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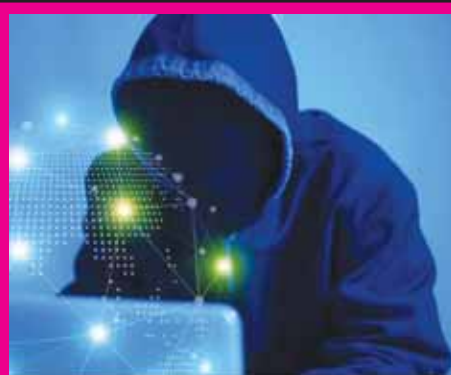
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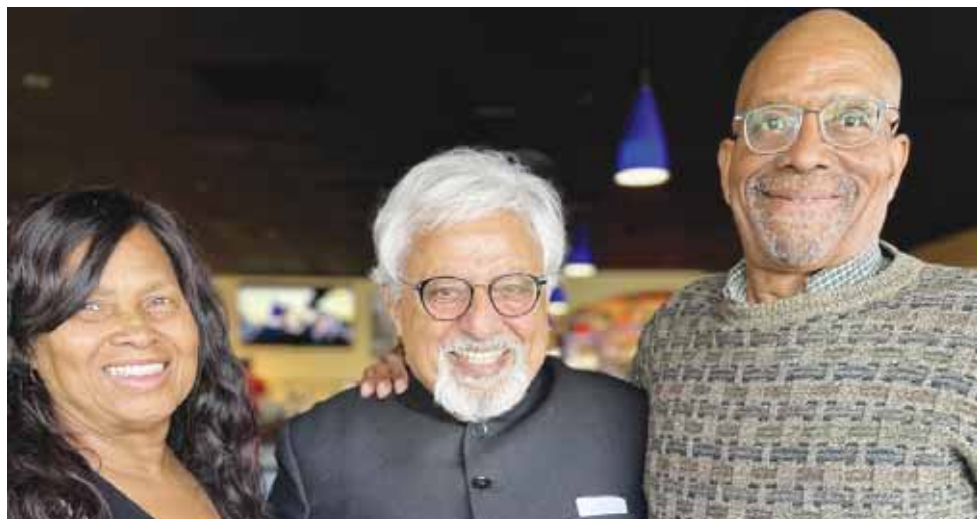
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**Indian in Australia gets 10 million in account by mistake**

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## NAACP announces Religious Leadership Award for Hindu statesman Rajan Zed



(By Our Staff Reporter)-National Reno-Sparks NAACP 76th Annual Association for the Advancement of Freedom Fund Banquet on August 24 in Colored People (NAACP) of Reno Sparks (Nevada), where he will also has announced the Religious Leadership Award for distinguished Hindu statesman Rajan Zed. Patricia Y. Gallimore, President Reno Sparks NAACP and NAACP National Board Director, in an email to Zed, who is President of Universal Society of Hinduism, wrote: "Your work in Northern Nevada and beyond, bringing people of all faiths, walks of life together in peace, love and harmony are being celebrated and recognized. I am proud to present the Religious leadership award to you. Rajan Zed will be receiving this Award at the

Sanskrit, followed by English interpretation, from ancient Hindu scriptures Rig-Veda, Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita. Headquartered in Baltimore (Maryland), founded 1909, the NAACP is the nation's first and largest grassroots-based civil rights organization, with over 2,000 volunteer-run branches nationwide. We are the home of grassroots activism for civil rights and social justice. We advocate, agitate, and litigate for the civil rights due to Black America"; it states.



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# India Association of Long Island gives New T-Shirts for Needy Kids.

Hicksville, NY † (By Our Staff Reporter)- The India Association of Long Island (IALI) has given over 1500 New T. Shirts for needy kids just before the start of the school year. The project of IALI was led by Project Chair Mukesh Modi with President Pradeep Tandon and co-chaired Shahi Goyal & Vinod Goyal.

These New T. Shirts were given to Robers F. Eslick the founder and ceo of Kids helping Kids, Sunita Manjarekar Director of Employment Programs for Nassau County Dept of Social Services. Mr. Zahid Syed Executive Director of community affairs at Town of Hempstead and Prafulba Vaghela for the Suffolk county needy kids. The event started by IALI secretary Dr. Neeru Bhambri humbly welcomed the guests and introduce the executive committee followed by IALI president Pradeep Tandon he mention that this is initiative embodies the spirit of community, generosity, and care. Every child deserves to feel valued and supported, and today, we are taking a small but significant step toward that goal. These T-shirts symbolize our commitment to ensuring that every



child feels seen and cared for.

Under the dynamic leadership of Mukesh Modi, IALI has organized the distribution of over 1,500 new Kids T-shirts for needy children.

President Pradeep Tandon also remarked, "I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Mukesh ji for his incredible efforts in organizing this project. His dedication and hard work have made a significant impact on many lives. Thanks to his compassion, the children will have new T-shirts, bringing

smiles to their faces and warmth to their hearts. Mukesh ji's commitment to making a difference in the community is truly inspiring and serves as a wonderful example of kindness and generosity.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to this giveaway. Your generosity has made it possible to bring joy to many children today. To the children receiving these T-shirts, know that you are important to us. We hope these T-shirts bring you joy and remind you that

you are part of a community that cares deeply about you."

"We are excited to roll out this project," said Mukesh Modi. "Our mission is to not only show appreciation to our community members but also to enhance the visibility and unity of our vibrant Indian American community." Mukesh Modi gave shout out for Sushma ji Loomba, she was very helpful in raising the fund with her help IALI could donate more T. Shirts for needy kids.

The giveaway benefitted organizations, ensuring that needy children from different areas can benefit from this initiative. This project highlights IALI's dedication to community engagement, cultural celebration, and social responsibility.

By distributing these T-shirts, IALI hopes to not only provide a useful item but also to inspire a sense of belonging and community pride.

Mr. Robert F Eslick founder of Kids helping Kids said these T. Shirts will be used for fall for all the needy children, he has distributed more than millions apparel to needy kids. Roberts thanked to IALI for this amazing event.

## Day Trip to Atlantic City



†(By Our Staff Reporter)-Long Islanders enjoyed their Sunday to-gather on a day group Trip to Atlantic City organized by courtesy of Meena Verma and Dr Binod Verma . The couple have been practicing this venture since many years .They named this group as Meet and Greet group. Sure everyone needs some alone time now and then. But socializing is good for your mental and physical health, it gets you out in the world, plus it's just plain fun! Enjoying time spent with friends, family, and even people you just met is good for the soul and can be extremely refreshing even if you aren't the biggest social butterfly. Their motto is take it from us, you meet a lot of great people on our trips. A luxury beautiful coach shuttle was arranged which is the most popular way for savvy seniors to travel. The benefits of comfort, convenience, price, and a fun experience together with friends make this the preferred travel method. The bus started from Hicksville with second stop at

Herricks. where everyone enjoyed bagels and hot Dunkin coffee for breakfast .The atmosphere on the bus seemed to explode with Hilarious jokes and songs as we passed through small towns. Before reaching Atlantic City the bus stopped at Authentic Indian Cuisine named i The Nizamsi for great sumptuous lunch. The bus reached midafternoon at Tropicana Casino. The excitement arouse between all the guests. The colorfully blinking lights, sounds, and energy of a casino was very exhilarating for first-time visitors. The prospect of winning money and trying out different games created a sense of anticipation and excitement among themselves . Those who did not like gambling enjoyed Atlantic City Boardwalk which stretches for miles, providing a scenic route along the coastline with a blend of historic charm and modern attractions. During the return the bus stoped at same restaurant- The Nizams.

## AAPI, Led By Dr. Satheesh Kathula And Team Commit To Take It To Newer Heights

†(By Our Staff Reporter) Chicago, I'm very honored and consider myself fortunate to be bestowed with the responsibility of leading the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI), the four-decades-old strong and largest ethnic medical organization in the United States. With the cooperation and collaboration of an excellent team of dedicated, hardworking, and loyal officers and executive committee members who are with me, we will take AAPI to newer heights,† Dr. Satheesh Kathula, who has assumed charge as the President of AAPI said. Dr. Kathula did not have to contest the elections this year, as he has been serving as the President-Elect during the past year. Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, who has been serving as the Vice President in the past year also did not have to face elections as per the AAPI By-Laws, as he automatically becomes the President-Elect of AAPI for the current year. While thanking the tens of thousands of Indian American physicians, who are active members of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI), Dr. Kathula said, iWe are grateful to AAPI members who have participated in the 2024 AAPI's voting process and have elected a new, diverse, balanced, and experienced team to lead AAPI, the largest ethnic medical organization in

the United States in the coming year and beyond. iDr. Amit Chakrabarty, the President-Elect in 2024-25 said in a statement: iI trust and believe that under the leadership of Dr. Satheesh Kathula, we will continue the noble mission of



AAPI and strengthen our efforts to make our beloved organization reach greater heights. iDr. Chakrabarty, a Consultant Urologist, Poplar Bluff Urology, Past Chairman of Urologic Clinics of North Alabama P.C., and the Director of the Center for Continence and Female Pelvic Health said, iSince my membership to AAPI In 1997, I have been a dedicated foot soldier for the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin. iAs the President-Elect, the multi-talented professional said,

# 8th Annual Rajasthani Teej Mahotsav



†(By Our Staff Reporter) Rajasthani Organization of American Residents (ROAR) and Jhoom Events celebrated the 8th Annual Rajasthani Teej Mahotsav on 9th August 2024 in Royal Alberts Palace, Edison, in a very grand and elaborated way under the leadership of Mrs. Tarang Soni, President of ROAR, and CEO-Jhoom Events. Teej is the festival which brings happiness, colors, music, food and it is the beginning of all the festivals in Hindu culture. Teej is the Hindu festival that is celebrated by women in many parts of North India. Haryali Teej or Sawan ki Teej welcomes the monsoon and is celebrated primarily by girls and

women, with songs, dancing and prayer rituals. The monsoon festival of Teej is primarily dedicated to Parvati and her union with Lord Shankar. Over 1000+ Indian and Rajasthani Diaspora attended the biggest Rajasthani Festival in America at TEEJ MAHOTSAV 2024, in full Rajasthani attire, pagadis and saffas were given by the organization to the members to complete the look. Ladies were dressed up in beautiful lehenga choli, Ghaghara and Indian dresses. Beating all the weather warnings, thunderstorms, flood warnings, tornados, people joined the Teej Mahotsav with an upbeat mood.

Nothing could defeat, detain, or bring down their love and affection for the motherland and their roots. People drove and flew from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Minnesota, Indianapolis, Ohio, Virginia, North Carolina, California, Illinois, Georgia, Michigan, Maryland, Washington DC, Seattle, and hundreds of people from Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey. That was the magic of the TEEJ MAHOTSAV 2024. Mahotsav started at 4 PM, with pagadi bandhai for all the members of the organization and welcoming with Dhol/Nagada and tilaks. Along with welcome drinks and snacks. Teej Mata procession started at 6

PM with Pooja of Teej Mata with Shanknad, dhol, bell, at the Neel Kamal Hall (Jaipur Palace) of the Royal Alberts premises. Following the Pooja. Kalbelia Dances, Fire Dance and many traditional dances were performed in front of the Teej Mata by several ladies led by ROAR Teej Queen. Priests did Shanknad to announce the start of the procession of the Teej Mata. Kids dressed up as Padmavati, Shiva and Parvati led the procession, followed by Kalash yatra by many ladies, who carried the traditional kalash & matakas on their heads, Rajputi talwar followed by Teej Mata. Both Men and Women

did the traditional Rajasthani dance, including Katchhi Ghodi dance. Finally Teej Mata entered in the Ball room at 7 PM with Ghanta Dhvani, Shanknaad and shlok Chanting. Diya Lighting were done by the ROAR Patrons Advisors Smt. Tarang Soni, Shri Naveen Shah, Shri Mukesh Modi, Dr. Ravi Muraraka, and Delegates Padmashree Dr. Sudhir Parikh and Ms. Pragya Singh, Consul (Visa and Community Affairs), NY Indian Consulate. Opening Dance performance was done by the ladies of the ROAR group on Rajasthani Traditional songs who performed on traditional Rajasthani Music and songs. **Press release by Mukesh Modi**

## Victimhood-laced quota: Vivek Ramaswamy slams attacks on Bangladesh Hindus

†(Sai Bureau)-Former Republican presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy has denounced the targeted violence against Hindus amid unrest in Bangladesh, and called out the "victimhood-laced quota systems" of the country. In a long post on X, the entrepreneur explained the quota protests in Bangladesh, and said that "bloodshed" is always the endpoint of grievances and victimhood.

