader war against jihadist terrorist organizations is not over; it is entering a new, more dangerous era. Containing the catastrophe in Afghanistan and learning from it will require U.S. leaders to confront the truth of our experience in Afghanistan and stop pretending. Stop pretending that our surrender to the Taliban in February 2020 and subsequent concessions to that terrorist organization-which strengthened our enemies and weakened our Afghan allies-were not the principal reasons for a lost war and its consequences.

The psychological blows we delivered to our Afghan allies included negotiating with the Taliban without the Afghan government, not insisting on a cease fire, forcing the Afghan government to release 5,000 terrorists, curtailing intelligence support, ending active pursuit of the Taliban, withdrawing all aircraft from the country, and terminating contractor support for Afghan forces. Stop pretending that we can end so-called endless wars by withdrawal. Wars do not end when one party disengages and our enemies are waging an endless jihad. We failed to learn from our complete withdrawal from Iraq in December 2011 and the subsequent reemergence of al Qaeda in Iraq which morphed into ISIS. By the summer of 2014, ISIS gained control of territory the size of Britain and became the most destructive terrorist organization in history. As the English philosopher and theologian G.K. Chesterton observed, war may not be the best way of settling differences, but it may be the only way to ensure that they are not settled for you. Stop pretending that all our efforts in Afghanistan were wasted. Progress is impossible to disavow as we watch the Taliban reverse gains and reinstate the horrors endured during the organization's rule from 1996 to 2001.



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Biden's attorney general making his family rich calling you a domestic terrorist



If you lived in this country 15 years ago and you have a good memory, you may remember the creation of something called the National Security Division at the Department of Justice. It was created back in 2005 when they re-upped the Patriot Act. The point of the National Security Division, we were told at the time, was to conduct "counterterrorism and counterespionage" operations against foreign adversaries. This was the big stuff. Mostly it was Islamic terror, which was the primary threat at that time, but these were also the people in charge of busting the Chinese spies who try to steal our nuclear secrets. They stop the suicide bombers and the hijackings. Not small stuff. Crimes that threatened the nation. That was then.

Then Joe Biden became president in January, and the entire mission of the United States government changed and turned inward, against you. A few days ago, the Department of Justice, under the radical Attorney General Merrick Garland, announced that the National Security Division has a new domestic mission. According to Garland, effective immediately, the National Security Division is handling the investigation of "harassment, intimidation and threats of violence against school board members, teachers and workers in our nation's public schools."

The question is: who is threatening these teachers and school board members? Is it Al Qaeda? Is it the Russian government? Is it ISIS-K? No. It's parents. Parents are angry about what's happening in schools. Why are they angry?

Take a look at the people Joe Biden has been nominating to senior leadership positions in the Department of Education. Take a look at YouTube videos at school board meetings across the country over the

past year, and you will know exactly why parents are mad. Parents who believe in things like biological sex, and who oppose radical ideas like racial hierarchies in pre-kindergarten classrooms. Teaching kids to hate their parents. Those are the threat, according to the Biden administration. You'll notice if you look closely that nowhere in Merrick Garland's recent order, or the DOJ's press release, is any explanation of these "threats of violence." What threats of violence? Has violence occurred at these school board meetings? No. Look closer, and you'll find this line: "The Justice Department will also create specialized training and guidance [that] will help school board members ... understand the type of behavior that constitutes threats."

Oh. So it's a propaganda operation, funded by you out of the Department of so-called Justice designed to tell teachers and school board members that when parents complain, it's domestic terrorism. It's not the first amendment in progress. It's not your constituents voicing legitimate complaints. It's essentially a foreign adversary trying to kill you. The Biden administration is trying to tell school board members, using the Department of Justice, that they are in physical danger from parents, and those parents are national security threats. Once again, nothing like this has ever happened in this country. It is an utter perversion of the mission and the power of the United States Department of Justice. It is almost impossible to overstate how sinister and crazy this is. We almost never play the equivalence game because it's tiresome, but in this case, it's hard to resist. Imagine if Donald Trump's DOJ designated, say, CNN anchors as domestic terrorists, put it in writing, and then told men with guns to enforce the law. How would that go over? We, for one, would be outraged by it. All

decent Americans would. And it would, in fact, be less of a stretch than this order. A lot of CNN anchors made excuses for violence during the riots last year. But the media aren't upset about this. When powerless suburban parents resist having nihilistic ruling class ideology imposed on their children, our media seem to believe it's perfectly ok to designate them terrorists and threaten them with firearms.

JASON JOHNSON, MSNBC: In a version of America where school board meetings have become the new culture war battleground with children caught in the crosshairs - sometimes literally, sometimes figuratively.

KRISTOFER GOLDSMITH, INTEL EXPERT: Right now everyone from the Proud Boys to the Oath Keepers to QAnon influencers are trying to encourage their members to maniacs to show up at school board meetings

GEOFF BENNETT, MSNBC: Some behavior is so bad, it's being compared to domestic terrorism.

FRANK FIGLIUZZI, MSNBC: This becomes a security crisis in a sense for the nation

CHRIS HAYES, MSNBC: How one republican senator is pretending school board harassment and intimidation aren't off the charts. BETSY WOODRUFF: Similar tactics to what happened on January 6th that are now being turned against school boards nationwide in a trend that is really disturbing and sinister JOY REID: Conservatives manufactured outrage over masks and history lessons, took our school boards hostage like a bunch of screaming maniacs. So, the federal government has designated American parents who are unhappy with the education their children are receiving as domestic terrorists, and the media are defending it.

Does criminalisation curb drug consumption? What the use of NDPS Act in Mumbai tells us



What happens when a poorly conceived law meets an overzealous police force and an apathetic judiciary? We study the application of Section 27 of the NDPS Act (henceforth called 'the law') in Mumbai to understand whether criminalisation of drug use serves its stated objective of curbing drug consumption. The law makes consumption of any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance punishable with imprisonment up to a year. We argue that this law, in effect, leads to the exploitation of the very people it purports to protect. India's approach to drug consumption

India sees drug consumption as a criminal offence, believing that criminalising drug use is the strongest symbol of society's condemnation. But this criminalisation leads to far more harm than mere drug use could ever do.

While criminalising any activity (such as theft or assault) typically causes harm to criminals (by way of fines and imprisonment) who victimise others, criminalisation of drug use is seen as a way to protect people from themselves. This is paradoxical, because such criminalisation harms the very people it intends to protect. To make matters worse, the writing of the law leaves much to be desired. First, the NDPS Act puts a blanket ban on all kinds of drugs. This would include cannabis, opioids, tramadol, amphetamines, and a long list of other drugs. Theoretically, even carrying a drug for medicinal purposes, without a valid prescription on your person, could lead to your arrest. Second, the law does not define 'consumption', nor does it prescribe any procedure for determining what constitutes 'consumption'.

IAF chief says Pak shares western military tech with China

Addressing his maiden Air Force Day press conference, the IAF chief also suggested that the IAF had an edge over the Chinese Air Force as even though the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) was building three bases very close to the Indian territory in Eastern Ladakh, they would continue to remain weak in terms of capability to launch multiple high altitude operations. Indian Air Force (IAF) Air Chief, Marshal VR Chaudhari today warned the global community against providing weapon systems to Pakistan as it shares their military technology with China, which is its closest ally in terms of military hardware and all other aspects.

Addressing his maiden Air Force Day press conference, the IAF chief also suggested that the IAF had an edge over the Chinese Air Force as even though the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) was building three bases very close to the Indian territory in Eastern Ladakh, they would continue to remain weak in terms of capability to launch multiple high altitude operations.



"There was nothing to fear from this (partnership between Pakistan and China), the only worry is about the western technology (given in aid to Pakistan by western countries including US, Sweden and other European countries) passing from Pakistan to China," Chaudhari said when asked about the possibility of a two-front war and the ongoing collusion between the two adversaries at the multiple fora.

When asked about the deployment of fighter aircraft

by the Chinese side on their side of the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh, the IAF chief said the disengagement process was on in the area but the Indian Air Force was fully prepared and deployed there to deal with any eventuality.

On the threat from new airfields coming up in Pakistan near the Indian border, the IAF chief said these new airfields were developed mostly for helicopter operations and the one built close to the Afghan border was to evacuate Pakistanis fighting inside Afghanistan.

While answering a query on whether the induction of new air defence systems such as the S-400 from Russia would result in the reduction of the number of aircraft required by the force, Chaudhari said there should be no comparison between the offensive and defensive weapon systems. Further, he also made it clear that the first S-400 air defence system would be reaching India this year itself and along with the Spyder, MRSAM and Akash surface to air weapon systems would help strengthen the air space of the country.

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Malaysia late Monday (Oct 4) summoned Beijing's envoy to the South-east Asian country in protest after Chinese vessels entered its maritime economic zone in the disputed South China Sea. Kuala Lumpur summoned Chinese ambassador Ouyang Yujing "to convey Malaysia's position and protest against the presence and activities of Chinese vessels, including a survey vessel, in Malaysia's Exclusive Economic Zone", the foreign ministry said in a statement.

The ministry accused China of going against local and international law with the presence of its ships off the coast of Sabah and Sarawak states, on the Malaysian part of Borneo island.

Monday's move was the second time this year Malaysia has summoned Beijing's envoy to protest Chinese activity related to the hotly contested waters.

In June, Malaysia scrambled fighter jets to intercept 16 Chinese military aircraft that appeared off Borneo over the South China Sea, where it has overlapping territorial claims with Beijing.



Malaysia summons Chinese envoy to protest South China Sea incursion

Malaysia accused China of breaching its sovereignty, while Beijing said the flight was routine training.

Malaysia-China relations are usually warm but have been ruffled by recent tension-raising incidents over the sea,

which is home to key shipping lanes and is believed to harbour rich oil and gas deposits.

"Malaysia's consistent position and actions are based on international law, in defence of our sovereignty and

sovereign rights in our waters," the foreign ministry statement said Monday, adding the country had "also protested against the previous encroachments by other foreign vessels not our waters". China has laid claim to

nearly all of the South China Sea and has built numerous military outposts on small islands and atolls, angering others with competing claims to the waters, including Vietnam, the Philippines, Brunei and Taiwan.

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गुलाबगंगा नदी के तट पर मोदी सरकार ने बड़ा बयान देकर पाकिस्तान को जवाब दिया है। मोदी सरकार ने पाकिस्तान को जवाब देते हुए कहा है कि पाकिस्तान को जवाब देते हुए हमें बूंद-बूंद को तरसेगा पाक। मोदी सरकार ने पाकिस्तान को जवाब देते हुए कहा है कि पाकिस्तान को जवाब देते हुए हमें बूंद-बूंद को तरसेगा पाक।

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Alaska's famous fish, Salmon, getting smaller due to climate change: Study

(News Agencies)-One of the most popular fish among seafood lovers, Salmon, is getting smaller in size as per experts and that might be a result of climate change.

A new study has reported that climate change can take a dangerous toll on valuable fishery, indigenous people and wildlife.



Scientists of University of Alaska at Fairbanks (UAF) observed that four out of five Alaska's wild salmon species have gotten smaller in size in the last few years.

One of the most affected ones is the King Salmon, which is technically called the Chinook salmon and is Alaska's official state fish. The King Salmon has gotten at least eight per cent smaller than its size before 1990, the study revealed.

This report is not based on just the recent trends.

Scientists have been compiled data from the 12.5 million samples collected in the last six decades.

Scientists also interviewed several locals from Alaska to get their first-hand experiences of this.

The claim of the size of salmon getting smaller has been confirmed by the interviewed Alaskans,

co-author Peter Westley of UAF's College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences said.

"People are walking into their smokehouses and not having to duck anymore," he said. "The fish are just smaller."

Climate change has been making the temperatures hotter with every passing day which is affecting the fish. In addition to this, the increased competition in different species of

salmon might also be leading to fish shrinkage, experts said.

It is not just seafood consumers, but also some wildlife animals who are getting affected by it. Alaska's bears and a few other wildlife animals also consume salmon. So, if the size keeps getting smaller, the nutrient count for these wildlife animals can have a negative impact on the wildlife animals consuming the red-fleshed fish, UAF's Krista Oke, the study's lead author, explained.

China has ability to mount 'full scale' invasion by 2025, says Taiwan's defence minister



(News Agencies)-Amid threat of Chinese warplanes repeatedly entering Taiwan's airspace, the country's defence minister Chiu Kuo-cheng declared that China can mount a "full scale" invasion by 2025. "By 2025, China will bring the cost and attrition to its lowest. It has the capacity now, but it will not start a war easily, having to take many other things into consideration," Taiwan's defence minister said.

Chiu added that China is capable of mounting a "full scale" invasion by 2025 and already has the ability to invade Taiwan. China

sent a record number of 56 warplanes to Taiwan as the country scrambled jets to thwart the Chinese threat on Monday. Taiwan's defence minister told lawmakers that there was a risk of "misfire" across the Taiwan Strait referring to the current tensions with China.

Also Read: China sends 56 warplanes into Taiwan's defence zone

The Chinese government considers Taiwan a breakaway province which it says it will seize by force if necessary, a development that worries the island nation.

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China sends 56 jets into Taiwan defence zone in another record incursion

(News Agencies)-Taiwan urged Beijing to stop "irresponsible provocative actions" after 56 Chinese warplanes crossed into its air defence zone on Monday in yet another record incursion. Taiwan urged Beijing to stop "irresponsible provocative actions" after 56 Chinese warplanes crossed into its air defence zone on Monday in yet another record incursion.

The defence ministry said it scrambled aircraft to broadcast warnings after 36 fighter jets, 12 H-6 nuclear-capable bombers and four other planes entered its southwest air defence identification zone (ADIZ).

Four more fighters entered the zone in a night sortie, bringing the total to 56 planes, the ministry added.

DAMAGING STATUS QUO OF PEACE: TAIWAN

The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), Taiwan's top China policy-making body, accused Beijing of "seriously damaging the status quo of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait" with its recent string of incursions. "We demand the Beijing authorities immediately stop its non-peaceful and irresponsible provocative actions," MAC spokesman Chiu Chui-cheng said in a statement.

"China is the culprit for causing tensions between the two sides of the (Taiwan) Strait and it has further threatened regional security and order," he added, saying Taiwan "will never compromise and yield" to threats.

CHINA'S INCURSIONS

The ADIZ is not the same as

Taiwan's territorial airspace but includes a far greater area that overlaps with part of China's own air defence identification zone and even includes some of the mainland.

Self-ruled democratic Taiwan lives under the constant threat of invasion by China, which views the island as its territory and has vowed to one day seize it, by force if necessary.

In the last two years, Beijing has begun sending large sorties into Taiwan's defence zone to signal dissatisfaction at key moments -- and to keep Taipei's ageing fighter fleet regularly stressed. Nearly 150 Chinese warplanes had breached Taiwan's ADIZ since Friday when Beijing marked its National Day with its then-biggest aerial show of force, buzzing the island with 38 planes.

That was followed by another incursion by 39 planes on Saturday, sparking criticism from Washington. State Department spokesman Ned Price reiterated Monday that the United States was "very concerned" by the "provocative" moves by Beijing. "This activity is destabilising, it risks miscalculation and it undermines regional peace and security," Price told reporters. "We strongly urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic and economic pressure and coercion against Taiwan," he said, calling US commitment to the island "rock-solid".

RAMPING UP PRESSURE

China's foreign ministry on Monday accused Washington of sending out "an extremely wrong and irresponsible signal" with

"provocative" actions such as selling arms to Taipei and sending its warships to the Taiwan Strait.

"The US should correct its mistakes, earnestly abide by the 'one China Principle'... prudently and appropriately handle the Taiwan issue, stop bolstering 'Taiwanese independence' separatist forces," said spokeswoman Hua Chunying. Beijing has ramped up pressure on Taiwan since the 2016 election of President Tsai Ing-wen, who rejects its stance that Taiwan is part of "one China". Under President Xi Jinping, Chinese warplanes are crossing into Taiwan's ADIZ at an unprecedented rate.

Last year, a record 380 Chinese military jets made incursions into Taiwan's defence zone, and the number this year as of early October has already exceeded 600. Last week, 24 Chinese

warplanes flew into the zone after Taiwan applied to join a major trans-Pacific trade pact, a move Beijing has opposed.