The 39-year-old, who quit the White House race and endorsed Donald Trump in January, detailed in the post on the microblogging site how a quota system created to correct the "wrongs of rape and violence" in the 1971 War of Independence has led to more such incidents in 2024. "Bangladesh fought a bloody war for its independence in 1971. Hundreds of thousands of Bangladeshi civilians were raped and murdered. It was a tragedy, and it was rightly mourned," Ramaswamy's tweet read.

Writing on the quota systems, which triggered the countrywide protests in Bangladesh in June, the Republican said that despite it proving to be a "disaster"



and the former Sheikh Hasina-led government scrapping most of it in 2018, the "victim-patrons fought back and the quota system was reinstated this year". "Once chaos begins, it can't easily be reined in. Radicals are now targeting Hindu minorities. A quota conflict created to rectify the wrongs of rape and violence in 1971 is now leading to more rape and violence in 2024. Bloodshed is the endpoint of grievance and victimhood," he tweeted. Vivek Ramaswamy ended the tweet with a reference to the US, saying that it's difficult not to look at the Bangladesh crisis and wonder what "lessons" Americans can learn. "It's hard not to look at Bangladesh and wonder what lessons we would do well to learn right here at home," the post read. The massive protests in Bangladesh that have led to the deaths of at least 500 people started as demonstrations against the quota system in government jobs. However, later it turned into anti-government and protesters demanded the ouster of Sheikh Hasina. She resigned and fled the country on August 5, and in the aftermath of the continued unrest, minorities in Bangladesh, especially Hindus, have been facing severe violence.

## Starbucks' Indian-Origin CEO, Recently Fired, Never Worked Past 6 pm



†(Sai Bureau)- Starbucks on Tuesday replaced its Indian-origin CEO Laxman Narasimhan with Brian Niccol, chief executive at Chipotle. Narasimhan steps down as chief executive and as a member of the Starbucks board "with immediate effect," the coffee giant said in an official statement.

A veteran of PepsiCo and other consumer brands, Laxman Narasimhan took over the top spot in March 2023 after a period of working with longtime Starbucks CEO and interim boss Howard Schultz.

Last month, Narasimhan spoke about the importance of work-life balance in an interview with Fortune magazine, and declared that he "almost never" worked past 6 pm. Narasimhan said he finished his work by 6 pm, adding that if anyone

got a minute of his time after 6 pm, they "better be sure that it's important".

"I am very disciplined about balance. If there's anything after 6 pm and I am in town, it's got to be a pretty high bar to keep me away from the family. Anybody who gets a minute of time after that better be sure that it's important... Because if not it will just wait for another day," the 57-year-old had said.

This quote from his July 7 interview has now gone viral on social media with several users claiming that he was "fired".

Starbucks Praises Laxman Narasimhan In its statement, Starbucks praised Laxman Narasimhan, saying he drove innovation in the brand's supply chains and boosted its store operations during his tenure.

## Indian-origin teen killed in UK, attack could have been avoided, says father



†(Sai Bureau)-The parents of a 19-year-old British-Indian medical student who was stabbed to death with her friend in Nottingham, England, last year said that the attack could have been avoided if the attacker's mental health had been properly managed by his doctors. Grace and her friend Barnaby Webber, both 19, were attacked by Valdo Calocane, who has since been detained in a high-security hospital under a mental health order. Three people were stabbed to death by Calocane in June 2023. The Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT), managed Calocane's care from May 2020 to September 2022. In January, Valdo Calocane, a 32-year-old dual Guinea-Bissau/Portuguese national, pleaded guilty to manslaughter. A review by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), which oversees healthcare services in England,

found a series of errors, omissions and misjudgements by mental health services in managing Calocane's condition. "I think I can categorically say that if this man had been treated and had taken his treatment, this whole attack would have been avoided," Sanjoy Kumar, Grace's father, told the BBC.

**FAMILIES DEMAND PUBLIC ENQUIRY** The affected families are now calling for a statutory public enquiry led by a judge to ensure improvements in the system. Kumar emphasised the need to focus on Nottingham to understand and rectify what went wrong, highlighting that similar systems are in place nationwide. Calocane, in his 30s, exhibited symptoms of psychosis and struggled to understand or accept his condition, with issues in taking his medication noted early on.

The CQC review was requested by the former health secretary, Victoria Atkins, to investigate the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT), which managed Calocane's care from May 2020 to September 2022. He presented with symptoms of psychosis and appeared to have little understanding or acceptance of his condition. Issues with him taking his medication were also recorded from early on. This review finds that there appear to have been a series of errors, omissions, and misjudgements in his care, the report finds, according to the BBC.

## HinduPACT Condemns Violence Against Hindus in Bangladesh

†(Sai Bureau)-HinduPACT vehemently condemns the recent spate of violence against the Hindu community in Bangladesh, culminating in the brutal murder of two councilors and the vandalization of the sacred Kali temple and ISKCON temple during anti-government protests.

This appalling act is not just an attack on individuals but a direct assault on the Hindu community for their pluralistic beliefs. We stand in solidarity with the Hindu community in Bangladesh and demand immediate action from the Bangladeshi government to bring the perpetrators to justice and ensure the safety and security of all its citizens, irrespective of their religious beliefs.

The international community must also take note of these heinous crimes and support measures to protect religious minorities worldwide. We call upon human rights organizations and governments around the globe to condemn these acts and work towards safeguarding the rights of all minority communities. Deepti Mahajan, co-

convenor of HinduPACT, said: With the coup in Bangladesh, the 10 million Hindus are sitting on a ticking bomb of genocide. Reports are coming in from inside Bangladesh of unimaginable torture, killings, and burning of Hindu temples. This instability in the region is extremely dangerous for democracies like India and an inevitable threat to the Hindus in Pakistan as well. We need the eyes and ears of all Western countries at this instability in Asia and demand the safety of the minorities in Bangladesh. Ajay Shah, President of VHPA and co-Convenor of HinduPACT commented: This incident is a grim reminder of the atrocities committed against Hindus during the 1971 genocide, where an estimated 300,000 Hindus were brutally killed. The echoes of such historical horrors underscore the urgent need for vigilance and protection of religious minorities. HinduPACT remains committed to advocating for the rights and safety of Hindus globally and will continue to work tirelessly to ensure justice is served in this grievous matter.

# Iran knows a real war against Israel would be costly. It's smarter to carry on anti-US tirade

The Israel-Hamas war has been going on for more than 10 months now, and there is little hope that it will stop soon. War is often a choice and not a necessity. Hamas is taking the war as a given situation under occupation, so it glorifies the deaths of thousands of Gazans as shahadat (martyrdom) and propagates violence upon the State of Israel as well as Jews for the sake of liberating the whole of Palestine. On the other side, the Benjamin Netanyahu government has some self-defeating ideas, too, like their claim of 'total victory' and aiming to destroy Hamas in Gaza and elsewhere. Therefore, both parties reject ceasefire and compromise and refuse to acknowledge the fact that each has inflicted violence upon the other in mind-boggling manners.

In a troublesome turn of events, Israel carried out two assassinations of Hezbollah leader Fuad Shukur in Lebanon and Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July 2024. It has heightened tensions in the region. In the case of Haniyeh, Israel has not taken responsibility, which is likely to be a strategy. Iran took it as an Israeli act that violated their sovereignty. Haniyeh was a state guest hosted by the Islamic Republic, and Iran has threatened to punish Israel for it.

A war to come is in the minds of many in West Asia as much as around the world. Iran has been involved in the Israel-Hamas war since it started on 7 October 2023, so it wouldn't be a sudden turn of events if Israel and Iran come to a direct fight now. They can, but they won't because Iran, so far, has preferred to threaten Israel, preach violence against it, and use its proxies like Hezbollah and Houthis to attack Israel. An actual war with Israel would not be in favour of Iran's religious Shia mission in the region or its fragile economy. Pragmatically, why risk the core agenda of the spread of Shia revolution for the sake of the Palestinian national movement, which Iran has exploited as a good excuse to carry on anti-Americanism, anti-Israelism, and anti-Semitism?

When Iran switched While the Arab States and the Palestinians chose to fight the idea and establishment of the State of Israel, rejecting the two-State solution as proposed by the UN Partition Plan of 1947, the Iran extended recognition to and full diplomatic relations with Israel in the 1950s. It was the second Muslim-majority country, along with Turkey, that wasn't concerned with the Arab or Palestinian issues then. It was only after the Shia revolution of 1979 that Iranian religious leaders suspended all diplomatic ties with Israel and declared it an illegitimate

entity in West Asia. It is a rejectionist and religious fundamentalist approach that has not helped the Palestinian cause.

It may not help in future either because it undermines the secular national movement that the Palestinians arrived at under Yasser Arafat in 1988, which led to the 1993 Oslo Accords. Thus, Iran's patronage and funding to Hamas appear more for the sake of its regional politics than the realisation of a Palestinian State. In June, an adviser to Mahmoud Abbas, the Palestinian leader from the West Bank, slammed Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Khomeini for sacrificing the Palestinian blood for his interests and politics. In Israel, Netanyahu has carried anti-Iran politics for the last decade and a half by aggressively opposing Iranian nuclear ambitions and pressuring the United States for more sanctions or even an attack on Tehran. His strategy has been to evade the Palestinian issue and exploit the Shia-Sunni divide that exists in Iran and other Arab States. Assassinating Haniyeh in Tehran thus serves Netanyahu's politics and not the security of Israelis, as it has brought more attention to what Iran will do than the everyday deaths of the civilians in Gaza or the mass protests against him by the Israelis who demand immediate ceasefire and compromise for the sake of hostages.

A constant threat

Iran's explicit threats to attack Israel are still taken seriously by all. Israelis have been the most anxious and worried; days and nights are passed with plenty of fear and some black humour. Keeping Israelis in suspense seems a strategy for Iran, as Ahmad Bakhshayesh Ardestani, a member of the Iranian parliament's National Security Commission, said that prolonging the wait is in Tehran's favour as Jerusalem feels every night that it is in limbo, and keeping Israel in limbo is part of the revenge operation. Adopting a policy of patience and waiting is part of the revenge process of the Islamic Republic. According to him, Iran will attack Israel soon by surprise and bloodshed would be carried out to avenge Haniyeh's killing in Tehran. Like in April, Iran might carry an attack with hundreds of missiles, but all in a predictable manner for Israel and America to sabotage them. The Hindi proverb sums it up the best: 'isaanp bhi mar jaye aur lathi bhi na toote.' Such a way out is needed to keep the rhetoric against Israel at the same time, not sacrifice much for the Palestinians; a real war is too costly, and the ayatollahs of Tehran are smart enough not to go there.

By Khinvraj Jangid

# India must invest more in regional integration

EVEN as India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy has suffered a huge blow with the meltdown of the Sheikh Hasina regime in Bangladesh, it has managed a significant turnaround with a smaller but important neighbour, Maldives. The process is an indicator as to how India is seeking to readjust its neighbourhood policy from its earlier over-emphasis on security. To be fair, both sides can take credit for this. India refused to get rattled by the initial anti-Indian moves of the Muizzu government and continued to maintain an even tenor in ties. Yet by a not-so-subtle call to boycott Maldivian tourism in January that nearly halved Indian tourist inflow into the country, New Delhi ensured that Male got the message. Muizzu changed course in March this year following his visit to China. In an interview to the local media, he spoke of the importance of India to his country and that India would continue to remain Maldives' closest ally. He acknowledged India's role in Maldives and the importance of ongoing projects facilitated by India and expressed gratitude for their contribution. One factor in this development was the fact that Maldives is indebted to India to the tune of nearly \$0.5 billion and the new Maldivian Government has been looking for leniency in repayment terms. Muizzu could not but have seen how New Delhi had bailed out Sri Lanka in 2022 when the country was hit by a major economic crisis and at a time when China had dithered. New Delhi came through for Maldives as well when, in May, the State Bank of India deferred the repayment of \$50 million by a year. But it is not just the Indian debt that worries Muizzu. As Aditya Gowdara Shivamurthy of the Observer Research Foundation has pointed out, the nation's economy is undergoing a severe crisis and is struggling to stay afloat. Borrowing by past governments have saddled the country with a debt-to-GDP ratio of 110 per cent and its reserves are rapidly depleting. As the record shows, India has moved beyond its 'security first' approach and is willing to engage neighbours through an all-round policy emphasising trade and development along with security. In the case of the Maldives, India has, however, taken the precaution of developing a new base in the Minicoy island that is closest to the Maldives, and shoring up its naval presence in Lakshadweep. But on a long-term basis, India needs to put serious money and effort into promoting regional integration. BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) has not really worked, and the Bangladesh uncertainty makes it less likely that it will do so soon.

By Manoj Joshi

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# Bangladesh's New Reality Doesn't Bode Well For India's Security

**Harsh V. Pant**

An interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus has taken charge of a fractured Bangladesh after a meeting between President Mohammed Shahabuddin, military leaders and student activists. Promising to "uphold, support and protect the constitution", Yunus has called for the restoration of law and order as his government faces the reality of the withering away of state apparatus. Sheikh Hasina is gone, but the real challenge begins now. A new reality confronts the people of Bangladesh. There is a new sense of optimism, but it is embedded in a deeply divided society and polity.

## From Certainty To Doubts

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has already extended his best wishes to Professor Muhammad Yunus on his new role and has expressed hope for a swift return to normalcy, emphasising the importance of ensuring the safety and protection of Hindus and all minority communities. For India, challenges abound as Hasina, its long-standing partner, had to depart in ignominy. The certainty of the last 15 years has given way to a sense of the unknown. New



Delhi had invested in its partnership with Dhaka confident that the Hasina dispensation would not let it down. As a result, a bilateral partnership that followed could not only resolve some of the most testing challenges but it also emerged as an anchor in the wider Bay of Bengal.

However, Hasina's tendency to centralise decision-making and marginalise the opposition managed to limit Bangladesh's evolution into a mature democracy. As Hasina drifted towards authoritarianism, New Delhi's options got further curtailed. Now, India has to

ensure that it manages to build ties with the new leadership in Dhaka.

## Building New Relationships

After signalling clearly that India will stand by its allies by getting Hasina out of Bangladesh, the next step is to engage the emerging political stakeholders in Bangladesh. This is needed not only for the long-term stability of Delhi-Dhaka ties but also for managing the immediate challenges of protecting minorities within Bangladesh and stabilising the highly volatile border area.

India shares a largely porous 4,096 km of land border with

Bangladesh. This border runs along the states of West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, areas once frequented by insurgent groups. However, under Hasina's leadership, the border remained relatively calm, as these groups have been prevented from finding refuge in Bangladesh. There are already reports of turbulence and New Delhi has asked its border security forces to be on high alert. With India facing serious challenges along its borders with Pakistan and China, the new reality with Bangladesh bodes ill for national security.

## Extremism Remains A

## Concern

The rise of Islamist extremism in Bangladesh is another challenge that New Delhi will be closely watching. Before Hasina, various extremist groups were flourishing under the patronage of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government. Many of these groups, such as the Ansarullah Bangla Team, the Hizb ut-Tahrir, and the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), have had links to various terrorist outfits based in Pakistan as well as to the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The present situation in Bangladesh opens up new possibilities for reviving these links. Jamaat-e-Islami is widely viewed as a key instigator of the recent riots that toppled Hasina. The Hasina government had banned it in 2013, but today it has re-emerged as a major political force.

The systematic targeting of Hindus also poses a challenge to India-Bangladesh ties as it will harden the mood in New Delhi against any engagement with Dhaka. Domestic politics in both nations will have to maturely handle rapidly deteriorating perceptions about each other.

***Populist politicians will never 'control' immigration. Here are the humane alternatives***

**By Filippo Grandi**

In Europe's febrile immigration debate, one word crops up again and again: control. Building walls, sending boats back, offloading refugees and migrants on to other countries in a year of multiple elections, populists assure voters that controlling everything from borders and immigration numbers to job markets and national security will make their lives better. Few political tactics succeed like fear. But I can also tell you such claims of control are illusory. In my job, I repeatedly see how so many policies touted as the solution to immigration flout the law and basic human rights. They also fail to address the reasons why people move: conflict, violence, persecution, poverty, the climate crisis in the major challenges of our time.

Unsurprisingly, people expect their leaders to handle the challenges that immigration poses. But we need to do so in a



fair, legal, effective way, which both relieves pressure on asylum systems and can win public confidence. What might this look like? First, having just recently returned from Ukraine and Sudan, where I met refugees enduring terrible conditions as they bear the brunt of war, I can assure you that the most urgent and obvious strategy is brokering peace. Conflict, violence and persecution

have displaced 120 million people globally, a number that has risen for 12 straight years. Without peace, many people can't go home and that figure can't come down.

Faster, fairer asylum systems and slashing backlogs are another must, and can be done by increasing the efficiency and capacity of claims procedures, speeding up decisions, and

improving cooperation and responsibility-sharing between European states. This would allow governments to deal humanely and legally with refugees and migrants. Those not needing asylum and who do not have the right to remain could be returned safely and with dignity. Improving these systems would go a long way to quelling xenophobic sentiment and combating the general sense that national borders are in chaos. The UNHCR is also developing new proposals that would see asylum claims processed regionally as well as inside the EU. Under these proposals, the most complex and credible asylum cases would be heard in EU countries, while the most tenuous would be processed regionally in safe third countries. From there, people could be more easily returned to their home countries when appropriate, while those recognised as refugees would be readmitted into Europe. All

claims would still be fairly and properly considered.

The extra capacity would allow member states to channel new arrivals to the right places from the outset. Crucially, the right to seek territorial asylum would be preserved.

Such an approach would need to be part of a bigger strategy to address the realities of vulnerable people on the move. That could include a constellation of one-stop shops for refugees and migrants to access everything from basic humanitarian support to information on seeking asylum in those locations in order to help locate missing relatives. These centres could also advise on legal ways to reach European states, or assist stranded migrants to return home safely if they wished. Similar safe mobility offices have been trialled in the Americas, offering a lifeline for people on the move.



# Dilli To Dili: India's 'Acting East' In East Timor

By Suvam Pal

When President Draupadi Murmu received the Grand Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, the newest Asian country's highest honour, from her counterpart Jose Ramos-Horta on August 10, a new chapter was written in India's foreign policy. Timor-Leste, or East Timor, may not be huge, but it marks a much-awaited breakthrough for India's "Act East Policy," which was upgraded from the erstwhile "Look East Policy" by Narendra Modi soon after he was sworn in as the Prime Minister for the first time in 2014. At a time when Quad, Aukus, Squad, and other strategic alliances are taking shape to protect the region from the emphatically long and rapidly overreaching tentacles of the dragon or Loong (as per the Communist Party of China's latest English sobriquet for the mythical creature), the tiny oil-rich nation with a name that is both a tautology and a pleonasm is going to be the newest country to have an Indian embassy.

Double Name, Strategic Location

The name Timor is derived from the Malay word timur, meaning east, while Leste in Portuguese means east as well. Therefore, both East Timor and Timor Leste become "East East" when the country's official names are translated into English. The former Portuguese colony,



which was later occupied by Indonesia, is arguably one of the most inconspicuous countries in Asia and the world. It hardly features in any international academic discourse these days, even though it is strategically located in the heart of the Indo-Pacific - the region that has become the talk of the town in international relations and global affairs. When President Draupadi Murmu received the Grand Collar of the Order of Timor-Leste, the newest Asian country's highest honour, from her counterpart Jose Ramos-Horta on August 10, a new chapter was written in India's foreign policy. Timor-Leste, or East Timor,

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Founding Fathers Of Fledgling Democracy The unitary semi-presidential republic is headed by Jose Ramos-Horta, the co-recipient of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize, and Xanana Gusmao, a former soccer goalkeeper-turned-guerilla leader, whose name is derived from the American 1970s rock and roll group Sha Na Na and is pronounced that way. It has been the freest country in Asia in the annual Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) Press Freedom Index over the last few years.

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# Taliban, Three Years On: Still Searching for Manna

By Jayanta Bhattacharya

On August 15, 2021, the Taliban swiftly took over Kabul following the withdrawal of the US-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), marking a significant diplomatic setback for India. The Taliban were believed to have support from the Tehreek-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan (TTP) operating around the Durand Line, as well as from moderates in Doha.

Amidst the ensuing chaos, India was forced to shut down its embassy in Kabul, evacuating diplomats and citizens. New Delhi had invested heavily in Afghanistan, but the future seemed uncertain under the shadow of conflict. As of August 2020, there were approximately 1,710 Indians in Afghanistan, working in sectors such as banking, IT, construction, healthcare, NGOs, telecom, security, and education, as well as with Afghan and UN missions. Aid to Afghanistan

The Taliban's return and the subsequent withdrawal of international forces led many countries, including India, to pull out. However, the Taliban leadership soon realized that running a government required more than just military might—it needed external funds and assistance. New Delhi has cautiously responded to Kabul's appeals for aid. Important delegations visited Afghanistan, and a technical mission was established in



June 2022 to better understand and coordinate humanitarian efforts. Since 2001, India has committed over USD 3 billion to development and reconstruction projects in Afghanistan. Bilateral trade between India and Afghanistan was valued at USD 1.5 billion in 2019-20. India has supported projects such as a new Parliament building in Kabul and two major river dams. More than 500 projects span across 34 Afghan provinces, addressing critical areas such as power, water supply, road connectivity, healthcare, education, agriculture, and capacity building. Various bilateral and multilateral meetings have taken place, and the Union Budget for 2024-25 allocated ₹ 200 crores to Afghanistan. This represents a decrease from ₹ 350 crores in the 2021-22 budget.

The Taliban have urged India to resume development projects, arguing that such initiatives would create job opportunities, alleviate poverty, and support development. The China Factor

India's outreach to Afghanistan is influenced by the regional dynamics, including China's growing activity. Initially excluded from China's expansive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in Asia, Afghanistan has seen increased Chinese involvement and funding. A Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs report from last year noted the strategic importance for India to deepen ties with its smaller neighbours in response to China's BRI and America's Indo-Pacific vision.

China is courting the Taliban to counter

the Uyghur separatist movement. Beijing wants the Taliban to address the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement, which, according to a 2021 UN report, is active in Badakhshan, Faryab, Kabul, and Nuristan provinces. The report indicated that the group seeks to establish a Uyghur state in Xinjiang, China, and facilitates the movement of fighters from Afghanistan to China.

Despite its efforts, Beijing's support for Afghanistan has not met all expectations. China has provided funds, machinery, and technical support, but not as generously as Afghanistan hoped. The country's economic growth was recorded at -6.2% in 2022, according to Afghanistan's National Statistics and Information Authority (NSIA).

Pakistan No Longer a Friend  
Pakistan has long served as a training ground and launchpad for the Mujahideen in their struggle against Soviet forces. Reportedly supported by the CIA, Peshawar in Pakistan quickly became a crucial hub for the fighters. This is well-documented in *The Bear Trap* by Brigadier Mohammed Yousuf and Mark Adkin. Yousuf, who led Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Afghan desk from 1983 to 1987, and Adkin, a major in the British Army, detail the logistical and military support Pakistan received from the CIA during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

## Kolkata Rape Case, And All That's Wrong With India's Medical System

Bharti Mishra Nath

The heinous incident at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College, where a female resident doctor was allegedly raped and murdered on the institute's premises on August 9, has sparked nationwide outrage among the medical community. Doctors from several hospitals across India have announced an indefinite strike to protest the gruesome crime. They have declared that all elective services (non-urgent and not medically necessary) will be suspended until a thorough investigation is completed. The strong reactions from resident doctors working in government colleges are understandable given the challenging conditions they face.