Friday's show of force came the same week China accused Britain of "evil attentions" after it sent a frigate to sail through the Taiwan Strait, which Beijing claims as its own waterway. WILL CHINA INVADE TAIWAN? Xi has described Taiwan becoming part of the mainland as "inevitable".

US military officials have begun to talk openly about fears that China could consider the previously unthinkable and invade. Monday's incursion "was a way for Beijing to tell Washington that it will not submit to US warnings, that it, not Washington, sets the rules in this part of the world," said J. Michael Cole, a Taipei-based analyst at the University of Nottingham's Taiwan Studies Programme.

Taliban remove Uyghur militants along China's border: Report

According to reports, the new Taliban government has removed Uyghur militants near its border with China. The Uyghur militants reportedly belong to the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP). Taliban spokesman Mohammad Naeem had earlier declared that Afghanistan "will not be used against any country's security".

Afghanistan shares a 76-kilometre border with China which runs along the restive Xinjiang region where China has reportedly opened "re-education" camps against Uyghurs. Reports claim the TIP militants were located in Afghanistan's Badakhshan province which runs along China's border. They have reportedly been moved to other areas including those who were in Nangarhar. China fears the short border along Xinjiang could become a staging ground for Uyghur militants. Taliban had declared earlier that it was ready to enter China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as the Xi government promised to ensure aid and vaccine assistance to the new Taliban government. China had openly expressed its support for economic development and investment for Afghanistan soon after the Taliban took control of Kabul while expressing its intention to further "friendly and cooperative" relations with the new regime. China's foreign ministry had said,

Bomb targets mosque in Kabul, several civilians dead

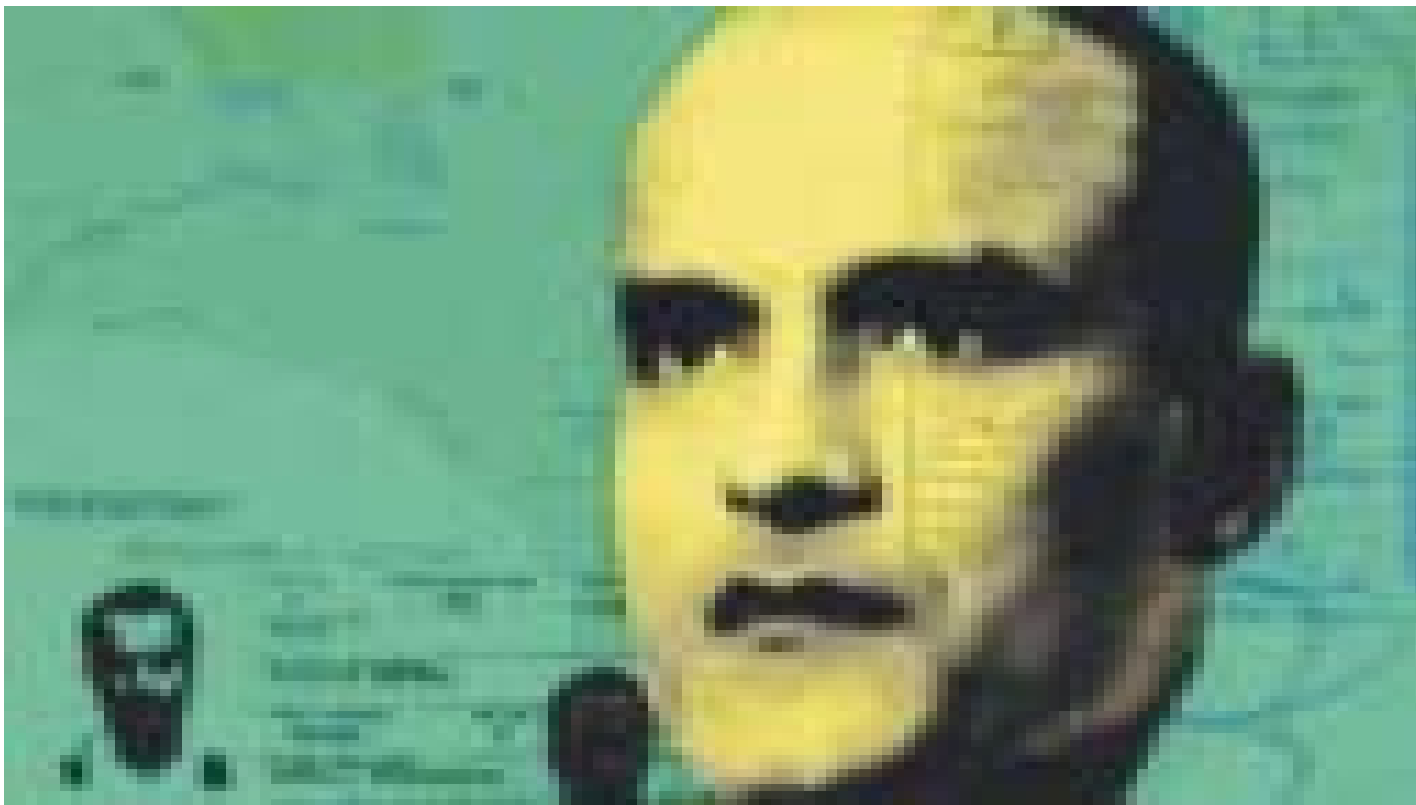
(News Agencies)-A bomb targeted the entrance of a mosque in the Afghan capital on Sunday leaving a "number of civilians dead", a Taliban spokesman said.

The bomb targeted the Eidgah Mosque in Kabul where a memorial service was being held for the mother of Taliban s p o k e s m a n

Zabihullah Mujahid. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. However, since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in



mid-August, attacks by Islamic State group militants against them have increased. The rise has raised the possibility of a wider conflict between the two extremist groups. IS maintains a strong presence in the eastern province of Nangarhar and considers the Taliban an enemy. It has claimed several attacks against them, including several killings in the provincial capital of Jalalabad. Attacks in Kabul have so far been rare.



Pakistan court allows India more time to appoint lawyer to represent Kulbhushan Jadhav

A Pakistan court on Tuesday allowed India more time to appoint a lawyer to represent death-row prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav.

Atop court in Pakistan on Tuesday allowed India more time to appoint a lawyer to represent death-row prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav in court to hear a review of his conviction and sentencing by a military court.

Jadhav, a 51-year-old retired Indian Navy officer, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017.

Hassan Aurangzeb, heard the case by the law ministry regarding designating a lawyer for Jadhav.

Attorney General for Pakistan Khalid Javed Khan reminded the court that it had passed an order on May 5 asking the authorities to make one more effort to contact India for the appointment of counsel.

He informed the court that the message

the government had requested the court for the appointment of a counsel. "India wants to appoint counsel from outside but our law disallows this, and so does India's in its own territory," he said.

Chief Justice Minallah said that Pakistan wanted to implement the ICJ decision. "Would it not be better to give them another opportunity so they could put forth their reservations before the court," he observed.

The judge asked Khan to convey the message to the Indian government and Jadhav. "Send another reminder to Kulbhushan and the Indian government. If India has any reservations, it may convey them here, or someone from the Indian embassy in Pakistan may convey them. That might bring forth a solution," the judge said.

Later, the court adjourned the hearing of the case for an indefinite period.

No progress was made on the review issue as India refused to appoint a local lawyer while demanding Pakistan to let an Indian lawyer represent Jadhav in court. India has asked Pakistan to address the "shortcomings" in a bill brought out to facilitate reviewing the case of Jadhav, saying the proposed law does not create a mechanism to reconsider it as mandated by the ICJ.

India has said the Review and Reconsideration Bill 2020 does not create a mechanism to facilitate effective review and reconsideration of Jadhav's case as mandated by the judgement of the ICJ and the municipal courts cannot be the arbiter of whether a state has fulfilled its obligations in international law.

Over 12,000 refugees cross over to Mizoram following military action in Myanmar



Over 12,000 Myanmar nationals have crossed over to Mizoram following military action in the surrounding villages of Chin State along the international border. This has triggered worries about another phase of the influx of Myanmar nationals into Mizoram.

Speaking with India Today, Mizoram Home Minister Lalchamliana said, "According to the latest report, 12,121 people from Myanmar have crossed over to Mizoram and they are taking shelter in various parts of the state."

According to the reports, over 2,000 people from Myanmar's Chin State have taken shelter in Mizoram's Hnahthial district.

A top official of Hnahthial district administration said that most Myanmar refugees have crossed the river and trekked hill areas, and entered into Mizoram following military airstrikes in the bordering villages of Thantlang town area in Chin State along the Mizoram-Myanmar border last month.

"As many as 1,052 Myanmar refugees are taking shelter in Sangau and its surrounding villages in Lawngtlai district, while 1,978 people are taking shelter in Tuipuiral area. In Hnahthial district, over 2,000 people are taking shelter, including 877 in Thingsai area alone," the official of Hnahthial district administration said.

Apart from Hnahthial district, many Myanmar refugees, including children and women are taking shelter in Lawngtlai, Siaha, Champhai, Lunglei and Serchhip districts as well. The district administration, Young Mizo Association (YMA) and other civil society groups have extended help to the refugees of Myanmar by providing them with food items, clothes, medicines and arranging shelter homes. Earlier, Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga sent a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and sought aid for Myanmar refugees who are currently taking shelter in the state.

Six districts of Mizoram Champhai, Siaha, Lawngtlai, Serchhip, Hnahthial and Saitual - share a 510 km long porous border with Myanmar.



India approached the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Pakistan for denial of consular access to Jadhav and challenging the death sentence.

After hearing both sides, the Hague-based ICJ issued a verdict in July, 2019, asking Pakistan to give India consular access to Jadhav and also ensure review of his conviction.

On Tuesday, a three-judge bench of the Islamabad High Court (IHC), comprising Chief Justice Athar Minallah, Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul

was conveyed to India but there has been no response so far. Khan also told the court that India wanted consular access to Jadhav in a separate room, but the authorities cannot take the risk of leaving him alone with Indian representatives. "They can cause harm to him even by just shaking hands with him," he said. He claimed Pakistan was making efforts for a complete implementation of the decision of review and reconsideration of the ICJ, but India was creating hurdles. Khan said due to Indian intransigence,



US has 3,750 active nuclear weapons, stockpile down from 3,805 a year ago

As recently as 2003, the US nuclear weapon total was slightly above 10,000. It peaked at 31,255 in 1967.

In a reversal of Trump administration policy, the State Department on Tuesday disclosed the number of nuclear weapons in the US stockpile. It said this will aid global efforts to control the spread of such weapons.

The number of US weapons, including those in active status as well as those in long-term storage, stood at 3,750 as of September 2020, the

department said. That is down from 3,805 a year earlier and 3,785 in 2018.

As recently as 2003, the US nuclear weapon total was slightly above 10,000. It peaked at 31,255 in 1967.

The last time the US government released its stockpile number was in March 2018, when it said the total was 3,822 as of September 2017. That was early in the Trump administration,

which subsequently kept updated numbers secret and denied a request by the Federation of American Scientists to declassified them. "Back to transparency," said Hans Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists. He said the Biden administration was wise to reverse the prior administration's policy.

Kristensen said disclosing the stockpile number will assist U.S. diplomats in arms control negotiations and at next year's Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty conference, which will review the disarmament commitment made by nuclear powers who are treaty signatories, including the United States.

The Biden administration is conducting a nuclear weapons posture and policy review that

is expected to be completed early next year.

At the Conference on Disarmament last February, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said, "President Biden has made it clear: the U.S. has a national security imperative and a moral responsibility to reduce and eventually eliminate the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction."

US government orders Google to track people searching specific names: Report

(News Agencies)- According to reports, the US government has allegedly issued warrants for search giant Google to provide data on people typing specific search terms.

A Forbes report said the FBI is issuing "keyword warrants" asking Google to provide data amid fears that innocent users may get caught.

It is however unclear how many such warrants have been issued and just how much data authorities reportedly have already.

Google has reportedly defended its move asserting that it carries

out a "rigorous process" and protects the privacy of users while supporting law enforcement officials.

The report comes amid a row over Facebook's privacy policies after a whistleblower claimed the social media giant should be regulated since its harms children and puts profits over public safety.

Facebook's ex-employee Frances Haugen told US lawmakers that Facebook stokes "division and weakens our democracy" as she urged the US Congress to take action.

However, Facebook CEO Mark

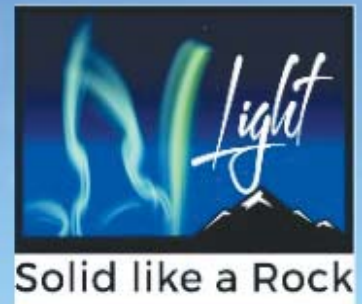
Zuckerberg dismissed the allegations as "deeply illogical" saying: "I don't know any tech company that sets out to build products that make people angry or depressed."

US lawmakers have been threatening for years to regulate social media companies. Senator Ed Markey said Mark "Zuckerberg's time of invading privacy was over" after Haugen's testimony.

Senator Amy Klobuchar added that Haugen testimony was a "catalyst for action" even as Zuckerberg defended the company.



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Chinese military activity near Taiwan provocative: US

On Monday, the United States termed Chinese military activity near Taiwan as provocative. "We urge Beijing to seize its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure and coercion against Taiwan," said White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki.



The United States on Monday termed the Chinese military activity near Taiwan as provocative.

"We remain concerned by the People's Republic of China's provocative military activity near Taiwan, which is destabilising risk miscalculations and undermines regional peace and stability," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters at her daily news conference.

"We urge Beijing to seize its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure and coercion against Taiwan, and we have an abiding interest in

peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait," she said.

WILL CONTINUE TO ASSIST TAIWAN: US

"That's why we will continue to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defence capability. We maintain our commitments, as outlined in the three communiques, Taiwan Relations Act, and the Six Assurances," she said.

America's commitment to Taiwan is rock-solid and contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and within the region, Psaki said.

"We have been clear, privately and publicly, about our concern

about the PRC's pressure and coercion toward Taiwan, and we will continue to watch the situation very closely," she said.

145 CHINESE WARPLANES SINCE FRIDAY

In a separate statement, Senator Marco Rubio said 145 Chinese warplanes have flown into or near Taiwan's air defense identification zone since Friday. These military incursions occurred just days before Taiwan's National Day and began on the People's Republic of China's National Day.

"The Chinese Communist Party's aggressive behavior is intended to intimidate Taiwan

and send a message to the rest of the free world," Rubio said.

"If Beijing's recklessness is not met with international condemnation, Xi Jinping will think he has a green light for further aggression. President Joe Biden must work with our allies to ensure the People's Republic of China respects the status quo and the sovereign territory of Taiwan and its neighbours," he said.

REGIONAL PEACE UNDERMINED: US

State Department Spokesperson Ned Price told reporters that the US is very concerned by China's provocative military activity near

Taiwan.

"This activity is destabilizing. It risks miscalculations and undermines regional peace and stability. We strongly urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure and coercion against Taiwan," he said.

"Our commitment to Taiwan is rock solid. It contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and within the region, and we'll continue to stand with friends and allies to advance our shared prosperity, security, and values. We will do that as we continue to deepen our ties with Taiwan," Price said.

After Christmas food, chocolate bar Bounty falls prey to supply chain crisis

Popular chocolate bar, Bounty, may be the next victim of the ongoing supply chain crisis in the UK and other European countries.

The chocolate giant, Mars, has reported that Bounty, which is one of its highest selling bars, is facing shortages in Russia due to the fall in its supply of raw materials in Europe.

The confectionary giant has warned its customers in Russia that the popular chocolate bar may face shortage in the next few months as experts have predicted possible lack of coconut flakes. These coconut

flakes are the unique ingredient in the Bounty chocolate bar. However, local reports have also stated that there might be 'forced restriction' behind this façade of lack of supplies for the Bounty brand. A letter warns that even though the demand has increased for this chocolate-coconut bar, the warehouses should have

enough to meet the demand by mid-October. At the same time, the reports have been rubbished and authorities have stated that the lack of raw materials is a result of poor harvest of coconut chips this time. Philippines,

which is the second largest coconut producer of the world, was hit by typhoons which destroyed more than 49 million trees.

The destruction of these trees have resulted in a poor harvest and analysts believe it will take nearly two to three years for the industry to come out of that loss.

This has come a little after it has been revealed that the UK will be facing shortage of Christmas food, especially meat products due to the lack of raw material. The UK has also been fighting a fuel crisis

which has been a direct consequence of Brexit.