Doctors at government hospitals, often located on sprawling campuses, work in dark and poorly maintained areas. Security is lax in many sections of these hospitals, lacking technology or CCTV to monitor potential perpetrators. In contrast, private hospitals generally offer better security and working conditions, with improved access control and a safer environment.

Numerous cases have highlighted the vulnerability of women in the medical profession to sexual attacks, intimidation, and violence from patients, their attendants, hospital staff, colleagues, seniors, and



teachers. Even female patients are at risk. The Kolkata incident evokes memories of the horrific assault on nurse Aruna Shanbaug at KEM Hospital in Mumbai in 1973. Aruna remained in a coma for 42 years before passing away in 2015. In May 2023, Dr Vandana Das was murdered by a drug addict brought to Kottarakkara Taluk Hospital in Kollam, Kerala. In 2019, in West Bengal, a mass resignation of doctors occurred after a mob attacked a junior doctor, triggered by the death of a patient and allegations of medical negligence.

"We care for patients, work long hours, and

sacrifice our personal time. Yet, when a patient dies, relatives often blame us," says Dr Nikita Jain, a junior resident at a government medical college. "Who will safeguard our safety, our lives, and our well-being? It is shocking how we are treated, especially in light of recent incidents," she adds.

A Tough Road For Students  
According to NMC data from February 2024, among those who dropped out of medical programmes, 153 were MBBS students and 1,117 were in postgraduate courses. In the past five years, at least 122

medical students, including MBBS students and postgraduate doctors, died by suicide due to academic pressure, burnout, mental health challenges, hostile work environment, and punitive bond policies.

For students entering the medical profession, distress, mental stress, and uncertainty begin as soon as they fill out the NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) form. Many who qualify the NEET struggle with the vast medical syllabus and consider dropping out but are often compelled to continue due to financial constraints. Conditions for postgraduate residents, especially in larger medical colleges, are particularly dire.

Most states impose bond conditions on medical students at all levels—undergraduate, postgraduate, and super-specialty. There are two types of bonds: 'seat leaving' bonds and 'service' bonds. The former impose heavy fines on students who leave their courses prematurely, particularly postgraduate students, to deter resignations and avoid perceived waste of medical education. Service bonds require doctors to work in the state's healthcare system for 1-5 years after completing their education, with penalties ranging from ₹ 10 lakh to ₹ 1 crore for breaking the bond.

# Why Bengal Needs to Reclaim More Than Just the Night

By Written By: Reshmi Dasgupta

The government in West Bengal did not realise that the rape and murder of a postgraduate medical student at one of the premier teaching hospitals in Kolkata would blow up into such a nationwide stir. After all, had followed the standard operating procedure (SOP) that had worked earlier this time too: hush up the incident, shame the victim, intimidate the parents into silence, pre-empt scrutiny by providing a convenient culprit and promise speedy justice. Yet this time, it did not work. Maybe because the brave parents refused to accept the police and hospital version that the young doctor had committed suicide. Maybe because too many people actually saw the body spread-eagled on a hospital cot, naked from the waist down, with grievous injury marks all over it to be convinced that it was suicide. Maybe because commiserations from the chief minister and her all-powerful



nephew were patently insincere. Those who do not live in West Bengal (and have not lived there for a long time) are the most shocked and surprised by this heinous rape and murder. Those who live in today's West Bengal are not. They are angry. Finally. Like the doctors now protesting in medical colleges all over the state, despite the government's best efforts to tamp down dissent. Because they know practically every state-run educational institution in Bengal

is in exactly the same situation. Which is why the protests over a young doctor's rape and murder have spread so rapidly across the state, with junior doctors in government-run medical colleges and hospitals again demanding safety and security. Yes, again. Their agitation in 2019 was triggered by two doctors being assaulted by families of patients. But this time it is about the dismal and dangerous conditions within the institutions, not about protection

from angry outsiders—a crucial difference.

Matters have obviously been allowed to deteriorate beyond normal tolerance levels. Even for Bengalis, who accepted the decades of Communist-driven economic decline and deindustrialisation, persistent bad roads and pathetic civic amenities, not to mention rampant corruption and terror in the hinterland: farmland being commandeered by party goons and dissenters being disappeared—is the new normal with the police doing nothing, or worse still, complicit.

Every state-run hospital and attached colleges is in the control of hoodlums with party affiliations. Most, if not all of them, also have the patronage of the local police as well as higher state government functionaries. How deep the rot runs is evident from the fact that even though the principal of RG Kar Hospital was forced to resign by the students, he was promptly reinstated as the principal of another state-run college hospital. Clearly, he has

godmothers. Only when the High Court was seized of the matter was this man prevented from insouciantly moving to yet another institution, presumably with the concurrence of the powers that be. He had been removed and brought back to RG Kar earlier too. The issue is as much about what happens inside the state's medical colleges as it is about the role of the police in letting matters come to such a pass. And, tellingly, CM Mamata Banerjee holds the home and health portfolios.

Last year a young student of Kolkata's trendy Jadavpur University was forced to commit suicide after sustained torture by a gang of men with party connections who had free run of the campus and hostel. The boy's parents were browbeaten into silence, protests by political parties were allegedly disallowed by the students themselves, and remedial measures were supposedly taken by a proactive state government. Was there any real change in the situation? No.

## Understanding Pakistan's Role In The Bangladesh Crisis

By: Arun Anand

The ongoing crisis in Bangladesh has captured international attention, with many observers attributing it to external interference, particularly from Pakistan and its intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The political turbulence in Bangladesh, marked by widespread student protests and subsequent governmental instability, is believed to be part of a broader geopolitical strategy involving multiple regional players. Recent evidence suggests that the Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh, has played a crucial role in orchestrating the unrest, allegedly with the backing of Pakistan's ISI. Bangladesh has long been a battleground for various political and ideological forces, both domestic and international. The country's political landscape is deeply polarised, with the ruling Awami League, led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), often supported by Islamist groups like Jamaat-e-Islami, being the primary contenders for power. The political



rivalry between these groups has frequently led to periods of unrest and violence. In recent years, Sheikh Hasina's government has faced mounting challenges, including accusations of authoritarianism, corruption, and human rights abuses. These issues have provided fertile ground for opposition forces, both within Bangladesh and from neighboring countries, to exploit the situation for their own strategic interests. Pakistan, which has historically had a contentious relationship with Bangladesh since its independence in 1971, has been

particularly active in seeking to influence the country's political direction.

Role of Islami Chhatra Shibir

The Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) has emerged as a significant player in the ongoing crisis. As the student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, the ICS has a long history of radicalism and has been implicated in various acts of violence and unrest in Bangladesh. The group's influence extends across several major universities, including Dhaka University, Chittagong University, Jahangir University, Sylhet University, and Rajshahi University.

These institutions have become focal points for student-led protests, which have escalated in recent years, particularly around the issue of the controversial quota system for government jobs. According to reports, ICS operatives have infiltrated these universities, using their positions to mobilise students and incite protests against the government. The protests, initially centered around legitimate grievances related to the quota system, quickly took on a more radical and violent character, with ICS members allegedly playing a key role in this transformation. The group's activities have been linked to a broader strategy aimed at destabilising Sheikh Hasina's government, with the ultimate goal of replacing it with a regime more favorable to Islamist interests.

Pakistan's ISI and External Influence

The involvement of Pakistan's ISI in Bangladesh's internal affairs is a critical aspect of the current crisis. The ISI has a long history of meddling in the political affairs of its neighboring countries, often using proxy groups to achieve its objectives. In Bangladesh, the ISI has reportedly been providing

support to Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing, the ICS, as part of a strategy to weaken Sheikh Hasina's government and create a more favorable political environment for Pakistan.

Reports indicate that the ISI's involvement in the student protests has been multifaceted. In addition to providing financial and logistical support to the ICS, the ISI has also been involved in sophisticated information warfare tactics, including the creation of fake social media profiles to spread disinformation and incite unrest. These tactics have been instrumental in escalating the protests from peaceful demonstrations into violent confrontations with the authorities. The ISI's activities in Bangladesh are part of a broader geopolitical strategy that includes undermining India's influence in the region. Sheikh Hasina's government has maintained strong ties with India, particularly in areas of trade, security, and counter-terrorism. Pakistan, which views India as its primary regional rival, has a vested interest in weakening the Bangladesh-India relationship.

# How Gurmeet Ram Rahim's paroles have coincided with Haryana, Punjab polls

Dera Sacha Sauda chief and rape convict Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh walked out of the Sunaria jail in Haryana's Rohtak on Monday after he was granted a 21-day furlough. This marks his second temporary release in the past eight months and the 14th in the last five years. Interestingly, his furloughs and paroles have consistently coincided with elections, be it to municipal bodies or state assemblies. However, the Haryana government has insisted that Ram Rahim's release was in line with the Haryana Good Conduct Prisoners (Temporary Release) Act. In fact, this is the seventh time he has been released since 2022. The latest furlough granted to Ram Rahim, who is serving a 20-year sentence for raping two of his disciples, comes weeks ahead of the Haryana Assembly election. He was granted a 50-day parole on January 19, which came

ahead of the Lok Sabha polls. During the 2022 Punjab Assembly election, he was out on parole for 21 days between February 7 and February 27. He was again released for 30 days on June 17, 2022, coinciding with the Haryana municipal elections.

The same year, he was released again on October 14, 40 days ahead of the assembly bypolls in Adampur, Punjab. In 2023, Ram Rahim was released for 30 days in July ahead of the Haryana panchayat elections. In November, he again walked out of prison for 21 days ahead of the Rajasthan Assembly elections.

Ram Rahim has a sizeable following in Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab and has dabbled in politics for a long time. The Sirsa-based Dera Sacha Sauda also has a political wing.

While Ram Rahim has never contested

elections, he has previously supported the Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), and the BJP. However, his endorsements have not always yielded the desired outcomes. The Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), the body that manages Sikh shrines, has raised eyebrows at the frequent paroles and furloughs being given to the Dera chief. In the recent case, the Punjab and Haryana High Court disposed of the SGPC's petition against Ram Rahim's temporary release.

**NOT ONLY GURMEET RAM RAHIM, 89 CONVICTS GIVEN PAROLE**

The Haryana government, in an affidavit, informed the Punjab and Haryana High Court that 89 convicts have been given parole or furlough under the Haryana Good Conduct Prisoners (Temporary Release) Act. Only two convicts were denied temporary release.

The Haryana government can grant 70 days of parole and 21 days of furlough under the Act.

Before the High Court, the SGPC had alleged that the law was being misused while granting furlough to Gurmeet Ram Rahim.

The BJP-ruled Haryana government has assured the High Court that any application for temporary release would be considered strictly as per the provisions of the jail manual without the competent authority indulging in arbitrariness, favouritism, or discrimination. Ram Rahim has been allowed to stay at the Dera ashram in Barnawa in Uttar Pradesh's Baghpat during his furlough period.

Earlier this year, the Punjab and Haryana High Court acquitted Ram Rahim and four others in a 22-year-old case pertaining to the murder of Dera Sacha Sauda's former manager, Ranjit Singh.

## Decoding the 'long arm of the US Deep State' in Bangladesh unrest

The situation in present-day Bangladesh reflects a complex interplay of domestic politics, international influence and personal rivalries, particularly between ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, chief advisor of the new interim government that has taken charge of the country. Hasina has accused the United States of orchestrating her removal from power for refusing to allow a US airbase on St Martin's Island, a strategic Bangladeshi location in the Bay of Bengal. She has suggested that this refusal led to foreign interference in her country's affairs, particularly in the form of the anti-quota student protests that, she alleged, were used to destabilise her government. At the same time, observers do not rule out the hand of the US Deep State in the political upheaval in Bangladesh. The Deep State refers to the clandestine network of powerful individuals or groups within the government or military that operates independently of elected officials to influence or control government policy and decision-making in order to pursue its own agenda. The interim government that has taken over the reins of Bangladesh is perceived by some observers to be pro-US. The most prominent figure in this government is Yunus, founder of Grameen Bank and a globally recognised pioneer in microfinance. Known for his strong links with US organisations, such as USAID and the Ford Foundation, Yunus is seen by some as aligned to US interests. The Ford Foundation is already under the scanner of Indian investigating agencies for allegedly pumping up anti-India sentiment. The strained ties between Hasina and Yunus soured further after the latter suggested he might float a political outfit. Hasina viewed it as a direct challenge to her leadership. She accused Yunus of treating Grameen Bank as his personal property and the bank of undertaking unethical practices, such as the alleged diversion of \$100 million meant for microcredit to a sister organisation, Grameen Kalyan, in purported violation of Bangladesh's financial laws.

Despite his global acclaim and contributions towards poverty alleviation, Yunus has faced legal challenges and scrutiny within Bangladesh, with his close ties to US entities fuelling suspicion of alignment with foreign interests.



This situation underscores the broader tensions within Bangladesh, where issues of sovereignty, foreign influence and political legitimacy are frequently contested, highlighting the delicate balance the country must maintain between domestic interests and international relations.

The US had been pushing Bangladesh to offer St Martin's Island for its military base. Washington is seen as aiming to control the Bay of Bengal to underpin India and counter China by controlling the Malacca Strait, though which three-fourths of the global maritime shipping trade passes. Hasina had flatly refused to do so, going by the US record of fleecing vassal states through military bases. In Bangladesh-US ties, this was the last straw. Now if I say that I will lease out St Martin's Island or our country, there will also be no problem for me to stay in power. I know that, Hasina said in a recent press statement, remarking on how the US wanted to build an airbase in the Bay of Bengal. Hasina also accused the US of carving out a 'Christian country' from parts of Bangladesh and Myanmar. She claimed a 'white man' who

met her before the Bangladesh elections in January this year had assured her of facing no problems during the elections if she allowed them to build an airbase on Bangladesh territory.

The US State Department, however, has said that any suggestion that Washington was involved in precipitating Hasina's resignation was absolutely untrue. Some observers have hinted at an orchestrated nexus aimed at ousting Hasina. In the current wave of protests that engulfed public and private universities in Bangladesh, among those involved are students of BRAC University in Dhaka. BRAC University is a prominent participant in projects of the Open Society University Network (OSUN), founded by George Soros, a Hungarian-born American businessman. Incidentally, Soros has been a vocal critic of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and has been accused by the BJP of trying to interfere in India's democratic process. BRAC University's parent organisation, the Bangladeshi NGO BRAC, is one of the world's largest non-profit set-ups.

# Indian in Australia gets 10 million in account by mistake, gifts friend 1 million

Jatinder Singh, a 39-year-old Indian national, has been sentenced to three years in prison in Australia for spending over 6 million Australian dollars (AUD) that was accidentally transferred into his bank account. The money was meant to be a AUD100 refund from cryptocurrency platform, Crypto.com, but due to an accounting error, more than 10.4 million was sent to his partner Thevamangari Manivel's account. Singh's spending spree lasted 10 months, involving 160 transactions, including buying two properties and gifting 1 million to a friend. The error occurred in May 2021 when Singh deposited 100 Australian dollars

into Manivel's account on Crypto.com. Due to a discrepancy in account names, the refund process went wrong, leading to the massive transfer. Singh instructed Manivel to move the funds from her Commonwealth Bank account to their joint account before the error could be corrected. SINGH MISTOOK MONEY AS JACKPOT FROM CRYPTO PLATFORM The cryptocurrency platform discovered the mistake during an audit seven months later.



Despite attempts by Crypto.com and the Commonwealth Bank to recover the money, Singh and Manivel ignored their efforts, believing it to be a scam, reported The Canberra Times. By this time, they had already spent the money, including buying two properties and gifting AUD\$1 million to a friend. Manivel also transferred AUD2 million to a bank account in Malaysia. Singh was arrested in March 2022 and charged with theft after telling police he thought the money was a winning something from Crypto.com. Judge Martine Marich noted Singh's cognitive challenges, including an extremely low IQ, which impaired his ability to understand the consequences of his actions.

Cognitive limitations and challenges in navigating social rules weigh more heavily on you than it would for others, Judge Marich said. She described Singh's actions as an opportunistic and poorly considered series of acts, stemming from a poor understanding of cryptocurrency trading and limited problem-solving abilities. BULLIED IN REMAND, MENTAL HEALTH OF INDIAN WORSENS Singh's difficult time on remand, which included racial bullying, worsened his mental health, causing anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts. The media coverage of his case further heightened his fears, with Judge Marich noting his apprehension about community judgement and his parents finding out. (You were afraid) of others in the Punjab community judging and gossiping about you and fear that your parents will learn of your offending, the judge said. Despite these challenges, Judge Marich acknowledged Singh's good prospects for rehabilitation. Singh will be eligible for parole after serving two years, having already spent 361 days in prison. The judge also noted that a conviction could impact future visa applications. Singh's former partner, Manivel, was jailed for 209 days in 2023 after being arrested while attempting to board a flight to Malaysia with a one-way ticket.

## Leader Of Tech Support Fraud Scheme Sentenced To Seven Years In Prison

Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that VINOTH PONMARAN was sentenced to seven years in prison for participating in a fraud conspiracy that exploited elderly victims by remotely accessing their computers and convincing victims to pay for computer support services that they did not need and which were never actually provided. In total, the conspiracy generated more than \$6 million in criminal proceeds from at least approximately 6,500 victims. PONMARAN previously pled guilty before U.S. District Judge Vernon S. Broderick, who imposed today's sentence. According to the allegations contained in the Superseding Information, court filings, and statements made in court, including during PONMARAN's plea proceeding and sentencing: From approximately March 2015 through July 2018, PONMARAN was a member of a criminal fraud ring (the Fraud Ring) based in the U.S. and India that committed a technical support fraud scheme targeting elderly victims located across the U.S. and Canada, including in the Southern District of New York. The

Fraud Ring's primary objective was to trick victims into believing that their computers were infected with malware in order to deceive them into paying hundreds or thousands of dollars for phony computer repair services. Over the course of the conspiracy, the Fraud Ring generated more than \$6 million in proceeds from at least 6,500 victims. The scheme generally worked as follows. First, the Fraud Ring caused pop-up windows to appear on victims' computers. The pop-up windows claimed, falsely, that a virus had infected the victims' computers. The pop-up windows directed the victims to call a particular telephone number to obtain technical support. In at least some instances, the pop-up windows threatened victims that, if they restarted or shut down their computer, it could cause serious damage to the system, including complete data loss. In an attempt to give the false appearance of legitimacy, in some instances the pop-up windows included, without authorization, the corporate logo of a well-known, legitimate technology company.

## Ex-CEO on why Google is losing AI race: Work from home more important than winning

Former Google CEO Eric Schmidt has criticised the tech giant's work-from-home policy, suggesting it's a key factor in why Google is losing the artificial intelligence race with startups like OpenAI. During a recent talk at Stanford University, Schmidt said, Google decided work-life balance, going home early, working from home was more important than winning. Schmidt, who also served as Alphabet's executive chairman, pointed out that this shift has put the company at a disadvantage compared to startups, where people work like hell. I am sorry to be so blunt, but the fact of the matter is when you all leave university and go found (start) a company, you're not going to let people

work from home and only come in one day a week," he added. In his remarks, Eric Schmidt pointed out that leading tech companies often miss out on the next big industry leap, underlining the importance of innovative thinking and driven leaders like Elon Musk. Schmidt's views align with those of other top executives, such as JP Morgan CEO Jamie Dimon, who has been critical of remote work and has pushed for employees to return to the office. However, it may be noted that Schmidt's claim that Google only expects employees to come in one out of five working days appears inaccurate. According to reports, Google requires its employees to be in the office three days a week.

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# Taliban marks three years since return to power in Afghanistan

Taliban authorities were set to celebrate the third anniversary of their takeover of Afghanistan on Wednesday, with a military parade at a former US military base and festivities in key cities.

Extra security was deployed in the capital Kabul and the Taliban's spiritual home of Kandahar ahead of the "day of victory", with Islamic State group attacks a continued threat in the country.

Taliban forces seized Kabul on August 15, 2021, after the US-backed government collapsed and its leaders fled into exile. The anniversary is marked a day earlier on the Afghan calendar. "The Day of Victory is historically a significant and proud day for the Islamic Ummah (nation), and particularly for the Afghan people," said Prime Minister Mohammad Hassan



Akhund in a statement on Tuesday.

"On this date, Allah granted the Mujahid nation of Afghanistan a decisive victory over an international arrogant and occupying force."

In the three years since they ended their 20-year insurgency, the Taliban government has consolidated its grip on the country, implementing laws based on its strict interpretation of Islam,

even though it is still unrecognised by any other state.

Their restrictions on women, who bear the brunt of policies the United Nations has called "gender apartheid", remain a key sticking point.

Banners, flags and poetry The days before the celebrations, workers were busy putting up banners and billboards reading "Congratulations" with the

anniversary date around Kabul. Vendors selling flags of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan -- the Taliban government's formal name for the country -- dotted the city, the white and black standard also fluttering over streets.

A military parade and speeches were to be held at the Bagram airbase, the US military's former centre of operations in Afghanistan, around 40 kilometres (25 miles) outside of Kabul.

Celebrations featuring athletes and poetry readings were due to be held in the capital.

Heavy security and decorations also went up in the southern city of Kandahar -- the birthplace of the Taliban movement and home to the reclusive leader Hibatullah Akhundzada, who rules through religious edict.

Security has been a key priority for Taliban authorities, and while

many Afghans express relief at the end of 40 years of successive conflicts, the economy remains in crisis and the population mired in a worsening humanitarian crisis.

A joint statement from international non-governmental groups warned of the growing aid funding gap to the country, with 23.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) reiterated calls for pressure on the Taliban government to lift restrictions on women, who have been squeezed from public life and banned from secondary and higher education.

"The third anniversary of the Taliban's takeover is a grim reminder of Afghanistan's human rights crisis, but it should also be a call for action," said Fereshta Abbasi, Afghanistan researcher for HRW.

## Trump's interview with Musk devolves into yet another X catastrophe

Elon Musk guaranteed entertainment. He delivered technical difficulties instead.

Musk planned to host GOP nominee Donald Trump for an interview iLive on X, formerly Twitter Spaces, at 8 p.m. But for the second time in the 2024 presidential election, the social media site was glitchy and many users apparently couldn't listen to the interview.

Musk posted that there appears to be a massive DDOS attack on ???. Working on shutting it down, adding that he may proceed with the interview with a smaller set of listeners. DDOS stands for distributed denial of service. The interview started about 45 minutes late.

The swirl of posts about technical difficulties echoed Musk's previous X Live event with Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, who launched his Republican presidential primary campaign on an X live interview with Musk. As appeared to happen with Trump's event, the site's livestream portal, which is audio only, crashed. If assuming all the Trump supporters who ridiculed DeSantis for the crashing of his Twitter Space with Musk will do the same here. LOLLOLOL, wrote conservative commentator

Erick Erickson, with a clown face emoji. Musk posted ahead of the event with Trump that he was going to do some system scaling tests tonight & tomorrow in advance. But these precautionary measures couldn't save the platform from crashing. Some X users were able to enter the



livestream portal, but as Bloomberg's Stephanie Lai posted, we're ten minutes in and there is still background music playing.

Many other users couldn't enter at all, getting either a gray-toned webpage where the portal would usually pop up or an unavailable notification on the mobile app.