Biden scales back his agenda in hopes of bringing moderates onboard

President Joe Biden and Democratic leaders in Congress in recent days have slashed their ambitions for a major expansion of America's social safety net to a package worth \$2.3 trillion or less, which will force hard choices about how to scale back a proposal that the president hopes will be transformational. The figure is substantially less than Biden's earlier plan, which called for \$3.5 trillion in new spending and tax cuts to spur a generational expansion of government in Americans' lives, including efforts to fight climate change and child poverty, increase access to education and help U.S. companies compete with China. Democratic leaders will probably need to narrow their plans for free community college, child tax credits and universal prekindergarten so they are offered only to lower- and middle-income Americans, according to party members involved in the negotiations.

The White House is also debating whether to try to keep as many programs as possible, by cutting their duration or reach, or to jettison some initiatives entirely to keep others largely intact, according to people familiar with

the discussions.

The cuts represent a blow to Biden's agenda, but the remaining plans would still deliver significant benefits to a wide range of Americans. Biden and his aides have known for months that they would most likely need to reduce the size and scope of his plans to satisfy moderates in his party.

But the president has stressed, in public and in private conversations with Democrats, that even a smaller bill could shift the landscape of the US economy and help the party hold power in midterm elections next year.

"These bills are about competitiveness versus complacency," Biden said Tuesday in Michigan, where he spoke at a union hall to promote not only the policies in his spending bill, but a smaller, bipartisan infrastructure bill that has passed the Senate but not the House. "They're about opportunity versus decay."

The president acknowledged in private meetings Monday and Tuesday with House Democrats that he was now negotiating a plan to spend no more than \$2.3 trillion, and possibly less, in a concession to two Democratic centrist holdouts, Sens. Joe

Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona.

Their votes are must-haves: Biden will need support from every Democrat in the Senate, and virtually every one in the House, to secure passage of the bill. Manchin has said he would support a \$1.5 trillion package under certain conditions.

Progressives are still pushing for more. In a private meeting between Biden and progressive lawmakers Monday, Rep. Pramila Jayapal of Washington, chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, pushed back at the range Biden offered and instead suggested a price tag of at least \$2.5 trillion, and up to \$2.9 trillion, according to a person familiar with the comments. The person spoke on condition of anonymity to describe a closed-door meeting. White House aides say privately that Biden is pushing Manchin and Sinema to spend as much as possible in the final bill.

Administration officials also say the reduced cost of spending and tax cuts in the bill means Democrats will have an easier time settling on the revenue increases - including tax hikes on high earners and corporations - to cover the price

tag.

Republicans say the legislation inserts too much government into people's lives and contend that its tax increases would cripple the economy. But the bill's proponents see a rare and perhaps fleeting opportunity to deliver on decades of promises that Democrats have made to voters.

Privately, many Democrats fear they could lose their congressional majorities next year in midterm elections - making this potentially their last chance for some time to create programs they believe will prove to be effective and popular.

"If the final package fails to meet this moment, it will be a squandered opportunity of historic consequence," said Lindsay Owens, executive director of the progressive Groundwork Collaborative in Washington. "These aren't just numbers on a page or props for political posturing - every dollar represents real investments in climate, housing, caregiving and other critical programs our communities need to survive and thrive."

On Capitol Hill, Democratic leaders have set their sights on Oct. 31 as the next self-imposed deadline to try to pass both the

\$1 trillion infrastructure bill and the sprawling domestic policy package.

Lawmakers and progressive interest groups have begun lobbying Democratic leaders and the White House to keep their preferred spending programs in the bill, all or in part.

Supporters of what Biden initially proposed as a \$400 billion investment in home health care for disabled and older Americans, including the powerful Service Employees International Union, are pushing to preserve that spending at a level that both expands access to in-home care and also raises the wages of care workers.

Those workers disproportionately include women of color, making the spending a key plank of Biden's promise to invest in racial equity.

On Tuesday, the centrist Progressive Policy Institute issued a report outlining a potential \$2 trillion plan built around efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, a means-tested prekindergarten program, an expansion of the Affordable Care Act and a more modest extension of the tax credit for parents than Biden has championed.

“Congress In Dying Stages. Had They Allowed Me...”: Navjot Sidhu’s Latest Googly

Chandigarh: Navjot Sidhu's tantrums continue to embarrass the Congress at a time the party high command is trying to focus on setting its house in order ahead of the 2022 Punjab Assembly election.

The latest headache for the ruling party was on Thursday after Sidhu - who hasn't yet formally withdrawn his resignation as chief of the Congress' Punjab unit - decided to lead party workers from Mohali to UP's Lakhimpur Kheri, to protest the brutal killing of farmers.

In visuals of the contingent as they prepared to set out on their protest, Sidhu, who today began a fast demanding the arrest of Union Minister Ajay Mishra's son,

looked visibly upset because he had to wait for Chief Minister Charanjit Channi's arrival.

The former cricketer - whose threat to quit last month left the Congress scrambling, particularly since the party had backed him in his bitter and public feud with former Chief Minister Amarinder Singh - was then caught on camera criticising his party.

The video in question shows Sidhu's close aide and cabinet minister Pargat Singh trying to pacify him by saying Mr Channi would join them soon. Sukhwinder Singh Danny, one of the Punjab Congress' Working President, then tells Sidhu the march will be successful.

The response appears bitter; he says: "Where is the success? If Bhagwant Sidhu's son (a reference to his father) was allowed to lead, then you would have seen... Congress is in a dying stage..."

The remark has also been condemned by the opposition Akali Dal, which has said it showed Sidhu's lack of respect for the Dalit community. The Akalis have also declared the comment had revealed the Congress' "caste card" - ahead of the election - had been exposed.

"Persons who keep own ambition above people's welfare cannot give any direction to the state. They stand exposed... Congress President Sonia

Gandhi should tell Punjabis why she tried to fool them by making a Scheduled Caste Chief Minister... but simultaneously reposes faith in Sidhu," Akali Dal leader Dr Daljit Singh Cheema said.

Sidhu and Amarinder Singh have waged an increasingly public and hostile spat over the past few months, culminating in Mr Singh declaring himself "humiliated" and quitting.

As he did so, Amarinder Singh repeatedly warned the Congress not to trust Mr Sidhu and declared that he was committed to ensuring his rival did not ascend to his former post.

The Amarinder-Sidhu spat dates back to the 2017 election, after which Sidhu expected to be

made Deputy Chief Minister but that was reportedly blocked by Amarinder Singh.

The Congress high command appointed Sidhu as state unit chief and Charanjit Channi as Chief Minister (Punjab's first Dalit Sikh leader, and appointment made in light of the fact that Dalits constitute nearly a third of the state's population) in the hopes it would quell infighting. However, Sidhu seems as unwilling to work with Channi as he was with Amarinder Singh. His threat to quit as Punjab Congress chief was apparently triggered by the Chief Minister not consulting him over key appointments, including those for the chief of the state's police.

CIA launches new China-focused unit

The Central Intelligence Agency announced the formation of a new China Mission Center on Thursday, underscoring the Biden administration's focus on Beijing as a top foreign policy priority and a formidable global competitor to the United States.

In a statement that referred to the Chinese government as a "key rival," the CIA said the mission center was the result of a series of strategic reviews launched by Director William Burns in the spring that concentrated on "China, technology, people, and partnerships," among other areas. The mission center is intended to "address the global challenge posed by the People's Republic of China that cuts across all of the Agency's mission areas," the CIA said, with Burns adding that it "will further strengthen our collective work on the most important geopolitical threat we face in the 21st century, an increasingly adversarial Chinese government."

Bloomberg News first reported in August that the CIA was weighing proposals for an independent mission center focused on China, which had previously fallen under the portfolio of the agency's Mission Center for East Asia and Pacific.

In addition to the mission center, Burns also announced the creation of a chief technology officer role,

as well as a Transnational and Technology Mission Center to "address global issues critical to US competitiveness — including new and emerging technologies, economic security, climate change, and global health."

Deputy CIA Director David Cohen "will oversee the implementation" of the changes to the agency's organizational structure that resulted from Burns' reviews, the CIA said.

Former directors of the CIA praised Burns and the agency for creating the center to combat the threats to American power posed by China.

"If there is any country that deserves its own mission center, it is China, which has global ambitions and presents the greatest challenge to U.S. interests and to international order," former CIA Director John Brennan told POLITICO. Leon Panetta, who served as CIA director and Defense secretary in the Obama administration, said that Burns had briefed him last week for roughly half an hour about the new center. "It's no question that we really need much better intelligence on what China is up to," he told POLITICO. "China remains a very hard target to be able to penetrate, and for that reason creating that center to establish a real focus on China makes sense."

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APOLLO
FARMS & RESORTS



US Special Forces secretly deployed to Taiwan for at least a year: report

jets and bombers into the defense zone over a period of four days.

Though the aircraft did not officially enter Taiwan's air space, the show of force concerned the international community and prompted the U.S., U.K. and Japan to conduct multi-national military exercises in the region. Taiwan Premier Su Tseng-chang warned this week that "Taiwan

definitely needs to be on alert." "China is increasingly over the top," he said. "We must come together as one and strengthen ourselves, only then will countries that want to annex Taiwan not dare to easily resort to force." Taiwan identifies as a sovereign nation, but it is officially recognized by China, the United Nations and the U.S. as part of the one-China policy.

The Chinese foreign ministry claimed that U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan emphasized U.S. "adherence to the one-China policy" in talks on Wednesday. But a statement released by the White House said Sullivan "raised a number of areas where we have concern with the PRC's [People's Republic of China] actions," including in the South

China Sea.

"Mr. Sullivan made clear that ... we will continue to invest in our own national strength and work closely with our allies and partners," the statement added. China has repeatedly condemned Taiwanese independence and has said it will take the island back by force - a threat U.S. security officials have warned could happen within the

next six years.

"Taiwan is clearly one of their ambitions," Adm. Philip Davidson, commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, told a Senate Armed Services Committee in March. "I think the threat [will] manifest during this decade, in fact, in the next six years." Fox News could not immediately reach the White House for comment.

Light brown, dark eyes, no freckles: Scientists recreate faces of Egyptian mummies from DNA

(SAI Bureau) - The discovery of mummified remains across Egypt has been one of the most significant sources of our knowledge of that ancient world. The remains indicate the practices, culture and belief system of the ancient civilisation. However, physical appearance has always been in question. Scientists have now reconstructed the faces of mummies from their DNA.

Researchers from the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History and the University of Tübingen in Germany have processed mummy samples, estimated to be between 2,023 and 2,797 years old, creating predictable faces. Parabon NanoLabs, a DNA

technology company that develops next-generation therapeutic and forensic products, has predicted these facial structures of three ancient mummies that belong to Abusir el-Meleq, an ancient Nile community in Egypt.

It used whole-genome sequencing data from the European Nucleotide Archive to select three samples with the highest quality data to analyse.

Scientists say that this is the first time a comprehensive DNA phenotyping has been performed on human DNA of this age, and the results are being presented to the forensic community. "It's great to see how genome sequencing and advanced bioinformatics can be

applied to ancient DNA samples," said Dr Ellen Greytak, Parabon's Director of Bioinformatics, in a statement.



Parabon Labs, in a statement, said that the work was made possible by the recent bioinformatics advances in the field of low-coverage imputation, which allows highly accurate determination of common SNP genotypes from low-coverage sequencing data. Scientists used

the technology to predict each mummy's ancestry, pigmentation, and face morphology. They found that their ancestry was more similar to the modern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern individuals than modern Egyptians.

The facial complexion on the mummies has been predicted to be light brown, with dark eyes and hair and no freckles, which are highly consistent with previous observations that "ancient Egyptians shared more ancestry with Near Easterners than present-day Egyptians, who received additional sub-Saharan admixture in more recent times" and that they had an

allele for lighter skin.

Scientists predicting the values of face principal components, which are transformed into 3D graphical meshes, used them to make a three-dimensional face morphology. They then compared face predictions to one another and calculated heat maps to show the differences between the subjects. Parabon Labs said that these differences were then emphasised to create caricatured faces, which were combined with the pigmentation predictions to create composites of the individuals' likely appearance at age 25 by Parabon's forensic artist.

Times Now sympathy went to BJP minister's son. Zee News turned to 'Khalistan plan'

And Priyanka Gandhi sweeping the room where she was detained Monday - "Politicians, listen in: you're not allowed into Lakhimpur," announced India TV. By the way, how come the BJP allowed Rahul and Priyanka so much goodwill TV time - he firewalled by the police, she with a broom in her hand?

We watched 'Politics over Lakhimpur' (Mirror Now), brought to you by news channels and political parties. 'Political tourism,' said Zee News of the Opposition's attempt to visit Lakhimpur from Monday; 'Political conspiracy,' alleged India Today; 'Rahul's vulture politics' (Times Now); 'Congress slams BJP' (CNN-News18); 'Akhilesh Arrested' (Bharat Samachar).

We watched Trinamool Congress leaders visit Lakhimpur (CNN-News18), Aam Aadmi Party's Raghav Chadha on his way there (Times Now) and Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar criticise the UP government - 'all India politics on,' observed Times Now Navbharat.

We watched channels toil over

juicy, gimmicky headlines - 'Deaths, Dandal & Drama' (CNN News 18 India); 'Clashes, claims and counter claims' (Mirror Now); 'More tragedy tourism - pick & choose and use' (Zee Hindustan).

Channels for MoS Mishra, son And we watched them ask more questions of the Opposition than the government. While reporters at ground zero were objective and spoke to farmers/protesters and their families - NDTV India, India Today, ABP News, India TV - as well as to Union Minister of State Ajay Mishra and his son Ashish Mishra who has been named in one FIR, those in the Delhi studios were inclined to emphasise one side of the story. 'Who is stoking Lakhimpur violence?' asked Republic TV. 'SP workers stoke fires,' it answered its own question after a police vehicle was set on fire outside Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav's residence where he sat on a dharna after being denied permission to visit Lakhimpur. 'Who attacked and lynched 4 BJP workers?' asked Times Now, 'Is justice not for all?'

wondered CNN-News18.

The video that ran alongside these queries was of certain unidentified men beating a man or men with rods and was shown repeatedly, Monday to Wednesday with questions like 'What kind of farmer is this?' (Zee News). Anchors on Zee News and Times Now asked their guests Monday evening, why they had sympathy only for the farmers/protesters and not the four BJP workers who had been allegedly killed.

We could ask them the reverse question: where was their sympathy for the dead protesters?

All the news channels interviewed MoS Ajay Mishra and his son Ashish. Channels like India Today did ask, 'Named in FIR why no arrest?' but mostly the two were given time and space to recount their version of events-is this courtesy extended to others who have FIRs against them? And the Times Now reporter sounded quite sympathetic when he said to Ashish Mishra that while there had been much talk of the (dead) protesters (where?), there was little talk

about the (dead) BJP workers - an odd comment when all the news channels did was talk about the BJP workers being 'lynched'.

Channels' own versions

'All versions all videos,' declared Times Now Wednesday but when it asked questions that 'hold the key' to the violence in Lakhimpur, Monday, this was not quite the case - 'Who attacked BJP convoy', was the minister's son responsible for the death of the four protesters, what proof was there of minister's son links to the violence; four people were 'lynched', 'beaten to death' by protesters - who were the perpetrators; who killed Shyam Sundar, a BJP worker.

On Republic TV, anchor Arnab Goswami accused the Opposition of 'flashpoint politics' and recited his version of the events, Sunday: protesters were angry at the BJP, they surrounded the vehicle, the driver 'ran amok' and 'most unfortunately' ended up running over 'some people' who died, and then the protesters turned into a 'lynch mob', pulled people out of the car and 'lynched and killed four people - 'beat them to pulp,' he added for good effect.

On CNN-News18, the anchor at 8 pm Monday wanted to know if there was video proof of Ashish Mishra being in the car; that if it was a peaceful protest, why would anyone want to run over people and why would BJP leaders, on their home turf, want

to create trouble?

News X hosted a guest, one Dr S.K. Dutta, who warned of 'Khalistani influences' without providing any proof; Zee News also spoke of a 'Khalistan plan'. At the other end of the spectrum, there was Ravish Kumar on NDTV India who concentrated on the death of the protesters/farmers and why their families were unwilling to cremate their bodies.