Trump's campaign spokesperson claimed that the GOP nominee and Musk were breaking the

internet. Musk's interview with Trump was supposed to be the third in a series with 2024 presidential candidates who have interested the tech mogul this year. But Musk has now pledged to put his full support ó and X feed real estate ó behind Trump's third

campaign. The multimillionaire has the potential to boost Trump's reelection chances with contributions from his personal fortune and mobilizing his devoted online followers. When the interview finally started, with about 1 million people tuned into the livestream, Trump and Musk discussed the assassination attempt that the former president survived before pivoting to verbal attacks on

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, who is now the Democratic nominee. During the unstructured interview, Musk often agreed with Trump on issues like immigration, inflation and crime. Both men during the hour-plus interview rambled at times over the criminal cases

Trump is facing as well as the ongoing foreign wars where the U.S. is providing aid. That war had zero chance of happening if I was there, Trump said of the Russia-Ukraine war. And he said this stupid administration allowed inflation to happen.

Trump also chastised Harris pledging over the weekend in Nevada to end taxes on tips ó a proposal Trump first floated at a rally in Las Vegas in June. He also repeated his criticism of Harris over her role as border czar in Biden's administration.

She was the border czar, and you people can't allow them to get away with their disinformation campaign. Now she's trying to say she wasn't really involved, Trump said of Harris.

Trump also praised Musk for his tough business practices, specifically breaking strikes at his businesses.

You walk in and you just say, You want to quit? They go on strike. I won't mention the company, but they go on strike and you say, That's ok, you're all gone. You're all gone, the former president said. And you are the greatest.

Musk has previously made donations to a mix of Republicans and Democrats, according to disclosures to the Federal Election Commission. His last disclosed political donation was made in November 2020, an election cycle when he wrote checks to both Sens. Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Chris Coons (D-Del.), among others. In the midterms before that, Musk wrote checks each for \$33,900 for the Republican and Democratic House campaign arms. The billionaire is now backing a new super PAC to support Trump, where he will potentially make his first political contributions of the 2024 election cycle. America PAC will file its first financial disclosures in October. She'll be worse than him, Trump said of Harris. Because she's a believer in the radical left and he wasn't.

# Disney wants lawsuit over doctor's death dismissed over husband's subscription

*Disney is attempting to get a wrongful death lawsuit filed by the widower of a New York University doctor dismissed, arguing that he signed up for the streaming service years earlier.*

Disney is attempting to get a wrongful death lawsuit filed by the widower of a 42-year-old New York University doctor dismissed, stating that he signed up for the streaming service years earlier. The doctor died in Florida in October last year following an allergic reaction after eating at the theme park restaurant.

Jeffrey Piccolo, the widower of Kanokporn Tangsuan, is suing Disney. However, according to court papers, the streaming media has now claimed that the \$50,000 suit should be tossed because Piccolo agreed to arbitration when he first signed up for a one-month trial of the Disney+ streaming service back in 2019, court documents showed. Tangsuan and Piccolo dined at the Raglan Road Irish Pub and Restaurant in October last year. Piccolo said his wife was highly allergic to dairy and nuts, and the couple chose to eat at the pub because they believed Disney would have proper safety regulations in place, Daily Mail reported. According to the



lawsuit, the couple repeatedly asked their server about allergen-free food, and was assured of the same when she ordered onion rings, broccoli, corn fritters and scallops. Soon after leaving the pub, the 42-year-old medical professional began having difficulty in breathing and collapsed. Despite self-administering an epi pen, Tangsuan died shortly after at a local hospital.

Piccolo has sought expenses for mental pain and suffering, loss of income and funeral expenses besides the over \$50,000 in damages. He claimed in the lawsuit that the theme park was negligent and failed to properly train their staff about food allergies, the Daily Mail report added. In a May 31 motion, Disney argued that the Disney+ subscriber agreement Piccolo

created in November 2019 and used to buy tickets to Epcot (Walt Disney theme park) in 2023, required him to agree to their terms and conditions. The company argued that he agreed to the terms of their 'Subscriber Agreement', which is an arbitration clause in Section 7. "[The section] applies to 'all disputes' including those involving 'The Walt Disney Company or its affiliates.'" Walt Disney Parks and Resorts is an affiliate of The Walt Disney Company," the company argued. Disney said the same terms were applicable in the Epcot purchase as well.

Disney further stated that in agreeing to the terms, Piccolo represented his late wife. The widower's lawyers have slammed Disney's latest motion as "preposterous" and "outrageously unreasonable", the New York Post reported.

The lawyers have also argued that Disney lost its right to seek arbitration when it filed its first response to Piccolo's lawsuit without mentioning the matter.

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# Judge declines to recuse himself in Trump hush money case for third time



†(News Agency)-A New York judge's daughter. Justice Juan Merchan, in a decision released on Wednesday, denied a request by Donald Trump was convicted of charges involving hush money paid to a porn star, dismissing the former US president's claim of conflict of interest related to political consultancy work by the

# Over 1,000 arrested in UK over violent rioting, targeted attacks against Muslims



†(News Agency)-British authorities have now arrested more than 1,000 people following days of rioting involving violence, arson and looting as well as racist attacks targeting Muslims and migrants, a national policing body said on Tuesday. The riots, which followed the killings of three young girls in the northern English town of Southport, began after the July 29 attack was wrongly blamed on an Islamist migrant based on online misinformation. Violence broke out in cities across England and also in Northern Ireland, but there have been fewer instances of unrest since last week after efforts to identify those involved were ramped up. Many have been swiftly jailed, with some receiving long sentences. The National Police Chiefs' Council said in its latest update that 1,024 had been arrested and 575 charged across the UK. Those arrested include a 69-year-old accused of vandalism in Liverpool and a 11-year-old boy in Belfast.

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## Canada Minister urges reforms in temporary worker programme amid UN 'slavery' jab



†(News Agency)- Canada's temporary foreign worker program is not fatally flawed but is "in need of reform," the country's immigration minister told Reuters on Tuesday, following a damning UN report that dubbed the program a breeding ground for modern slavery. The program brings non-Canadians to the country to work on a temporary basis. Ostensibly meant to fill labour shortages, it has grown dramatically and has come under fire for suppressing wages and leaving workers vulnerable to abuse. The low-wage temporary foreign worker stream, especially, "is one that we need to take a more careful look at," Immigration Minister Marc Miller said. Its ranks have grown dramatically - from 15,817 in 2016 to 83,654 in 2023, thanks

in large part to expansions in 2022. Among other things, these expansions increased the share of employers' workforces that could be low-wage temporary foreign workers, and the change waived a rule precluding the hiring of temporary foreign workers in certain low-wage occupations in regions with unemployment rates of 6 per cent or higher. Labour Minister Randy Boissonnault is considering "a refusal to process in the low wage stream if the abuse and misuse does not improve," said labour ministry spokesperson Mathis Denis. But "even when the program is working as intended and there's no abuse, the low-wage stream absolutely suppresses wages.

## Israel keeps up strikes in Gaza as fears of wider conflict in West Asia grow



†(News Agency)-Israeli forces pressed on with operations near the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis on Monday amid an international push for a deal to halt fighting in Gaza and prevent a slide into a wider regional conflict with Iran and its proxies. Palestinian medics said Israeli military strikes on Khan Younis on Monday killed at least 18 people and wounded several. Meanwhile, more families and displaced persons streamed out of areas threatened by new evacuation orders telling people to clear the area. As fighting continued, Hamas reacted sceptically to the latest round of Egyptian and Qatari-brokered talks due on Thursday, saying it had seen no

sign of movement from the Israeli side. The group said on Sunday that mediators must force Israel to accept a ceasefire proposal based on ideas from US President Joe Biden, which Hamas had accepted, "instead of pursuing further rounds of negotiations or new proposals that would provide cover for the occupation's aggression". Two sources close to Hamas told Reuters the group was convinced the new call for talks was coordinated beforehand with Israel to deter responses from Iran and Hezbollah to the assassination of the group's chief, Ismail Haniyeh, in Tehran and a top Hezbollah leader in Lebanon.

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Recorder of Town

# Musk blames 'DDOS attack' for technical glitch that delayed Trump interview

(News Agency)-Elon Musk's much-anticipated interview of Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump on X started after 45 minutes of delay. Musk claimed it was a "massive DDOS attack" behind the site crash. The interview, initially scheduled for 8 pm, started just after 45 minutes of delay, with Musk kicking off the conversation by claiming



that adversaries attacked the site to prevent Donald Trump from being heard. With the worst-case scenario in mind, the tech mogul stated that the social media platform would allow only a few live listeners and would later post the conversation online. "There appears to be a massive DDOS attack on X. I am working on shutting it down. Worst case scenario, we will proceed with a smaller number of live

listeners and post the conversation later," the Tesla chief stated. In another post, he said, "We tested the system with 8 million concurrent listeners earlier today."

### WHAT IS DDOS ATTACK?

DDOS stands for "Distributed Denial-of-Service Attack." It is a cybercrime, according to the cybersecurity firm Fortinet, in which the attacker floods the target or its surrounding infrastructure with internet traffic to prevent users from accessing connected online services and sites.

According to Microsoft, "During a DDoS attack, a series of bots, or botnet, floods a website or service with HTTP requests and traffic. Essentially, multiple computers storm one computer during an attack, pushing out legitimate users. As a result, service can be delayed or otherwise disrupted for a length of time." It is possible that hackers can also infiltrate your database during an attack, accessing sensitive information. DDoS attacks can exploit security vulnerabilities and target any endpoint that is reachable, publicly, through the internet," Microsoft added.

# Former Finance Minister of Mozambique Convicted of \$2B Fraud and Money Laundering Scheme

A federal jury in Brooklyn, New York, convicted the former Finance Minister of Mozambique for his role in a \$2 billion fraud, bribery, and money laundering scheme that victimized investors in the United States and elsewhere.

According to court documents and evidence presented at trial, Manuel Chang, 68, of Mozambique, received \$7 million in bribes in exchange for signing guarantees on behalf of the Republic of Mozambique to secure funding for three loans for maritime projects. As part of the scheme, Chang and his co-conspirators falsely told banks and investors that the loan proceeds would be used for the projects and not to pay bribes to government officials. In fact, however, Chang and his co-conspirators diverted more than \$200 million of the loan proceeds that were used, among other things, to pay bribes and kickbacks to Chang and others.

While serving as Finance Minister of Mozambique, Manuel Chang obtained \$7 million in bribe payments in exchange for signing guarantees to secure more than \$2 billion in loans," said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Nicole M. Argentieri, head of the Justice

Department's Criminal Division. "Not only did Chang's abuse of authority betray the trust of the Mozambican people, but his corrupt bargain also caused investors to suffer substantial losses on those loans. Chang's conviction today demonstrates that the Criminal Division is committed to combatting foreign corruption in violation of U.S. law, no matter where these schemes occur or whom they involve." The trial evidence showed that, between approximately 2013 and 2015, Chang, together with his co-conspirators including executives of Prinvest Group, a United Arab Emirates-based shipbuilding company, ensured that a United Kingdom subsidiary of Credit Suisse AG and another foreign investment bank arranged for more than \$2 billion to be extended to companies owned and controlled by the Mozambican government: Proindicus S.A. (Proindicus), Empresa Moçambicana de Atum, S.A. (EMATUM), and Mozambique Asset Management (MAM). The proceeds of the loans were intended to fund three maritime projects for which Prinvest was to provide the equipment and services.

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# Bangladesh parties patient on polls but fear a 'king's party'

†(News Agency)-With the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government, the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) is believed to have the brightest chance of coming to power when the next election is held. The biggest question is when will the next election in Bangladesh be held, and will the BNP contest the election with its earlier partner Jamaat-e-Islami?

Then there is also the fear of the emergence of a "king's party" if the election is delayed too much. That is a reference to a new party that might have the military's blessing. Bangladesh has seen prolonged years of military rule and army-backed regimes. The military doesn't seem to have an appetite for backing an interim government for too long, given the current popular sentiment. Bangladesh Army chief, General Waker-Uz-Zaman, is backing an interim government and promised to hold early elections and a return to civilian rule soon.

A top BNP leader and a Jamaat member told India Today. In that elections can't be put off for long, and even the interim government of Muhammad Yunus was aware of that.



However, everyone agrees that the institutions that had taken a particular shape during the 15 years under Sheikh Hasina need to be revamped first.

"All political parties keep preparing for elections. But the situation now in Bangladesh is not mature enough to think about elections. Now is the time to handle the problems created by the earlier regime and solve the crises. Restoring law and order is a priority, and bringing in reforms is the focus area," says Nazrul Islam Khan, a member of the BNP's national

standing committee.

"However, elections can't be postponed indefinitely. The time cannot be predicted right now. But I don't think it will take a long time to hold the next election," Khan tells India Today. In from Dhaka.

Jamaat-e-Islami too feels that it's time for restoration of institutions, but elections need to be conducted within 1.5 years.

"I hope elections are held sooner than later. There has been tremendous damage done to institutions that are the cornerstones of democracy, be it judiciary,

election commission, or the police. Restoration needs time, but it can't be too long a process," says Muhammad Nakibur Rahman, Jamaat-e-Islami member and professor of finance at University of North Carolina.

Nakibur Rahman is the son of Motiur Rahman Nizami, the former president of Jamaat-e-Islami.

**WHY BANGLADESH ELECTION CAN'T BE PUT OFF FOR LONG**

The Election Commission of Bangladesh deregistered the Jamaat, a radical right-wing party, after a High Court decision in 2018.

However, Jamaat was included in the all-party talks that General Waker-Uz-Zaman held after Hasina escaped from Bangladesh amid protesters marching towards her residence on August 5. Jamaat members have been blamed for the violent protests, but its leaders say there is no evidence to link it to the violence. Jamaat's Muhammad Nakibur Rahman fears the emergence of a "king's party" if the military-backed interim government stays on for too long. He expects the elections to be held within 1.5 years.

## Ground Report: Dhaka turns into Gotham City, vigilantes patrol streets as cops stay away



†(News Agency)-As the clock strikes midnight in Bangladesh's Dhaka, Rani and her friends, armed with hockey sticks, iron rods, and even plastic pipes, could be seen patrolling their neighbourhood every day. With police personnel absent in Dhaka streets following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5 amid widespread looting and targeting of minorities, youths have decided to take matters into their own hands and protect their communities. The streets of the Hindu Colony of Old Dhaka, which once bustled with life, are now deserted, with a handful of young men patrolling the area. These youths, members of the Hindu community, have formed a vigilante group to guard against potential attacks on their homes and temples. Since August 5, there have been over 200 instances of attacks on Hindus. Five Hindus have been killed and there have been several cases of sexual assault.

Attacks on temples and targeted looting of shops owned by Hindus have also been reported.

Dhaka has, in fact, turned into Gotham, a fictional city that is protected by Batman, a vigilante comics character.

"Our population here is around 5,000. We are guarding our colony because the situation in Bangladesh has changed. Hindu houses and temples are being looted, and that's why we are on guard every night," Madan Ravidas, a local youth, told India Today. "We question anyone who comes from outside to ensure our safety," he further said.

As the sun sets, the youths go out with sticks to patrol the main road and the roads connecting the colonies. Vehicles entering the neighbourhood are searched thoroughly. Another youth, Charan Ravidas, said after Sheikh Hasina left the country, the situation had changed and a lot of injustice was perpetrated against the minorities.

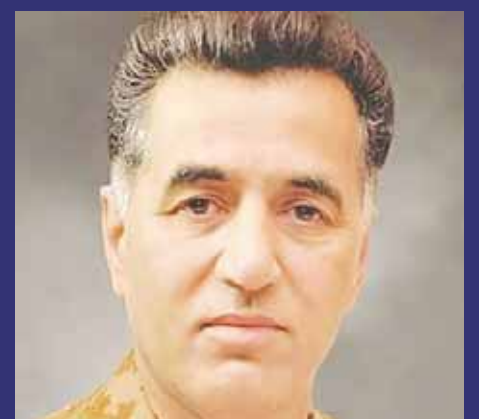
## Ex-ISI chief Faiz Hameed's arrest 'internal issue' of Pak army, says Imran Khan

†(News Agency)-Pakistan's jailed former premier on Tuesday termed the arrest of former ISI chief Faiz Hameed as an "internal issue" of the military and said that the army's action against the former general has nothing to do with his party. Hameed served as the director general of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) from 2019 to 2021, when Khan was prime minister and was accused of meddling in political affairs at his behest. "Khan sahib said just this that it is the army's internal matter and that whatever action the army has taken has nothing to do with the PTI or Khan sahib," Khan's legal representative Intezar Panjutha said. Panjutha made these remarks following a meeting of Khan with his senior lawyers at Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi.

Panjutha quoted Khan as saying it was purely a military matter, with no links to PTI. He further clarified that there had been no political connection between Khan and General Faiz.

Khan also claimed that former army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa had replaced General Faiz after making a deal with Nawaz Sharif, according to the lawyer.

Khan also suggested that if General Faiz's arrest was related to the events of May 9, it would be an opportune moment to form a judicial commission and bring the CCTV footage of the day



to light, Panjutha noted. He also stated that the former premier urged his followers to peacefully protest tonight for the sake of freedom, stressing the importance of taking to the streets for the country. Panjutha also highlighted Khan's concerns over the mounting pressure on the Supreme Court, the disillusionment among the youth, and the deteriorating conditions in Pakistan, comparing them with those in Bangladesh.

He stated that Khan believed it was time for Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa to step back, highlighting that PTI's three seats were allegedly taken away the previous day.

Earlier, in an unprecedented move, Hameed was detained by military authorities and court-martial proceedings were initiated against him on charges of corruption, misuse of authority and violating the Pakistan Army Act.

# Founder Of "BitClout" Digital Asset Charged With Fraud In Connection With Sale Of "BitClout" Tokens

Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and Christie M. Curtis, the Acting Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), announced the arrest of NADER AL-NAJI, the founder and promoter of the iBitClout token. AL-NAJI was charged with defrauding a iBitClout purchaser by making false and misleading representations disclaiming control over the use of the investment funds. AL-NAJI was taken into custody on Saturday, July 27, 2024, and was presented yesterday before a U.S. Magistrate Judge in California. FBI Acting Assistant Director in Charge Christie M. Curtis said: iNader Al-Naji, founder of the BitClout protocol, allegedly lied to investors and misappropriated investments in the protocol for personal expenses and gifts. Failing to properly disclose the use of invested funds disrupts the integrity vital to investing and can breed distrust for future opportunities. The FBI does not tolerate individuals who use false promises and half-truths to exploit well-intended investors of their funds.

According to the allegations contained in



the Complaint:[1]

AL-NAJI is the founder of BitClout, a social media and cryptocurrency trading platform that purportedly allowed users to purchase BitClout tokens using Bitcoin, ostensibly through a decentralized protocol without any centralized issuer, for the purpose of trading BitClout tokens in connection with the social media profiles of other BitClout users.

BitClout held itself out as a i cross between a financial app and a social app. i

Specifically, BitClout was touted as ia social network built from the ground up as its own custom blockchain. It's not a company, it has no employees o i t's just code and coins. . . . [W]e refer to BitClout as a e protocol o i t is ultimately nothing more than an open-source piece of code running on machines all over the world. No company, just code and coins. i

In or about January 2021, AL-NAJI contacted representatives of a prospective investor (iInvestor-1i) to

discuss the BitClout project and provided Investor-1 with BitClout's marketing material. On or about January 18, 2021, AL-NAJI met with representatives of Investor-1 and stated, in substance and in part, his intent to use the Bitcoin raised from selling BitClout to develop the BitClout protocol. As part of negotiations with Investor-1, AL-NAJI claimed, in substance, that the role played by his entity was merely to purchase BitClout tokens from the protocol, and that he did not have any control over the funds after the purchase was complete.

In fact, contrary to AL-NAJI's representations to Investor-1, AL-NAJI did maintain control over the proceeds provided by Investor-1 and used them for, among other things, personal expenses and gifts to AL-NAJI's family members. After inducing Investor-1 to invest approximately \$3 million, AL-NAJI routed the funds through multiple accounts for the ultimate benefit of himself and family members. AL-NAJI, 32, of Los Angeles, California, is charged with one count of wire fraud, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

## Starbucks CEO out after just over a year amid struggling sales



†(News Agency)- Starbucks is parting ways with its CEO and bringing in the head of Chipotle to lead the coffeeshop chain, as it seeks to revive flagging sales and appease outside investors.

Starbucks announced Tuesday that Brian Niccol, who has led the Mexican-style chain since 2018, will take over the coffee giant starting next month. Laxman Narasimhan, who'd been with Starbucks for less than two years, is exiting the company. Shares of Starbucks rose 14% in premarket trading on the news. The coffee giant's performance has struggled this year, hurt by weak sales in the U.S. and China. It had also faced increasing customer complaints about declining service quality and rising prices. The

company had recently come under pressure from so-called activist investors who'd purchased large stakes in order to force changes. Ironically, Chipotle has also faced similar criticisms: It raised prices earlier this year and also faced a wave of social media criticism over uneven portion sizes. But Chipotle has better weathered those issues, recently reporting strong earnings that bucked a broader industry slowdown.

But in its release announcing the change, Starbucks said Niccol had "transformed" Chipotle. "His focus on people and culture, brand, menu innovation, operational excellence, and digital transformation have set new standards in the industry and driven significant growth and value creation," Starbucks said.

## Mars to acquire Pringles maker Kellanova in \$36 billion all-cash deal: Report

†(News Agency)-Mars, the well-known family-owned candy giant behind brands like M&M's and Snickers, announced on Wednesday its plan to acquire Kellanova, the company that produces Cheez-It and Pringles, in a nearly \$36 billion all-cash deal.

The acquisition stands as the largest in the history of the packaged food



industry.

Mars will pay \$83.50 per share for Kellanova, reflecting a 33% premium over Kellanova's closing price on August 2, just before Reuters broke the news that Mars was exploring the acquisition. Following the announcement, Kellanova's shares jumped 8% to \$80.45 in pre-market trading. This acquisition comes at a time when major U.S. packaged food companies, such as Kraft Heinz, Mondelez, and Hershey, are experiencing slower sales growth. This slowdown is due to budget-conscious consumers opting for

cheaper, private-label products over more expensive branded items. The challenging environment has led to increased dealmaking in the sector, as companies seek to gain scale and withstand the pressures of price inflation and changing consumer behavior.

Mars' acquisition of Kellanova significantly surpasses its \$23 billion purchase of Wrigley in 2008. The deal will bring together a broad range of popular consumer brands under Mars' umbrella, including Twix, Bounty, and Milky Way chocolates, along with Kellanova's snack products such as Pop-Tarts, Rice Krispies Treats, and Eggo

frozen waffles.

Legal experts anticipate minimal antitrust challenges for the acquisition, given the limited overlap between the product offerings of Mars and Kellanova. Kellanova, which separated from WK Kellogg Co last October, primarily focuses on the salty snacks business both in the U.S. and globally, as well as cereal sales outside of North America. WK Kellogg retained the North American cereal business of the original Kellogg company. The Wall Street Journal initially reported the details of the deal earlier this week.

# How a wildlife sanctuary in the Great Nicobar Island was made to vanish

By Pankaj Sekhsaria

Imagine a large patch of low-lying land on the outskirts of any of our ever-expanding metros. Though registered in government records as a lake, it has been dry for a few years because of poor rains. By a sleight of hand well-known to the Indian public, the land is taken over by a builder, a high-rise is constructed in double quick time and occupants move in with much fanfare. The rains return, land becomes lake and the residents are marooned. The aggrieved home-owners go to court, which in turn asks the government to fix responsibility. The government sets up an enquiry committee which comes back with an ingenious solution: The lake that was a lake till recently was never a lake in the first place. And now that there is a building here how can this be a lake anyway? If migratory birds were visiting, it was their illusion that this was a lake, and the bird sanctuary here had been denotified many years ago anyway. A farce (or should we call it subterfuge?) much bigger than this has just been played out in the Great Nicobar Island as reported by this newspaper (ñNicobar port

plan: Flagged in no-go zone earlier, now in permitted areaí, IE, July 29).