Come Tuesday, news channels broadcast several other videos that showed a jeep/Scorpio ramming into the crowd of protesters and one protester caught under the jeep's wheel while the passengers fled - the people "had no inkling... were completely oblivious..." of the car coming up behind them," said a sympathetic India Today reporter.

Each time they aired these videos, channels were careful to state that they could not authenticate the veracity of the videos - which is just as it should be, except they never issued a similar warning Monday when they showed the 'lynching' video. Hmmm.

Each day, anchors talked politics - 'siyasat' -when they ought to have left it to their reporters to find out the all elusive 'truth of the matter.

Meanwhile, India TV ran a feature, Monday afternoon, on all the steps Prime Minister Narendra Modi had taken to help farmers - 'Modi ne kisan ke liye kya kya kiya'. Really? Was that appropriate after Lakhimpur?

Archaeologists unearth unique luxury in Jerusalem: A 2,700-year-old toilet



SAI Bureau)-Israeli archaeologists have found a rare ancient toilet in Jerusalem dating back more than 2,700 years, when private bathrooms were a luxury in the holy city, authorities said Tuesday. The Israeli Antiquities Authority said the smooth, carved limestone toilet was found in a rectangular cabin that was part of a sprawling mansion overlooking what is now the Old City. It was designed for

comfortable sitting, with a deep septic tank dug underneath. "A private toilet cubicle was very rare in antiquity, and only a few were found to date," said Yaakov Billig, the director of the excavation. "Only the rich could afford toilets," he said, adding that a famed rabbi once suggested that to be wealthy is "to have a toilet next to his table." Animal bones and pottery

found in the septic tank could shed light on the lifestyle and diet of people living at that time, as well as ancient diseases, the antiquities authority said. The archaeologists found stone capitals and columns from the era, and said there was evidence of a nearby garden with orchards and aquatic plants - more evidence that those living there were quite wealthy.

NCB Drug Bust: Bollywood and drug association shaken India

of several industries concurrently. The cruise industry had earned a bad name for its association with this drug rave, which majorly let-down the just-reviving tourism industry.

An app-based giant in the education sector, BYJU's has faced severe backlash. The brand gained fame promoting Shah Rukh Khan as their ambassador. There are calls for boycotting their product for their association with the superstar. Besides, the cryptocurrency

market took a tumble in India, as the NCB officials did not rule out the usage of Bitcoin for drug purchases. The number of arrests related to the drug bust are on the rising spree. Quite evidently, this incident highlights that drug addiction predominantly exist among the young generation in modern India. The administrative and judiciary are taking proper actions, several big names from the entertainment industry are under the scanner.

By Susmita Ghosh



The debt drama that masked a brutal power struggle: Schumer vs. McConnell

McConnell insisted Democrats take the hardest possible path to raising the debt limit, Schumer said he would simply not pursue it, and they settled on a short-term hike that both spun as a victory — until McConnell faced blowback from reliable allies who questioned whether he'd picked a fight only to back down from it. As the final agreement took shape, Schumer and McConnell appear to have held no personal conversations. Aides and emissaries handled the details, according to sources in both parties. As McConnell first devised an off-ramp to lift the nation's borrowing cap into December, he called Sens. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) before informing Schumer — and before he told his own caucus. Other Democrats, including Schumer, learned in a press release. "Shadow-boxing," said Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), describing Schumer and McConnell's latest long-range confrontation. "Because they don't talk that much, it doesn't seem." The majority and minority leader are perpetually angling for advantage in the longest-running 50-50 Senate in U.S. history, and their cage match over how to raise the debt ceiling is just the latest bout since McConnell refused to let the chamber organize after Schumer took over. Their ice-cold relationship lacks the sizzle of McConnell's tiffs with former Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid — but McConnell is using increasingly hardline tactics to make Schumer's life more

difficult, given the chamber's close margin and the tension among the disparate ideological wings in his rival's party.

Both liberals and conservatives were unhappy at first about the debt fix, with the latter griping that McConnell had backed down and the former frustrated that Schumer didn't push harder for a long-term solution that would strip Republicans of leverage. But Schumer looked far more like a winner by Thursday night, as Republicans fought among themselves over taking up the deal McConnell had cut and the final vote nearly got derailed.

"Now he's the one that's in a caucus meeting trying to corral people to get their votes together," said Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.). When the next collision comes in December, she predicted, it won't be "about what he allows. He's not in the majority."

Regardless of the votes he provided to advance the debt deal Thursday night, McConnell's motivations are clear: He's scrapping for any possible advantage he can claw away from Schumer to net a single seat and take back the reins of the Senate, even if it brings the nation closer to an economically paralyzing default. Schumer's task is trickier: He's trying to juggle the competing imperatives of standing up to McConnell and keeping his caucus together as it battles over how big to go on President Joe Biden's agenda.

In this particular conflict, McConnell was trying to goad Schumer into using the arcane budget reconciliation technique to raise the debt ceiling, forcing Democrats to raise the cap to a certain number. Schumer refused, and despite McConnell's offer for a temporary hike that's conditional on raising the debt ceiling again come December, Democrats say they won't choose reconciliation then either.

"Chuck Schumer won this game of chicken," said Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), a leading critic of McConnell's strategy. "I wish Republicans hadn't blinked. I wish we hadn't done that."

In part, it's because Democrats are going all-out to refuse McConnell's direction. Several senators said privately that Democrats have held the line against reconciliation because it's what McConnell wants. He also asked them to drop the debt ceiling from a spending bill last week — and after Democrats made that accommodation once, they don't want to repeat it.

When it comes to McConnell trying to run the Senate, "he may try, but he won't succeed," said Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.).

"Mitch McConnell has so infected the debt ceiling issue with political self-interest," Blumenthal said. "He wants to be majority leader. That's his goal."

Schumer, of course, wants to stay majority leader in 2023. But he's chiefly seeking to exploit the interim debt fix to finally clinch a deal on the

party-line social spending bill that's sparked a feud between his centrists and his liberals.

Yet Schumer's crowing over latest confrontation with McConnell irked Manchin, a vote he can't afford to alienate.

As Schumer criticized Republicans on the floor for threatening default and praised his caucus for saving the country, Manchin buried his heads in his hands. He then talked to Schumer about what he saw as inappropriate remarks. That was not a way to take it out. We just disagree. I'd have done it differently," Manchin said.

Some Democrats on Wednesday blasted

McConnell's offer before meeting privately as a caucus, then emerged from that sitdown to declare they had bested their perpetual foe. After Schumer contended to Democrats that McConnell "blinked" on Wednesday afternoon, Duckworth said, he was able to get his caucus on board with his strategy.

"It's not a solution," said Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii).

"What this does is allow us to focus on getting the president's agenda done."

Democrats will have to act fast to avoid being dragged down again into fiscal quicksand. That's because, as much as the GOP leader struggled on Thursday getting his conference to accept a provisional detente, advisers say he's got a larger strategy in mind.

McConnell was eager to tie the debt ceiling to the expiration of government funding on Dec. 3, sapping energy from Democratic

majorities by creating new deadlines for them to confront. Some of his conservative members may not have liked the offer he made to Schumer this week, but it got him closer to that goal.

Given that Democrats have three scheduled recesses before the new debt deadline, it won't be long before McConnell again begins pressuring them to raise the ceiling through reconciliation. Not to mention that Democrats had to put a number, \$480 billion, to this week's increase — and possibly the next one too.

McConnell knows exactly what he's doing," said Sen. John Barrasso (R-Wyo.), the conference's No. 3 leader. "They're going to own the debt."

Several more centrist senators are exhausted by the back-and-forth over who won the debt fight. There's another deadline around the corner, and both Schumer and McConnell remain at odds over how to raise the borrowing cap then. Many Democrats are ready to toss the entire notion of the debt ceiling legislatively overboard. But until then, they're willing to take a breather after McConnell offered a lifeline that Schumer grabbed, no matter how messy their parliamentary mano-a-mano became. "I know a lot of my colleagues are saying the other side caved," said Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.). "I think rationality won."



Ajay Kumar Mishra was acquitted in a 2000 murder case, but appeal is pending before HC. Now, his son is accused of murder in Lakhimpur Kheri case FIR.

MoS Ajay Mishra - Lakhimpur Kheri strongman who 'delivers justice on the spot'

For four days now, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs and BJP leader Ajay Kumar Mishra has been in the eye of the storm, after his younger son Ashish was accused of being part of a convoy that ran over a group of farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri, killing four and triggering violence that resulted in the deaths of four more people. The FIR in the case mentions Ashish Mishra's name on charges of murder and rioting, and includes the allegation that he sat on the passenger side of an SUV and shot at the protesters, who had gathered to show black flags to his father, the two-term sitting Lakhimpur Kheri MP. Back in July, Ajay Mishra came into the spotlight when he was inducted into the Narendra Modi government as minister of state, and was touted as the lone Brahmin face from Uttar Pradesh to be part of the ministry. Since the father became a Union minister, Ashish Mishra 'Monu', who was denied a ticket for the 2017 UP assembly elections from Nighasan, had also increased his activities in the constituency. Within a few weeks, a tussle started

between the Mishra family and protesting farmers, especially of the Sikh community, which ultimately snowballed into the violence in Lakhimpur Kheri. ThePrint traces the history of the Mishra father and son. Zila panchayat to Modi ministry The Mishras are a prominent Brahmin family from Banbirpur village in Nighasan block. In Ajay Mishra's college days, he had a massive interest in wrestling. Then, he practiced law before entering politics. He started his political career as a zila panchayat member in 2009 as an independent candidate. In the 2012 assembly elections, Mishra got a BJP ticket to fight from Nighasan, and he defeated Samajwadi Party's R.A. Usmani by a margin of over 22,000 votes. He won the Lok Sabha elections from Lakhimpur Kheri in 2014 and 2019. Mishra was close to former UP minister and senior BJP leader Ram Kumar Verma, who also hailed from the Lakhimpur Kheri district. Verma, who died in 2018, was considered his 'political guru', and because of this, Mishra got support of the Kurmi community in 2012. "Verma backed him in the zila panchayat elections in 2009,

and later helped him in the 2012 elections too," said a BJP source. Pradeep Gupta, a district BJP functionary who oversees Nighasan, told ThePrint: "Ajay Mishra is a highly popular face, and on an average, every single day, he conducts some programme or other in the district to ensure he remains connected with the people. He meets people regularly and also holds janta darshan every week. And he believes in delivering justice on the spot. People come with their complaints and he gets them addressed immediately. Whenever he meets any party worker, he immediately stops the car and addresses them by name. This is a way of giving respect to every worker. He takes immense care of the workers." Nighasan resident Sunil Singh, meanwhile, said of Ajay Mishra: "Even if he can't help financially, he manages things politically, so in that sense, he helps people. There have been many instances in our area where he personally intervened to help the people and which is why he has been given such support." 'Management skills, short temper' A party functionary in Lakhimpur Kheri told ThePrint on the

condition of anonymity that while Ajay Mishra doesn't have a good rapport with many in the local unit, his "management skills" have given him a strong hold on it. "He neither comes from an RSS background nor is a ground-level party worker. He has been with our party for less than 10 years. He got the ticket because the party was looking for a Brahmin face, and he is financially very sound," the functionary said. People in his constituency also know Ajay Mishra as a short-tempered politician. A source close to him said he gets annoyed easily. A resident witnessed Mishra lose his cool with a village head from Palia block, who had come to one of his janta darbars with a problem. "The village head ran away, but later Mishra said 'I will do his work, but it's necessary to teach them a lesson to keep these guys under control'," the resident claimed. On 23 September, during a public meeting, he got annoyed with a protester, and a video of the incident went viral. He could be heard saying: "Why has the farmers' protest not got attention in Lakhimpur? Because there are only 10-15

people protesting against the laws. If the farm laws were so bad, the protest would have caught on. I would say 'sudhar jao, nahin to do minute mein sudhaar denge' (mend your ways, else I'll do it in two minutes) to these farmers." This statement was purportedly what provoked the farmers to stage Sunday's protest. Wrestling enthusiast Ajay Mishra has had brushes with the wrong side of the law too, and has the image of a strongman in the area. The first case against him was registered in 1990, sections 323 (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt), 324 (voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means) and 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace) of the Indian Penal Code. Then, in 1996, a 'history sheet' was opened in his name at Tikoniya police station, but closed after a few months. In 2000, he became a topic of discussion locally when he was named in the murder case of 23-year-old Prabhat Gupta, who was shot dead in the Tikoniya area of Lakhimpur Kheri. During the hearing of this

case, Ajay Mishra was shot at in court, injuring him, but the shooter was never identified or nabbed.

He was acquitted in 2004, but the family of Gupta filed an appeal in the Allahabad High Court, and the case is still sub-judice.

Prabhat's brother Rajiv Gupta told ThePrint: "My brother was murdered and a case was registered and my father fought it in court. The case was filed in 2000, but my father passed away, and till today, I am fighting that case."

He went on to allege: "Whatever tricks and games they played at that time, they are doing the same in this farmers' protest case. They are getting new witnesses ready who will speak on their behalf; they are trying to twist the entire narrative. I hope justice will be delivered in this case. I also hope that the entire case is investigated under the supervision of the Supreme Court."

Trying to push son

Ajay Mishra's son Ashish looks after the family business of a rice mill and petrol pumps in

Lakhimpur Kheri district. It is no secret that he aims to become an MLA from the Nighasan seat, but was denied a ticket by the BJP in 2017.

Soon after his father retained the Lakhimpur Kheri seat in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, Ashish started organising public meetings in the constituency to capture their attention. And since the senior Mishra became a minister, he started pushing Ashish as the main speaker in public meetings.

According to a local Samajwadi Party leader who did not wish

to be named, Ajay Mishra tried hard to get a ticket for Ashish but did not succeed. "There was a lot of talk about his son getting a ticket. But at the last minute, he was unable to secure it. He was then hoping that Ashish would be able to contest the 2022 elections. His son also used to attend a number of his programmes and conducted his own too," the leader said.

A source close to the family told ThePrint that after winning in 2019, Ajay Mishra's aims have included "becoming the BJP's Brahmin face and getting a

ticket for his son". Ashish Mishra was hopeful of bagging a ticket for the 2022 UP polls, and had also started campaigning informally. A few posters were put up in the Nighasan area that read 'Yuvaon ki pukaar, Monu Bhaiya abki baar (the youth are calling for Monu Bhaiya this time)'.

"The entire controversy has now jeopardised the minister's plan. It is quite difficult now for him to get a ticket for his son. He is right now concentrating on saving his own ministership," said a party functionary, requesting anonymity.-

'Will anyone care about a mere driver's life?': Lakhimpur driver worked for Ajay Mishra for 6 years

A new video clip has shown that the three vehicles that rammed into protesting farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri on October 3 had no intention of slowing down for the crowd. It is alleged that Ashish Mishra, the son of union minister Ajay Kumar Mishra, was in one of these vehicles.

One of the vehicles was a Mahindra Thar. The video footage showed a man in a pale yellow shirt in the driver's seat. The Thar was the first vehicle in the convoy to run over the farmers at 4 pm that day.

Ajay Kumar Mishra later confirmed that the Thar belonged to him and is registered under his family's name.

On the same day at around 2.15 pm, Ashish Mishra gave a speech at a wrestling match in



his father's village of Banveerpur, around two km from where the incident took place. Eyewitnesses showed Newsland video footage of the speech.



Standing a little away from Mishra is a man in a pale yellow shirt.

This man is Hari Om, 31, a driver who had been working for the minister for the last six years. His identity was confirmed by his family. But given that the pictures are extremely blurry, it's hard to ascertain for sure whether the person in the first video is Hari Om too.

Hari Om died during the violence that broke out in Lakhimpur Kheri after the convoy of vehicles mowed down the farmers. Seven others died that day: four farmers, two BJP workers, and a journalist.

A day later, the minister made a phone call to Hari Om's cousin Rajnikanth Mishra. According to Rajnikanth, the minister said, "Don't worry. I'll give you Rs 1 lakh when your sister has to get married."

At Hari Om's home in Parsehra

village, his father now lies on a charpoy. He has no idea that his son is now dead.

The incident

On September 30, Hari Om left his family's home in Parsehra. It's a two-bedroom brick house, with three charpoys in the courtyard alongside a few plastic chairs, utensils and an earthen stove. Ten people live here, including Hari Om's parents and his three sisters, their kids and his brother, and their poverty is evident.

Hari Om himself lived in Ajay Kumar Mishra's house in Banveerpur, around 93 km away, coming home once a week with medicines and money for his family.

At Hari Om's house in Parsehra area of Lakhimpur Kheri, a blue portable commode chair stood in the corner. Three charpoys lie in the courtyard along with some clothes, cow dung cakes, a few plastic chairs, utensils and

an earthen stove.

At around 10 am on October 3, Hari Om called his mother and promised her that he would bring back medicines for his father. That was the day he attended the wrestling match with Ashish Mishra, as confirmed by video footage from eyewitnesses.

At 6 pm, his family tried to call him but his phone was switched off.

The family spent nine hours frantically trying to locate him. The panic first set in when Hari Om's uncle informed the family that violence was taking place and Ashish Mishra's name was involved. "Our uncle saw it on the TV and told us," said Maheshwari Mishra, Hari Om's sister.

That's when they began frantically watching TV for updates and making calls to whoever they thought could help. Finally, at 1 am on October 4, Rajnikanth Mishra and Hari Om's uncle went to the district hospital at Lakhimpur Kheri town. There, Rajnikanth recognised his cousin's body. Later that morning, Rajnikanth called Hari Om's mother and told her that her son was dead. His body was taken to his family's home at 11 am. "Hari Om dropped out of school very early. He can barely read," Maheshwari said. "Papa's health deteriorated when Hari was very young and so he had to stop studying and feed the family. But he made sure that I would study. He really wanted at least one of us to be educated."

His mother told Newslaundry that Hari Om was her strength. "I myself have trouble walking and cannot move much," she said. "Hari Om was the one that ran this house."

Anger and desperation

His family believes there is no way Hari Om could have run over the protesters.

"My son was a very gentle man," said his mother. "He worked hard, he was principled, he didn't drink and stopped other people from smoking if he could. He could not have done what I saw in those videos."

In the six years that Hari Om has worked for Ajay Kumar Mishra, the minister has never visited their house. "He did come for our sister's wedding once," said Rajnikanth.

Ashish Mishra has not spoken to the family since the incident. The minister told the family he would visit them on October 5 but never showed up. On October 4, Rajnikanth spoke to him on the phone where the minister promised Rs 1 lakh for Maheshwari's wedding.

Did the family ask the minister for help with their father's medicine or better living

conditions? Rajnikanth replied, "Why will anyone turn around between Sikhs and Hindus. I will



and care about a mere driver's life?"

Hari Om's mother repeatedly insisted that her son should not be called a BJP worker. She explained that while the family is an ardent supporter of the BJP, Hari Om chose to work for the minister simply because he desperately needed a job.

Meanwhile, the family is very angry with the farmers' protest. "This is not a farmers' protest. We are also farmers, we're not protesting right?" said

not call them farmers."

Newslaundry reached out to both Ajay Kumar Mishra and his son Ashish Mishra. "Minister is busy and his son is with him," said Amit Mishra, Ajay Mishra's personal assistant.

'He spent most of his time with Ashish Mishra'

Hari Om worked as Ajay Kumar Mishra's personal driver for about five years. When the minister was appointed a different driver in the past year, Hari Om took

over as the Mishra family's driver.

"He spent most of his time with Ashish Mishra and helped their family with household things," said Rajnikanth.

Hari Om was introduced to Ajay Kumar Mishra through his uncle, a local BJP worker. Rajnikanth said Hari Om's family is "very poor" and he also has three sisters to look after. His father is unwell and bedridden, and his medicines are also "very expensive".

"That's why he took up this job," Rajnikanth said. "It was not

because of his political leanings."

Hari Om earned around Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000 per month. He has a younger brother, Sri Ram, who would stay home and look after their father. "He needs full-time care," Sri Ram explained, "so I decided to stay home and look after him while my brother worked." Of his three sisters, two are married while the youngest, 23-year-old Maheshwari, has completed her undergraduate degree - the only one among the five siblings to do so.



Event in which MoS Ajay Kumar Mishra was chief guest put on hold

Mishra's son Ashish Mishra and others are accused of running over farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri on Sunday, following which a case of murder has been registered by the Uttar Pradesh police

A Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) event, in which union minister of state for home Ajay Kumar Mishra was invited as the chief guest on Thursday, has been put on hold, people familiar with the development said. He was to attend '7th national conference of heads of prisons of all states/union territories', organised by BPRD at its headquarters in Mahipalpur, as the chief guest. However, a BPRD spokesperson said on Wednesday that the October 7 program is 'on hold', without giving any specific reasons.

Mishra's son Ashish Mishra and others are accused of running over farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri on Sunday, following which a case of murder has been registered by the Uttar Pradesh police.



Eight people, including four farmers and a local journalist Raman Kashyap, died on Sunday in violence that broke out after at least one car, allegedly driven by the minister's son, hit

protesting farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri, prompting an angry crowd to burn two vehicles and widen their agitation.

Opposition parties have demanded the sacking of Ajay

Mishra as union minister while farmers have sought the arrest of father-son duo.

The minister has defended himself saying he or his son was not present at the spot on

Sunday.

Several opposition leaders including Priyanka Gandhi tried to make their way to the Lakhimpur Kheri but were prevented from doing so.





Farmers Run Over In UP, Murder Charges Among 10 Big Developments

Lakhimpur Kheri violence: Minister Ajay Mishra has denied that his son, Ashish Mishra, was linked to the violence.

A murder case has been filed against Union Minister of State Ajay Kumar Mishra's son for allegedly running a car over protesting farmers in Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri. Opposition leaders have been barred from visiting the area.

Here are the top 10 developments on this big story:

1. The violence erupted as a group of protesting farmers in Tikonka area of Kheri tried to block Union Minister Ajay Kumar Mishra and Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya from visiting. The protesters were upset over a recent speech by Mr Mishra.

2. The farmers claimed the violence broke out after a car in the minister's convoy ran over protesters. Visuals from the area showed arson and vehicles set on fire. Eight people, including four farmers, were killed in the incident.

3. A retired High Court judge will now probe the violence in Lakhimpur Kheri, the Uttar Pradesh government has announced. The state government has also announced that it will pay a compensation

of ₹ 45 lakh and a government job to families of farmers killed in violence. The injured will be given ₹ 10 lakh.

4. A murder case has been

filed against Minister Ajay Kumar Mishra's son, Ashish Mishra. He has also denied that his son was linked to the violence. "My son wasn't present at the spot. There were miscreants who attacked workers with sticks and

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to Akhilesh Yadav - have been stopped from visiting the area. The Uttar Pradesh government has requested the Lucknow

by the Uttar Pradesh police in the early hours of morning and she was not shown any papers either. "They did not show me any papers. If they do not give me any papers, then I will call it kidnapping," the Congress leader told NDTV in an exclusive interview from a guest house in Sitapur where she was detained.

8. Mobile internet services have been suspended in parts of the violence-hit district, where restrictions under CrPC section 144, which prohibits assembly of four or more people, has also been imposed, according to officials.

9. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, appealing for calm, said he was "saddened" by the violence in his state and promised strict action against those responsible.

10. The UP Police took to Twitter early on Monday to describe the violent incident as "unfortunate" and said eight casualties have been reported till now as per the district administration.



filed against Minister Ajay Kumar Mishra's son, Ashish Mishra. The protesting farmers have alleged that the car was driven by the Union Minister's son Ashish. Several other people have also been named in the First Information Report (FIR).

5. Minister Ajay Mishra says he is not aware about any FIR against his son Ashish

swords. Had my son been there, he wouldn't have come out alive," Mr Mishra, the junior Home Minister, was quoted as saying by news agency ANI. "My son was present at the venue of the (Deputy Chief Minister's) event... all through, I was accompanying the deputy chief minister," he said.

6. Opposition leaders - from

airport authority not to allow the arrival of Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and Punjab's Deputy CM Sukhinder S Randhawa. The BSP, having been denied visitation rights, took it in its stride and decided to wait it out.

7. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said today she was pushed and manhandled while being arrested

Maneka, Varun, Swamy out

Scindia, Smriti inducted into BJP national executive

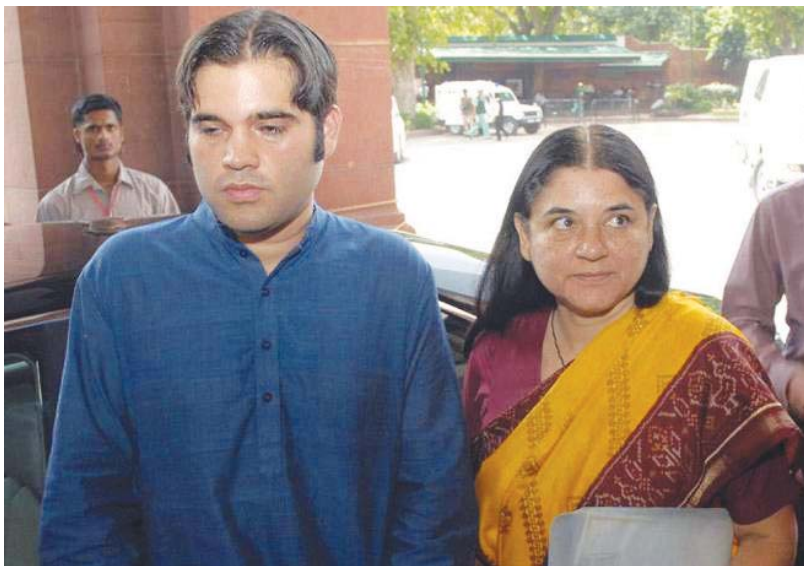
Lok Sabha members Maneka Gandhi and her son, Varun Gandhi, were dropped from the Bharatiya Janata Party's national executive, while Union Ministers Smriti Irani and Jyotiraditya Scindia were among those inducted into the 80-member decision-making body that was announced on Thursday.

The list was announced hours after Mr. Gandhi said via a tweet on Thursday morning that the video of the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, where a group of farmers was on Sunday allegedly mowed down by cars in Union Minister of State Ajay Kumar Mishra's convoy, was "crystal clear".

"...Protestors cannot be silenced through murder. There has to be accountability for the innocent blood of farmers that has been spilled and justice must be delivered before a message of arrogance and cruelty enters the minds of every farmer..." Mr. Gandhi tweeted.

On Monday, Mr. Gandhi had written to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath seeking action in the matter.

BJP president Jagat Prasad Nadda appointed the 80 members, which included Prime Minister Narendra Modi; senior leaders L.K. Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi; and former party presidents and current Union Ministers



Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh and Nitin Gadkari. In a statement, the party said 50 special invitees and 179 permanent invitees, including Chief Ministers, Deputy Chief Ministers, national spokespersons, presidents of national wings and state unit leadership, would also be a part of the national executive committee.

Meeting on Nov. 7?

Since Mr. Nadda took over as party president in January 2020, this was the first appointment of the

national executive by him. According to sources, a meeting of the national executive, which was last held in 2019 during Mr. Shah's tenure as party president, could be held on November 7.

Among the national executive members dropped by Mr. Nadda are former Union Ministers Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Vijay Goel and Dr. C.P. Thakur; current Union Ministers Rao Inderjit Singh, Ashwani Kumar Choubey and Prahlad Singh Patel; Rajya Sabha member Subramanian Swamy.

Some new entrants to the party have been included in the national executive, including Mr. Scindia and Dinesh Trivedi, a former Trinamool Congress MP who joined the BJP in the run-up to the West Bengal Assembly

elections earlier this year. Prominent BJP campaigners and candidates in the Bengal polls like actor Mithun Chakraborty and MP Swapan Dasgupta have also been included in the national executive.

Union Ministers G.Kishan Reddy, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Hardeep Singh Puri, V. Muraleedharan, Bhupender Yadav, Anurag Thakur, Meenakshi Lekhi and S. Jaishankar are among those in the national executive.

Eight Killed as Tensions Around India's Farm Protests Worsen

The police are investigating whether the son of one of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ministers was in a vehicle that slammed into protesters.

(Farmers and onlookers gathering on Monday after eight people were killed the day before in an incident involving protesting farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri district of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Credit...Agence France-Presse —

Getty Images

By Emily Schmall, (for NY Times)

NEW DELHI — Eight people were killed on Sunday in an incident that protesting farmers said was the fault of the son of a prominent Indian leader, as nearly yearlong demonstrations against a government revamp of the country's agriculture laws threatened to enter a more volatile phase. The police have said they are investigating the deaths of four farmers and four others in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Protest leaders said a vehicle plowed into demonstrators as part of a convoy traveling past the site. The police said they were investigating whether Ashish Mishra was in the car that struck the protesters, as the protest leaders have claimed. He is the son of Ajay Kumar Mishra, India's minister of state for home affairs.

Ashish Mishra told Indian TV news channels on Monday that the allegations against him were "baseless."

Reaching the authorities became difficult after the state police temporarily shut down internet service in the area, in an apparent effort to calm tensions.

The incident has injected fresh political vitriol into protests that have plagued New Delhi, India's capital, and the surrounding regions since late November. Huge numbers of north Indian farmers have occupied protest camps on

the outskirts of the capital in demonstrations against a trio of market-friendly farm laws that they say will put many of them out of business.

The laws, which have been suspended by the country's supreme court, are intended to overhaul a system that economists call wasteful and ineffective in meeting the country's needs. But many farmers fear that the overhaul will undermine government-run markets for grain, leading to plunging prices. A majority of people in India depend on agriculture for their livelihood, and the country lacks job growth in other areas to take up the slack. Police officials did not immediately confirm details about who was killed during the Sunday incident. Local news reports identified three of the others killed as members of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, and the fourth as a freelance journalist working for a TV news network that is sympathetic to the ruling party.

The incident drew further attention after the Uttar Pradesh police detained Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, a leader of India's main opposition Congress party who oversees the party's activities in Uttar Pradesh. She was detained early Monday after her convoy, taking her to visit the families of the farmers who were killed, was stopped by the Uttar Pradesh police.

Ms. Gandhi's visit to the area came against the backdrop of an upcoming state election in Uttar Pradesh, India's most-populous state, which is seen as a bellwether for the political fortunes of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Uttar Pradesh was hit hard by the coronavirus, but its leader, Yogi Adityanath, has been a vocal proponent of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist agenda, and has worked hard to fire up the party's Hindu base.

"Either show me a warrant for why you are detaining me, or I will go from this place," Ms. Gandhi told a police officer in footage shared by her party. "There is law in this country, even if there is none in your state." On Monday afternoon, Ms. Gandhi told the Indian TV news channel NDTV that she had been arrested on charges of unlawful assembly.

The deadly incident and the arrest of Ms. Gandhi, the great-granddaughter of India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, are likely to galvanize a new phase of the protests. Worsening tensions could force Mr. Modi's government and farmer leaders to revive negotiations that stalled this spring amid a catastrophic second wave of Covid-19.

Farmers continued sit-ins and gatherings through the pandemic and harsh monsoon rains.

The tensions have repeatedly flared into violence. The worst incident took place in January, when farmers stormed New Delhi with thousands of tractors and broke through police barricades. In return, the government sent forces to try to arrest farmer leaders and clear the tents where they had been camped out for months. However, the sprawling protest camps remained. The protests intensified last month in the state of Haryana, next door to Uttar Pradesh, after a local official was captured on video ordering the police to use violence to break up one gathering. The state authorities deployed additional troops and switched off the internet, but the tensions eased only after the government agreed to investigate the official's conduct. The incident on Sunday took place in the Uttar Pradesh district of Lakhimpur Kheri after a series of run-ins in recent weeks between protesters carrying black flags and the elder Mr. Mishra and his supporters.

Explained: Who is Ajay Mishra, Union MoS at centre of Lakhimpur Kheri incident?

Ajay Mishra's induction into the crucial Home Ministry came at a time when every party is fighting for the Brahmin vote ahead of the UP polls, and BJP especially is fighting allegations of anti-Brahmin bias in the state.

Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra (Teni), who is at the centre of the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, was inducted into the Union Cabinet recently.

Mishra, the lone Brahmin face from Uttar Pradesh to find a place in the Cabinet during the reshuffle exercise, is a two-term MP from Lakhimpur Kheri.

Mishra's induction into the crucial Home Ministry came at a time when every party is fighting for the Brahmin vote ahead of the UP polls, with the BJP especially fighting allegations of having anti-Brahmin bias in the state.

Born in Lakhimpur Kheri on September 25, 1960, Mishra was educated at Christ Church College and DAV College, Kanpur. He holds BSc and LLB degrees.