At the heart of the matter are two related aspects: First, a category of land labelled by Indian law as coastal regulation zone



(CRZ)-1A and second, the environmental clearance granted by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to a Rs 42,000 crore transshipment port in Great Nicobar Islandís Galathea Bay. Coastal areas that are notified as protected areas (wildlife sanctuary and national park), with

mangroves, corals, turtle-nesting beaches, sea grass beds and nesting grounds of birds among others, are included in CRZ-1A. Significantly, they are out of bounds for large construction

projects such as the port in question in Great Nicobar Island. The beach at Galathea Bay, the site of the proposed port, is one of the most significant nesting sites in the Indian Ocean of the giant leatherback, the worldís largest sea turtle, in addition to three other species that also nest here. The project site also

has coral colonies and mangroves as mentioned in the projectís environment impact assessment report and the adjoining coastal forests have important nesting sites of the endemic Nicobar megapode. It was to conserve this richness and diversity that Galathea Bay was proposed in 1997 as a wildlife sanctuary over 11 sq kms of sea, coast and coastal forest. This was clearly CRZ-1A and a port was out of the question here. But the path was cleared, first and foremost, by denotifying the sanctuary in January 2021 even though the turtles continue nesting here. Put together, the Galathea Bay WLS should never have been de-notified, the MoEFCCís environment appraisal committee (EAC) should never have recommended the project for clearance and the MoEFCC should never have cleared the project that it did in November 2022. This was then challenged in the National Green Tribunal, which even as it failed its mandate spectacularly, could not help but note that the project site had 20,668 coral colonies and that part of the project is in CRZ-1A area where Port is prohibited.í

## How 9 People Were Conned With Promise Of Job In Canada By 'Dunki' Agent

By Sunil Kumar Singh

A man who claimed to have a business in Canada cheated nine unsuspecting people, including a woman and her two children, after falsely promising to send them to Canada for a job.

As depicted in the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer film 'Dunki', the popular technique is used by migrants wherein they transit through other countries with lenient travel document requirements to reach their final destinations, usually countries like the US, the UK and Canada.

Mohit Chaddha invited the victims, who were from Ludhiana, to a lavish bungalow in Maharashtra's Lonavala, took them for a visit to Imagica water park and partied with them before giving them a spiked beverage and stealing their belongings. The victims were promised a job in a food packaging company in Canada.

He fled with six mobile phones, ? 2 lakh worth of cash and even transferred ? 7.5 lakh from a woman's bank account using her phone, all while his victims were unconscious. Two men named Harjeet Singh and Satish Rao have been accused of assisting him.

One of the female victims said she met Mohit on the matrimonial website Shaadi.com and that he promised to marry her and take her to Canada.

"I have sold all my household items in Ludhiana, I have become homeless. Everything happened within a few days. Actually, his behaviour was very good. Ask anyone if there was even one percent doubt. No one doubted that person," Surinder Kaur said.

Upon realising that they had been cheated,



the victims, left without any money or mobile phones, spent the night at Lonavala railway station before filing a complaint with the police. "We were told in the morning that we have to have an interview in the embassy, so he asked us to give him our phones.

Everyone was given something mixed in mango shake, it was very strong, after that we did not know anything. Everyone fell asleep suddenly, the boys were unconscious. After that, around 5 o'clock, Harjeet Singh and Suresh Rao took the

goods in an auto. We also have the number of the auto," one of the victims, Neha Malhotra, said.

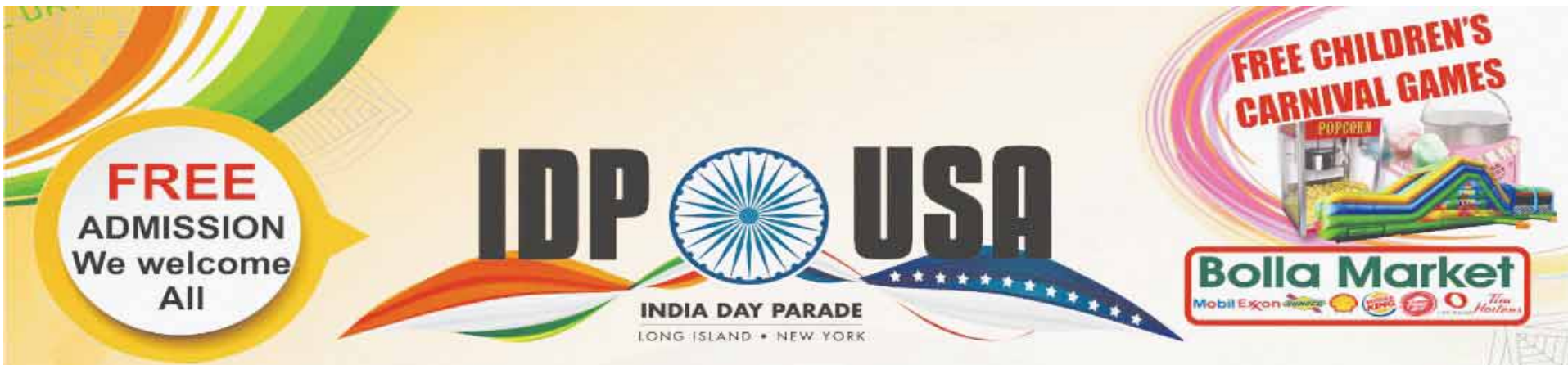
Naji Arora, who had ? 7.5 lakh taken out of her account, said, "All this transfer was done. After the transfer we came to know that they had left with the luggage. When we checked the CCTV, Mohit had left at 12 o'clock." "All mobile phones are switched off right now, we are taking out their CDR (Call Detail Records), the woman had also met him in Santa Cruz, so we are taking her information. Today is only the first day of the investigation, so we cannot say much at the moment," said Police Inspector Suhas Jagtap of Lonavala City Police Station.

## This should be America's next step to stay ahead of ruthless cybercriminals

by Frank Cilluffo and Joshua Whitman

The threat cybercrime poses to nations, businesses and individuals has reached a critical juncture ó and it's time to recognize that cybercriminals are operating freely in countries that provide them shelter, causing economic harm and undermining global security. The United States International Cyberspace and Digital Policy Strategy, published by the State Department in May, introduces the concept of 'digital solidarity' to collaboratively battle malicious cyber activity. However, this strategy overlooks a critical tool for combating cybercrime: the designation of state sponsors of cybercrime. To close this gap and get ahead of increasing cyber threats, the United States must take the lead in identifying and designating nations that harbor cybercriminal organizations. The exponential rise of cybercrime demands an escalated international response. Ransomware attacks alone reaped record payouts in 2023 and are projected to cost the world more than \$40 billion in 2024. Nation-states, major corporations, critical infrastructure providers, schools, hospitals and ordinary citizens have all fallen

victim. The ubiquity of cybercrime has normalized what was once a niche threat reserved for high-value targets. This normalization stems from the proliferation of cybercrime safe havens ó nations that allow cybercriminal syndicates to operate within their borders without fear of extradition or prosecution. By looking the other way, these countries provide cybercriminals the stability and infrastructure to plan complex attacks and safely store illicit proceeds. Likely emboldened by state protection, hackers based in safe havens can escalate their attacks with deepening sophistication. Russia epitomizes this model of state cyber sanctuary. Despite issuing public condemnations of cybercrime, the Kremlin is quietly supporting hacking groups as long as those groups don't target Russian interests and are willing to do Moscow's bidding when called upon. Symbiotic relationships have developed, with hackers sharing stolen data with Russian intelligence and the state providing legal safe harbor and access to money laundering services.



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# Behind the revived terror spree in Jammu: Restructured alliance and a new plan

By Arvind Ojha & Ankit Kumar

A renewed syndicate with focused tasks distributed among several outlawed organisations, brokered by Pakistan's military, is likely behind the recent spate of successful terrorist attacks targeting security forces in the Jammu region, according to intelligence inputs exclusively reviewed by India Today.

Earlier this winter, a gathering of several notorious terrorist groups took place in Bahawalpur, Pakistan. Among those in attendance were Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar, Al Badr commander Bakht Zamin, Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin, and many others. The new terror alliance has divided and allocated tasks such as recruitment, training, arms and ammunition, funding, logistics, and propaganda among various terrorist units, according to intelligence reports.

Here's a lowdown on Pakistan's new terror cabinet responsible for the recent bloodshed in the election-bound Jammu and Kashmir. **Bakht Zameen Khan:** A seasoned militant with experience in Afghanistan, who reportedly participated in the Kargil War on behalf of Pakistan with his group of mercenaries, is now responsible for coordinating this renewed

terror operation. He has also established a successful business network of educational institutions, including schools and colleges. He manages the terror funds



through his business network and was seen visiting terror camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK). His connections

with hardline elements in Pakistan and Afghanistan puts him in a suitable position to effectively coordinate with the Pakistan military and other terror commanders such as Masood Azhar and Syed Salahuddin. **Masood Azhar:** After nearly five years of absence from public life, Azhar has re-emerged, making public appearances that suggest a green light from the Pakistan establishment. Under Azhar's leadership, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) controls multiple mosques and training centres across Pakistan, where new recruits receive arms training. Over the past several decades, JeM has developed an extensive network of resources that assist these recruits in infiltrating the difficult terrain during winters. Azhar has been designated a global terrorist by several countries as well as the United Nations. **Syed Salahuddin:** The founder of Hizbul Mujahideen has been the face of the insurgency in Kashmir for decades, though his ability to orchestrate large-scale attacks has waned over the years. Under the new arrangement, his role has shifted to recruiting teenagers under the banner of the 'Kashmir freedom struggle,' a cause often glamorised in Pakistan's popular culture. Salahuddin resides near

Rawalpindi under heavy security and frequently visits the hinterlands of Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK) to recruit young men, who are later trained to participate in armed operations in India. Together with Azhar and Khan, he forms the leadership group of the terror syndicate.

**Saifullah Sajid Jutt:** Born Habibullah Malik, and also known as Langda, this 42-year-old terrorist hails from Kasur, Pakistan. He has long been associated with Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). Protected by the establishment, Jutt runs a drug-smuggling network in Pakistan and is involved in money laundering activities. He has played a key role in smuggling arms via drones and uses this illicit network to recruit criminals for terror operations in Jammu and Kashmir. His involvement is suspected in previous attacks on security personnel in Bhat Dhurian, Poonch, and in a suicide attack in Hyderpora. **Sheikh Jameel-ur-Rehman:** Tasked with local coordination in an area where multiple terrorist factions operate, Sheikh Jameel-ur-Rehman hails from Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir, but has been residing in Pakistan as a Pakistani national.

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**FBI TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVE**

**BHADRESHKUMAR CHETANBHAI PATEL**

Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution - First Degree Murder, Second Degree Murder, First Degree Assault, Second Degree Assault, Dangerous Weapon with Intent to Injure

DESCRIPTION

Alias: Bhadreshkumar C. Patel	Place of Birth: Kantrodi Ta Virangam, Gujarat, India
Date(s) of Birth Used: May 15, 1990	Eyes: Brown
Hair: Brown	Weight: 165 pounds
Height: 5'9"	Occupation: Employee of donut shop
Sex: Male	Nationality: Indian

REWARD

The FBI is offering a reward of up to \$250,000 for information leading to the arrest of Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel.

REMARKS

Patel was last known to be in the Newark, New Jersey, area.

CAUTION

Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel is wanted for allegedly killing his wife by striking her multiple times with an object while they were both working at a donut shop in Hanover, Maryland, on April 12, 2015. A local arrest warrant was issued in the District Court of Maryland for Anne Arundel County on April 13, 2015, and Patel was charged with first degree murder, second degree murder, first degree assault, second degree assault, and dangerous weapon with intent to injure. A federal arrest warrant was issued in the United States District Court, District of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland, on April 20, 2015, after Patel was charged with unlawful flight to avoid prosecution.

**SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS**

If you have any information concerning this person, please contact the FBI's Toll-Free tip line at 1-800-CALL-FBI (1-800-225-5324). You may also contact your local FBI office, the nearest American Embassy or Consulate, or you can submit a tip online at [tips.fbi.gov](https://tips.fbi.gov).

Field Office: Baltimore

# USA NEWS OBSERVER



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Trump's interview with Musk devolves into yet another X catastrophe



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