Mishra first became an MP was in 2014, winning by 1 lakh votes over his nearest BSP rival. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, he doubled his victory margin, to over 2 lakh votes, against an SP candidate.

Party leaders told The Indian Express earlier that Mishra used to be an office-bearer in the BJP's Lakhimpur Kheri unit, before winning as an MLA from the Nighasan Assembly segment of Lakhimpur Kheri constituency in



2012.

Since 2014 when he was elected for his first term as an MP, Mishra has been a member of several parliamentary committees, including Standing Committee on Rural Development, Consultative Committee, Ministry of Skill Development

And Entrepreneurship, Committee of Parliament on official language, Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public

Distribution, Consultative Committee, Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

On Sunday, four farmers were among eight persons killed in Lakhimpur Kheri after a convoy of three SUVs, including one owned by Mishra, hit a group of farm protesters leading to a clash. The farm leaders claimed Ajay Mishra's son Ashish was driving one of the SUVs.

On Monday, the police registered

an FIR on charges of murder against Ashish.

Mishra has said that his son was not present on the spot at the time of the incident.

Speaking in his son's defence, the MoS had earlier said, "We aren't aware of how the incident happened. Based on information and videos, it's visible that the driver was killed after being pulled out of the car. If it were my son, he'd have been dead.

It's impossible to get out of a place where a car ran over people amid a gathering of thousands."

For the first time since the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, Mishra attended office in the Ministry of Home Affairs at North Block on Wednesday.

He also met Home Minister Amit Shah for about 40 minutes and discussed the situation arising out of Sunday's incident and the possible ways to tackle it, sources said.

While in his office he was largely accompanied by his personal secretary and interacted with his staff. He did not hold any official meetings," a home ministry official told The Indian Express. Meanwhile, a media invite for an event, scheduled for Thursday in which Mishra was the chief guest and was supposed to deliver a speech, has been "cancelled".

A media officer for the Bureau of Police Research and Development told PTI that the programme was being put on "hold and the invitation may be treated as cancelled". The event is related to the two-day 7th national conference of heads of prisons of all states and Union Territories.

Union Minister Ajay Kumar Mishra no stranger to controversies

The mowing down of farmers in the Lakhimpur Kheri incident, in which his son Ashish Mishra is accused of murder, is not the first burning controversy in the life of Ajay Kumar Mishra, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs. Before he entered State-level electoral politics, Mr. Mishra was in the year 2000 accused of murdering a youth leader of the Samajwadi Party in Tikonja. A local sessions court acquitted Mr. Mishra and three others in March 2004 in the murder case of Prabhat Gupta alias Raju.

A criminal appeal filed by Prabhat Gupta's brother Rajeev Gupta is pending before the Allahabad High Court, which had in March 2018 reserved the judgment in the appeal, but since it could not

be delivered later that year, Gupta's family prayed for it to be heard again. The last hearing in the case was on February 5, 2019.

"If justice was prompt, then justice would not have deviated somewhere," Mr. Rajeev Gupta, who is still pursuing the legal case, told The Hindu. On September 7, a month before the incident in Tikonja in which eight persons were killed, a Division Bench of Justices Rajan Roy and Suresh Kumar Gupta directed the Uttar Pradesh government to submit a report and restore the security which was earlier granted to Rajeev Gupta till it disposed the writ petition filed by him, which was kept pending.

Mr. Gupta had approached court



alleging that he faced a threat to his life, submitting that the accused in the murder case of his brother was not just an MP but also a Minister in the Government of India. Mr. Gupta is the pairokar of one of the witnesses in the case, Sanjeev

Gupta, who is also his brother. Mr. Gupta had told the court that the district authorities in Kheri did not pay heed to his request for providing security and that he did not expect fair play as the accused is an influential Minister, according to the High Court's order.

Though the lower court acquitted Mr. Mishra, who was a vice-president of a district cooperative bank at the time the allegation against him was made, Mr. Gupta maintains his charge 21 years after his brother was shot dead on July 8, 2000 and also claims there were several attempts made during this period to deter him from fighting the case.

"My father died fighting the case.

My brother was shot in his temple. Why else would we fight this case till today?" asked Mr. Gupta, who is now associated with Shivpal Yadav's party.

According to the FIR lodged in 2000 and the revision petition filed by his father Santosh Gupta in 2004 in the Allahabad High Court, it was alleged that Prabhat Gupta and Mr. Mishra had rivalry over a recently held panchayat election and on July 8, 2000 when Prabhat Gupta was going to his shop from his house, he was fired at on his temple and between his chest and abdomen. He fell on the ground and died, said the revision petition. The family accused Mr. Mishra and three others.



Explained

How to keep your cryptocurrency investments safe

Contrary to popular belief and media propaganda that hacking, thievery, and losses are a part of the cryptocurrency market, there are multiple steps that cryptocurrency investors can take to secure their holdings.

It is no secret that the cryptocurrency market is flooded with newbies that are flocking en masse to make some money off it. They invest in all sorts of crypto-coins and Initial Coin Offerings (ICOs), making the market accessible to all and in extension, become truly peer-to-peer.

Anybody with an internet connection, anywhere in the world can buy, sell and hold cryptocurrencies and benefit from their investments in terms of returns. While this is great for all participants of the market, there are a lot of newbies that don't fully understand the workings of the market, community, and hence; the ecosystem. They fall prey to hacks and thefts because they are unaware of just how susceptible their crypto holdings are to hackers and thieves. And incur major losses in the process.

Contrary to popular belief and media propaganda that hacking, thievery, and losses are a part of the cryptocurrency market, there are multiple steps that cryptocurrency investors can take to secure their holdings.

Here is a list of 4 such practices every cryptocurrency investor should inculcate in their day-to-day to make sure that their bases are covered.

USE AN OFFLINE WALLET

One of the most common mistakes every newbie makes while entering the world of cryptocurrency trading is using an online wallet service, often provided by an exchange. This is the easiest wallet to set up and use because it is already on the exchange, but also the most susceptible to hacks.

The reason for this is all cryptocurrency holdings on an exchange are centrally stored and hence form a honey-pot of coins. Making it attractive to hackers and hence making the users victims of them.

The most foolproof way of storing your cryptocurrency assets is in an offline wallet. Offline wallets can be operated either through your desktop, mobile, or specifically dedicated hardware.

USE MULTIPLE LEVEL AUTHENTICATION

When you take your coins off an online wallet, what you're doing is taking control of their management and safety. Most online wallets are password protected that can easily be hacked and passwords can be stolen too. So when you do use an offline wallet, make sure there are multiple levels of authentication before being able to access your holdings.

The advantage of having multiple levels is that it takes

longer to breach and hence the incentive for hacking is lost.

REMEMBER YOUR PRIVATE KEYS

If you've done the following up to now, the biggest risk to your cryptocurrency assets and holdings is you. Forgetting passwords and pin codes is something we all do and there is a probability that you will do the same for this.

So backing up your passwords is a good idea. And having a hard copy of your private keys and passcodes in a safety deposit box, as dramatic as it sounds, may not be the worst idea.

DIVERSIFY

In the cryptocurrency market, along with the high levels of volatility, there is the added risk of a company, that runs a particular crypto coin, shutting down because of bankruptcy or other reasons.

So when investing in crypto coins, it is a good idea to have a good intersection of everything that the market has to offer. This way, you've made promising investments in all the market's top players, thereby increasing your chances of making a decent return on investment.

Since 1950, 3,000 paedophiles operated in French Catholic Church, says report

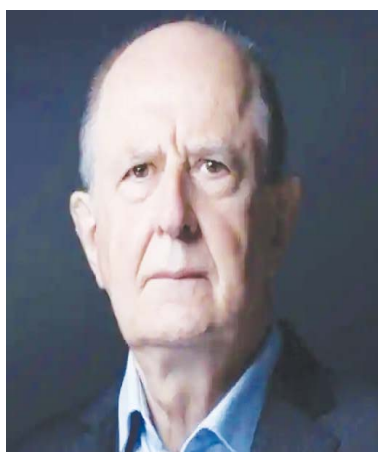
Since 1950, around two-and-a-half years of research, which was based on 3,000 paedophiles seem to have operated in Catholic Church in France.

The striking revelation has been made by the head of an independent commission, which is investigating the scandal, to AFP news agency, days ahead of the release of its report.

Due to be released on Tuesday, the report has been made after

archives, and interviews with witnesses. Commission's chairman Jean-Marc Sauve, said, the research found between 2,900 and 3,200 paedophile priests or other church members. Sauve added that it was "a minimum estimate".

Sauve, who is also a senior



French civil servant, said, the report runs into 2,500 pages. It looks to quantify both the number of offenders and victims.

The report looked into "the mechanisms, notably institutional and cultural ones" within the Church, which allowed paedophiles to function. It will also offer 45 proposals.

In 2018, the independent

commission was set up by the Bishops' Conference of France (CEF). It was formed after a number of scandals shook the Church in France and worldwide.

The commission constitutes 22 legal professionals, doctors, historians, sociologists and theologians. Its objective was to investigate allegations of child sex abuse by clerics since 1950s.

Extreme heat caused by urbanisation, global warming threatening cities: Study

Rapid population growth and global warming have helped in increasing exposure to extreme heat in cities, a study has found.

Rapid population growth and global warming are increasing exposure to extreme heat in cities, aggravating health problems and making moving to urban areas less beneficial for the world's poor, according to a study released Monday.

The rise is affecting nearly a quarter of the world's population, said the report published in the "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences."

In recent decades, hundreds of millions of people have moved from rural areas to cities where temperatures are generally higher because of surfaces such as asphalt which trap heat and a lack of vegetation.

Scientists studied the maximum

daily heat and humidity in more than 13,000 cities from 1983 to 2016.

Using the so-called "wet-bulb globe temperature" scale, a measure that takes into account heat and humidity, they defined extreme heat as 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit). The researchers then compared weather data with statistics on the cities' population over the same 33-year period.

They calculated the number of days of extreme heat in a particular year by the population of the city that year to come up with a definition called person-days.

The authors found that the number of person-days in which

city dwellers were exposed went from 40 billion per year in 1983 to 119 billion in 2016.

Cascade Tuholske at Columbia University's Earth Institute, a lead author of the study, said the rise "increases morbidity and mortality."

"It impacts people's ability to work, and results in lower economic output. It exacerbates pre-existing health conditions," he said in a statement.

Population growth accounted for two-thirds of the exposure spike, with actual warming temperatures contributing a third, although proportions varied from city to city, they wrote.

Bangladesh's capital Dhaka was the worst-affected city, seeing an

increase of 575 million person-days of extreme heat over the study period.

That was largely attributable to its population soaring from around four million in 1983 to around 22 million today.

Other big cities to show similar trends were Shanghai, Guangzhou, Yangon, Dubai, Hanoi and Khartoum as well as various cities in Pakistan, India and the Arabian Peninsula.

Major cities that saw around half of their exposure causing by a warming climate included Baghdad, Cairo, Kuwait City, Lagos, Kolkata and Mumbai.

The authors said the patterns they found in Africa and South Asia, "may crucially limit the

urban poor's ability to realize the economic gains associated with urbanization."

They added that "sufficient investment, humanitarian intervention, and government support" would be needed to counteract the negative impact.

In the United States, some forty major cities saw exposure grow "rapidly," mainly in the Gulf Coast states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

The study was carried out by researchers at New York's Columbia, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, the University of Arizona at Tuscon and the University of California, Santa Barbara.

In less than a decade, global warming destroyed 14% of the world's corals: Report

According to the largest ever coral health survey, destructive dynamite fishing, pollution -- but mostly global warming -- has wiped out 14 per cent of the world's coral reefs from 2009 to 2018. This report titled "Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2020", is based on nearly two million data points gathered from 12,000 sites in 73 countries, spanning over 40 years. It's the first survey of its kind since 2008 and the sixth global survey of its kind. The

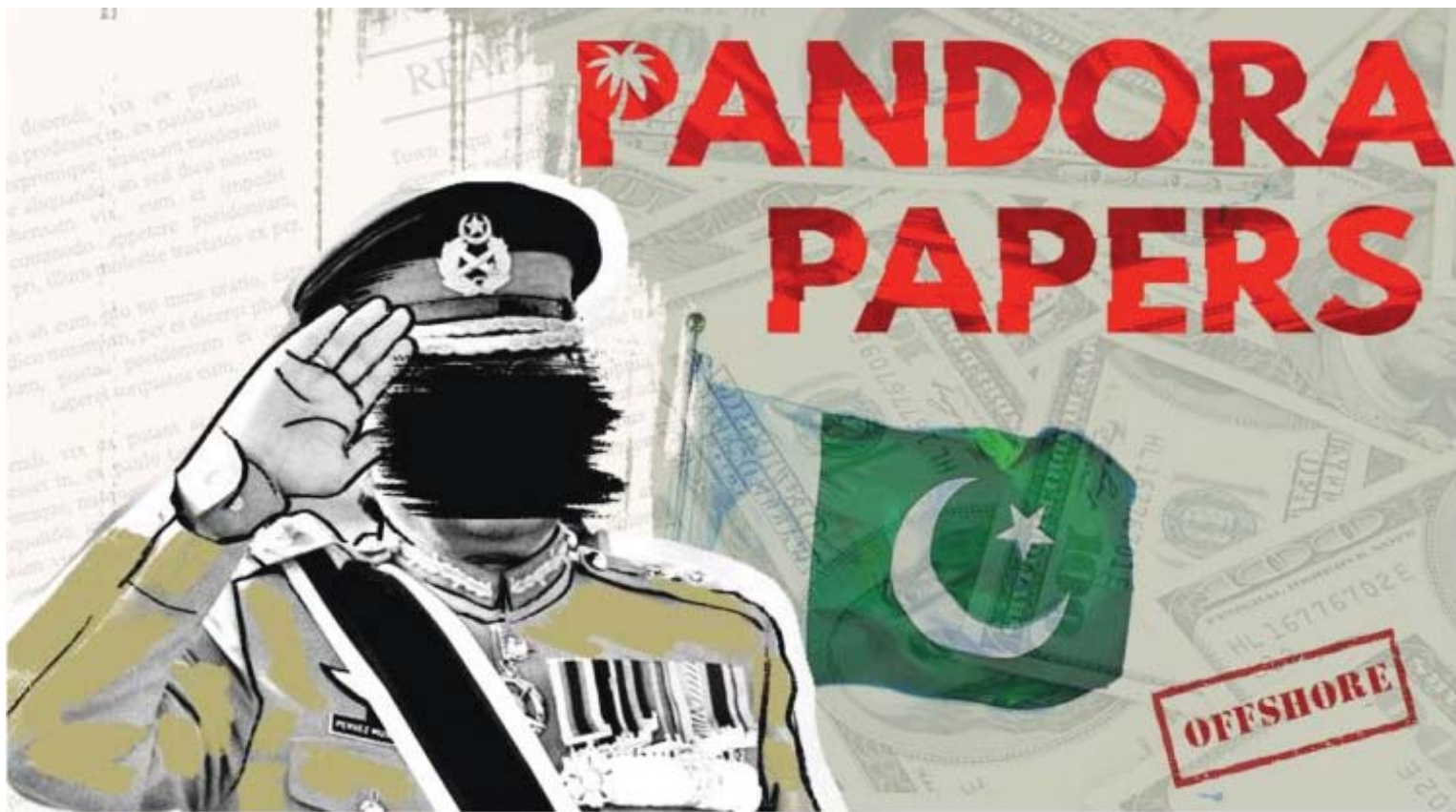
report compares healthy live coral with algae-infested areas, a sign of coral distress, to determine the change over time. Coral loss varied by region from 2009 to 2018, ranging from five per cent in East Asia to 95 per cent in the Eastern Tropical Pacific. According to more than 300 scientists in the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, coral reefs in South Asia and the Pacific, the Arabian Peninsula, and off the coast of Australia were the hardest hit. "Climate change is

the biggest threat to the world's reefs," co-author Paul Hardisty, CEO of the Australian Institute of Marine Science, said in a statement. Almost 90 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions is absorbed by the ocean, shielding land surfaces but generating huge, long-lasting marine heatwaves that are forcing many coral species past the edge of tolerance. As a result of a single "bleaching event" in 1998, eight per cent of all corals were destroyed. Coral reefs cover less



than 0.2 per cent of the ocean's surface, yet they are home to almost 25 per cent of all marine animals and plants. They also

provide a huge range of benefits to billions of people everywhere, including jobs, and protection from storms and shoreline erosion.



I am offshore Pakistani General.

My establishment beat India in Pandora Papers

Idropped in just to inform you that I also own an offshore property like many of my fellow patriotic brothers. You can now call me your Offshore General. How I reached here is no mere coincidence, I planned my wealth before my birth. You all might have been in the womb, but I was in the Pandora box, though I never beat my dhindora.

People have been talking a lot about how my bro Shafaatullah Shah, who was General Pervez Musharraf's aide in a previous life, got his \$1.2million-apartment in London by dealing with the Indians. Let me set the record

straight: One, the transaction only happened because Musharraf planned to make Mughal-e-Azam 2.0 with himself as Saleem and Aishwariya Rai as Anarkali. Two, Dawood Ibrahim was late on his monthly house rent in Karachi, so obviously the D-company had to pay. As you know, there aren't any free lunches, except for me.

While Pandora Papers named another of my retired fauji bud, Raja Nadir Pervez, for doing arms business with India, it actually brought tears to my heart, if not my eyes. Yes, we Generals want Pakistani citizens to consider

India as their enemy with whom friendship is unthinkable, but you know, my readers, that rule doesn't apply to us. Don't be so naïve. Nadir is actually the nadir of all our careers. Like me, Nadir was also a prisoner of the 1971 war in India and, believe it or not, it was after he experienced Indian hospitality first-hand that the idea of doing business with the enemy struck him. People judged him when, on the repatriation flight, he sold his lota and balti to a museologist.

People say offshore Generals are the tip of the iceberg, but I say we Generals are Rose of Titanic, deal

with it.

The military elite are here Here, I raise my voice for the plight of Generals from other mothers like the ex-Indian military intelligence chief who made it to the Pandora Papers. I, for one, am proud of him, so should India be, which lost to Pakistan in the 'offshore asset expose' by scoring 380 people, compared to our 700. While Pandora Papers editors didn't name me, this is my second disappointment in weeks, first one being the Times 100 most-influential list. Not naming me in the list and giving a spot to Taliban's Mullah Ghani Baradar

**We may say
Indians are our
enemies, but the
Pakistani Generals
well know how
important India is
to our offshore
accounts.**

reeked of immaturity. Now, where is Baradar? He can't even run his home in Afghanistan, let alone the country. I bet not so influential after all.

In another instance of plight alert, I want to mention US General Mark Milley, who, as you know, is my friend too, and I lovingly call him Chili Mili. Now tell me, what wrong did Milley do to be crucified in front of the world? Who is a president in front of a General? Asking Milley why he didn't resign after Afghanistan debacle? As your Twitter General, I take strong exception to this treatment meted out to my brave Chili Mili and I will take revenge from Senator Cotton, who, by the way, makes cotton from my offshore yarns. No more cotton for you, Cotton.

There is a time for jokes, and this isn't one. Unlike this tweet.

I've also read your passionate rumour-mongering on who the new ISI chief is and where the current one is going. Always remember that ex-ISI chief Faiz Hameed might become your "core commander", but it is I who will remain your Crore Commander. Under my able leadership, and with the blessings of Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, who, by the way, has never even heard an Indian song, we shall continue to make ourselves mala-mal.

China wants to tame Internet algorithms. It's all about national security

In this week's Chinascope, we will look at China's Galwan clash propaganda, hidden debt, controlling the algorithms, the investigation against former justice minister and other leading stories.

China over the week

Chinese state media produced a propaganda broadcast on Martyrs' Day remembering the PLA soldiers who died in the Galwan Valley clash on 15 June 2020. Since 2014, China has marked 30 September as Martyrs' Day to remember the Chinese soldiers who fought wars with Japan and Korea in the 1950s.

PLA soldiers visited the frontline of the Galwan Valley in Ladakh, where they sang the Chinese national anthem. The theatrics at the border were supposed to



send a message to India.

In continuation of imposing control on algorithms, the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) has set a three-year timeline to tame the algorithms used across the Internet platforms. The CAC notice is titled "Strengthening the Comprehensive Management of Internet Information

Service Algorithms".

"In three years, gradually establish a comprehensive algorithm security governance system with a sound governance mechanism, a sound supervision system, and a standardized algorithm ecology," says the notice.

The regulation is targeted at Internet companies and has a national security and ideological angle. Beijing justifies the national security argument of the algorithm control by drawing parallel between adherence to Communist Party and its ideology to long term "prosperity" of China. The Chinese Communist Party's internal disciplinary body is investigating former justice minister Fu Zhenghua.

Chinese state media announced Zhenghua's detention for "serious violations

of discipline and law". He became the deputy director of the Social and Legal Affairs Committee of the CPPCC National Committee.

In 2018, he was appointed as the justice minister despite rumours implicating him in corruption scandals. Xi Jinping had trusted Fu with a probe into the former head of internal security Zhou Yongkang in 2013, a case which was most discussed among the anti-corruption movement. The news about the investigation was a top trend on search engine Baidu and social media platform Weibo. This past week, AidData - a research lab at William and Mary University - revealed the increase in Chinese "hidden debt" offered by state-owned banks and state-owned enterprises.

Sensex, Nifty end lower as metal stocks decline. Check top gainers and losers

The Sensex and Nifty 50 ended lower on Wednesday as concerns over rising inflation gripped investors. Check out the top gainers and losers here.

Indian shares slipped on Wednesday as stocks across the board witnessed losses and investor sentiment around the globe soured over sky-high oil prices, which stoked worries about rising inflation.

The NSE Nifty 50 index ended 0.99% lower at 17,646, while the S&P BSE Sensex was down 0.93% at 59,189.73.

World stocks slid and the MSCI world equity index, which tracks shares in 50 countries, fell 0.4%.

Meanwhile, in India, the benchmark indexes eked out gains early in the session, driven by energy stocks. But both indexes flattered between gains and losses as the session progressed and slid 1% each in the afternoon. The Nifty's Energy index, which scaled a record earlier in the day, snapped three sessions of gains and settled 0.45% lower.

"Valuations are at significantly premium levels. Indian markets have been resilient despite negative global cues and markets have finally given into the pressure," said Siddhartha Khemka, head of retail research at Motilal Oswal Securities in Mumbai.

Forty-one of the 50 stocks on the Nifty 50 index settled in negative territory, led by a near 4% drop in aluminium and copper manufacturer Hidalgo Industries and SBI Life Insurance Co. All of Nifty's major sub-indexes closed lower, with the metals index declining the most to settle 2.98% lower. Shares of Zee Entertainment Enterprises closed down 1.6% after it said it had filed a suit in the Bombay High Court to declare a requisition notice sent by its top investors as invalid.

State-run oil and gas explorer Oil and Natural Gas Corp held on to gains and closed higher for a fourth straight

session on the back of high oil prices as expensive crude tends to benefit companies like ONGC.

Meanwhile, domestic investors await the outcome of the central bank's policy meeting where it is widely expected to keep the repo rate unchanged on Friday.

Top gainers and losers on Sensex:

Gainers % Change

HDFCBANK +1.24%

HDFC +0.26%

BAJFINANCE +0.18%

Losers % Change

INDUSINDBK -3.38%

TATASTEEL -2.81%

BAJAJ-AUTO -2.39%

SUNPHARMA -2.39%

HCLTECH -2.25%

Govt permits 100% FDI in telecom sector

The government has permitted 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) under automatic route in the telecom services sector. In a press note issued on Tuesday, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) said foreign investment in telecom services will be subject to the condition of Press Note 3 of 2020.

As per the Press Note 3 of 2020 shared by the DPIIT, a "non-resident entity can invest in India, subject to the FDI Policy except in those sectors/activities which are prohibited. However, an entity of a country,

which shares land border with India or where the beneficial owner of investment into India is situated in or is a citizen of any such country, can invest only under the Government route".

The DPIIT said cases that require prior government approval under the provisions of Press Note 3 will continue to be in place. Only 49 per cent FDI was allowed through the automatic route till now and anything beyond

needed to be through the government route.

The development comes almost over a year after the government notified changes in the FDI rules in April 2020 that made prior approval of the government mandates for foreign investments from countries that share a border with India including Pakistan, China, Bangladesh and Nepal.

All telecom services including infrastructure providers will be covered under the new FDI rules. It may be noted that the Centre had

earlier announced 100 per cent FDI in the telecom sector through the automatic route as part of its relief package for the telecom sector.

As part of the telecom sector relief package, the government had introduced a total of nine structural reforms including computation of AGR dues, a four-year moratorium on patents and more.



Domestic LPG cylinder rates hiked by Rs 15. Check prices in major cities

The price of domestic liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders has been hiked by Rs 15. After the hike, a non-subsidised 14.2-kilogram cooking gas cylinder will cost Rs 899.50 in Delhi. LPG cylinder rates have increased by an equal amount in other parts of the country. State-run oil companies have increased cooking cylinder prices by Rs 15, marking four straight months of

upward revision in rates. It may be noted that LPG prices are revised every month. Non-subsidised LPG cylinder rates were hiked by Rs 25 in September, July and August. Cooking gas prices are on the rise due to an overall increase in natural gas prices. Domestic natural gas price was hiked by

62 per cent last week, marking the first increase in rates since April 2019.

Besides the natural gas price hike, the other factors that determine LPG cylinder prices in the country are the exchange rate

of the rupee against the US dollar and the global benchmark rate. It is worth mentioning that global natural gas prices have also seen a sharp increase alongside crude oil prices. However, the price hike is much lower in comparison to the hike in natural gas prices, according to executives from major state-run oil companies.





Amid safety concerns,

Blue Origin flight that carried Bezos to space enters Guinness world records

The flight carried four passengers on the company's New Shepard spacecraft above the Karmen line (100 km above Earth) for a period of three minutes before returning them to Earth.

As Blue Origin goes under review over claims that it ignored safety concerns to gain an advantage in the space race, the company has managed to set several world records with its flight that carried Jeff Bezos to space in July this year. Months after the successful launch and landing of the first crewed mission for the company,

the Guinness Book of Records has registered the flight in its record books.

The flight, which carried Blue Origin boss Jeff Bezos into space set four world records as it strengthened the emerging sector of space tourism, which for now remains available to the millionaires and billionaires of the world. The flight carried four passengers on the company's New Shepard spacecraft above the Karmen line (100 km above Earth) for a period of three minutes before returning them to Earth.

"Best day ever, it was incredible," said Jeff Bezos after landing back on Earth and becoming the 571st astronaut to soar into space.

A RECORD HOLDER FLIGHT

The flight made four world records as it soared into the skies, which include the oldest person to go to space, the youngest person to go to space, The first siblings to go to space and the first suborbital spacecraft to carry paying customers.

Wally Funk, the 82-year-old aviator became the oldest ever astronaut, fulfilling a lifelong dream that was thwarted by the

sexism of the early space era. She had qualified every test required to become an astronaut in the 1960s but was sidestepped when the Mercury program was shelved. Funk has over 16,000 hours of flying under her belt and has flown almost every aircraft from fighters to trainers. She was the first female air safety investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board, and served as chief pilot in several flight schools. 19-year-old Oliver Daemen made it into the records book for being the youngest astronaut to go to space. A high school graduate, he got the call to join Bezos days ahead of the flight after another bidder, who won an auction for the fourth seat by paying a whopping \$28 million. Daemen's ticket was paid for by his father, the CEO of a private equity firm. He also became the first paying customer for the company. Meanwhile, Jeff Bezos was accompanied on the flight by his brother Mark, entering his name into history books to become the first siblings to go to space at the same time. NASA has been conducting research on siblings and their involvement in spaceflight, one such year-long

research was conducted when astronaut Mark Kelly went into space, while his twin brother remained on the ground and the agency studied the changes in the two.

NEXT FLIGHT ON OCTOBER 12 As the New Shepard spacecraft displayed its capability of taking tourists into space and then safely returning them back on Earth, the company is now set to conduct two more crew flights by the end of this year as tickets go for sale. "We have built the system to go on forever and take hundreds and thousands of astronauts into space," the company has said.

Blue Origin recently announced its next crewed launch on October 12, which will carry four astronauts beyond Earth and bring them back.

The company has already announced the names of two astronauts Chris Boshuizen, a former NASA engineer and co-founder of Planet Labs and Glen de Vries, vice-chair, Life Sciences & Healthcare, Dassault Systèmes and co-founder, Medidata.

The liftoff is being targeted for 8.30 am CDT, 7.00 pm Indian Standard Time.



NASA to crash spacecraft into asteroid's moon to save Earth



What if an asteroid is headed on a collision course? What would we do to escape the fate of dinosaurs? Well, we have nuclear weapons that can possibly be fired at the asteroid. But what if the broken pieces are still large enough to create major mayhem on Earth?

Questions like these are important for our planetary defence. And we need a plan in place to better tackle such a situation when it occurs.

Perhaps as a step in that direction, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is planning to

intentionally crash a spacecraft into a moon of an asteroid to see what happens to its orbit. NASA's Double Asteroid Redirection Test mission (DART) is set to lift-off this November. A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket will be used for this.

The mission is targeting Dimorphos, a small moon that revolves around the asteroid Didymos.

Didymos is a Near Earth Object (NEO). These are space objects whose orbits bring them within 30 million miles radius around Earth.

Didymos (the asteroid) and Dimorphos (the

moon) will come within a distance of 6,835,083 miles (11 million kilometers).

The NASA spacecraft will deliberately crash into Dimorphos and see what happens to its motion in space. It is estimated that motion of the moon will change by 1 per cent. Though this doesn't sound much, it would affect the period of revolution by about seven minutes.

A DART program executive at NASA headquarters has been quoted by CNN as saying that the mission was the first step to test methods for hazardous asteroid deflection.

A long rainy spell induced by volcanism helped dinosaurs become huge



Can you imagine a cat-sized dinosaur? The answer is most likely a 'no'. When someone says dinosaurs, all we can imagine is a scary creature the size of a building eyeing for round two of its brunch. Movies haven't helped change this perception. Dinosaurs ruled the pre-historic world but their beginnings were very humble. They were literally the size of a cat. But they gradually grew in size and reached scary proportions within 2 million years. And a super long rainy spell in this period helped. And what caused this rain? Scientists say continued volcanic activity. Researchers who carried out the study have published their findings in journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The scientists studied sediments at the bottom of an ancient lake crater in China (Jiyuan basin) and concluded that between 234 and 232 million years ago, earth experienced what are called 'pulses' of volcanic activity. This increased amount of carbon dioxide in the air. This increased temperature and intensified hydrologic cycle.

In a bid to combat climate impact, cut carbon footprint, Germany unveils synthetic kerosene plant

On Monday, German officials unveiled what they claimed would be the world's first commercial synthetic kerosene plant in a bid to reduce the climate impact of flying.

Located near Germany's northwest border with the Netherlands, the facility in Werlte will produce hydrogen using water and electricity from nearby wind farms. With the addition of carbon dioxide, hydrogen is converted into crude, which is then refined into jet fuel.

About 2.5% of global carbon dioxide emissions, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming, come from the aviation industry. In spite of the trend to electrify other forms of transportation, making large, battery-powered planes remains an extremely



daunting task.

According to experts, using e-fuels to replace fossil fuels without requiring substantial modifications to aircraft could be a solution to the problem.

As synthetic kerosene releases no more CO₂ into the atmosphere during combustion than it has removed

during production, this fuel can be described as carbon-neutral.

As of early next year, this new plant will be capable of producing only a small quantity of eight barrels per day. Comparatively, in 2019, commercial airlines around the world consumed almost 2.3 billion barrels of kerosene.

While the amount of oil it can produce would only be enough to fill one small passenger plane once every three weeks.

The organisations behind the project say their goal is to help demonstrate that the process can be technologically feasible and, with enough demand, once scaled up, it can also prove to be economically viable. Atmosfair, a German non-profit group is this project's leader.

The group offers companies and individuals means to neutralize carbon emissions. Germany's national carrier Lufthansa will be the first to use the synthetic kerosene or e-fuel, produced at this plant, which was built with engineering giant Siemens' help.

How should you choose the right mattress to invest in sound sleep?



If sleep is a superpower, the right sleep essentials are the keys to unlock it.

Five decades ago, a pioneering vision to help India sleep better transformed into reality with the inception of Duroflex. Their 50+ years of expertise helped them take forward this vision through continuous innovation, backed by research and technology, in their latest mattresses, pillows, protectors and sleep tech options. This made sleeping a truly enriching experience for its customers. Known for their industry-first innovations, Duroflex has been a flag bearer of the latest in sleep technology. And to keep the tradition of innovating alive, they have created duropedic mattresses a doctor recommended orthopaedic mattress range that has a revolutionary five zoned full body support system. It has been tested and is recommended by the experts at the National

Health Academy. Below are a few excerpts on the necessity of adequate sleep and why one must invest in the right mattress. What is the importance of sleep in today's time and age? In the wake of the pandemic, there has been an increased awareness about immunity and a focus on staying healthy. Sleep is the foundation of good health. It plays a vital role in our body's immune system. Studies show that sleeping well throughout the vaccination period and beyond may help boost the body's virus-fighting response.

How and why sleep is a superpower everyone must learn to harness?

Sleep is the cornerstone of physical and emotional health. In fact, great sleep enhances our ability to exercise regularly, maintain a healthy balanced diet,

and stay fit and productive. The healthy functioning of every single organ in our body is primed as we sleep. Sleep also helps in building emotional resilience, thereby helping us manage anxiety and stress better. It is a superpower available to us for free, and learning how to harness it can help unlock our best self.

Why invest in the right sleep essentials?

If sleep is a superpower, the right sleep essentials are the keys to unlock it. Thoughtfully designed and research-backed sleep essentials provide optimum comfort and support, resulting in improved sleep quality. In today's stress-filled environment where sleep is compromised, Duroflex wants to encourage India to upgrade its choices in essential products like mattresses that enable better sleep.

Yami Gautam reveals she suffers from a skin condition called Keratosis-Pilaris. What is it?



After being the poster girl for perfect and glowing skin, actress Yami Gautam took to Instagram to share unedited pictures of herself showcasing all her 'flaws'. The post has struck a chord with netizens where Yami talked about letting go of her fear and insecurities and embracing her skin condition Keratosis-Pilaris.

WHAT IS KERATOSIS-PILARIS?

Keratosis-Pilaris is a kind of skin condition that makes the skin patchy and full of small bumps and sometimes dry patches. Though harmless, this skin condition can't be cured completely. However, it can be well kept in check with regular and generous application of moisturisers and creams.

YAMI GAUTAM OPENS UP ABOUT

Yami Gautam shared glimpses of her unfiltered photos from a shoot as she talked about her skin condition.

THE SKIN CONDITION

Yami shared five photos from different photoshoots where her face was visibly not airbrushed. "I recently shot for some images and just when they were about to go in for post-production (a common procedure) to conceal my skin-condition called Keratosis-Pilaris, I thought, 'Hey Yami, why don't you embrace this

fact and accept it enough to be OKAY with it. Just let it be," she wrote in the caption.

"I've dealt with it for many years now and today finally, I decided to let go of all my fears and insecurities and found the courage to love and accept my 'flaws' wholeheartedly. I also found the courage to share my truth with you. Phew! I didn't feel like airbrushing my folliculitis or smoothing that 'under-eye' or 'shaping up' that waist a tiny bit more! And yet, I feel beautiful," she added.

Her post received all the support from netizens as they lauded her courage and showered love on her unfiltered self. Yami Gautam was last seen in Bhoot Police along with Saif Ali Khan, Arjun Kapoor and others.



Rajinikanth's Annaatthe introduction song sung by SPB is electrifying

As fans are eagerly waiting for Rajinikanth's upcoming film, Annaatthe, the makers dropped its first single, titled Annaatthe Annaatthe on Monday, October 4. The song, composed by D Imman, is the last song sung by celebrated playback singer SP Balasubrahmanyam before his demise on September 25, 2020.

ANNAATTHE FIRST SINGLE OUT NOW

Sharing a poster featuring Rajinikanth, the makers of Annaatthe had announced that the film's first single will drop on October 4. Now, fans can enjoy the lyrical song that introduces us to Rajinikanth in the film. The song is titled Annaatthe Annaatthe. Sun Pictures took to social media to share the first single.

The colourful visuals of the song perfectly go with its peppy mood. Rajinikanth once again proves why he is loved by all with his on-point expressions.

Earlier, the official Twitter handle of Sun Pictures had shared a poster featuring Rajinikanth to make an announcement about the song's release. They wrote, "#AnnaattheFirstSingle sung by the legendary Padma Vibhushan Thiru #SPBalasubrahmanyam is releasing on October 4th at 6 PM! (sic)." SP Balasubrahmanyam died on September 25, last year at a private hospital in Chennai after a long battle with Covid-19. The entire country remembered the

legendary musician on his first death anniversary this year. However, his fans can celebrate his brilliance with his last song, Annaatthe Annaatthe, now.

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ANNAATTHE?

Annaatthe is a family entertainer directed by Siruthai Siva. Superstar Rajinikanth plays the lead role in the film. Reportedly, he will be seen as a village panchayat head who is also a doting brother. Produced by Sun Pictures, Annaatthe will release in the theatres on November 4, on the occasion of Diwali. The film's cast also features Nayanthara, Keerthy Suresh, Khushbu, Meena, Prakash Raj and Soori.

Utkarsh Sharma on Gadar 2 rumours:

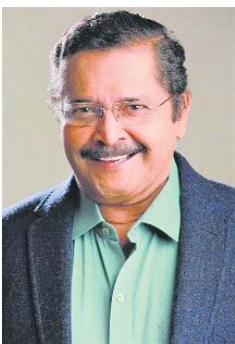
You'll have to wait a little bit, it's not a Fast and Furious



A sequel to the 2001 hit Gadar has for long been speculated to be in the making, and some recent reports only intensified the rumours. According to latest buzz, the film's screenplay is ready, and it'll go on floors next month, bringing back the original cast of Sunny Deol and Ameesha Patel, along with Utkarsh Sharma, who played their son in the film. We reach out to Utkarsh, son of Anil Sharma, the director of the original film, to ask if there's any truth to these reports. Neither confirming nor denying anything, he tells us, "Abhi toh hamari taraf se we have not announced anything. I understand the love of the fans, which they have been giving us even after 20 years desiring a sequel to this blockbuster film. That can only happen with a terrific story, and that takes time." Reminding fans how good things take time, he cites the example of how audiences have been waiting for cult film, Sholay (1975), too. "This is not a Fast and Furious film that you just keep coming up with sequels. It needs that gravity, that time. Ek nayi duniya banane ke liye samay lagta hai. Rome was not built in a day, so I cannot, unfortunately, say anything at this point beyond that." On being prodded further, Utkarsh says that audiences will have to wait for a little bit more, as pandemic is still on. "Now with the lockdown opening up, a lot of my projects are resuming together at the same time."

Tiku Talsania cites lack of new concepts in the entertainment scene for his absence from films

Most recently seen in Hungama 2, veteran actor Tikur Talsania has been majorly missing from action in the past one decade, having done a few small parts here and there. And his absence, he says, was not out of choice but a compulsion due to lack of good work. "I'd love to do lots of work. I'm waiting for new concepts to appear in the entertainment scene, so I can do more and more work," he shares, adding, "Things are picking up slowly and steadily. Let's hope this pandemic ends soon and I'd be seen doing a lot more acting onscreen."



Talsania has been a part of films such as Raja (1995), Raja Hindustani (1996), Ishq (1997) among others. He hopes that the way digital boom has created more

opportunities for artistes, it will also contribute in him getting more and interesting work.

"People are getting a lot of work (on the web platforms). I really wish that it spreads far.

I was part of the TV boom when it happened and now being there on phone (acting on OTT) with everyone, is something really terrific and fantastic," explains the 67-year-old.

Not just actors, Talsania feels everybody - writers, directors, musicians - who's associated with this medium, is going to benefit from it. "The digital medium starts right from your phones to computers to laptops.

Sidharth Malhotra: Earlier, good numbers at the box office could override bad stories

Sidharth Malhotra is riding high on the success of Shershaah, which opted for a direct-to-OTT release amid an uncertain scenario for theatres. And it sure paid off, as the film drew appreciation from all quarters, changing the game for him. Acknowledging the positives of the web medium, the actor agrees that before theatres shut down amid the pandemic, things had become too much about box office numbers - even audiences started judging a film by the many crore clubs. "To give them full credit, OTT platforms have removed the burden of numbers to judge a film. Pehle kya hota tha, even good numbers could override bad stories, usually it was like, 'Paisa banaya na eventually' There is nothing wrong in that. [But] once you negate that you are just looking at a film bare, what it makes you feel and not getting influenced by what it did at the box

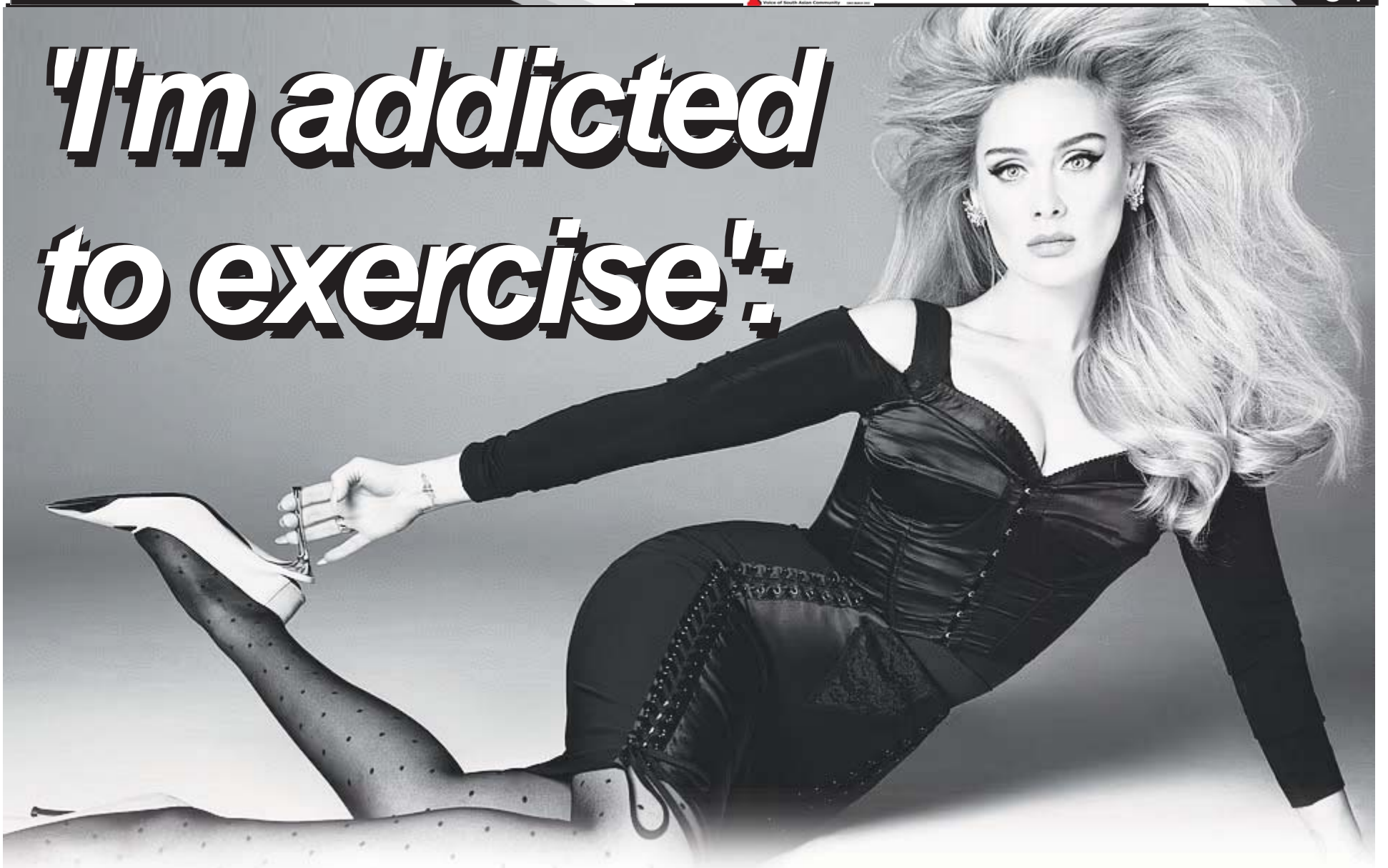


office," elaborates the 36-year-old.

He again asserts that the box office benchmark is nothing wrong, but it did distract the audience at times. "Now, there is no distraction (with OTT releases), you have the option of watching it for half an hour, rewinding it, watching it again... it speaks volumes about this medium. If creatively, your intention is in the right place, you can really capture and make the audience feel certain things," he says.

Malhotra admits that he was "pleasantly surprised" by the response that his latest release, Shershaah garnered. And life after the film has been "happier, calmer, relaxed" for the actor. "It is such an amazing feeling to get this kind of love and respect for your performance, which is unlike my past films. I am geared up for future work. I dived back into it within a couple of days after Shershaah."

'I'm addicted to exercise'



Adele the bombshell breaks silence on 100lbs weight loss, divorce and hot new romance while making history as first celeb to cover British and US Vogue

Adele has revealed that she is addicted to exercise as she breaks her silence on her 100lbs weight loss as well as speaking candidly about her divorce and hot new romance with Rich Paul.

The Someone Like You singer, 33, made history on Thursday as the first celebrity to cover British and US Vogue where she addressed her break up with ex-husband Simon Konecki and her body transformation for the first time.

She looked incredible in an accompanying shoot for the publication as she posed in a black satin corset dress before changing into a yellow couture Vivienne Westwood gown.

Speaking about her incredible weight loss over a period of two years she said: 'It was because of my anxiety. Working out, I would just feel better.'

'It was never about losing weight, it was always about becoming strong and giving myself as much time every day without my phone. I got quite addicted to it. I work out two or three times a day.'

Adele has been doing rigorous weight-lifting and circuit-training



sessions every day - twice a day if her anxiety is running high - for three years and counting.

In the interview - which is her first for five years - Adele also discussed her divorce from Simon, 47, saying that she 'left'

him and 'would have been miserable had she not put herself first'.

The former couple announced they were going their separate ways in April 2019, with Adele filing court documents five

months later.

She said of the breakdown of her relationship: 'When I was 30, my entire life fell apart and I had no warning of it. It just wasn't right for me anymore. I didn't want to end up like a lot of other people I knew.'

'It wasn't miserable miserable, but I would have been miserable had I not put myself first. But, yeah, nothing bad happened or anything like that.'

She added of the aftermath of her divorce: 'I was embarrassed. I was really embarrassed. That thing of not being able to make something work. We've been trained as women to keep trying, even by the movies we watched when we were little. At the time it broke my heart, but I actually find it so interesting now. How we're told to suck it up.'

For the magazine's cover shot she looked stunning as she slipped into a busty yellow couture gown. The star wowed in the corset-style dress by designer Vivienne Westwood for the radiant shoot. She wore her blonde tresses in a bouncy blow dry for the glowing image and opted for a glamorous

makeup look complete with her classic winged black eyeliner. Elsewhere in the spread she turned up the heat as she wore a busty black corset-style dress which she teamed with spotty patterned tights and white heels. The songstress looked chic in a tweed jacket and striped shirt for another stunning look before changing into a dramatic green dress.

In the interview she also spoke for the first time about dating her new boyfriend, Rich Paul. She said: 'I did date before Rich, but they hated it. They'd find it stressful being out or seen with me...Whereas he's not frazzled by it at all. It feels like it's consistent and considerate enough that I don't care who knows. He's great. He's so f**king funny. He's so smart, you know.'

Rich and Adele confirmed their romance last month after being spotted on a dinner date, after going public in July when they sat court side at game five of the NBA Finals in Phoenix, Arizona.



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Minister of Shame

☛ The police are investigating whether the son of one of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ministers was in a vehicle that slammed into protesters. Eight people were killed on Sunday in an incident that protesting farmers said was the fault of the son of a prominent Indian leader, as nearly yearlong demonstrations against a government revamp of the country's agriculture laws threatened to enter a more volatile phase. Minister Ajay Mishra has denied that his son, Ashish Mishra, was linked to the violence.

☛ A murder case has been filed against Union Minister of State Ajay Kumar Mishra's son for allegedly running a car over protesting farmers in Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri. Opposition leaders have been barred from visiting the area.



Union Minister of
State Ajay Kumar
Mishra

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